

# **Effective Practices for Community Supervision (EPICS): The Application of Science to Supervision Practices**

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Corrections Institute

# **RESEARCH AND EVIDENCE: FOUNDATION FOR THE MODEL**

# Principles of Effective Intervention

- Prior research has demonstrated that correctional services can be effective in reducing recidivism...but not all services are equally effective!
- The most effective services are based on the **principles of effective intervention.**

# Principles of Effective Intervention

- There are more than 40 published meta-analyses of the correctional treatment literature.
- Results have been replicated with remarkable consistency; there is considerable support for the RNR framework across quantitative reviews of the literature.

# Adhere to the Principles of Effective Intervention

## RISK

### WHO

Deliver more intense intervention to higher risk clients

## NEED

### WHAT

Target criminogenic needs to reduce risk for recidivism

## RESPONSIVITY

### HOW

Use CBT approaches  
Match mode/style of service to offender

## FIDELITY

### HOW WELL

Deliver treatment services as designed

# EPICS MODEL AND CORE SKILLS

Why EPICS?

# Rationale for EPICS Training

A meta-analytic review of the supervision research revealed:

- The development of supervision plans were based on court-mandated conditions and not assessment results
- Even when criminogenic needs were identified, they were not discussed in the majority of cases
- ↑ probation officer focused on conditions of probation, ↑ in recidivism

# EPICS Model

## PURPOSE

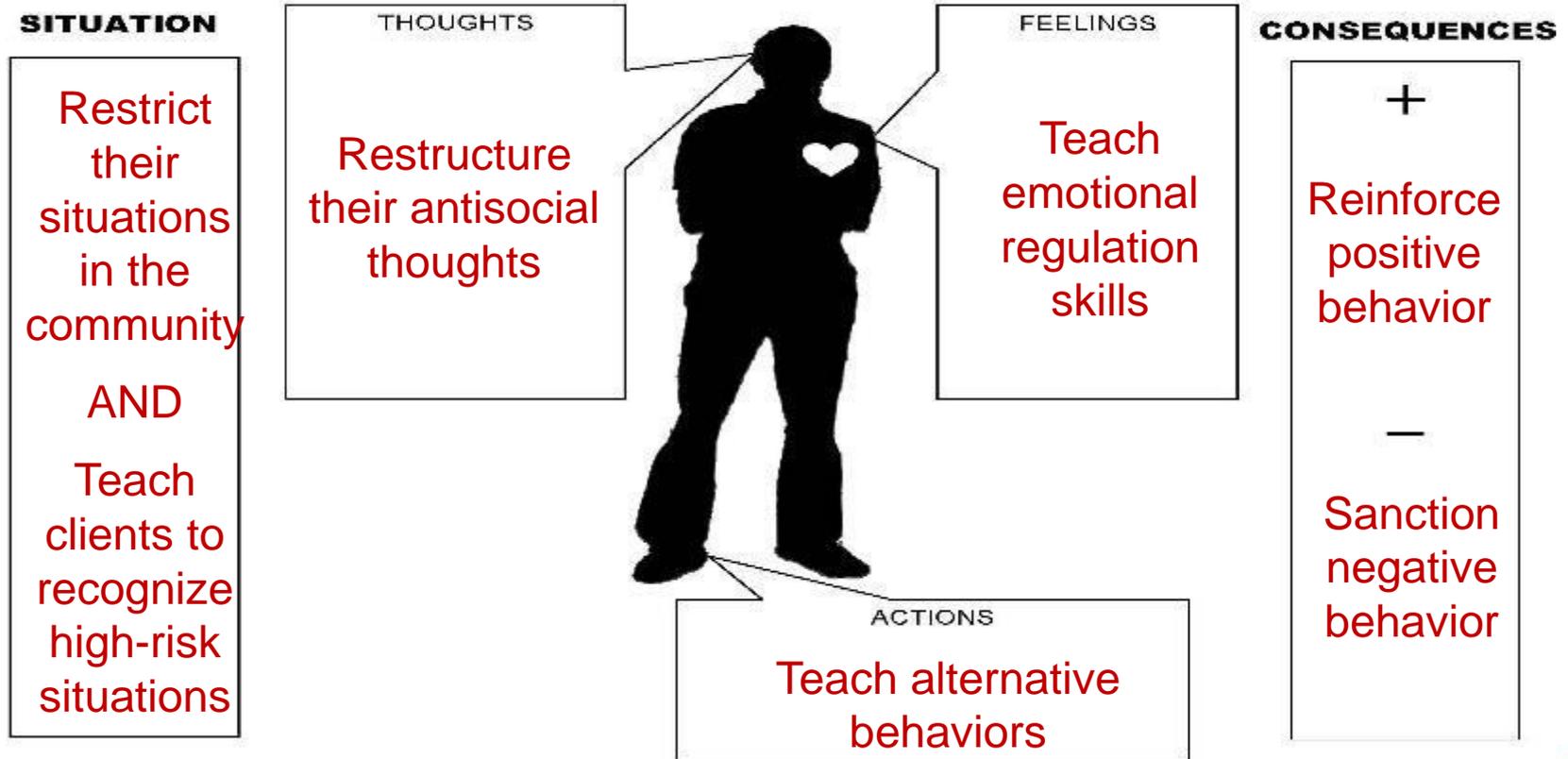
- This model strives to fully utilize the time that officers spend with clients and ensure clients receive a consistent message throughout the continuum of correctional services
- The EPICS model is not intended to replace more intense cognitive-behavioral treatments that address specific criminogenic needs

# Objectives of the EPICS Model

- Apply the **RNR** framework to community supervision
  - Focuses effort on moderate to high risk clients
  - Provides a format to target criminogenic needs in a one-on-one context
  - Encourages identification of specific responsivity factors
  - Uses cognitive and behavioral strategies to change offender behavior
- Train staff on **core correctional practices**
- Train staff to intervene where the offender is deficient in making decisions
- Include measures of fidelity and coaching sessions

# Rationale for the EPICS Model

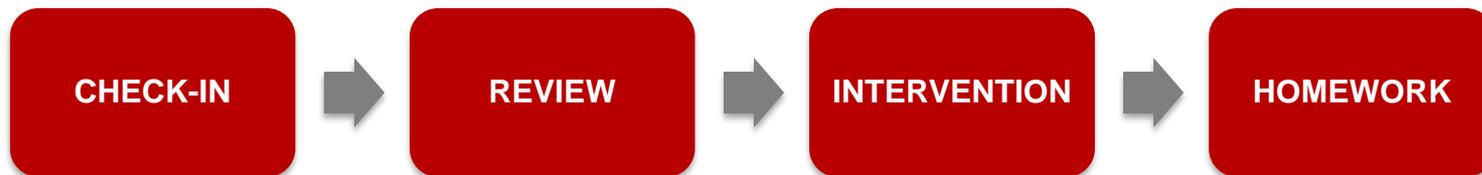
## Behavior Chain



# EPICS Model

## INDIVIDUAL SESSION OVERVIEW

Each contact session should be structured in the following way:



# EPICS Model

## CHECK-IN

- Check-in is an opportunity to:
  - Promote a collaborative relationship with offender
  - Assess for crises/acute needs
  - Assess for compliance with conditions

# EPICS Model

## REVIEW

- Review is an opportunity to:
  - Enhance learning by reviewing previous interventions
  - Review previous homework assignment
  - Discuss community agency referrals
  - Set or review goals with the client

# EPICS Model

## INTERVENTION

- Intervention is an opportunity to:
  - Target criminogenic needs using structured cognitive-behavioral techniques:
    - Behavior Chain
    - Cognitive Restructuring
    - Cost-Benefit Analysis
    - Skill Building
    - Problem Solving
    - Graduated Practice
  - Target specific responsivity issues

# Cost-Benefit Analysis

## PURPOSE

- Weighs both short-term and long-term costs and benefits of antisocial target behavior and an alternative prosocial behavior
- Helps build motivation towards changing problem behaviors

# Cost-Benefit Analysis

Behavior: **Risky**

	Consequences	
Short-term	+	-
Long-term	+	-

# Cost-Benefit Analysis

Behavior: **Alternative prosocial**

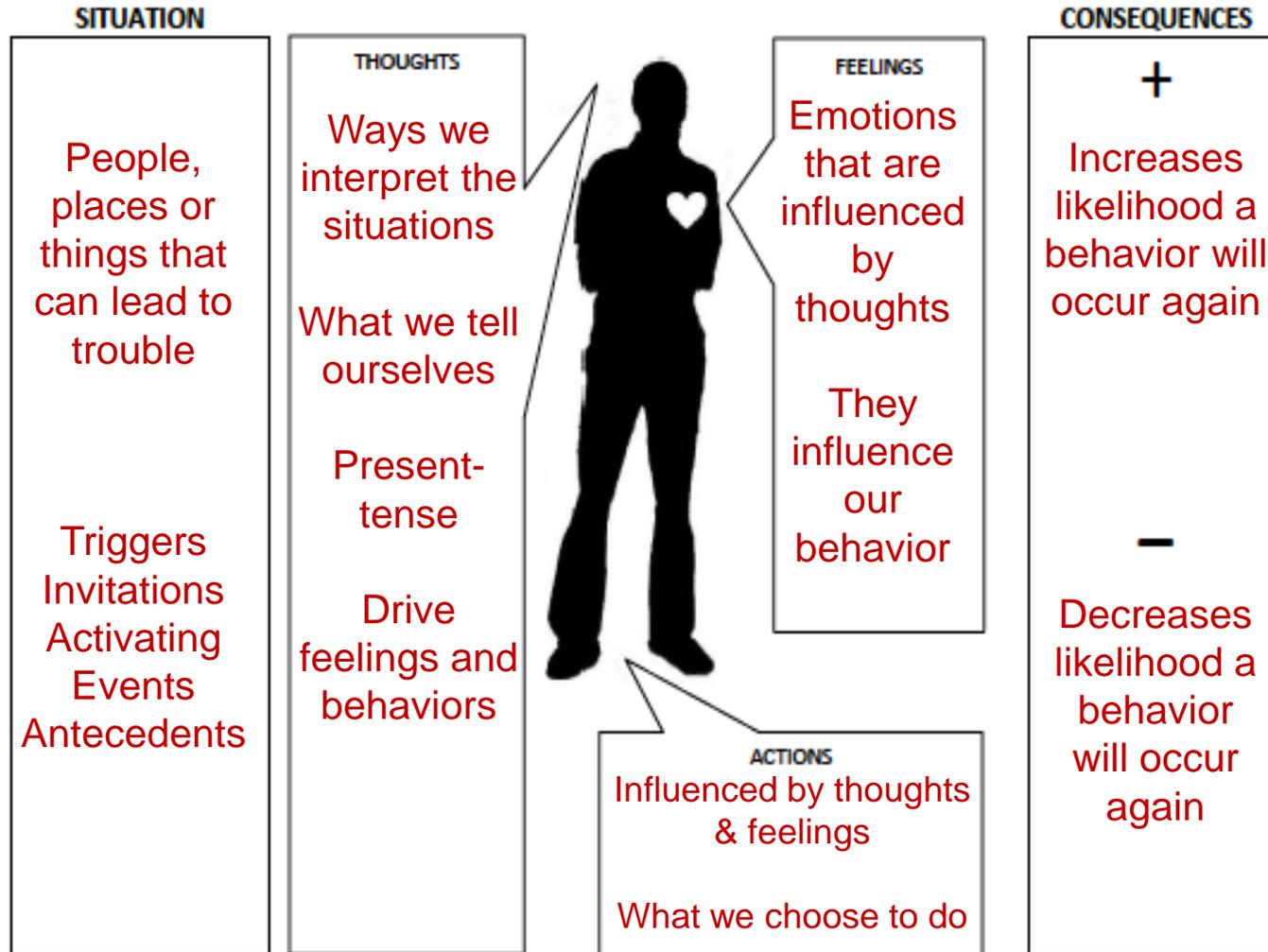
		Consequences	
Short-term	+		-
Long-term	+		-

# Behavior Chain

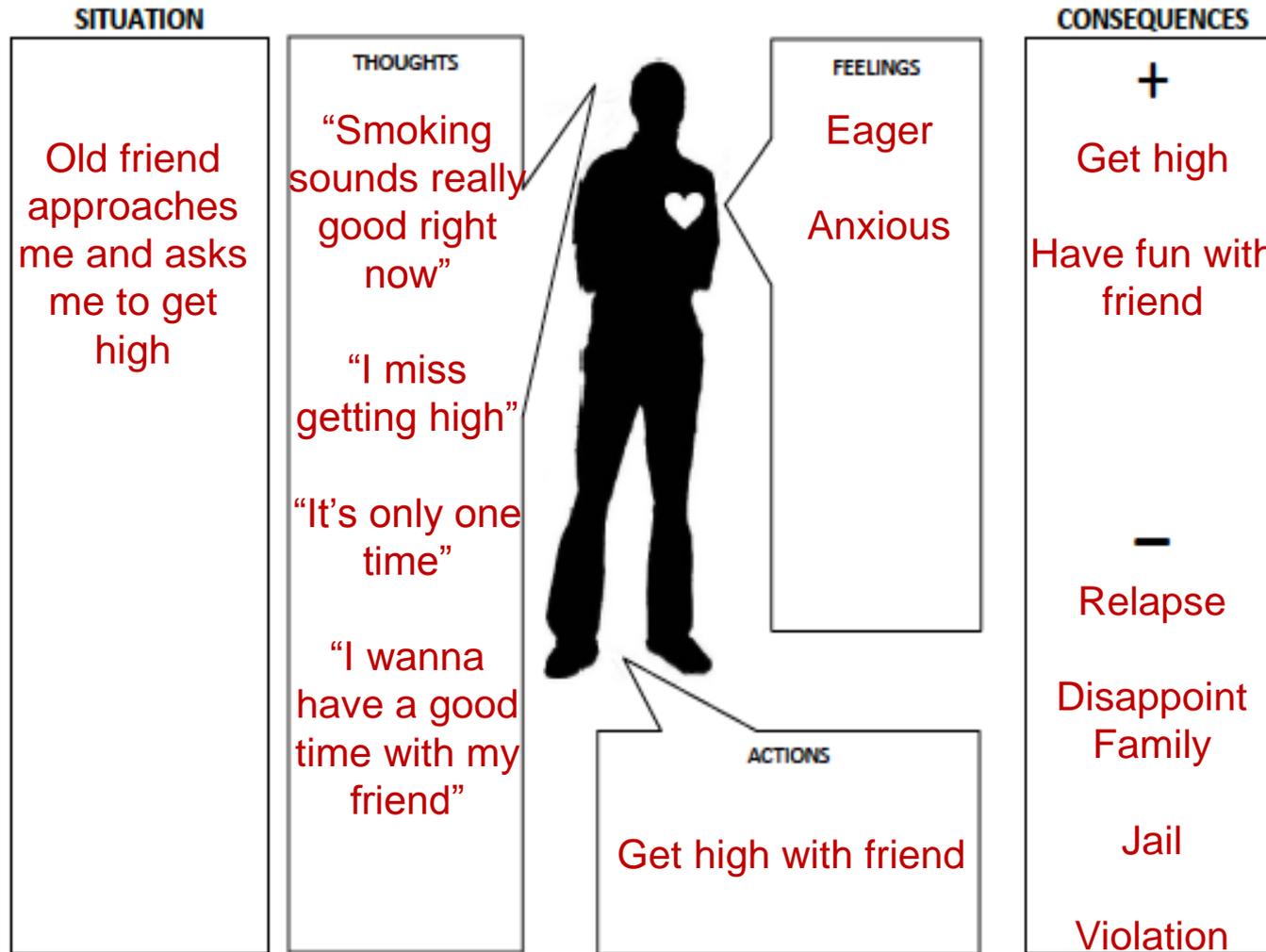
## PURPOSE

- Helps offenders learn the thought-behavior link
- Helps offenders identify their antisocial thinking in risky situations

# BEHAVIOR CHAIN



# BEHAVIOR CHAIN



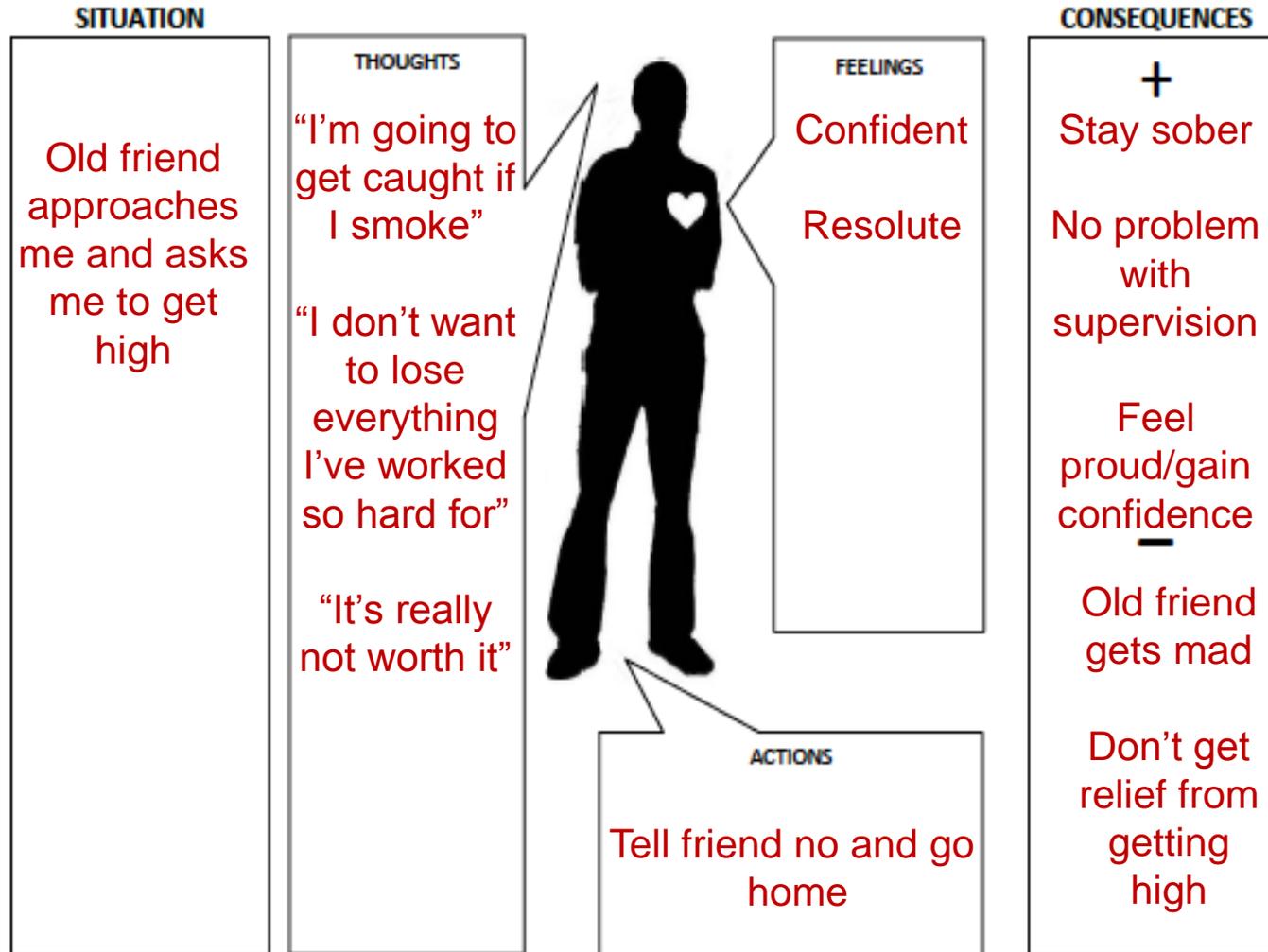
# Cognitive Restructuring

**GOAL:** Change behavior

**TO CHANGE BEHAVIOR:**



# BEHAVIOR CHAIN



# Structured Skill Building

## PURPOSE

- Used when problem behavior is likely being caused by a skill deficit
- Teaches prosocial behavioral responses to high risk situations

# Structured Skill Building

## STEPS OF STRUCTURED SKILL BUILDING

1. Introduce the skill
2. Obtain offender buy-in
3. Teach the skill following the concrete steps
4. Model the skill
5. Role play the skill
6. Provide feedback to the offender

# Problem Solving

## STEPS OF PROBLEM SOLVING

### 1. Identify your problem and goal:

Have the offender state their problem objectively. Determine what exactly the offender wants to happen in the situation and what is best for him/her and everyone involved

### 2. Brainstorm options and choose the best one:

Brainstorm possible solutions to the problem. Review all the alternatives generated and discuss the short-term and long-term consequences of the solutions

### 3. Plan and try your solution:

Develop concrete action steps in this stage and role play the plan. The offender will then use this plan to solve the problem



# EPICS Model

## HOMework

- Homework is an opportunity to:
  - Generalize learning to new situations
  - Assign appropriate homework
    - Assign homework directly related to the intervention
    - Give client clear expectations
    - Encourage client to use interventions on risky situations

# EPICS Core Skills

## Throughout Model

- Relationship skills:
  - Active listening
  - Giving feedback
- Behavioral modification skills:
  - Reinforcement
  - Disapproval
  - Use of authority

## Interventions

- Motivational skills:
  - Cost-benefit analysis
- Cognitive behavioral skills:
  - Cognitive restructuring
  - Prosocial modeling
  - Structured skill building
  - Problem solving

# Why EPICS?

## EPICS PILOT RESEARCH

- Effective Practices in Community Supervision (EPICS)
- Results indicated that staff trained in the EPICS model demonstrated more consistent use of core correctional practices
- Trained staff also became more proficient in their use of the skills over time as a result of participation in additional practice sessions

Smith et al. (2012)

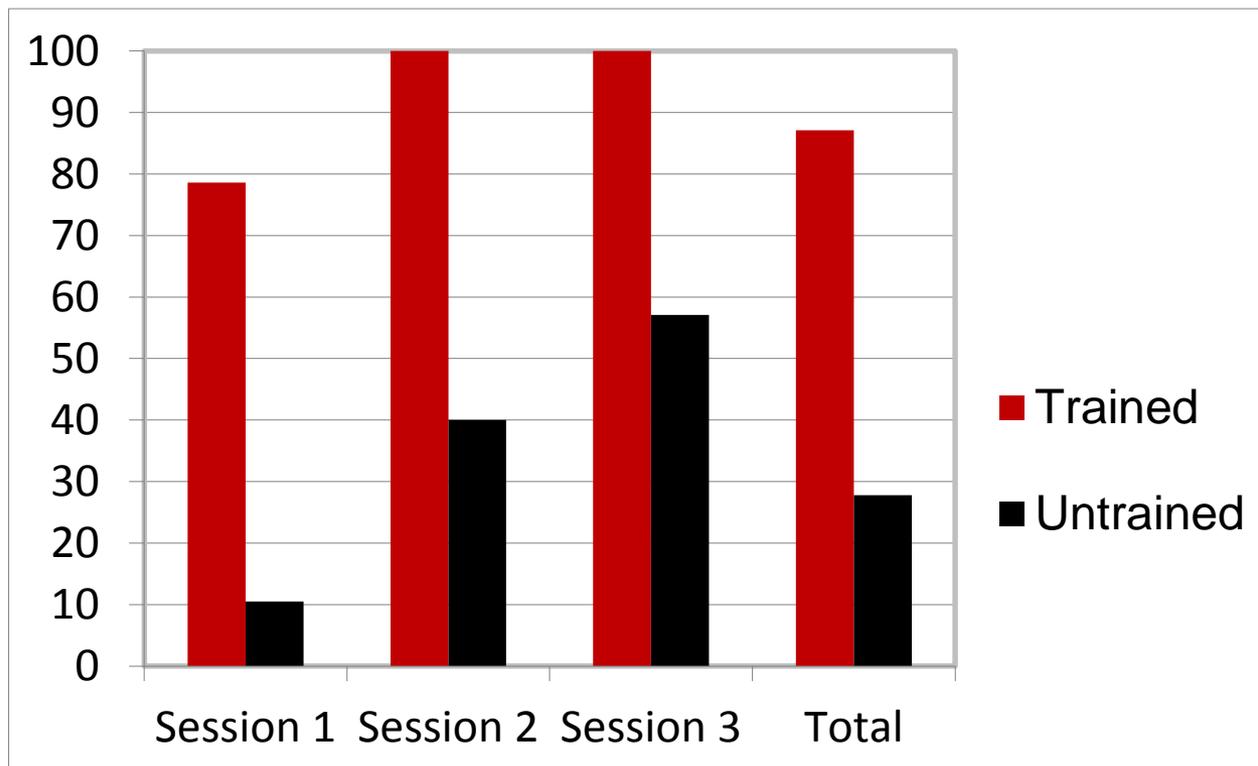
# Why EPICS?

## EPICS RESEARCH

- Evaluation of EPICS in Ohio
- Involved 21 trained and 20 untrained staff and 272 offenders
- Staff trained in EPICS outperformed untrained staff in the use of core correctional practices during contact sessions
- High risk offenders assigned to high fidelity staff had significantly lower incarceration rates than high risk offenders assigned to low fidelity staff

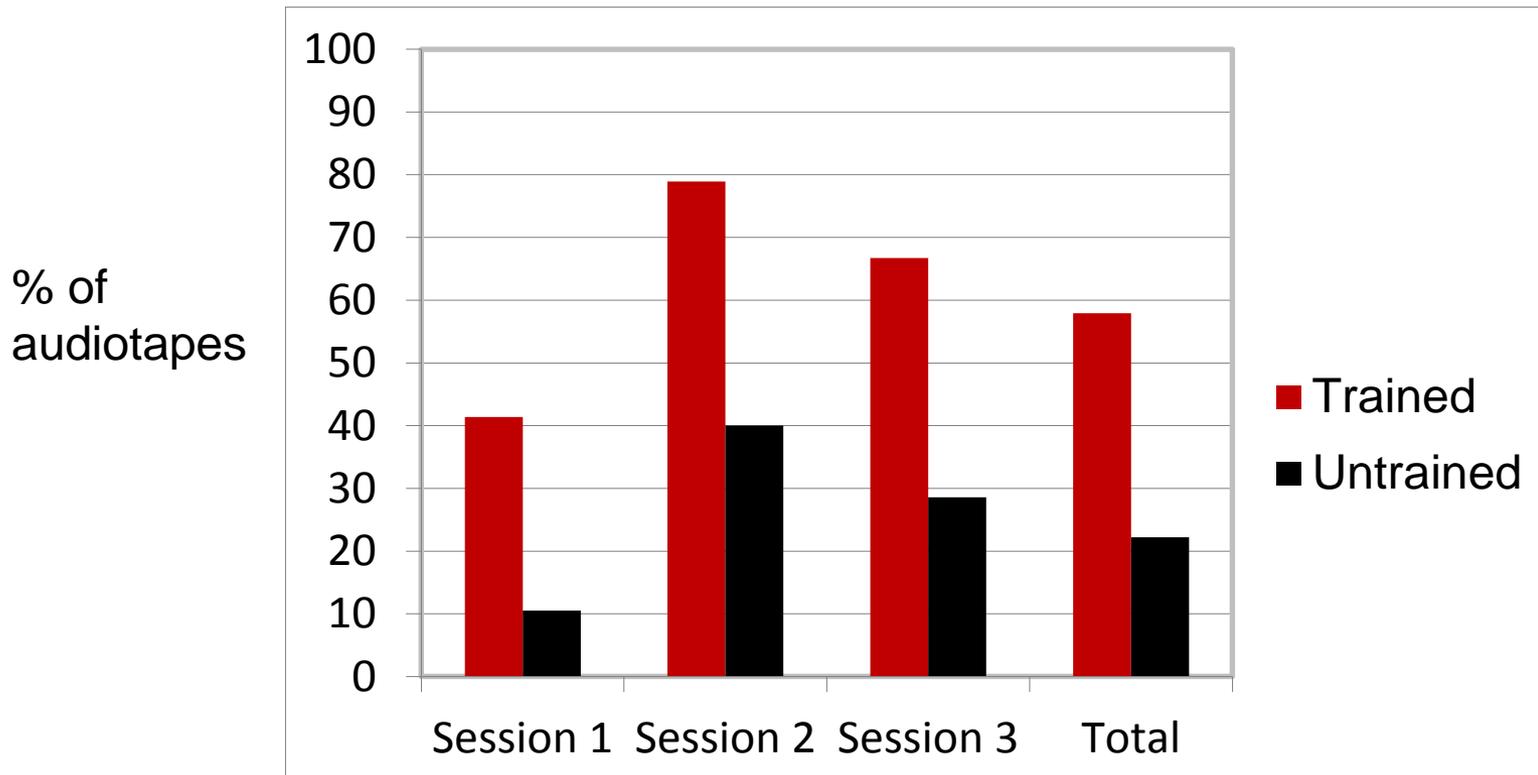
# Rationale for EPICS Training

**Trained staff were more likely to spend time discussing criminogenic needs**



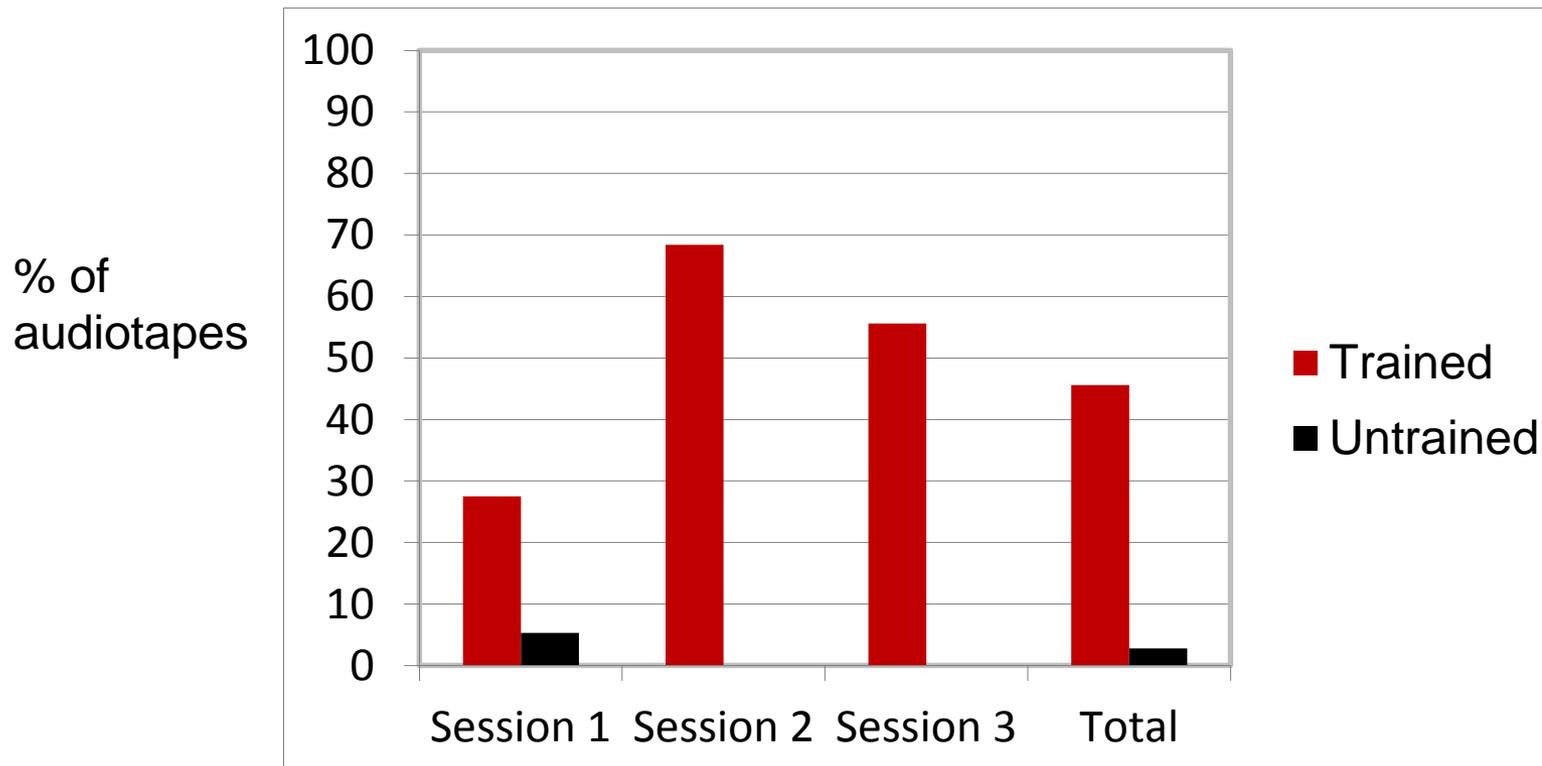
# Rationale for EPICS Training

**Trained staff were more likely to make effective use of social reinforcement**



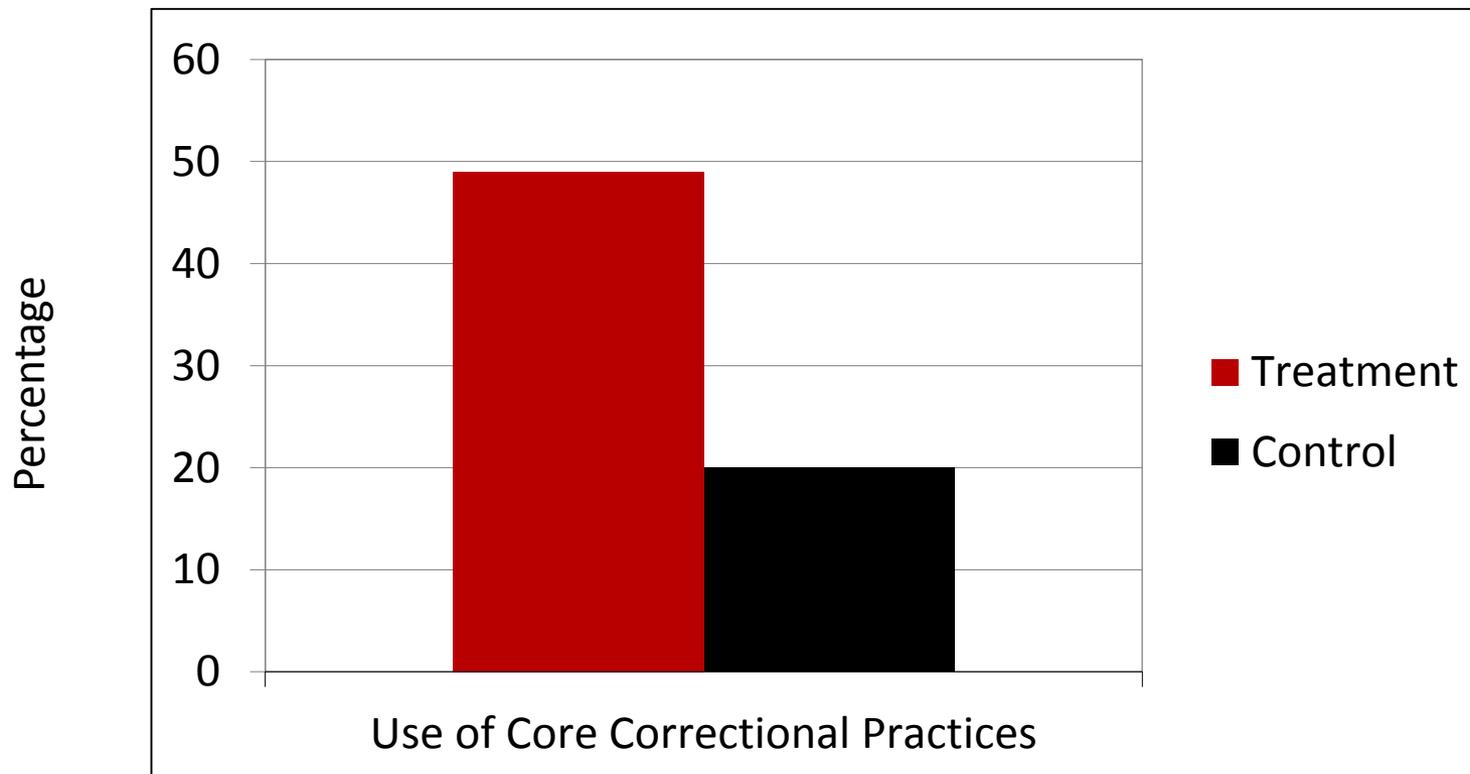
# Rationale for EPICS Training

**Trained staff were far more likely to identify antisocial thinking**



# Why EPICS?

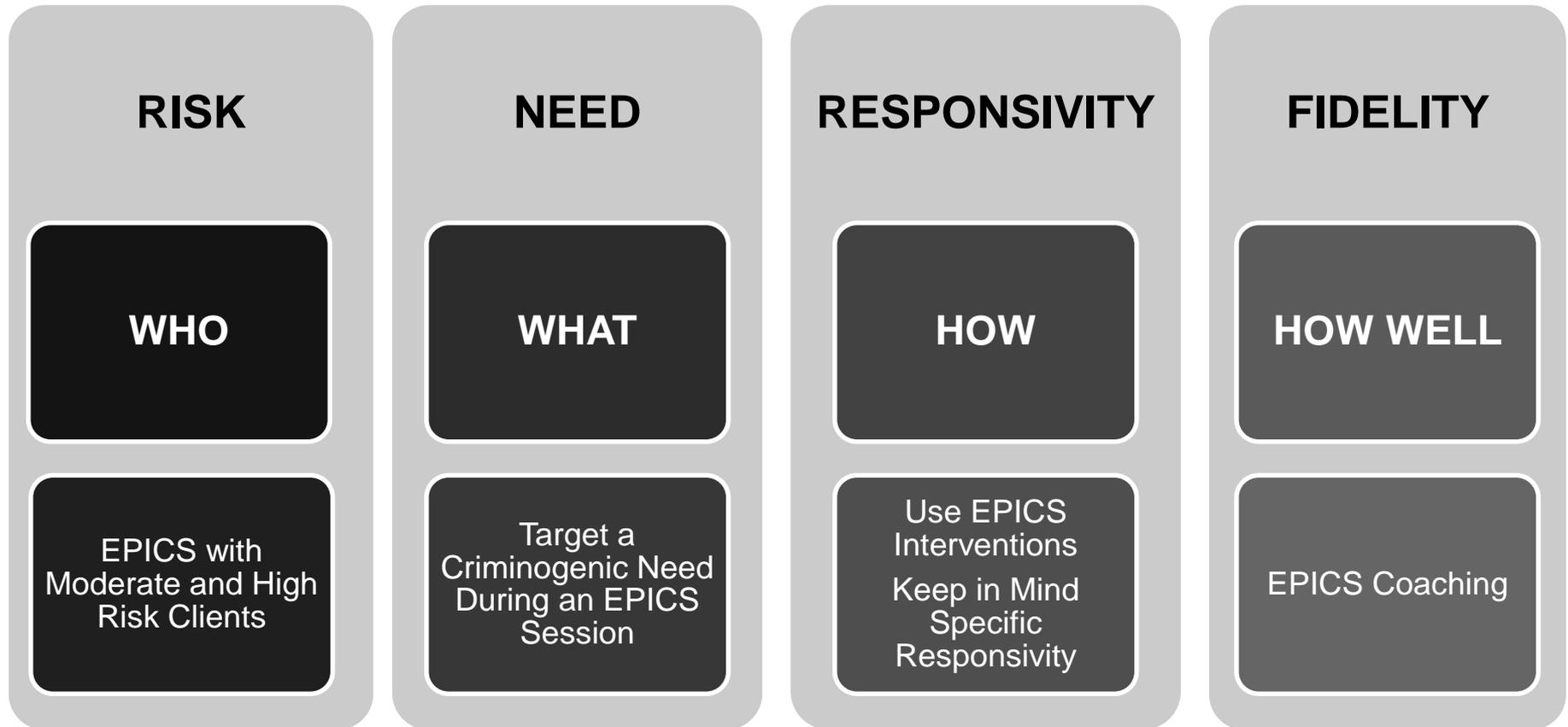
## EPICS RESEARCH



Latessa et al. (2013)

# **EPICS TRAINING AND COACHING PROCESSES**

# EPICS and EBP



# Model Fidelity

## FIDELITY PRINCIPLE

- Implementing the intervention **as closely as possible** to the way it was designed
- Every major study shows **a strong relationship** between fidelity and recidivism
- Poor fidelity can lead to **null effects** or **unforeseen consequences** (increasing recidivism)

# Rationale for Coaching

- Coaching helps:
  - Reinforce material learned in training
  - Breaks down material into smaller pieces
  - Helps with long-term sustainability and initial skill acquisition; with continued maintenance of skill use
- Drastically increases **model fidelity** and **sustainability** of the model

# How to Increase Fidelity: Coaching

- Training often provides participants with information and skills
- Still, there are challenges to transferring this information into practice
  - Less than 10% of material covered is retained
- Training focused solely on knowledge transfer without follow-ups or skill practices, do not lead to changes in daily practices

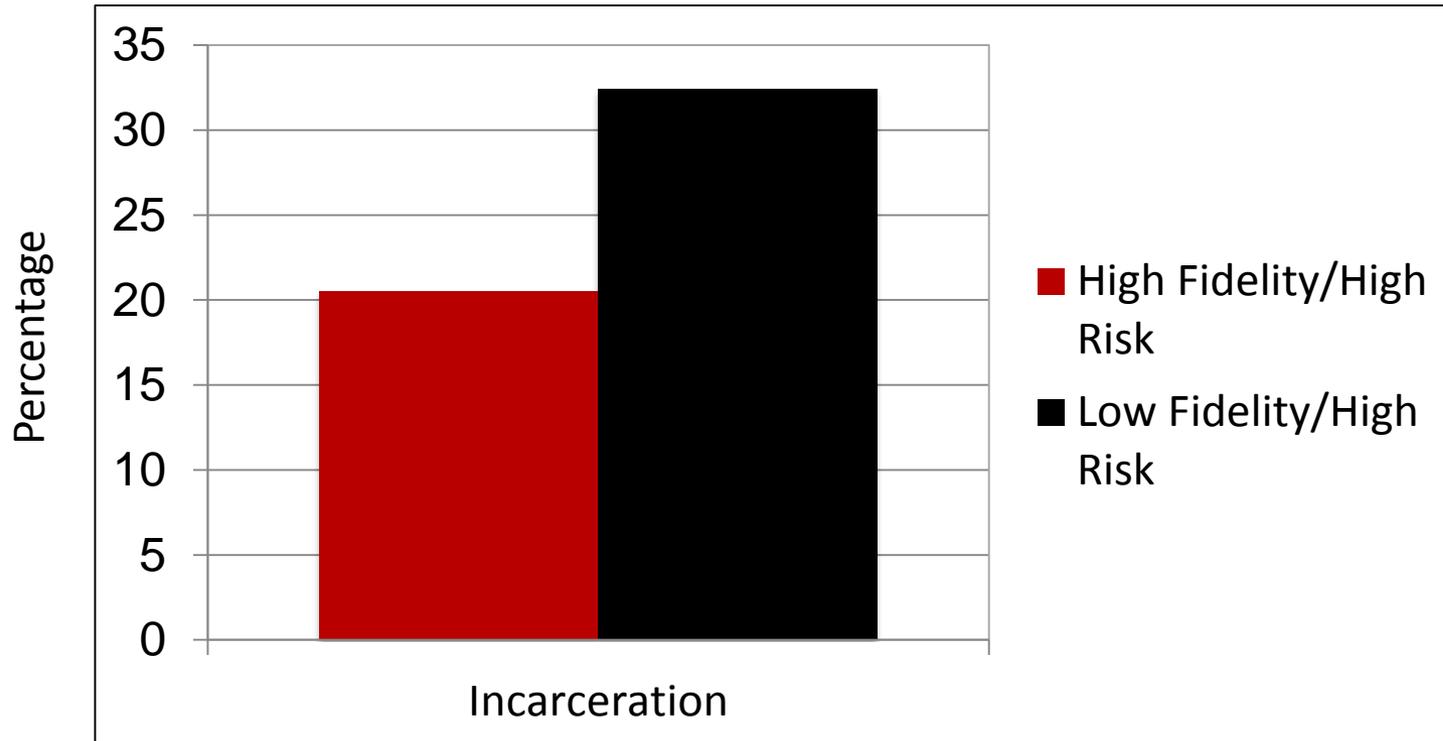
# Importance of Fidelity

## EPICS INFLUENCE ON RELATIONSHIPS

- Probation staff trained in EPICS who had high fidelity to the model were significantly more likely to be perceived as trusting by the offenders on their caseload
- The study found that as trust increased between the offender and the officer, the odds of being re-arrested are lowered

# Importance of Fidelity for EPICS

High risk offenders assigned to high fidelity staff had significantly lower incarceration rates than high risk offenders assigned to low fidelity staff



# EPICS Training and Coaching Process

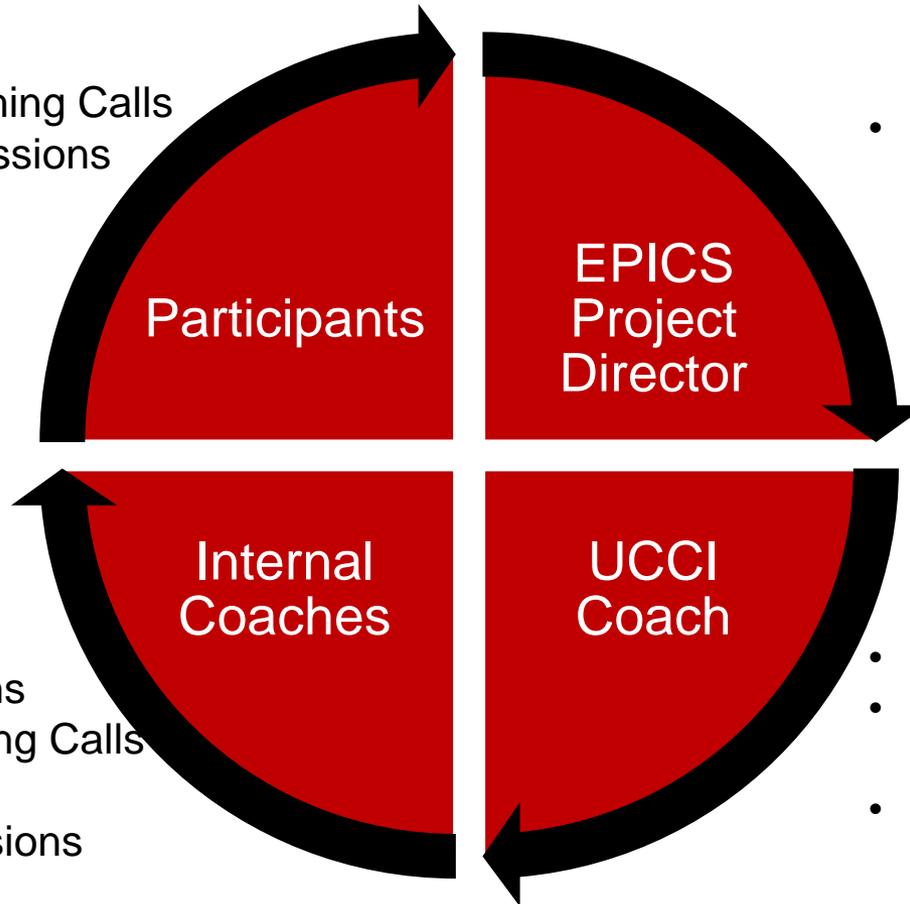
- EPICS is a three-day training for officers and supervisors on RNR, core correctional practices, and the session components
- In order to ensure adherence to the model and to train the supervisors as coaches, monthly coaching sessions are included as part of the training
- 5 initial follow-up, coaching sessions
  - Continued maintenance and remedial group and individual coaching sessions

# EPICS Coaching Process

- Written individual feedback is provided on use of the model
- Support is provided to supervisors regarding implementation and on-going coaching
- Helps increase fidelity to the EPICS Model, continued troubleshooting of the model, practice, and refreshers/boosters

# EPICS Coaching Process

- Participates in Coaching Calls
- Conducts EPICS Sessions



- Implementation Support & Guidance

- Conducts Coaching Calls
- Works Closely with Internal Coaches
- Monitors Use of Model

# EPICS Coaching Process

- Each coaching session includes two different calls/webinars
  - 1<sup>st</sup> call of each session is with UCCI coach and internal coaches
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> call of each session is with UCCI coach and all participants
- Internal coaches call
  - How to code EPICS sessions
  - How to coach individuals in EPICS
- Coaching call
  - Group feedback on use of model
  - Skills/interventions are reviewed, modeled and practiced

# Thank You

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