

Principles of Corrections

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Research supports several principles for effective offender interventions. NIC highlights eight principles in its "Evidence-Based Policy and Practice" initiative. They are listed below in developmental sequence. Resources for implementing program interventions are also listed below.

NIDA Treatment Principles

1. **Assess Actuarial Risk/Needs** - Assessing offenders' risk and needs (focusing on dynamic and static risk factors and criminogenic needs) at the individual and aggregate levels is essential for implementing the principles of best practice.
2. **Enhance Intrinsic Motivation** - Research strongly suggests that "motivational interviewing" techniques, rather than persuasion tactics, effectively enhance motivation for initiating and maintaining behavior changes
3. **Target Interventions**
 1. **Risk Principle** - Prioritize supervision and treatment resources for higher risk offenders.
 2. **Need Principle** - Target interventions to criminogenic needs.
 3. **Responsivity Principle** - Be responsive to temperament, learning style, motivation, gender, and culture when assigning to programs.
 4. **Dosage** - Structure 40% to 70% of high-risk offenders' time for 3 to 9 months.
 5. **Treatment Principle** - Integrate treatment into full sentence/sanctions requirements.
4. **Skill Train with Directed Practice** - Provide evidence-based programming that emphasizes cognitive-behavior strategies and is delivered by well-trained staff.
5. **Increase Positive Reinforcement** - Apply four positive reinforcements for every one negative reinforcement for optimal behavior change results.
6. **Engage Ongoing Support in Natural Communities** - Realign and actively engage pro-social support for offenders in their communities for positive reinforcement of desired new behaviors.
7. **Measure Relevant Processes/Practices** - An accurate and detailed documentation of case information and staff performance, along with a formal and valid mechanism for measuring outcomes, is the foundation of evidence-based practice.
8. **Provide Measurement Feedback** - Providing feedback builds accountability and maintains integrity, ultimately improving outcomes.

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