Alaska Results First

Benefit-Cost Findings:
Adult Criminal Justice Programs

Presented to:
Alaska Criminal Justice Commission
June 15, 2017

A Brief Introduction

ALASKA RESULTS FIRST

Alaska's Results First Initiative

- State of Alaska applied to join *Results First*
  - Tri-branch agreement to pursue this work
    - Alaska Legislature
    - Office of the Governor
    - Alaska Court System

- In 2015 Alaska became the 19th jurisdiction to partner with Pew-MacArthur *Results First*

- Alaska Justice Information Center (AJiC)
  - Tasked with conducting data collection, analyses, and dissemination of findings

An Overview
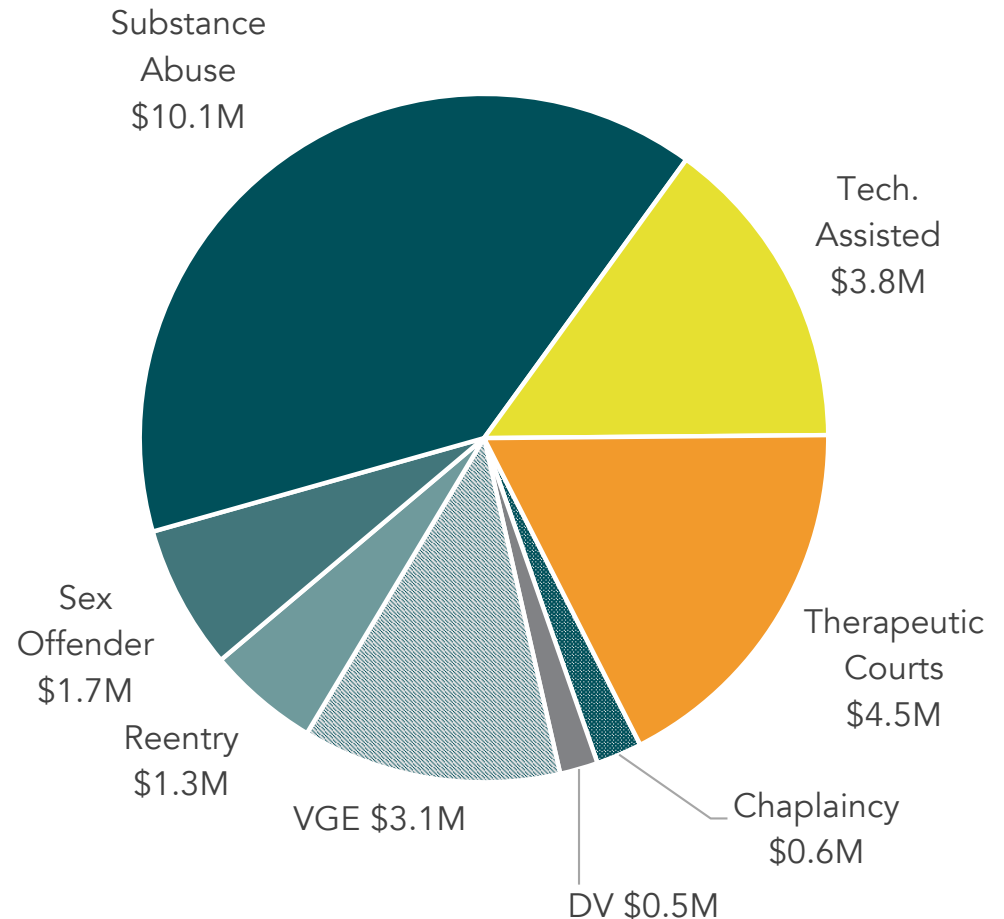
STEPS IN THE PROCESS

The *Results First* Process

- Program Inventory
  – Comprehensive listing of all programs provided in a particular policy area (e.g., criminal justice)

- Match state programs to the evidence base
  – Results First Clearinghouse Database; Results First Ratings Database
  – *How effective are programs that are provided?*

- Pew-MacArthur Benefit-Cost Model
  – Estimates benefit-cost ratios for programs that have been rigorously researched/evaluated

Step 1:
Program Inventory

- 54 adult criminal justice programs identified
- Separated into 8 groupings:
  - Chaplaincy services
  - Domestic violence (DV)
  - Vocational and general education (VGE)
  - Re-entry services
  - Sex offender
  - Substance abuse
  - Technology-assisted
  - Therapeutic courts

- 36 adult criminal justice programs were funded wholly or in part by the State of Alaska
  - $25.5 million annually

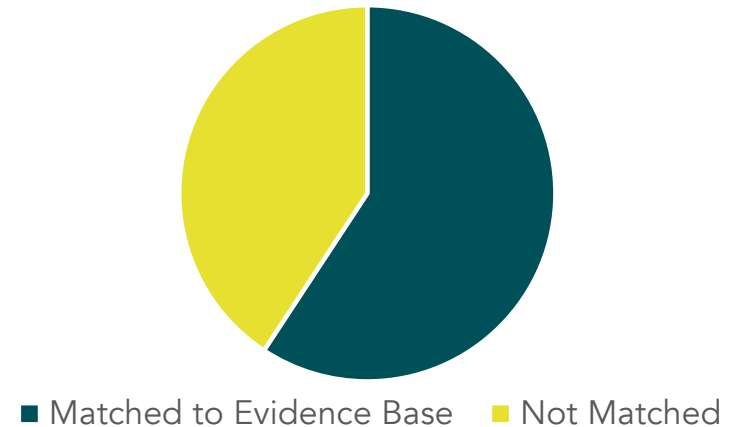- 18 adult criminal justice programs in the inventory did not receive dedicated state funding allocations

Distribution of State Investments in Adult Criminal Justice Programs

Substance Abuse $10.1M
Tech. Assisted $3.8M
Therapeutic Courts $4.5M
Chaplaincy $0.6M
DV $0.5M
VGE $3.1M
Reentry $1.3M
Sex Offender $1.7M

Step 2:
Program Matching

- Compare Alaska adult criminal justice programs with programs that have been rigorously evaluated
  - Program features
    - Program content/curriculum
    - Program structure/process
  - Locus of Treatment
    - Prison vs. community
    - Inpatient vs. outpatient
  - Target population/eligible participants
- Key Findings
  - 32 of 54 (59.3%) adult criminal justice programs matched to evidence base
  - Of the 32 programs matched, 26 funded wholly or in part by State of Alaska ($23 million)
  - 90% of state investment in adult criminal justice programs directed to programs matched in evidence base

Programs Matched to Evidence Base

■ Matched to Evidence Base   ■ Not Matched

State Investment in Adult Criminal Justice Programs

■ Matched to Evidence Base   ■ Not Matched
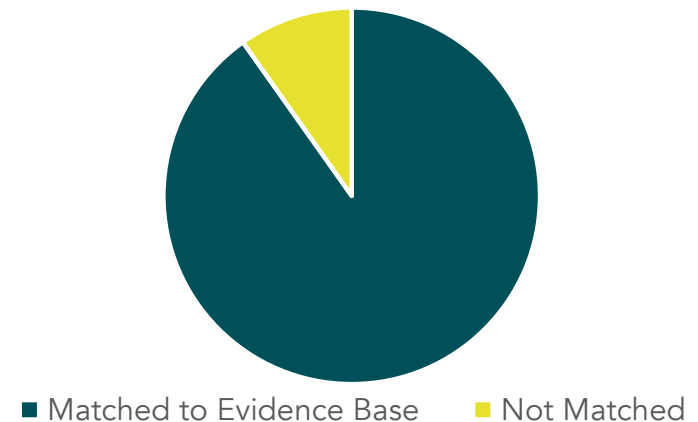
Step 3:
Populate *Results First* Benefit-Cost Model

- Prerequisite steps:
  - Estimate per-participant program costs
  - Estimate criminal justice resource use and cost parameters
    - Probability of resource use for prison, community supervision
    - Marginal costs of: police ($ per arrest), courts ($ per conviction), prison ($ per inmate), and community supervision ($ per offender)
  - Estimate recidivism parameters for Alaska program-eligible populations
    - 2007 cohorts
      - 9 cohorts in total
    - 8-year recidivism estimates

- THEN…populate the *Results First* benefit-cost model to estimate **benefit-cost ratios** for programs

Step 3 {continued}:
Populate *Results First* Benefit-Cost Model

- Not all of Alaska's evidence-based programs were put in the model
  - Evidence not about recidivism
    - For example: 12-step programs >>> relapse
  - Evidence insufficient to determine a reliable recidivism reduction effect
    - Too few studies
    - Studies of substandard scientific rigor
  - No dedicated, program-specific funding
    - For example: Ignition interlock (self-pay)

- Total programs entered into the model: 19

Programs Included in Model

- ASAP: Alcohol Safety Action Program (DHSS)
- BIP: Batterer Intervention Program (DPS via CDVSA)
- EM: Electronic Monitoring (DOC)
- IOPSAT: Intensive Outpatient Substance Abuse Treatment (DOC)
  - Community-based
  - Prison-based
  - Dual diagnosis
- PACE: Probation Accountability with Certain Enforcement (DOC)
- PsychEd: Psych-Educational Substance Abuse Program (DOC)
- RSAT: Residential Substance Abuse Treatment (DOC)
- SOTX: Sex Offender Treatment (DOC)
  - Community-based outpatient
  - Prison outpatient
  - Residential (therapeutic community)
- TC: Therapeutic Courts (ACS)
  - Anchorage Municipal DUI Wellness Court
  - Felony DUI Wellness Courts
  - Hybrid DUI/Drug Wellness Courts
  - Anchorage Felony Drug Court
  - Mental Health Courts
- VGE: Vocational/Adult General Education
  - Vocational education
  - Adult general education

Benefit-Cost Ratio

- A monetary metric for assessing "return on investment"

- Consists of two elements

  - $$\frac{Benefits}{Costs} = \frac{(Avoided\ CJ\ Costs) + (Avoided\ Victimization\ Costs)}{Program\ Costs}$$

  - Note: Benefits are triggered by **recidivism reduction** achieved by each adult criminal justice program

- The ratio can be made larger by…
  - ⬆ benefits
  - ⬇ costs

Interpretation

- *How does one interpret a benefit-cost ratio?!*

- Ratio greater than 1.0
  - Benefits exceed costs
  - Example: 3.07 >>> $1 investment by state produces $3.07 of benefits
- Ratio of 1.0
  - "Break even"
  - $1 invested by state produces a return of $1 of benefits
- Ratio greater than 0.0, but less than 1.0
  - Positive return with tangible monetary benefits, but not equal to amount invested
  - Example: 0.80 >>> $1 investment by state produces $0.80 of benefits
- Ratio of 0.0
  - No return on investment
- Ratio less than 0.0
  - Negative return
  - State investment lost, plus additional costs produced
  - Example: -0.96 >>> $1 investment by state lost, and an additional $0.96 in costs incurred

Results First Model Results

BENEFIT-COST RATIOS
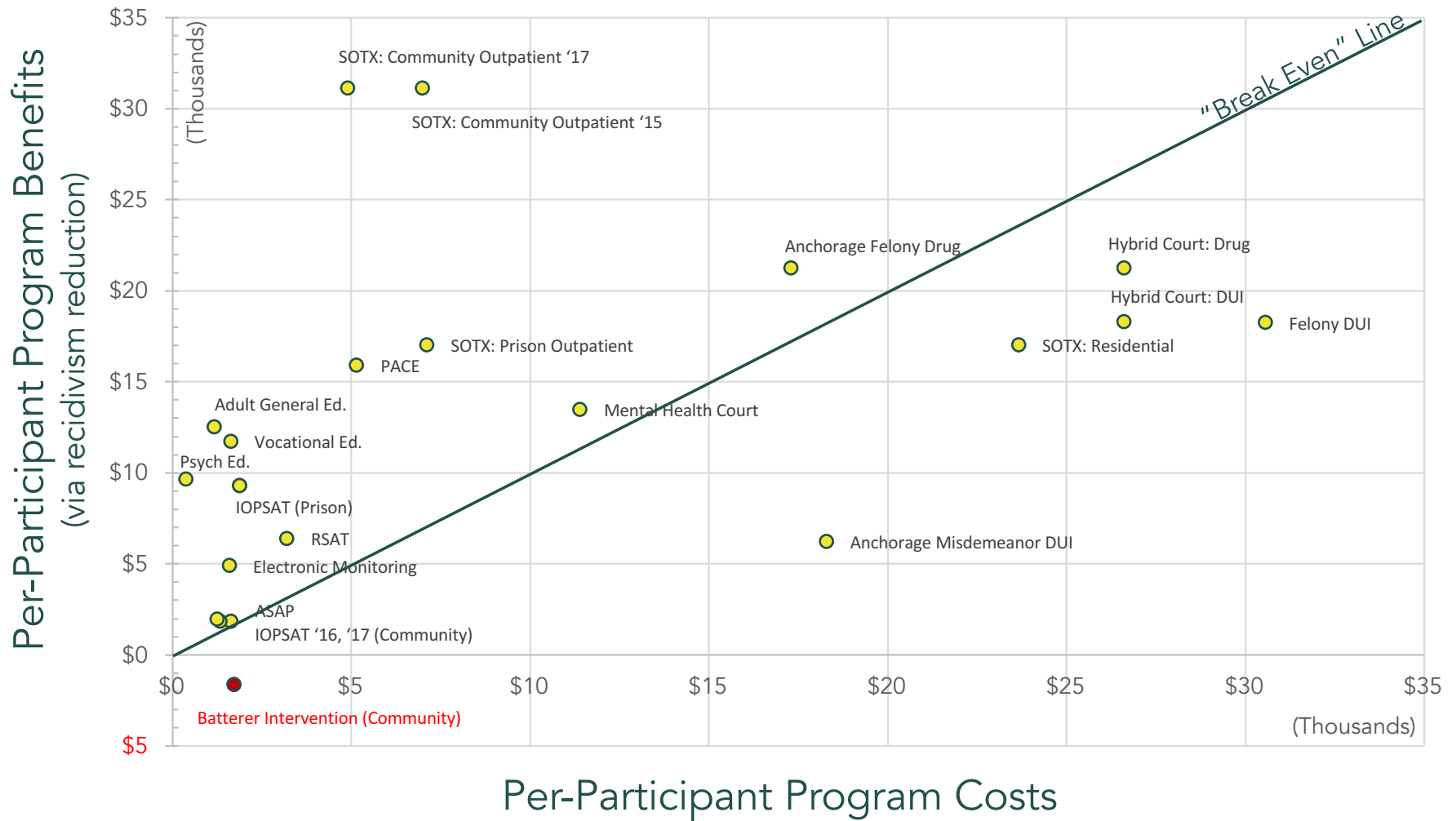# ADULT CRIMINAL JUSTICE PROGRAMS

Benefit – Cost Ratios

Adult Criminal Justice Programs

1. PsychEd ($23.80)
2. Adult General Education ($10.58)
3. Vocational Education ($7.11)
4. Sex Offender: Community Outpatient '17 ($6.33)
5. IOPSAT: Dual Diagnosis ($4.89)
6. IOPSAT: Prison ($4.87)
7. Sex Offender: Community Outpatient '15 ($4.43)
8. PACE ($3.07)
9. EM: Post Prison ($3.03)
10. Sex Offender: Prison Outpatient ($2.38)
11. RSAT ($1.97)
12. ASAP ($1.51)
13. IOPSAT: Community '17 ($1.32)
14. Anchorage Fel Drug Court ($1.22)
15. Mental Health Courts ($1.16)
16. IOPSAT: Community '16 ($1.08)
17. Hybrid Courts [as Drug] ($0.80)
18. Sex Offender: Residential ($0.72)
19. Hybrid Courts [as DUI] ($0.69)
20. Fel DUI Wellness Courts ($0.60)
21. Anchorage Misd DUI Court ($0.34)
22. BIP: Community-Based (-$0.96)
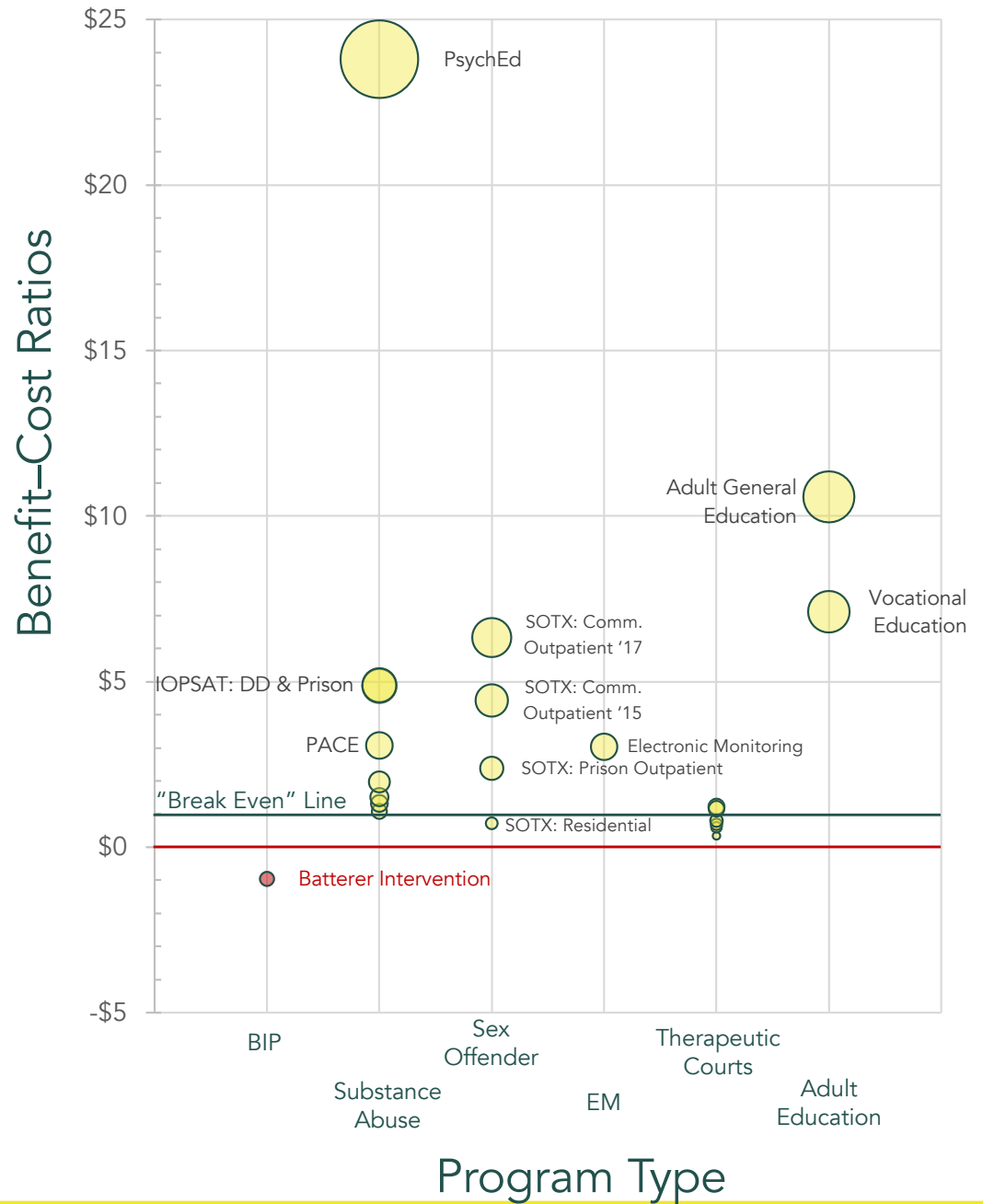
Benefits vs. Costs
(Alternate View)

Expected Recidivism Reduction

Adult Criminal Justice Programs

1(t). Sex Offender: Community Outpatient '15 (32.44%)
1(t). Sex Offender: Community Outpatient '17 (32.44%)
3(t). Anchorage Fel Drug Court (26.31%)
3(t). Hybrid Courts [as Drug] (26.31%)
5. Adult General Education (23.41%)
6. Vocational Education (21.94%)
7. PACE (21.82%)
8. Mental Health Courts (20.63%)
9. Anchorage Misd DUI Court (20.24%)
10(t). Fel DUI Wellness Courts (19.97%)
10(t). Hybrid Courts [as DUI] (19.97%)
12(t). Sex Offender: Residential (17.72%)
12(t). Sex Offender: Prison Outpatient (17.72%)
14(t). IOPSAT: Prison (17.35%)
14(t). IOPSAT: Dual Diagnosis (17.35%)
16. PsychEd (15.20%)
17. RSAT (11.91%)
18. ASAP (8.89%)
19. EM: Post Prison (3.15%)
20(t). IOPSAT: Community '16 (2.45%)
20(t). IOPSAT: Community '17 (2.45%)
22. BIP: Community-Based (-5.13%)
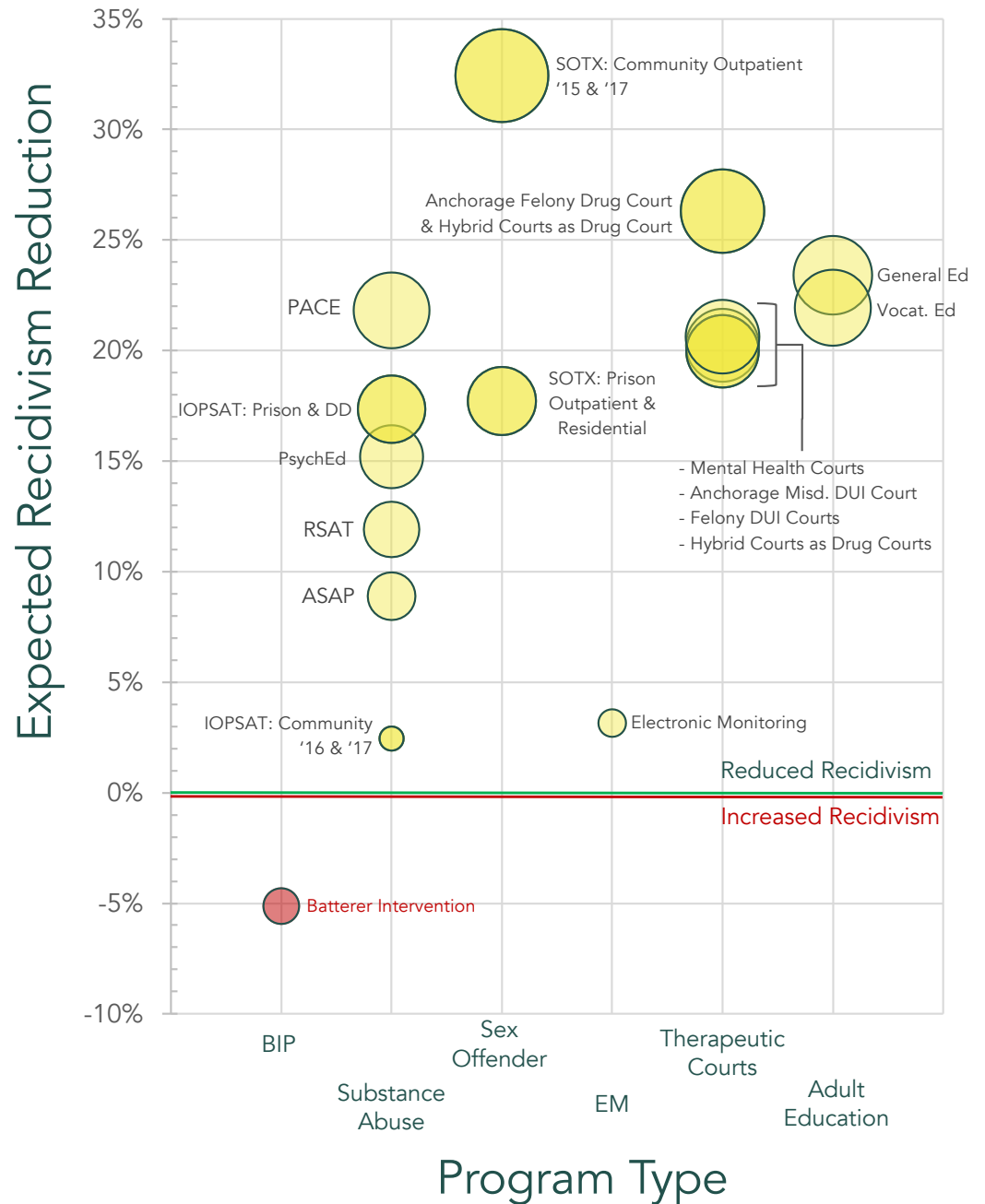
SUMMARY

"3 Things"

1. 90% of state investment in adult criminal justice directed to programs matched in evidence base

2. Of the 19 adult criminal justice programs modeled, all but one produced positive returns
   - 14 benefits exceeded costs
   - 4 positive return with tangible monetary benefits, but not equal to amount invested
   - 1 negative return

3. Benefit-cost ratios are not fixed!
   - "Return on investment" – that is, the monetary performance – of a program can change
   - Increase benefits (e.g., program elements, participants)
   - Decrease costs (e.g., capacity, contracting/procurement)

3 More For The Road…

1. Results First findings are intended to be used as a decision making TOOL, not a decision making rule

2. What are our expectations, RE: "return on investment" when it comes to the delivery of public services?

3. Model estimates could be improved
   - Program level
     - Programmatic data collection and compilation
       - Collect/compile data with research/evaluation in mind
   - Policy level
     - Establish a program (and culture) of rigorous program evaluation and assessment, and institutionalize a paradigm of continual process improvement

Contact Information

Brad A. Myrstol, Ph.D.
Phone: 907-786-1837
Email: bamyrstol@alaska.edu

Araceli Valle, Ph.D.
Phone: 907-786-4881
Email: avalle@alaska.edu