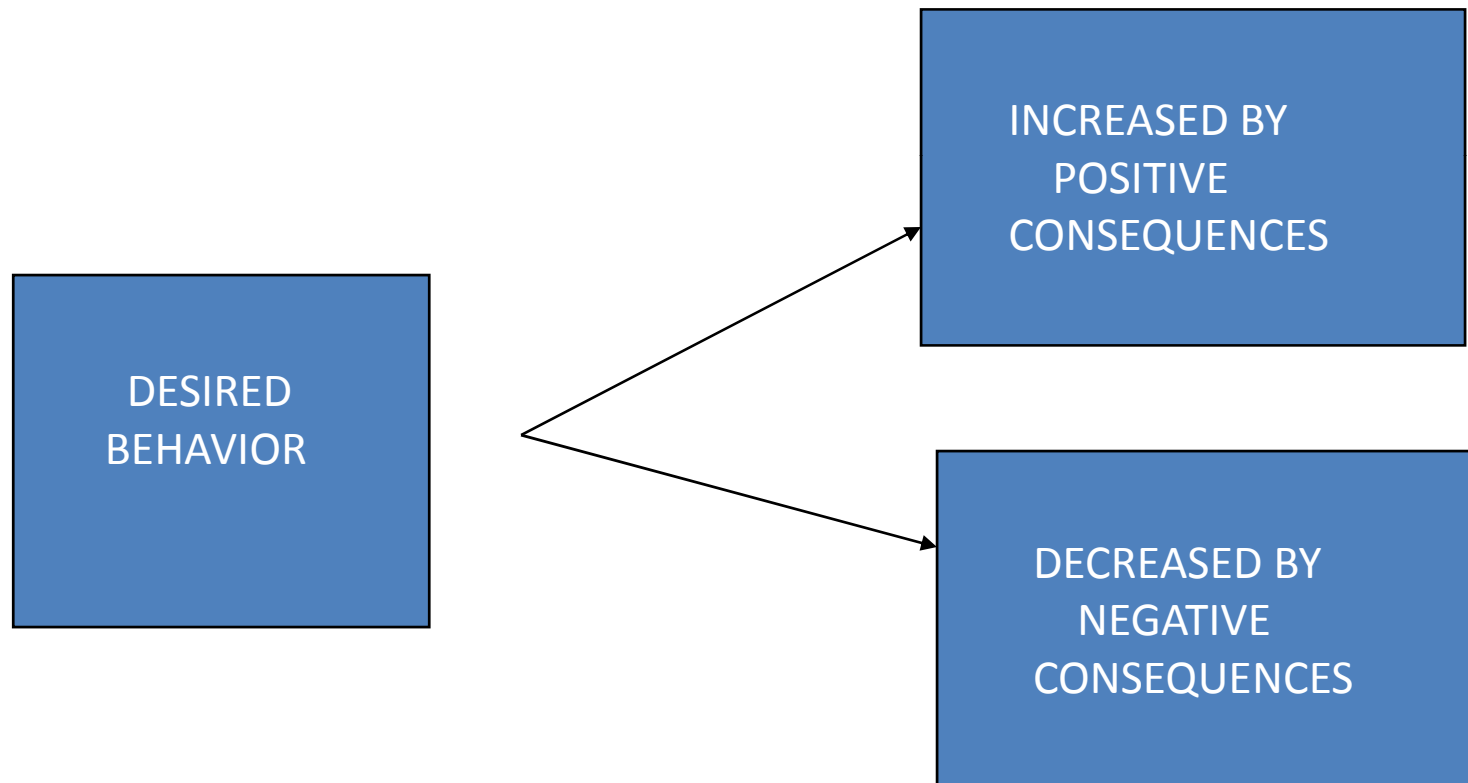


Contingency Management in Drug Courts: Research and Resources

Contingency Management in Federal
Problem Solving Courts

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PRINCIPLES OF BEHAVIOR CHANGE



Positive Reinforcement: Value Added In Criminal Justice

- Shift focus away from failure toward success
- Adds value to interaction by emphasizing
 - clear, objective expectations
 - frequent monitoring and feedback
 - appropriate consequences consistently applied
- Can improve the monitoring “atmosphere”
 - better staff morale
 - enhanced client self-efficacy

What Target Behavior(s)?

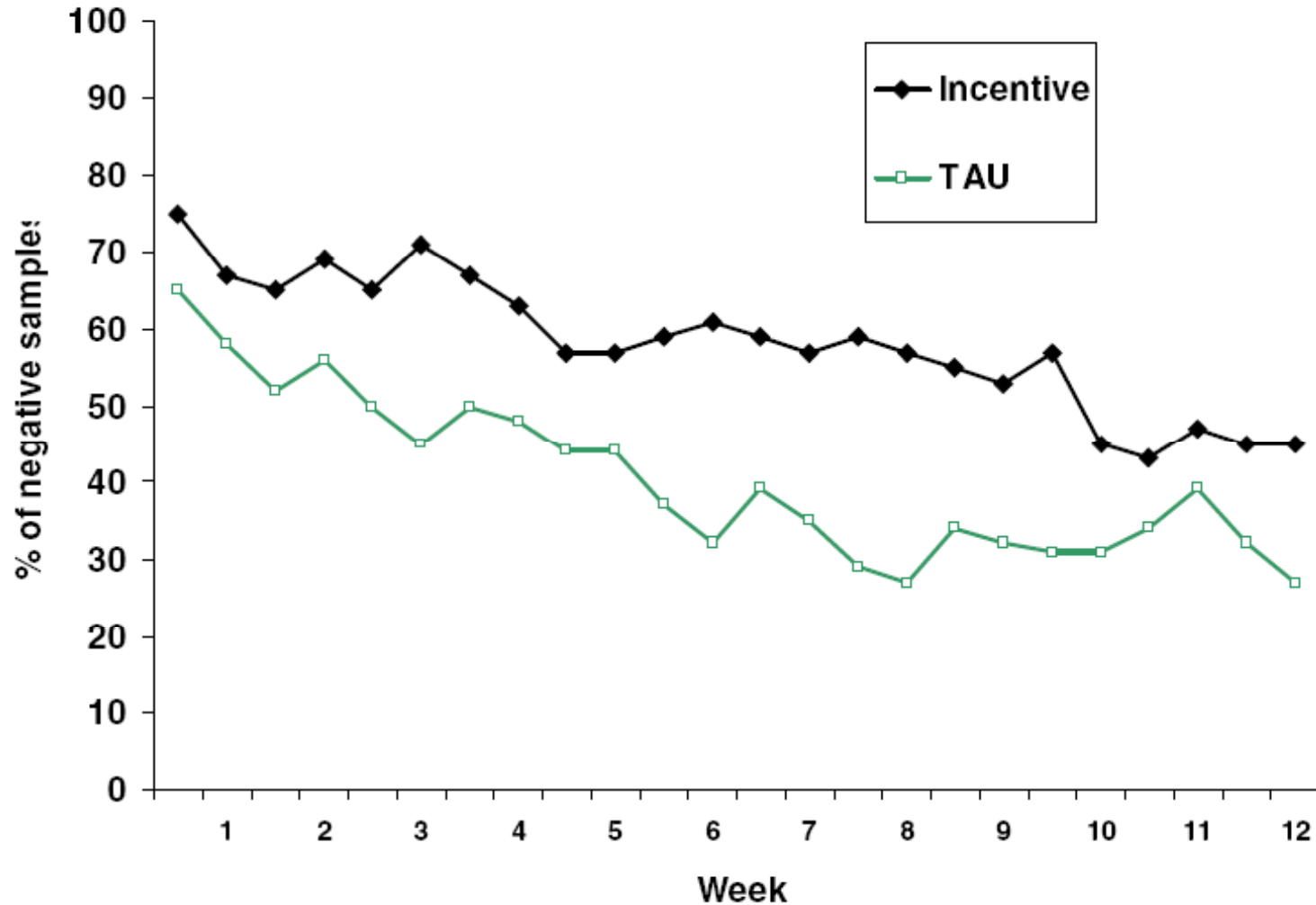
- Drug Abstinence
 - Evidence-based intervention
 - Central to success of clients
 - Feasible due to CJ support for frequent testing
- Court, PO and treatment attendance
- Other individual goals
 - GED, employment, child support, etc

Methods Used to Reinforce Sustained Behavior Change

- Voucher systems used in JSTEPS
 - award points for each positive behavior exhibited
- Escalating schedules
 - Number of points awarded increases over successive instances of good behavior
- Total amount earned
 - Highly variable across sites
 - Research suggests \$20-\$30 per week is minimum

Methamphetamine users (N = 113)

Percent Negative Samples



Is CM Feasible in a Drug or Problem Solving Court?

- Yes, but aspects of CJ culture might interfere
 - Traditional reliance on sanctions
 - Tendency to focus on multiple behaviors and reward long-term achievements rather than small steps toward a goal
 - Potential for inconsistent consequence delivery
 - Difficulty with record keeping

Would Positive CM Improve Outcomes In A Drug Court Setting?

- It depends
 - Would be competing with powerful negative sanctions in place for drug use
 - Difficult to detect improvement if clients are already doing well (ceiling effect)
- Might depend on how CM is implemented
 - Adherence to principles of delivery

Research In Drug Courts

Drug Courts Are Making A Difference

	<u>Drug Court</u>	<u>Conventional Tx</u>
Remained for \geq 30 days (%)	80	57
Completed 16-week Tx (%)	56	32
Mean weeks retained	11	8
MA-free UA's provided (%)	97	91

from: Marinelli-Casey et al., JSAT, 34, 242-48, 2008

Drug Court Outcomes Can Be Improved

- Good outcomes for those who stayed BUT
- Nearly half drop out (relapse?)
- Incentive programs could potentially improve these outcomes

Where and How Could CM Best Be Implemented?

At the drug treatment program?

In the court room?

At the probation office?



Research on Positive Incentives

- **Abstinence-contingent vouchers at the Tx program** (*Prendergast et al., 2008*)
 - No difference across groups
 - Tx completed: 60-70%;
 - negative UA's: 67-72%
- **Gift cards at status hearings (4-6 wk intervals)** (*Marlowe et al., 2008*)
 - No difference across groups
 - Graduated: 56%
 - negative UA's: 82-86%

Where to deliver CM?

- JSTEPS sites focus on probation department as nexus of incentive tracking and delivery
- This may be the best location as it is consistent with research that has failed to find effects in Tx program or at status hearings

Research on Risk Levels

- Judicial supervision frequency in a misdemeanor drug court (*Marlowe et al., 2007*)
- Bi-weekly vs as usual (4-6 weeks) status hearings
- Delivered to low vs high-risk participants
 - High risk = APD and/or prior drug treatment

Risk Level Makes a Difference

	High risk	High risk	Low risk
	As Usual Status Hearings (4-6 wks)	Bi-weekly Status Hearings	Combined Conditions
Graduated (%)	56	75	74
Drug Positive (%)	8	64	47

Suggests Targets For Intensive Monitoring and/or CM

- Population: High risk participants
- Behavior: Something that can be improved
 - Avoid ceiling effects by targeting a behavior that is not occurring at a high rate naturally

JSTEPS Principles of CM In Drug and Problem Solving Courts

- Make a clear contract with the client
- Keep a record of behavior over time
- Deliver reinforcers frequently and consistently (each time the behavior occurs)
- Use escalating schedules of reinforcement
- Integrate appropriately with sanctions

JSTEPS Goals

- Teach and support adoption of positive reinforcement in drug courts
- Examine adoption process
- Examine adherence to principles of CM and reasons for non-adherence
- Examine outcomes for CM clients