What Works for Crime Reduction: Linking Research to Policing

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Research Evidence Partnerships Manager
Knowledge, Research and Practice Unit
Setting standards of professional practice

Identifying, developing and promoting practice based on evidence

Supporting the professional development of those working in policing

Supporting police forces and other organisations to work together to protect the public and prevent crime

Identifying, developing and promoting ethics, values and standards of integrity

Outcome: The public from all communities have a high level of trust in the integrity and professionalism of the police. People working in policing have confidence that the decisions they and their colleagues make are guided by sound ethical principles.
What does it mean?

`Using the best available evidence to inform decisions about practices and policies`

**ASK**
- Reflect on practice, build hypotheses

**TEST**
- Seek to answer the question through rigorous testing (e.g. experimental trials, systematic reviews)

**LEARN**
- Learn about ‘what works?’ (or doesn’t…)

**ADAPT**
- Adapt policy/practice to reflect findings

Scientific models – POP, systems thinking, National Decision-Making Model
What does ‘good’ evidence look like?

**Statements about ‘what works’**

5 Systematic Reviews (Based on level 3-5 studies)

4 Randomised controlled trials

3 Before/after measures
   - Multiple site comparisons

2 Before/after measures
   - Two site comparisons

1 Before/after measures
   - No comparison site

**Statements about ‘what’s promising’**

4 Before/after measures
   - Multiple site comparisons

3 Before/after measures
   - Two site comparisons

2 Before/after measures
   - No comparison site

1 One-off measure
   - No comparison site

**Study designs increasingly rule out potential alternative causes**

**Study designs cannot rule out potential alternative causes**
Best available: fit method to question

What works... causal links
- systematic review
- randomised controlled trials
- quasi-experimental approaches

Why... advancing understanding
- understand a specific problem and its causes
- existing (secondary) or new data (primary)
- surveys, administrative data, observations, interviews, focus groups

How... practice-based expertise
- shared practice
- systematically distilled by police professionals into checklists, guidance, training or lessons learned

Common features – transparency, peer review
The challenge for policing...

Cochrane Collaboration
- Medicine/Healthcare
- Over 5,000 systematic reviews
- Focus on specific interventions for specific illnesses

Campbell Collaboration
- Crime and Justice area
- Only 58 systematic reviews
- Focus on broad intervention strategies (hot spots, problem solving), not specific tactics
...there are lots of things we don’t know about how to respond to and prevent particular types of crime...

...introducing the What Works Centre for Crime Reduction...
What Works Centre for Crime Reduction

Mapping and sharing what works

Embedding in crime reduction

Identify - Assure - Share - Use

[Logos of collaborating institutions]
Partnership work is critical

Surveys show officers rely on and prefer professional experience rather than research

BUT

The more they know about research the less they believe the police alone have enough information about crime and what to do about it

AND

The more they are exposed to research the more likely they are to be willing to do experiments

SO

When research is part of their professional experience - they will be much more likely to use it!

Palmer (2011) Survey of inspectors and chief inspectors in Greater Manchester Police
Lum et al (2012) Receptivity to research in Policing
College support

Building partnerships

Policing Knowledge Fund

Police Knowledge Fund

To support the development of sustainable education & research collaborations between police forces & academic institutions.

1. Build sustained capability amongst officers and staff to understand, critique and use research

2. Embed or accelerate understanding of crime and policing issues, and evidence based problem-solving approaches

3. Demonstrate innovation in building the research evidence base and applying it through knowledge exchange and translation across all levels of policing.

Successful PKF Bids 2015-16

14 bids representing 39 forces & BTP

- Memory evidence in rape & serious sexual offences
- Developing Restorative Policing
- Public Protection & Crime Prevention
- Enhancing police responses to child sexual exploitation
- Improving Investigation of Cyber enabled crime
- Policing Hate Crime
- Mental Health

Colleges of Policing:
- University of Bedfordshire
- Leeds Beckett University
- University of Sussex
- Liverpool John Moores University
- City University London
- University of York
Successful PKF Bids 2015-16

14 bids representing 39 forces & BTP

- Exeter Policing, Evidence & Research Translation Project
- Centre for Policing Research & Professional Development
- Open Source Comms, Analytics & Research Centre
- Action Learning Plus
- Promoting Tipping Points for EBP: an International Centre
- Better Policing Collaborative
- East Midlands Policing Academic Collaboration

Partners:
- University of Exeter
- The Open University
- Cardiff University
- Keele University
- University of Northampton
- University of Nottingham
College support to forces

Building partnerships

Policing Knowledge Fund

Research Fairs and Cafes

Mapping & supporting regional collaborations/networks

Research Framework and templates/protocols

National Research Programme

College support to forces

Sharing knowledge
What Works Crime Reduction Toolkit
## Crime Reduction Toolkit

### About the Crime Reduction Toolkit
- Our effect scale
- Our quality scale

### Key
- Quality of evidence
  - No information
  - Limited quality
  - Moderate quality
  - Strong quality
  - Very strong quality

### Filters
- Impact on Crime
  (select a range using the markers below)
- Search term...
  - Violent Crime
  - Property Crime
  - Offender Based
  - Victim Based
  - Location Based

### Crime Reduction Toolset

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intervention</th>
<th>Impact on crime Effect</th>
<th>How It works Mechanism</th>
<th>Where it works Moderator</th>
<th>How to do it Implementation</th>
<th>What it costs Economic cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Scared Straight” Programmes</td>
<td>XX</td>
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<td>Multisystemic Therapy</td>
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<td>Alcohol ignition interlock</td>
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<td>CCTV</td>
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<td>CPTED (Robbery)</td>
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<td>Drink driving (DWI) courts</td>
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<td>Increased police patrol</td>
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<td>Multisystemic Therapy</td>
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Neighbourhood watch

What is the focus of the intervention?
Neighbourhood watch schemes aim to reduce crime by directly involving the community in activities that promote safety or assist with the detection of crime. They actively seek the greater involvement of local people in crime prevention activities. The first schemes were seen in the US in the late 1960s and they are now very common in both the US and the UK. They are known under a variety of names including home watch, block watch and community watch (Review 1).

This narrative is primarily based on one systematic review covering 18 studies.

EFFECT
How effective is it?
Overall, the evidence suggests that neighbourhood watch can reduce crime. There are however some important considerations, such as variation in practices across schemes, and large differences between countries in terms of observed reductions.

The review estimated that overall, for every 100 crimes, an average of 26 crimes were prevented with Neighbourhood Watch (based on 18 studies). There was no evidence of a backfire effect (where crime increases) across the evaluations reviewed.

How strong is the evidence?
The review was sufficiently systematic that many forms of bias that could influence the study conclusions can be ruled out.

This evidence is taken from a systematic review covering 18 studies. The review demonstrated high quality in terms of having a transparent and well-designed search strategy, featured a valid statistical analysis and considered the validity of the way outcomes are measured and/or combined. The review did not quantify an overall effect for unanticipated outcomes such as displacement caused by the intervention and, whilst it considered publication bias, it did not consider bias introduced by coder subjectivity or statistical outliers.

MECHANISM
How does it work?
The authors note that: “It is … difficult to determine from current research how neighbourhood watch works”. However, they go on to suggest that Neighbourhood Watch might reduce crime by:

(a) Detering offenders through increasing their awareness of a great propensity of residents to look for and report suspicious activity; (b) reducing perceived opportunity via increasing signs of occupancy in vacant homes (moving bins, removing newspapers);
Why would you use the Crime Reduction Toolkit?

- Help to identify what works for frontline PCs (Response Officer)
- Inform our work with young people and help us to write funding bids (Charity Worker, Prince’s Trust)
- To save money and time (Sergeant)
- Encourages police partnership (Trading Standards Officer)
- Better accountability for decisions (Inspector)
- Helps to identify research gaps (Local Authority Researcher)
- Horizon-scanning and resource allocation (Neighbourhood Sergeant)
College support to forces

Sharing knowledge

What Works Crime Reduction Toolkit

Research Map and RCT register

Evidence Champions network

What Works Systematic Reviews

Global Policing Database

EBP master classes
College support to forces

Building capability

Randomised trials

Learning events

# Evidence Base Camp

60 delegates from across the service – 5 priority areas mapped!!!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Abstracts returned</th>
<th>Available for synthesis</th>
<th>Useful Studies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acute Mental Health Crisis</td>
<td>1,408</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barriers to career progression</td>
<td>1,205</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reducing theft from the person</td>
<td>844</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supporting mental well-being</td>
<td>1,229</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responding to prostitution</td>
<td>979</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>5,665</strong></td>
<td><strong>262</strong></td>
<td><strong>107</strong></td>
</tr>
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</table>
Evidence Base Camp

"Evidence base camp has already started to have a positive impact on how we approach problems within force - making us think about what evidence is out there before bringing in new approaches to tackling crime.

"This event has shown what can be achieved when forces work together and build on each other's work to improve the knowledge of the entire service. It is surprising how little evidence there is about what works within policing and there is now a real opportunity for all of us - officers and staff - to help build the evidence base by employing the techniques learnt at this event."
Building capability

Randomised trials

Learning events

Research Surgeries

Toolkits and ‘How to’ Guides

College Bursary Scheme

Perhaps the most exciting aspect of the College of Policing is the opportunity it creates to link research evidence directly to professional standards.
Any Questions?

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07818 414728

http://whatworks.college.police.uk/About/Pages/default.aspx