Trawling the research base for the Crime Reduction online toolkit

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Overview

- Systematically assembling the evidence base
- Where does the evidence come from?
- What do practitioners need from the evidence base?
- How fit for purpose is this evidence?
MISSION:
“to identify the best available evidence on approaches to reducing crime (and the potential savings to the police service, their crime reduction partners and the public)”

Findings from systematic review or meta-analyses

Broadly defined ‘crime prevention’

Overall aim was to search for evaluations of interventions in all relevant fields that might have a crime prevention outcome
Our systematic search flowchart

2. Number of records from database searches (15,287)
2. Known meta-review references (425)
2. Alternate databases searched elsewhere (347)
2. Additional grey literature (266)
2. UK Police Library catalogue (439)

3. Application of screening codeset (16,764)

EXCLUDED papers (15,875)
- EXCLUDED as duplicate (3,713)
- EXCLUDED on topic (5,668)
- EXCLUDED on intervention (2,273)
- EXCLUDED on outcome (2,654)
- EXCLUDED on method (5,345)
- EXCLUDED - but could be useful (193)

INCLUDE on abstract (838)

4. Enough info in abstract?

EXCLUDED papers (491)
- EXCLUDED at this stage (491)
- EXCLUDED as duplicate (3)

5. Coded on full-text (266)
5. Coded on abstract (67)

Final number of included studies = 328
The crime prevention evidence base

- Commissioned by a variety of stakeholders who frame the research question in many different ways
  - By intervention
  - By problem
  - By population
  - By context
  - By policing strategy
  - By outcome
  - By stakeholder

- Implies that all these foci are relevant to practitioner sub-groups
## Type of intervention

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intervention type</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Percentage of coded reviews citing intervention</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Correctional interventions</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sentencing and deterrence</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational interventions</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>23</td>
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<tr>
<td>Community interventions</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Policing and partnership</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>16</td>
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<tr>
<td>Developmental and social prevention</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drug treatment interventions</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>14</td>
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<tr>
<td>Situational prevention</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restorative Justice</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Publicity</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>657</td>
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</table>
Timeline of evidence syntheses publication

- Policing and partnership interventions
- All interventions

Founding of the Campbell Collaboration
What do practitioners need to know?

- Not just ‘what works’
  - How it works (mechanism)
  - Under what conditions it works (moderators)
  - How to get it to work (implementation)
  - How much it costs (economics)

- E.g. mandatory arrest of domestic violence offenders
  - Works for middle-class victims/offenders
  - Doesn’t work for economically disadvantaged victims/offenders
Street lighting example

Mechanisms linking street lighting improvements to crime reduction

- Improve street lighting
  - Night-time illumination increases
    - Offenders are seen
      - Police are called
        - More arrests
          - Night-time crime reduces
  - Area improves generally
    - Community confidence increases
      - More informal social control
        - All crime reduces
    - More people go out at night
      - More informal surveillance

Making the evidence base accessible

Crime Reduction Toolkit

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intervention</th>
<th>Impact on crime</th>
<th>How it works</th>
<th>Where it works</th>
<th>How to do it</th>
<th>What it costs</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alcohol ignition interlock</td>
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<td>Alcohol tax and price policies</td>
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<td>CCTV</td>
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<td><strong>NEW</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) for Domestic Violence</td>
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<td>Correctional boot camps</td>
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<td><strong>NEW</strong></td>
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<td>Criminal sanctions to prevent domestic violence</td>
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<td>Drink driving (DWI) courts</td>
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<td>Educational interventions to prevent relationship violence in young people</td>
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How fit for purpose is the evidence?

• Most reviews don’t consider the active ingredients for why an intervention might work

• The evidence is generally weak on effect, and often on other dimensions
  – But need to remember that reviews rely on primary study evidence

• BUT, weak evidence on effect doesn’t undermine other dimensions
  – I.e. reviews can be strong on moderators or implementation
Advancing the evidence base

• Need to encourage narrow systematic review topics
  – E.g. CBT for domestic violence offenders
  – E.g. Property marking for reducing burglary

• Data collection in primary reviews should speak to the aspects of an intervention that practitioners need to know
  – Moderator analysis is crucial in unpicking what may be effective for different sub-groups

• Commissioners of primary research need to know this!
Thank you


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