

# Rockford Focused Deterrence Initiative Research Report

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EXAMINING KEY PROGRAM PROCESSES, SERVICES PROVIDED AND OUTCOMES OF THE ROCKFORD, ILLINOIS FOCUSED DETERRENCE INITIATIVE

Research Report

Center for Criminal Justice Research, Policy, and Practice

LOYOLA UNIVERSITY CHICAGO

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# About the Report:

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**Data Sources:** This research relied on participant case file records, interviews with program participants and stakeholders, booking data from the Winnebago County Jail, video-recordings of call-ins, and surveys of officers in the Rockford Police Department and members of the Rockford Community.

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The Center promotes fair, informed, effective, and ethical criminal justice approaches through collaborative interdisciplinary research, professional development and targeted projects.

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

To address escalating street and gun-violence in Rockford, Illinois, Winnebago County's Criminal Justice Coordinating Council piloted the Focused Deterrence Intervention (FDI) between January of 2018 and November of 2019. The intervention utilized a "focused deterrence" or "pulling-levers" framework to identify and deter members of the community who are at a heightened risk of committing future acts of street and gun violence. Loyola University Chicago's Center for Criminal Justice Research, Policy and Practice collaborated with Winnebago County's Criminal Justice Coordinating Council to support the development, implementation and evaluation of the Focused Deterrence Intervention. The present report reviews FDI's pilot years, with a focus on evaluating FDI processes key to the program design.

### Key Findings Include:

- Between January of 2018 and November of 2019, 87 men and women under probation or Mandatory Supervised Release (MSR, or "parole") supervision were identified as high-risk and required to participate in a call-in meeting or were "custom" notified (i.e., met with at their home). Those chosen were largely men (98%) and black (82%), with the largest proportion on MSR (64%). Ultimately, 74 participants attended either a call-in meeting (59 individuals) or custom notification (15 individuals), and of those, 66 met with the Navigator to complete an intake.
- A key component of the Rockford Focused Deterrence Intervention was conveying the deterrent message of "swift, certain and fair" punishment to participants. Analysis of video-recordings of the call-in meetings reveal that an average of 23.5 deterrent statements were made per call-in meeting, though there was large variation between meetings. In one meeting there were 15 deterrent statements, while another meeting had 32.
- Another key component of the Rockford Focused Deterrence Intervention was the provision of services. Engagement with the Navigator, a case-manager who worked closely with participants and provided social service referrals, was high. Eighty-nine percent (66 of the 74 participants) completed an intake with the Navigator and set at least one goal.



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# INTRODUCTION

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Between January of 2018 and November of 2019, Winnebago County's Criminal Justice Coordinating Council piloted the Focused Deterrence Intervention (FDI) to address street and gun violence in Winnebago County's largest city: Rockford. Although Winnebago County has 11 cities and towns, Rockford alone accounted for 89% of the county's violent crime in 2017. The intervention sought to address Winnebago County's violent crime rate and concerns over public safety by identifying and deterring individuals who are at a heightened risk of committing future acts of street and gun violence. Loyola University Chicago's Center for Criminal Justice Research, Policy and Practice collaborated with Winnebago County's Criminal Justice Coordinating Council to support the development and implementation of the Focused Deterrence Intervention. The present report reviews the two years of FDI's pilot, with a focus on evaluating FDI processes key to the program design: (1) identifying high risk individuals for the intervention, (2) conducting call-in meetings and custom notification meetings, (3) providing program participants with services, and (4) responding to participants who violate the terms of their probation and/or parole with swift, certain and just punishment. Finally, the report provides an analysis of the outcomes of the Focused Deterrence Intervention participants, including services received by those who engaged with the Navigator and recidivism for all those who attended a call-in or custom notification meeting.

Data for this research brief include:

- Aggregated case file records kept by the FDI Navigator, a case-manager who provided social service referrals and worked closely with participants to help them set and achieve positive life goals associated with desistance from crime.
- Interviews with 19 participants in the intervention who actively engaged with the Navigator.<sup>3</sup>
- Interviews with 17 stakeholders involved in implementing the program from agencies within Winnebago County's criminal justice system, including representatives from the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council, Rockford Police Department, the 17<sup>th</sup> Judicial Circuit Court (which serves Winnebago and Boone County), the Winnebago County State's Attorney's Office, the Winnebago County Probation and Court Services Department, the Illinois Department of Corrections' parole office operating in Winnebago County, and the Navigator.
- Booking data provided by the Winnebago County Jail for all individuals who attended a call-in or custom notification meeting.



- Analysis of video-recordings of all call-in meetings.
- Survey data of Rockford citizens in 2017 (and, again, in 2019) measuring their perceptions of crime and disorder, their perceptions of the Rockford Police Department, and their perceptions of the Winnebago County court system.
- Survey data of Rockford police officers in the winter of 2018-2019 measuring their perceptions of crime and disorder, perceptions of their organization, perceptions of their role as a police officer, and perceptions of their interactions with citizens.

## ROCKFORD'S VIOLENT CRIME CONTEXT

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### In 2017, Rockford's violent crime rate outpaced other cities in Illinois

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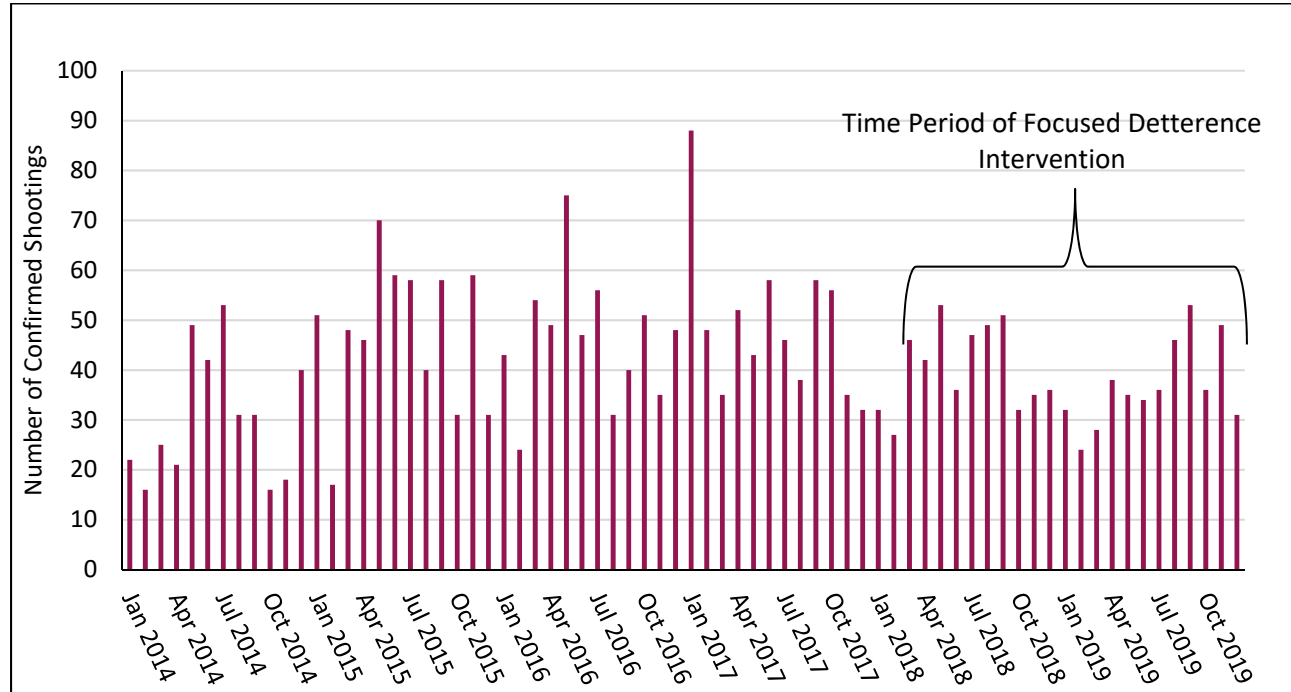
This intervention was well-timed. Located along I-90, a regional drug transportation corridor and within 100 miles of two urban crime hubs (Chicago and Milwaukee), Rockford experienced substantial increases in violent crime in the period leading up to the initiative. Between 2014 and 2017, the total number of violent offenses (including murder, aggravated criminal sexual assault, robbery and aggravated assault/battery) reported to police in Winnebago County experienced a 26% increase, mostly due to a 38% increase in reports of aggravated assault/battery. Rockford's overall violent crime rate rose 27% from 2014 (1,239.6 per 100,000 people) to 2017 (1,571.9 per 100,000 people).<sup>4</sup> As a result, Rockford's violent crime rate in 2017 was 44% higher than Chicago's violent crime rate of 1,004.7 per 100,000 people. Further, Rockford had the highest violent crime rate of Illinois cities in 2017 with at least 35,000 residents. Indeed, Rockford's violent crime rate was more than 3.4 times the average among cities of similar size nationally, placing it on several "most dangerous" cities lists.<sup>5,6</sup>

Additionally, Rockford saw a precipitous rise in violent crimes involving firearms in the years preceding the initiative. The number of confirmed shootings increased by 60% between 2014 (364 confirmed shootings) and 2017 (589 confirmed shootings, Figure 1). Aggravated battery with a firearm incidents rose 47% between 2014 (76 offenses reported) and 2017 (112 offenses reported).<sup>7</sup> Further evidence of the increase in gun violence and the response by the Rockford Police Department was the increase in the number of guns taken off the street by the police.



Between 2014 and 2017, the number of firearms recovered by the RPD increased 30%, from 186 to 242.<sup>8</sup>

**Figure 1: Confirmed Shootings in Rockford, 2014-2019**



Source: Analyses by Loyola’s Center for Criminal Justice Research, Policy & Practice of data provided by The Rockford Police Department.

During 2018 and 2019, the two years during which the Rockford Focused Deterrence Intervention was being implemented,<sup>9</sup> gun violence in Rockford has declined somewhat. Between 2017 and 2019, the number of confirmed shootings declined 25% from 589 (2017) to 442 (in 2019) and the number of aggravated battery with a firearm incidents declined by 53%. In 2019, there were 53 aggravated battery with a firearm incidents. During this time period, the number of firearms recovered by the RPD remained stable, decreasing by less than 1%.



## FOCUSED DETERRENCE APPROACH

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Focused deterrence is an evidenced-based approach to policing that provides high-risk individuals with social services alongside “certain, swift, and fair” punishment

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The “focused deterrence” framework is a recent innovation in policing that has shown promising evidence of effectiveness in reducing crime. The strategy, which was pioneered in Boston and known as Operation Ceasefire, began as a problem-oriented policing program to stop gang violence during the 1990s. Focused deterrence is an interagency approach, and it targets specific individuals or groups in an effort to reduce and prevent violent crime (Kennedy, 1997). It is often described as a “blended strategy” that utilizes the resources of law enforcement, the community, and social services (e.g., Braga, Weisburd, & Turchan, 2018) to address individual-and-community-level factors that facilitate crime. Sometimes referred to as “pulling-levers policing” (e.g., Kennedy 1997, 2008), this strategy emphasizes using all available sources of leverage against known offenders, combining both formal and informal sanctions to deter high-risk individuals from engaging in criminal behavior. Since Operation Ceasefire was implemented in Boston, focused deterrence strategies have been applied in many cities throughout the United States and evaluations of focused deterrence programs have consistently shown decreases in crime. This includes decreases in youth homicide (Braga et al., 2001; Corsaro & McGarrell, 2010; Kennedy, 1997), gun homicide (Corsaro & McGarrell, 2010; Kennedy, 1997; McGarrell, Chermak, Wilson, & Corsaro, 2006; Papachristos, Meares, & Fagan, 2007), and violent crime (Corsaro, Hunt, Hipple, & McGarrell, 2012; Papachristos et al., 2007).

Focused deterrence frameworks reflect an effort to find new and creative ways of implementing traditional (and nontraditional) law enforcement tools to reduce crime, such as directly communicating incentives and disincentives to targeted individuals (e.g., Kennedy 1997, 2008). In doing so, focused deterrence strategies reflect the core principles of deterrence theory. Deterrence theory suggests that crime can be prevented when its costs are perceived by the offender to outweigh the benefits (Gibbs 1975; Zimring & Hawkins 1973). Within the theory, discussions often distinguish between “general” and “specific” deterrence. General deterrence refers to the notion that the general population is dissuaded from committing crime when it sees punishment following the commission of a crime. Conversely, specific deterrence refers to the punishment administered to a specific person with the intent of discouraging that



person from committing crime in the future. Deterrence theory suggests that the likelihood an individual commits a crime will be reduced if they perceive that the punishment for committing that crime will be “certain, swift and severe.” It’s important to note “severe” in deterrence theory does not refer to excessive punishment, but rather to punishment that is proportionate to the offense, or a “fair” punishment. However, consistent with the focused deterrence framework, the high-risk individuals who are targeted for the program are given a message that subsequent involvement in crime will be met with more severe consequences (yet, still fair) than they faced in earlier cases. For example, if an individual received probation the first time around, a second conviction would lead to incarceration. Or, if an individual was prosecuted in state court the first time around, a second prosecution would be handled in federal court if applicable.

Critical to focused deterrence approaches is the direct (and repeated) communication of a deterrence-based messaging to high-risk individuals by law enforcement and community officials in the form of a “call-in” meeting (e.g., Crandall & Wong, 2012; McDevitt et al., 2006). When referring to violence, the term “high risk” applies to individuals who are at high risk for both further criminalization and victimization. Indeed, because street violence is often fueled by retaliatory gang activity, individuals who are at a heightened risk of committing street violence are often at a heightened risk of being the victim of street violence themselves (Jennings et al., 2012). Thus, a key element of the strategy is the delivery of a direct and explicit message to a relatively small target audience regarding 1) what kind of behavior will provoke a specific response, and 2) what that response will be. The message is intended to deter future violent behavior by altering high-risk individuals’ perceptions of the costs and benefits associated with violent offending. In particular, the deterrence-based message is specifically constructed to enhance their perception of the certainty, swiftness, and severity of sanctions.

Having government actors engage in procedural justice is important within a focused deterrence approach and communicating the fairness of sanctions is no easy task. Those who are targeted for this messaging are known to be at high-risk for committing violent street crime *because they have been sanctioned for this behavior in the past*. Sanctions for potential future offenses would necessarily escalate in severity (harshness) because the Illinois penal code takes a more punitive stance against repeat offenders. Thus, the call-in must simultaneously inform high-risk individuals of the escalated consequences of future offenses while also persuading them that those consequences are fair.

A specific goal of focused deterrence is to maintain a sense of procedural justice among offenders. Thibaut and Walker (1975) posited that people care as much about methods underlying decision-making as they do about the actual decision being rendered. This underscores the notion that fairness is a fundamental part of society and that fairness is



associated with more than just outcomes. Procedural justice is commonly identified by four pillars: 1) fairness in the process, 2) transparency in actions, 3) opportunities for voice, and 4) impartiality in decision-making (Kunard & Moe, 2015). Ultimately, when citizens assess the fairness of a police-citizen interaction, their perceptions are influenced by a combination of the outcome as well as the process, and, often, the outcome of an interaction is less important than the interaction itself.

Procedural justice in focused deterrence programs is achieved by being transparent— notifying offenders that law enforcement is closely monitoring them, are aware of their illegal activities, and that continued violence will result in aggressive enforcement and the “pulling” of all available “levers” to hold them accountable (e.g., Kennedy, 1997). Importantly, the manner and context in which the message is delivered couples the focus on deterrence with efforts to enhance offenders’ perceptions of procedural justice and police legitimacy (e.g., Braga et al., 2018). This is accomplished through an emphasis on respectful delivery of the message and the notion that the message is fair in the sense of providing clear notice of what will occur if violence continues. Moreover, an important part of the message—an offer of community support and social services (e.g., employment assistance, housing, substance abuse treatment)—often accompanies this message and is intended as a disincentive to criminal behavior. Lastly, communicating the message to the target audience typically includes a community voice describing the impact of serious gun-related violence on individuals, families, and the community.

### **Assessing Community and Police Perceptions of Violent Crime and Safety**

One of the key elements of any violence reduction strategy is the support, cooperation and involvement of the community, and this is an important component of the focused deterrence intervention in Rockford. Indeed, part of the planning process involved gauging citizens’ perceptions of crime and disorder in Rockford, and what they see as appropriate responses to violent crime and those who commit violent crime. An internet-based survey was administered to Rockford residents between September 25, 2017 and November 30, 2017. To recruit potential respondents, Rockford citizens were notified of the survey via various social media websites (e.g., Facebook) and websites of various Rockford and Winnebago County agencies, organizations, and elected officials (e.g., city webpage). More than 1,300 people participated in the survey, although the number of responses to each individual question varied slightly due to some questions not being answered by all respondents.<sup>10</sup>

The survey indicated that the community is largely supportive of an approach that includes both accountability (punishment) and rehabilitation (services and treatment) to reduce violence. The majority of survey respondents agreed people who commit violent crime should





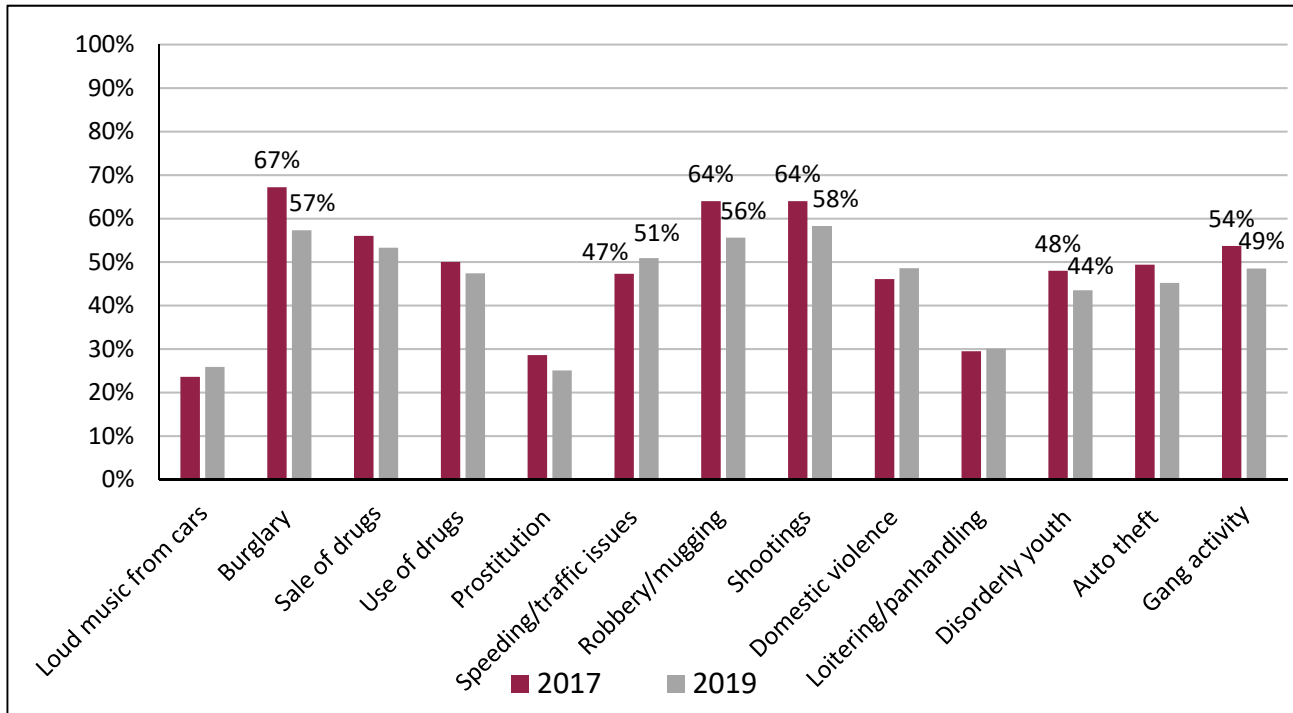
be punished severely, and the majority of respondents also agreed that those who commit violent crime need to be provided with services and treatment to change their behavior. The respondent characteristic that had the strongest influence on their views regarding punishment and treatment was perception of Rockford's safety. Respondents who felt that Rockford had become a less safe place to live in the past year were much more likely to support punishment and less likely to support services and treatment.

The crime issues that respondents were the most concerned about included shootings, robbery, gang activity, and burglary. Forty percent or more of respondents to the survey indicated they were "very concerned" about these problems in their neighborhood. These specific crime issues were also the areas where respondents were most likely to indicate the police should give the "most attention." Just over one-half (56%) of respondents felt as though crime in general had increased in their neighborhood over the past year, while less than one-half (44%) felt as though violent crime had increased in their neighborhood. There were no statistical differences in the perception of crime increasing in the respondents' neighborhood across different racial groups, however, men were more likely than women to perceive that crime increased in their neighborhoods.

Following a full year of the focused deterrence intervention being implemented, a second round of the community survey was administered between June 6, 2019 and June 25, 2019. Again, an electronic survey was administered, and the same recruiting procedures were implemented. More than 1,200 people participated in the second survey, although the number of responses to each individual question varied slightly due to some questions not being answered by all respondents.<sup>11</sup> As in 2017, the community members surveyed in 2019 were most concerned about violent crimes and largely supportive of an approach that includes both accountability (punishment) and rehabilitation (services and treatment) to reduce violence. Comparing the 2019 survey respondent levels of concern for specific crime problems in their neighborhoods to those in 2017 revealed statistically significant improvements across a number of crime concerns, including burglary, drug sales, robbery/mugging, shootings, disorderly youth, and gang activity (Figure 2).



**Figure 2: Comparing Reported Concern\* in Neighborhood Crime for 2017 and 2019 Survey Respondents, by Type of Crime**



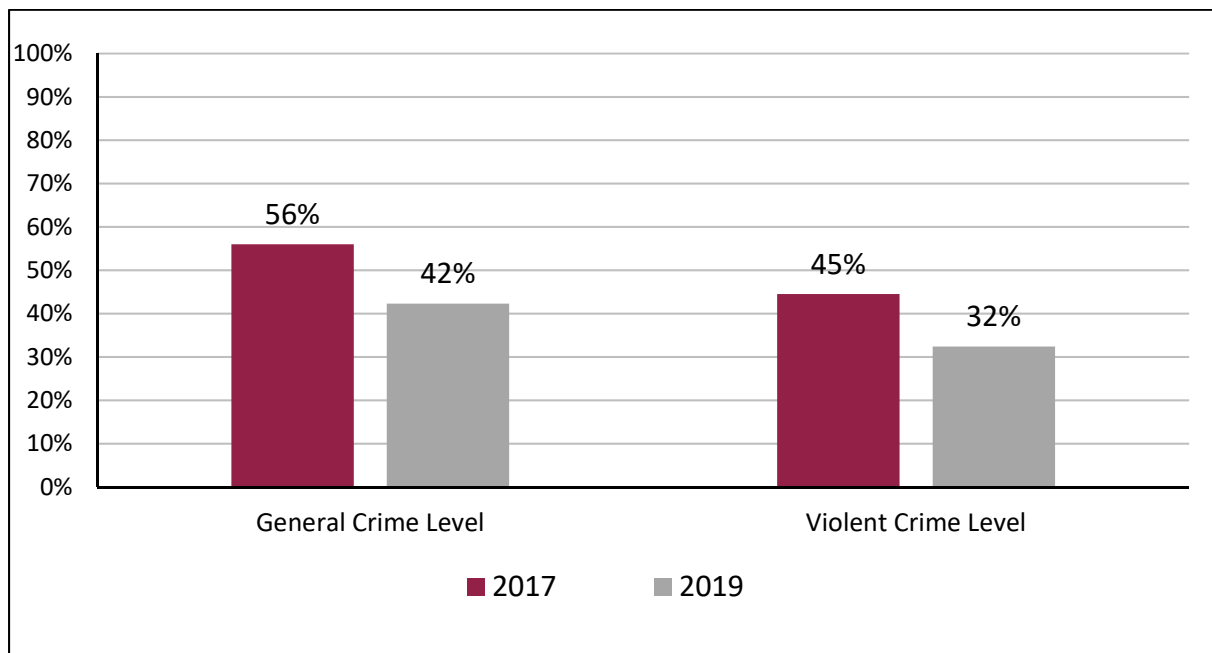
Source: Analyses of 2017 and 2019 Rockford Community Resident Survey Data collected by Loyola’s Center for Criminal Justice Research, Policy & Practice.

\*Percentage included survey respondents who reported they were “concerned” or “very concerned.” Those categories with percentages included in the figure were statistically significant after controlling for differences in the survey sample that would impact perception of crime such as race and age.

Comparatively fewer respondents surveyed in 2019 indicated they were impacted “a lot” by crime (13.4%) as compared to those surveyed in 2017 (15.8%). Compared to those surveyed in 2017, a smaller percentage of the 2019 respondents felt that crime in general, and violent crime in particular, had increased in their neighborhood over the course of the previous year (Figure 3). In 2017, 56% of survey respondents indicated that crime in general had either “increased some” or “increased a lot” in the previous twelve months, compared to 45% of survey respondents in 2019. Similarly, a greater percentage of 2017 respondents reported that violent neighborhood crime had increased in the previous year (45%) compared to 2019 respondents (32%). Finally, a *smaller percentage* of the 2019 respondents indicated that Rockford had had become a less safe place (combined responses to “less safe” and “much less safe”) to live/work in the past year (50.5%) as compared to those surveyed in 2017 (72.4%).



**Figure 3: Comparing Perception of an Increase\* in Neighborhood Crime in the Previous Year for 2017 and 2019 Survey Respondents**



Source: Analyses of 2017 and 2019 Rockford Community Resident Survey Data collected by Loyola’s Center for Criminal Justice Research, Policy & Practice.

\*Percentage includes survey respondents who reported that crime had “increased some” or “increased a lot” in the previous year.” Reported differences in percentages were statistically significant after controlling for differences in the survey sample that would impact perception of crime such as race and age.

As a follow-up to the community surveys, the research team also conducted a survey of Rockford police officers to better understand their perceptions of crime as well. The electronic survey was sent to 249 non-supervisory officers during the winter of 2018-19, and 113 officers completed the survey.<sup>12</sup> Overall, officers expressed more concern for violent crime than they did for property, drug, and nuisance crimes. For example, 70% and 83% of officers were “very concerned” about robberies and shootings, respectively. Additionally, 63% of officers were “very concerned” about gang activity. Almost all officers expressed punitive attitudes towards violent offenders, but many also saw the need for rehabilitation for these offenders. For example, 97% of officers agreed that violent criminals should be punished severely, and slightly more than one-half of officers (53%) agreed that violent criminals need to be provided with services/treatment.



Additionally, officers had mixed feelings towards citizens. Almost all (91%) of the officers agreed that most citizens have good intentions. However, 70% of officers agreed that they have reason to be distrustful of citizens, and only 54% agreed that citizens mostly could be trusted to do the right thing. Burnout and job frustration were a concern for many officers. For example, more than one-quarter of officers (27%) indicated that they feel burned out from their work at least once per week. On a positive note, almost half of officers (48%) feel like they make a difference through their work at least once per week; although, another 23% indicated they only have that feeling a few times per year.

## IMPLEMENTING THE INTERVENTION

### Choosing Participants

Between January of 2018 and November of 2019, 87 men and women on probation and/or mandatory supervised release (i.e., MSR or “parole” from Illinois prisons) were identified as high-risk and “called in” to the Rockford Focused Deterrence Intervention. The intervention’s target population was individuals who were at a high-risk of committing an act of gun-related violence or being the victim of a future act of gun-related violence. Current intelligence revealed those committing crime in Rockford are mobile and much of the gun-related violence is retaliatory in nature, committed primarily by small, disorganized gangs of prolific, chronic violent offenders. As such, the target population for this project was from across all three Rockford Police Districts as the target population was those committing chronic crime rather than geographic hot spots of crime. To increase the likelihood of call-in meeting and custom notification attendance, only individuals on probation and MSR were eligible for inclusion in the intervention. Participants were identified for inclusion via a two-step process. First, the Winnebago County Probation and Court Services Department and the IDOC Parole Office in Winnebago County each identified a list of individuals currently on supervision who they identified as high-risk of committing an act of gun violence or violence in general. Probationers were determined to be at high-risk of committing a future act of violence based on their score on either the LSI-R or the Illinois Adult Risk Assessment (IARA),<sup>13</sup> any recent violent or gun-related charges and the professional judgement of the probation officer overseeing their case. Identifying the high-risk parolees was more difficult due to the lack of a risk assessment being done on those released from prison during the period when the Rockford Focused Deterrence initiative was being implemented. Because of this lack of an objective risk assessment instrument for this group of the target population, parole officers tried to identify those with characteristics that placed them at increased risk of gun violence, including being relatively



young and in prison for a gun or violence-related offense. Additionally, the parole officer overseeing their case considered the number and nature of any prison disciplinary actions as an indication of potential risk. Individuals who had mental health needs that would interfere with their ability to take part in the intervention and/or could not be addressed by the Navigator's services (ex: Schizophrenia) were dropped from consideration by both agencies. Further, younger individuals (under 30), were prioritized over older individuals as the likelihood of committing a violent offense declines with age.

Once the two agencies (probation and parole) identified potential participants, they then submitted these lists for consideration and discussion at a monthly Focused Deterrence initiative operations meeting attended by representatives from the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council, Rockford Police Department, the Winnebago County State's Attorney's Office, the Winnebago County Adult Probation Department, the IDOC Parole Office in Winnebago County, the Navigator, the Program Manager, and members of the research team. During these meetings, the representatives discussed each individual on the list, screening out those who had any pending charges, active warrants or whom the police were currently building a case against. Further, these conversations gave the Navigator the opportunity to screen out any individuals who, based on local knowledge of ongoing rivalries between social factions within the community, were a potential threat to Navigator safety.

The stakeholders interviewed largely expressed confidence that the inclusion criteria and processes were identifying the men and women on probation and parole caseloads at the highest risk of committing additional violent offenses. They pointed first to a process of choosing participants that was based both on their professional acumen (probation and parole) and evidence-based risk assessment tools (probation only). Stakeholders also pointed to the recidivism rate amongst intervention participants as evidence that the program was, indeed, targeting those likely to reoffend.

Most of the intervention participants that were interviewed for this study viewed themselves as a "good fit" for the program based on their history of gun-related charges, although most tended to view themselves as already at low-risk for future offending at the time of the call-in or notification meeting. Indeed, all saw themselves as a good fit for the intervention because they *viewed themselves as being ready for change and felt they had been targeted for the program, in part, because parole or probation saw this readiness as well.*<sup>14</sup> While this view did not reflect the actual criteria for inclusion into the program, it may have been beneficial for these participants to believe that they had been identified as ready for change and particularly worthy of services.



However, when asked whether the program was “targeting those most at risk for committing violence in Winnebago County,” many participants and stakeholders noted that the majority of street violence in Rockford is committed by juveniles, who, by virtue of their age and legal status, were excluded from adult probation or parole and the intervention. Further, concern regarding the inclusion of juveniles on supervision was raised due to the need to ensure the confidentiality of juvenile justice records versus the nature of the call-in meetings, which involved community members. Intervention participants interviewed, in particular, expressed a desire to see the program expand to accept younger men caught up in street violence, but noted that it would be difficult to engage a group who was likely “not ready yet” for change. While the operations group discussed expanding to include juveniles, the legal issues around confidentiality (i.e., call-in meetings attended by community members) and the operational difference in the juvenile court, juvenile probation and juvenile parole, resulted in that avenue not being pursued as part of this pilot initiative.

### ***Demographics of Individuals Chosen for the Intervention***

In all, 87 individuals were identified for participation in the Rockford Focused Deterrence Intervention. Fifty-six of those chosen were on MSR only (65%) and 28 were on probation (32%, Figure 4). An additional three individuals were on both MSR and probation (3%). Although gender and race were not selection criteria for the program, most individuals identified for the program were Black men. Nearly all (85 individuals) were men, and 82% (71 of the 87) of the chosen participants were Black, followed by white (9%, 8) and Hispanic/Latino participants (7%, 6). The average age of participants at the time they were inducted into the program was just under 28 years old (27.75), with just over half of the participants (44, 51%) being 25-44 years old. An additional 40% of the participants (35) were 18-24 years old and 6% (5) were 45 years and over. In all, the largest proportion of participants (approximately 43%) were black men between the ages of 25 and 44. All participants lived in Rockford with nearly half (47%) of the participants living in the 61102, 61103 and 61104 zip codes.



**Figure 4: Individuals Chosen for Focused Deterrence Intervention by Demographic Characteristics**

	Number of Individuals Chosen	Percent of Total
<b>Sex</b>		
Men	85	98%
Women	2	2%
<b>Race</b>		
Black	71	82%
White	8	9%
Hispanic/Latino	6	7%
Unknown*	2	2%
<b>Supervision Status</b>		
MSR	56	64%
Probation	28	32%
Both	3	3%
<b>Age</b>		
18-24	35	40%
25-44	44	51%
45 and over	5	6%
Unknown*	3	2%

Analyses by Loyola’s Center for Criminal Justice Research, Policy & Practice of Navigator Case Records and publicly available circuit court records.

*\*Some demographic characteristics were unknown because the participant never completed an intake with the Navigator and the research teams was unable to identify them via publicly available circuit court records.*



## ***Choosing Participants: Lessons Learned and Opportunities for Improvement***

**Develop Agency-Specific Protocols for Sharing Information:** The current screening process that takes place during operations meetings relies on the representatives from each individual agency to volunteer information about the prospective participants' previous arrests, risk level based on assessment (if available), any open charges and likelihood of being arrested in the time period between the operations meeting and the call-in. Each agency has limitations in what information can and should be shared. For example, early operations meetings included representatives (Judges) from the 17<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court. It was quickly determined that the presence of the judiciary during discussions about current and potential participants was inappropriate as it exposed them to details about the prospective participant's lives and behavior that could compromise their ability to provide fair and impartial judgments in future court proceedings. Because representatives experience some turnover, the research team suggests that the stakeholders develop agency-specific protocols for the type of information they can and should provide to determine eligibility and the extent to which an individual would represent a risk to the Navigator's safety.

**Evidence-based Risk and Needs Assessment for MSR:** While the Winnebago County Probation and Court Services Department was able to rely on an evidence-based, risk/needs assessment tool to evaluate the risk level of potential participants, the IDOC Parole Office was not. Although IDOC has sought to implement an evidence-based risk/needs assessment to guide parole practice for more than a decade, at the time of the pilot implementation it had not yet been put into place. The research team suggest that future versions of the intervention *require* that parolees complete a risk and needs assessment to determine eligibility and appropriateness for the program, which is designed for high risk individuals.

**Develop a Plan for Repeat Participants:** As the intervention entered the second year of implementation, one challenge to identifying participants was that some of the names submitted for consideration were individuals who had previously been unsuccessfully discharged from the intervention because they were incarcerated in jail or prison for violating the terms of their probation and/or parole and were now *reentering* the community again. While some stakeholders felt that these former participants were an ill-fit for the program because they had effectively squandered their chance at receiving the services of the Navigator, others argued that their recidivism indicated that they were, indeed, the most likely to commit additional crimes and in need of those services. The research team recommend that the stakeholders develop a policy for these potential participants. Including these individuals for a second call-in, increased surveillance, and access to services would be consistent with the principles of focused deterrence in that the participants would still be considered at high-risk of committing additional crimes. Arguably,





they may be better primed for participation, having directly experienced the “swift, certain and just” punishment that the approach argue deters criminal behavior. Finally, these individuals would likely benefit from services and may be more receptive a second time around.

### **The Call-in**

Call-ins are a key component of a focused deterrence approach. In the context of reducing *gun violence*, the purpose of a “call-in” meeting is to convey to the participants three key messages that they are expected to take in and share with their peers. The first message—the main message—is that gun violence will no longer be tolerated. The second message is that there will be swift, certain, and fair consequences for continued involvement in gun violence. The third message is that there will be a person (i.e. Navigator) who will work one-on-one with participants to help them obtain social services and other resources to “stay alive and thrive.”

Over the course of two years, seven (7) quarterly call-in meetings were held. The dates of the meetings were: March 21, 2018; June 13, 2018; September 12, 2018; November 28, 2018; March 20, 2019; June 19, 2019; and September 18, 2019.<sup>15</sup> Participants were notified of the mandate to attend the call-in meeting via a letter, coupled with either an “in-person” or “over the phone” reminder by their probation or parole officer. In addition, the Navigator typically contacted those mandated to attend the call-in prior to the call-in to introduce herself and prepare them for the aspects of the call-in that previous attendees identified as off-putting and fear-inducing, including the presence of the police, the pat-down process and the confiscation of cell-phones for the duration of the meeting.

Historically, call-ins have been located in a neutral community location, and they have been moderated by someone who is seen as emblematic of the partnership between the community and law enforcement. Call-ins for the Rockford Focused Deterrence Intervention were held at the Rockford Rescue Mission, a well-known and centrally located community center that provides shelter, necessities, food and counselling to homeless populations in Rockford. With one exception,<sup>16</sup> the call-ins were moderated by Reverend Copeland, a well-respected bridge between both the criminal justice system and the local black community. Reverend Copland was also instrumental in the implementation of the RAVEN (Rockford Area Violence Elimination Network) program, an earlier attempt at implementing a focused deterrence-type program in Rockford that targeted only those released from prison.

To encourage a sense of community inclusion, the Call-In speakers and the participants were seated in chairs forming a circle, with the call-in speakers all seated together in a half circle and facing the participants. Consistent with focused deterrence principles, which highlight the importance of community voice, selected participants were encouraged by the Navigator and



their probation or parole officer to bring along supportive family members to observe the call-in. Additionally, stakeholders within the criminal justice and social service community who were interested in the proceedings, but who were not directly speaking in the call-in, were among the observers. No observers were included in the circle, but rather, sat in rows of chairs behind the participants.

Within the focused deterrence framework, the following groups are customary speakers during the call-in: (1) law enforcement personnel, (2) social service providers, and (3) community members. Additionally, it is also customary for the community members to represent diverse backgrounds, such as someone with lived experience of being on probation or parole, the family member of a victim of gun violence, and a leader from the faith community. The call-in meeting can be a powerful and transformative experience in which program participants, community members, and law enforcement see each other in new ways. This process has the ability to build new relationships and recognize common ground. At their core, call-ins are a communication tool, a way to speak to group members and deliver critical information. Figure 5 provides information about the specific agencies and representatives who spoke during the call-ins for the Rockford Focused Deterrence Intervention. It is important to note that due to scheduling conflicts, not all of these speakers were able to attend every meeting. If possible, a designee was sent in their place.

**Figure 5: Call-in Speakers**

Elected Government Leaders	Criminal Justice Representatives	Community Member	Navigator	Moderators
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mayor of Rockford</li> <li>• Winnebago County Board Chair</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Police Chief</li> <li>• Sheriff</li> <li>• State’s Attorney for Winnebago County</li> <li>• U.S. Attorney Rockford Branch Chief</li> <li>• Adult Probation Supervisory Agent or Probation Agent</li> <li>• Parole Supervisory Agent or Parole Agent</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Formerly incarcerated residents</li> <li>• Victim Parent</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Navigator</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pastor</li> <li>• Retired Rockford Police Lieutenant</li> </ul>

Of the three individuals who represented the elected leaders of Rockford and Winnebago County across the call-in meetings (the Mayor, the City Administrator, the Mayor’s Office on Domestic Violence and Human Trafficking Prevention, and the County Board Chair), all but one were white men (Figure 6). For criminal justice agency representatives and community members, there was variation in race across the meetings and representatives. Among the criminal justice agency representatives, roughly two-thirds were white and about one-third were black. For the community member speakers, fewer than 15% were white, almost three-quarters were black, and about 15% were Hispanic. Almost all of the government representatives across the six meetings were men. For criminal justice representatives and community members, there was greater variation in the sex of the speakers across the meetings. Among criminal justice representatives, fewer than one-half (approximately 40%) of the speakers were men and most (roughly 60%) were women. Among the community member speakers, most (roughly 85%) were men and only about 15% were women. The Navigator, a black woman, was present at all of the meetings. For all of the meetings except one, the moderator was a black man; for the final meeting (9/19/19), the moderator was a white man.

**Figure 6: Demographic Characteristics of Call-In Speakers**

Date	Government Reps.			Criminal Justice Reps.			Community Members		
	White	Black	Hispanic	White	Black	Hispanic	White	Black	Hispanic
03/21/18	2	0	0	4	1	0	1	2	1
06/13/18	2	0	0	3	2	0	0	4	0
09/12/18	2	0	0	5	1	0	0	3	1
03/20/19	2	0	0	2	3	0	0	2	1
06/19/19	1	0	0	5	1	0	1	3	0
09/18/19	1	0	0	3	2	0	1	4	1

Call-in meetings began with a message of welcome and a prayer from the Reverend Copeland, followed by short speeches from the government representatives, justice agency representatives, the community members, and, finally, the Navigator. Consistent with the principals of focused deterrence, government officials who attended the call-in were encouraged to speak about 1) the harm that violence inflicts on the community; 2) the resources the government is directing to the focused deterrence initiative; 3) the variety of service resources being afforded to the participants; and 4) the hope that the participant will become productive members of society. Law enforcement officials were encouraged to speak



about 1) the purpose of the call-in; 2) the strength of the partnership between police and prosecution; 3) the fact that new enforcement rules are in place to ensure certain, swift, and fair prosecution/sanctions for continued criminality; 4) the fact that law enforcement has partnered with social service providers to assist those who want to change; and 5) that the new enforcement rules apply to the call-in participants *and* their associates. Community members were encouraged to express the moral voice of the community. Family members of gun violence victims were encouraged to talk about 1) the impact of gun violence on their lives; and 2) how this fate could occur for the participants and their families. Formerly incarcerated community members, some of whom had been involved as participants in previous call-ins, were encouraged to 1) denounce the street code of violent retaliation; and 2) help participants see that there are other options available and that change is possible. Finally, the community faith leader was asked to talk about 1) the impact of violence on communities; and 2) encourage participants to see how their behavior affects others in the community. Because the Rockford Focused Deterrence Interventions were recorded, the research team was able to analyze the extent to which speakers transmitted these messages. A detailed analysis of the messages and their reception is provided below in the section titled *Content Analyses of the Call-In Meetings*.

Following the speakers, the participants in the call-in were invited to join Reverend Copeland and the Navigator for a meal (typically pizza or sandwiches), and to learn more about local social services and job programs in an adjoining room staffed by representatives from various social services providers in the community.

### ***Call-in Attendance***

Of the 87 individuals identified for inclusion into the Rockford Focused Deterrence Intervention, 72 were mandated to attend one of the seven quarterly call-in meetings at the Rockford Rescue Mission between January of 2018 and November of 2019. Of the 72 individuals mandated to attend a call-in meeting, 59 individuals ultimately attended. Of the 13 individuals who were mandated to attend a call-in meeting but did not, three were judged to have missed the meeting for legitimate reasons<sup>17</sup> and were successfully custom notified (more information on custom notifications below). An additional nine participants (all of whom were on probation) were deemed non-compliant to the supervision conditions by their probation officer, resulting in the State's Attorney's Office filing a petition to vacate (i.e., revoke) their probation. Eight were ultimately served with petitions to vacate probation and unsuccessfully discharged from the program. It should be noted that most (6) of those who were deemed non-compliant for failing to attend their mandated call-in meeting were also charged with new criminal offenses. In two instances, the failure to attend the call-in meeting was the sole reason that probation was revoked, and the individual was ordered to serve the prison or jail term associated with



their original sentence. Finally, one participant was mandated to attend a call-in and was subsequently arrested at the call-in because a warrant was issued for new charges between his selection into the program and the date of the call-in meeting.

**Content Analyses of the Call-In Meetings**

As noted earlier, the call-in meeting and the communication of deterrence-based messaging is a crucial component of the focused deterrence approach. To analyze the extent to which these messages were conveyed to participants, the research team conducted a systematic and thorough coding of video-recordings of the call-in meetings provided by the Rockford Police Department. Unfortunately, technological difficulties precluded the watching/analyzing of one meeting video (November 28, 2018); thus, the results herein reflect analyses for six of the seven meetings.<sup>18</sup>

The average length of time for the call-in meetings was just over 49 minutes, with the longest meeting lasting just under on hour at 55:29 (3/21/18) and the shortest meet lasting approximately 40 minutes (6/19/19, Figure 7). On average, the community members spoke for the longest amount of time at 15 minutes and 34 seconds per meeting. This was followed by criminal justice representatives (an average of 14 minutes), the moderator (an average of 7 minutes and 32 seconds), the navigator (an average of 5 minutes and 31 seconds), and government representatives (an average of just under 4 minutes, 3:46).

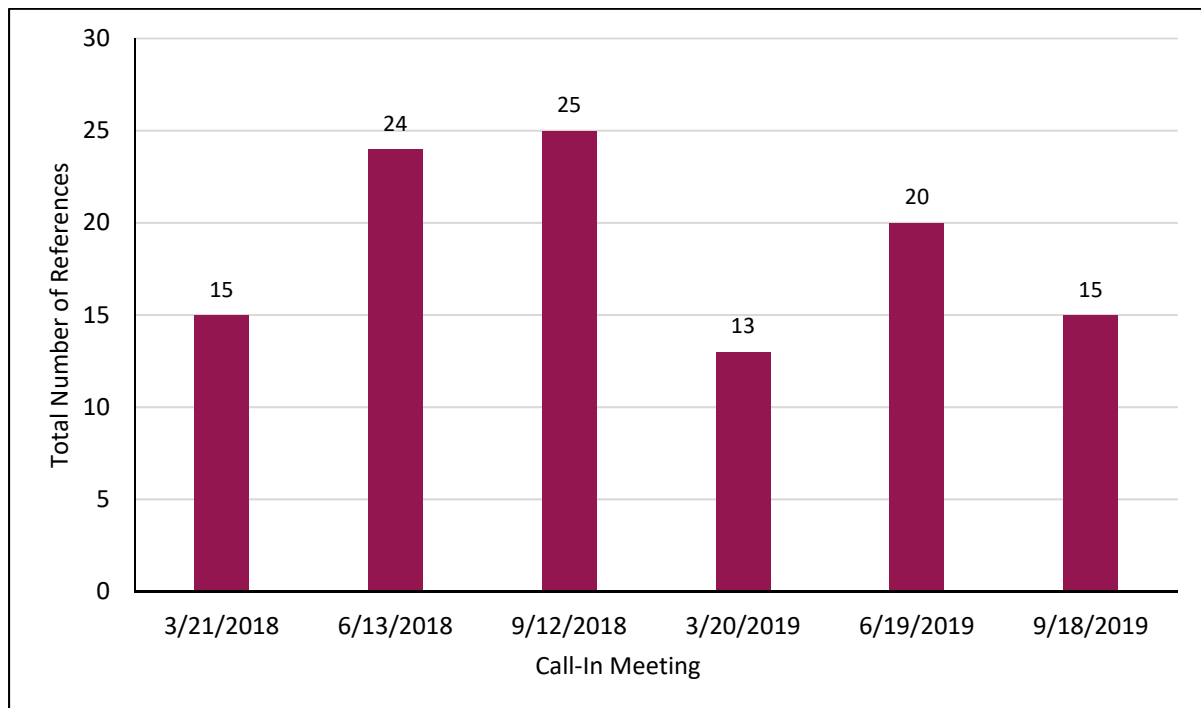
**Figure 7: Length of Meetings and Group Speaking Time**

Date	Meeting Length	Government Reps.	Criminal Justice Reps.	Community Members	Navigator	Moderator
03/21/18	55:29	03:51	14:52	23:07	05:17	07:29
06/13/18	49:39	04:19	16:00	15:39	04:37	08:12
09/12/18	51:48	04:52	10:40	10:24	04:27	09:36
03/20/19	42:50	03:48	13:14	14:03	03:46	07:28
06/19/19	40:41	02:19	17:14	07:01	05:17	07:19
09/18/19	55:15	03:28	12:01	23:09	09:40	05:07
<b>AVERAGE</b>	<b>49:17</b>	<b>03:46</b>	<b>14:00</b>	<b>15:34</b>	<b>5:31</b>	<b>07:32</b>



As is a common theme of many prior focused deterrence initiatives, the main message directed at the program participants was that the violence in Rockford must stop. To analyze the communication of the main message from the speakers to the participants, the research team counted the number of times the main message was conveyed (Figure 8). This includes references to the following phrases: “the violence must stop,” “the violence needs to end,” “the violence will stop,” and “the violence must end.” Across the six meetings, the main message was communicated a total of 112 times—an average of 18.67 references per meeting.

**Figure 8: References to “Ending the Violence” by Call-In Meeting**



Trends varied in the use of “Ending the Violence” messaging by individual speakers<sup>19</sup> (Figure 9). The moderator of the meetings, by far, referenced the message the most (24 total references; an average of 4.00 per meeting). The community members—combined—were close behind (a total of 20 references; or an average of 3.33 per meeting). This was followed by the Winnebago County State’s Attorney (11 references; an average of 1.83 per meeting), the parole agent (10 references; an average of 1.67 per meeting), and the mayor and police chief (each with 9 references or an average of 1.50 per meeting).

**Figure 9: References to “Ending the Violence” by Speaker**

Speaker	Call-In Meeting Date						TOTAL	AVERAGE
	3/21/18	6/13/18	9/12/18	3/20/19	6/19/19	9/18/19		
Mayor	1	1	2	1	1	3	9	1.50
County Board	0	0	1	2	0	0	3	0.50
Police Chief	2	2	3	0	1	1	9	1.50
Sheriff	0	0	5	0	1	0	6	0.75
State Attorney	1	5	1	1	3	0	11	1.83
U.S. Attorney	0	1	1	2	2	1	7	1.17
Probation†	1	0	1	2	2	0	6	0.75
Parole‡	1	2	2	1	1	3	10	1.67
Community Member**	4	5	2	1	4	4	20	3.33
Navigator	1	3	1	0	1	1	7	1.17
Moderator	4	5	6	3	4	2	24	4.00

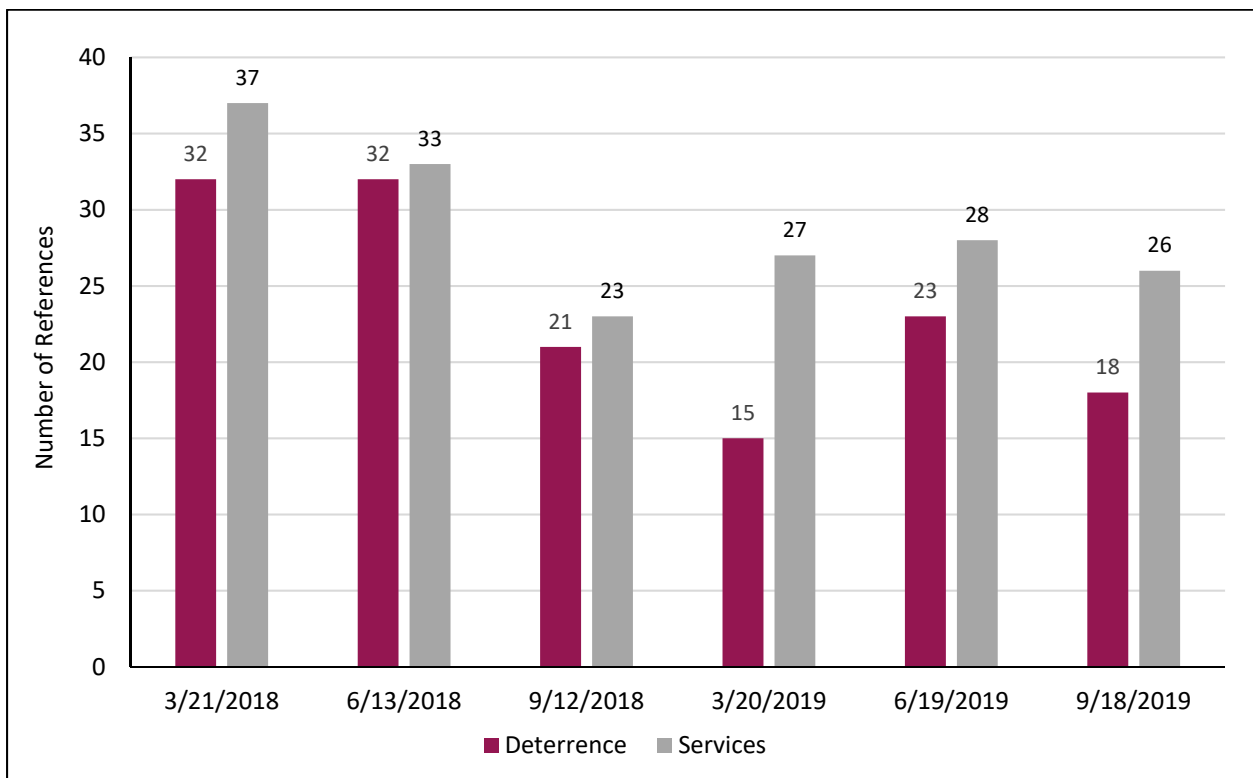
Recall that the focused deterrence message was applied to a relatively small audience (individuals at high risk in Rockford) rather than a general audience (all individuals in Rockford), and it operated by making explicit cause-and-effect connections between the behavior of the target population and the behavior of the authorities. For example, in the first call-in meeting, one of the justice agency representatives emphasized this mentality by saying “I believe in second chances but not third chances.” The intended message was that if the participants continued to engage in violent/gun crime, the criminal justice system would deal with their subsequent crimes more swiftly and severely.

At the same time, the participants were also informed that they would be offered rehabilitative services to help them refrain from continued violent offending. This is a hallmark of the focused deterrence framework’s “stick and carrot” approach. For example, in the first call-in meeting,



the probation officer highlighted that the navigator was there to help the participants succeed and mentioned several rehabilitative services, such as employment services, housing services, drug/mental health counseling, and cognitive-behavioral therapy. Across the six meetings, the *service* message was conveyed slightly more often than the *deterrence* message. There was a total of 174 references to services (number of mentions of services and number of mentions of utilizing those services) and there was a total of 141 references to deterrence-related concepts (i.e., mentions of ideas related to certain, swift, and fair sanctions) (Figure 10). This translates to an average of 29 service references per meeting and 23.5 deterrence references per meeting.

**Figure 10: Number of Deterrence- and Services-Oriented Messages by Call-In Meeting**



There was variation in the use of deterrence and rehabilitative services messaging among the speakers (Figure 11). As a group, the community members (combined), provided the greatest number of references to deterrence across the six recorded call-ins (47 references; the mean was 7.83). As an individual speaker, the Assistant U.S. Attorney (who was present at all six call-ins) referenced deterrence the most (21 total references; the mean was 3.50); the Assistant U.S. attorney also had the largest imbalance in terms of referencing deterrence and services across the call-ins (21 references to deterrence compared to 12 references to services). The



Winnebago County State’s Attorney gave 18 references (the mean was 3.00) to the deterrent message but also gave several more service references for a much more balanced presentation (18 to 17). In terms of the service messaging, the community members—combined—yielded the greatest number of references (39 references; the mean was 6.50). As far as individual speakers, though, the probation officer (23 total references; the mean was 3.83), the police chief (18 references; the mean was 3.00), and the mayor and state attorney (17 references each; the mean was 2.83) gave the most references to rehabilitative services. The largest imbalance of references—towards services—was offered by the probation officer (23 references to services compared to 6 references to deterrence).

**Figure 11: Total References to Deterrence and Services by Individual Speakers**

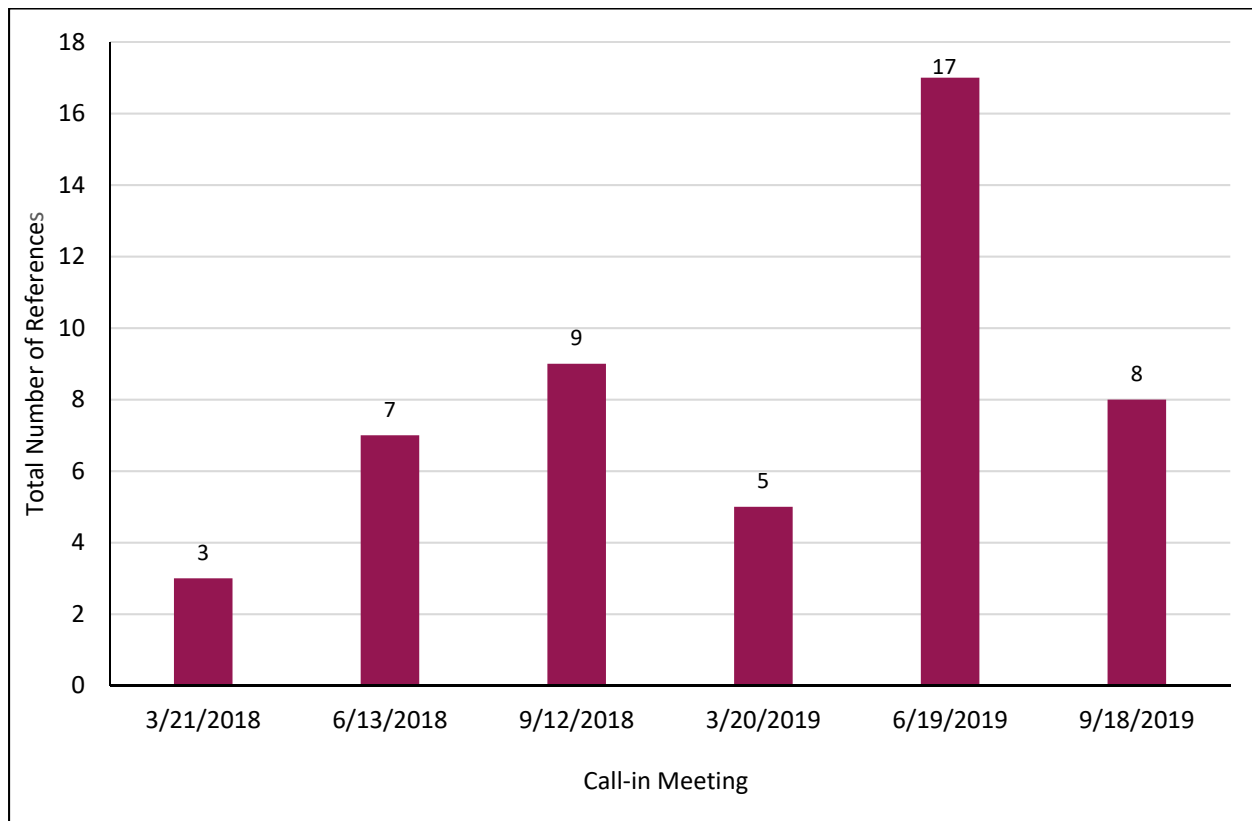
Speaker	Call-In Meeting Date														AVERAGE	
	3/21/18		6/13/18		9/12/18		3/20/19		6/19/19		9/18/19		TOTAL		Deterrence	Services
	D	S	D	S	D	S	D	S	D	S	D	S	D	S		
Mayor	1	4	0	4	0	2	1	2	0	1	1	4	3	17	0.50	2.83
County Chair	1	1	0	3	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	5	0.33	0.83
Police Chief	4	3	2	3	3	2	3	2	1	4	1	4	14	18	2.33	3.00
Sheriff	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	2	1	4	2	0.75	0.33
State Attorney	3	2	4	4	2	5	4	3	3	1	2	2	18	17	3.00	2.83
U.S. Attorney	1	0	7	3	3	1	1	2	7	3	2	3	21	12	3.50	2.00
Probation	1	6	1	2	2	3	1	3	1	9	0	0	6	23	1.00	3.83
Parole	2	2	3	3	1	2	0	3	3	4	2	1	11	15	1.83	2.50
Comm. Member*	14	10	12	7	6	8	2	7	4	1	7	6	47	39	7.83	6.50
Navigator	3	3	0	2	0	2	0	2	3	3	1	2	7	14	1.17	2.33
Moderator	2	5	3	2	3	3	2	2	0	1	0	3	10	16	1.67	2.67

\* All community member speakers combined; (D) = Deterrence; (S) = Rehabilitative Services



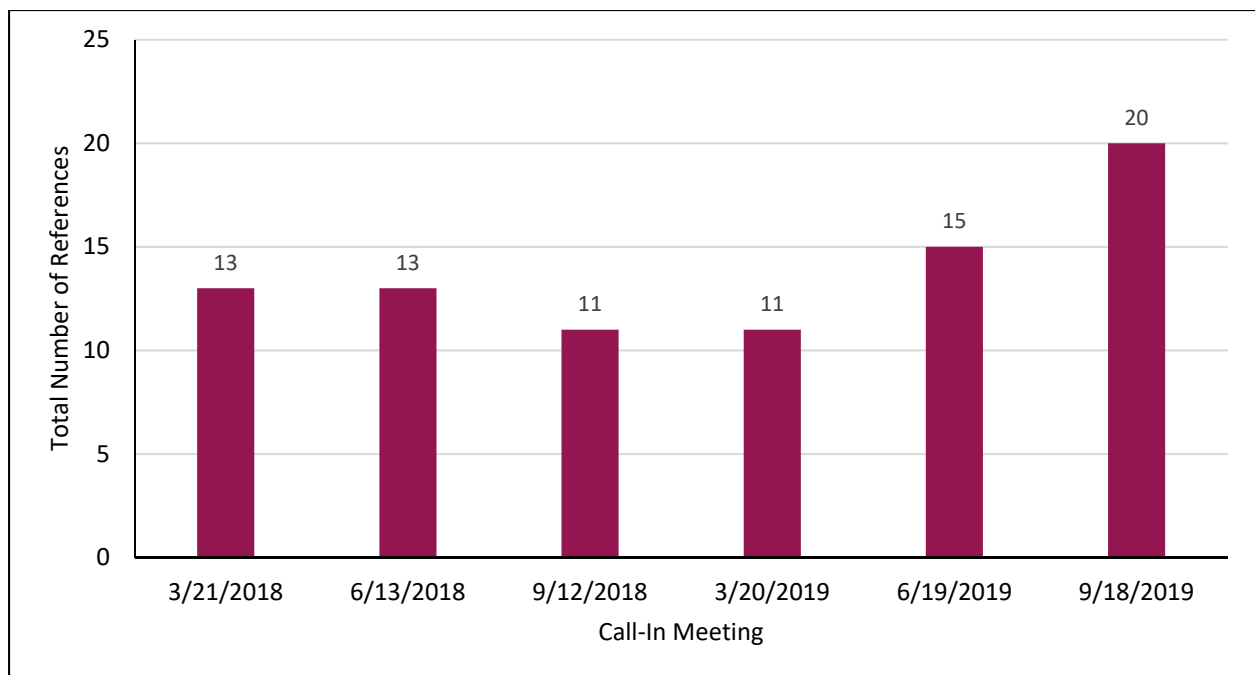
Additionally, the research team counted the number of references the speakers (any speaker *except* the navigator) made to utilize the expertise/services of the navigator to help the participants navigate the variety of rehabilitative services being offered (Figure 12). Overall, there were a total of 49 references to utilizing the expertise of the navigator, and there were approximately eight references per meeting (the mean was 8.17). The most mentions occurred at the 6/19/19 meeting (17), and the fewest mentions occurred at the 3/21/18 meeting (3). Part of the reason for the increased frequency during the implementation period in the mentions of how the navigator could help was due to all of those involved having seen firsthand the types of support and assistance the Navigator had provided. During the first call-in, most of the government, criminal justice agency, and community member participants did not know, nor had ever met the Navigator. However, during the course of program implementation, they had direct contact with the Navigator as that person worked with participants and heard of concrete examples of how Navigator services had helped participants. Thus, as the program was implemented, all of the stakeholders saw the benefit of Navigator assistance and support to the participants, and increasingly mentioned that during the call-in meetings.

**Figure 12: Total References to Utilizing Expertise and Services of the Navigator**



Finally, speakers often referenced a desire for the participants to become successful and productive members of society. This was conveyed several times by several different speakers. For example, in the first call-in meeting, the moderator emphasized the notion that he (and the entire group of speakers) hopes that the participants “not only stay alive, but also thrive.” Overall, there were a total of 83 references (the mean was 8.17, Figure 13). The most mentions occurred at the 9/18/19 meeting (20), and the fewest mentions occurred at the 9/12/18 and 3/20/19 meetings (11).

**Figure 13: Total References to Encouraging Participant to be a Productive Member of the Community**



***Participant and Stakeholders Response to Call-In Meetings***

Most (12) of the 15 call-in participants interviewed described their call-in experiences in overall positive terms. Although all reported experiencing anxiety at the beginning of the call-in, describing themselves as being “on guard,” “uneasy,” “worried,” or “nervous” during the initial pat-down and in the presence of so many police officers and representatives of the criminal justice system, they were ultimately won over by the presence of both government and high-ranking criminal justice officials in Rockford, and the offer of what they deemed to be sincere and legitimate offers of aid:



**Mike:**<sup>20</sup> The people that was there, I didn't expect these people to be there. I'm thinking that they're busy, you feel me? It was good to see that they care, they took time out of their day to come out, to show they face and show that they serious about the program and they really want to help us. That was good.

**Pen:** [lets out a deep breath] At first, I didn't know what to expect. There was State Attorneys, there was all type of people there, city officials, convicts, all type of people were there. I didn't know what to expect and I went in there on guard. But, soon enough the people are legit...Not only did they talk about helping people, they *actually* are helping people. They are *actually* listening.... With most, ah political affiliates or city officials I ain't ever had any type of positive communication with them. You know, they usually look at a person who made mistakes and wound up inside the penal system as somebody else. It's just a job to them so or something else or they see you as, as something less or [inaudible] or something like that.

The remaining three call-in participants interviewed, described the call-in solely in negative terms. Their description of the call-in focused primarily on what they perceived as hostile, one-sided and redundant messages about the possible repercussions of future criminal activity. As one participant put it:

**Steve:** I get there and I'm thinking, 'okay they're gonna talk to us about, you know, crime prevention, and how not to be, you know, a violent offender or stuff like that and we're not gonna hold what you did against you because we want you to be rehabilitated from it and you know we can let bygones be bygones and we move away from it.' It wasn't that. It was more like a 'heads up, if you do this and do that or if you step outside boundaries, we got new technologies that'll do that' [smacks hand on table] and I was like, what? And I said, 'I'm here for you to tell me *this*?' It was a threatening moment to me, and I didn't take it well, excuse me, it was, it was insulting, rather... I felt like I was being violated...So I didn't even take it serious.

When asked to reflect on the messages of deterrence and punishment, five of the participants who described the experience in overall positive terms, also identified the style and substance of the messages of deterrence and punishment that were conveyed in the first half of the call-in as unnecessary, patronizing and a potential barrier to participant engagement. Noting that none of the threats were "new news" to him, Henry explained:



Really, it goes in one ear and out the other. It's just another person that's above us, that didn't live or come from the life that we've experienced, telling us 'you need to do this, you need to do that.'...It's hard to listening to people like that say something good but that they will catch you if they can. And that kind of sets back from what they were saying before, about how they want to help us. Because they are so quick to throw out what they will do if we mess up.

Participants like Henry who found the call-in beneficial, despite feeling alienated by the messages of the first half of the program noted that the testimony of current participants who were doing well in the program and the warmth and sincerity of the Navigator's welcome ultimately won them over. The remaining seven participants interviewed did not report any issue with the deterrence and punishment messages or the ways in which they were delivered, although most noted it was nothing they hadn't heard before.

### *Call-in Lessons Learned and Opportunities for Improvement*

**Balance Security Needs with Community Inclusion:** Participants and stakeholder attendees of the first call-in noted that the presence of several police officers outfitted in police uniforms and tactical gear and the practice of said officers publicly patting down the participants prior to the call-in was potentially off-putting to participants and countered the message of community inclusion that is central to the Focused Deterrence Intervention. Further, there was concern that participants would interpret these practices as overly aggressive, decreasing the likelihood that they would be receptive to either the message of the call-in or further engagement with the Navigator. Changes were implemented to balance the need for security during the call-in and provide participants with a more welcoming introduction to the program. Police presence was limited to the 2-3 officers needed, and pat downs were subsequently conducted in a private room.

**Reconsider the Degree to which the Deterrent Messaging is Emphasized:** Nonetheless, more than half of the (8) participants who attended call-ins and participated in a research interview identified the style and substance of the deterrence and punishment messaging as a potential barrier to participant engagement with the Navigator. Given that these interviews were conducted entirely with individuals who had a high level of engagement with the Navigator, it is possible that there were some individuals who did not engage with the Navigator because of their response to the first half of the call-in. While the message of deterrence and punishment is a part of the Focused Deterrence initiative, those interviewed made it clear that they already knew about the consequences of their behavior. Indeed, most were returning from prison and all had been sentenced and were on community supervision. If future iterations of the intervention want to increase the likelihood that an



individual follows up with the Navigator, stakeholders should consider abbreviating the deterrence and punishment portions of the call-in, since it is already known by the participants, so that a larger portion of the messaging is on what was perceived by the interviewees “new” and “encouraging” (e.g., that officials care, that there is support and services). Although there needs to be a balance between deterrence and services in the *operation* of the program, perhaps during the call-in more of an emphasis of services and community would increase motivation among participants.

**Continued Involvement of Key Officials:** Multiple call-in participants who were interviewed noted that the presence of the city officials, particularly the Mayor, at the call-ins validated the “welcoming” message of the call-in and the legitimacy of the proffered aid. The research team suggests that future iterations of the intervention maintain this practice.

**Increase Messages to Spread the Word to the Community:** A key component of the focused deterrence approach is the messages conveyed in the call-in meeting spread to others in the community who are also at risk of committing acts of violence. However, when asked if they had discussed the call-in with anyone in the community who was caught up in street violence, participants in the call-in reported that they no longer had contact with those individuals. It’s possible that these responses are a product of a sample bias (all participants doing well) or the participants desire to avoid the appearance of maintaining a criminal social network. Nonetheless, many participants and stakeholders also noted that people within their communities or on their caseloads did not know what the intervention was or what it was for. The research team suggests that future interventions make a greater effort to publicize the focused deterrence intervention, while at the same time respecting the privacy of the individual participants.

**Increase Community Attendance:** Participants were encouraged to bring supportive family to the call-in, yet few did so. As a result, the audience of the call-in was comprised almost entirely of interested criminal justice practitioners, social service providers, and the research team. Efforts were made to invite previous call-in participants who were doing well in the intervention, and some of them did attend and speak at subsequent call-ins. However, many of those invited did not attend, often because of conflicts with their schedules or difficulty getting transportation. Addressing these barriers to attendance would increase the number of people from the local community in the audience, reinforce the messaging of the call-in with current participants and potentially lead to the development of a supportive community amongst participants.



## Custom Notifications

Sixteen individuals<sup>21</sup> were mandated to attend a custom notification meeting, rather than a call-in meeting. Custom notification meetings were designed to echo the messages of the call-in meeting but took place in a private location (typically the participant's home, their parole or probation officer's office or a private room within the Rockford Rescue Mission) and with the Navigator, a member Rockford Police Department's Intelligence Division, and their probation or parole officer when they were available.<sup>22</sup> Custom notification meetings were deemed appropriate for individuals whom the program operations group determined would benefit more from an individual approach or, most commonly, whom the operations group determined to be in urgent need of intervention prior to the next scheduled call-in date. Individuals were notified of the mandate to attend the call-in meeting or custom notification meeting via letter and in person or over the phone by their probation or parole officer. Of those 16 individuals mandated to attend a custom notification meeting, 12 were successfully custom notified. The remaining four were ultimately unsuccessfully discharged from the program due to being in violation of their community supervision for being AWOL (1) or because they were charged with new crimes (3). An additional three participants were custom notified after they missed their call-in, for a total of 15 participants who were custom notified.

During these meetings they were informed that they had been identified as high-risk, were under increased surveillance, and would be held accountable for any future violence to the fullest extent possible. Participants were also introduced to the Navigator, who informed participants that she was available to work closely with them to help them set and achieve positive life goals associated with desistance from crime.

Two of the participants interviewed were custom notified. Both spoke in positive terms about the meeting, noting in particular the warm welcome and promise of legitimate aid they felt they received from the Navigator, as well as the sense that they had been singled out for individualized help. Like many of those who attended call-ins, these two participants reported that they initially found the messages of punishment and deterrence intimidating. However, both participants also noted that they felt these messages were softened after they had an opportunity to respond and assert their commitment to going straight.

### *Custom Notification Lessons Learned and Opportunities for Improvement*

**Schedule Custom Notification Meetings:** Early attempts to custom notify participants consisted of unannounced visits by the police, Navigator and Reverend Copeland at the home of the identified individual. This approach was quickly dropped as participants were usually not at home, or the door was not answered by those in the residence. Indeed, in at least one incident, the participant was suspected to have fled their home

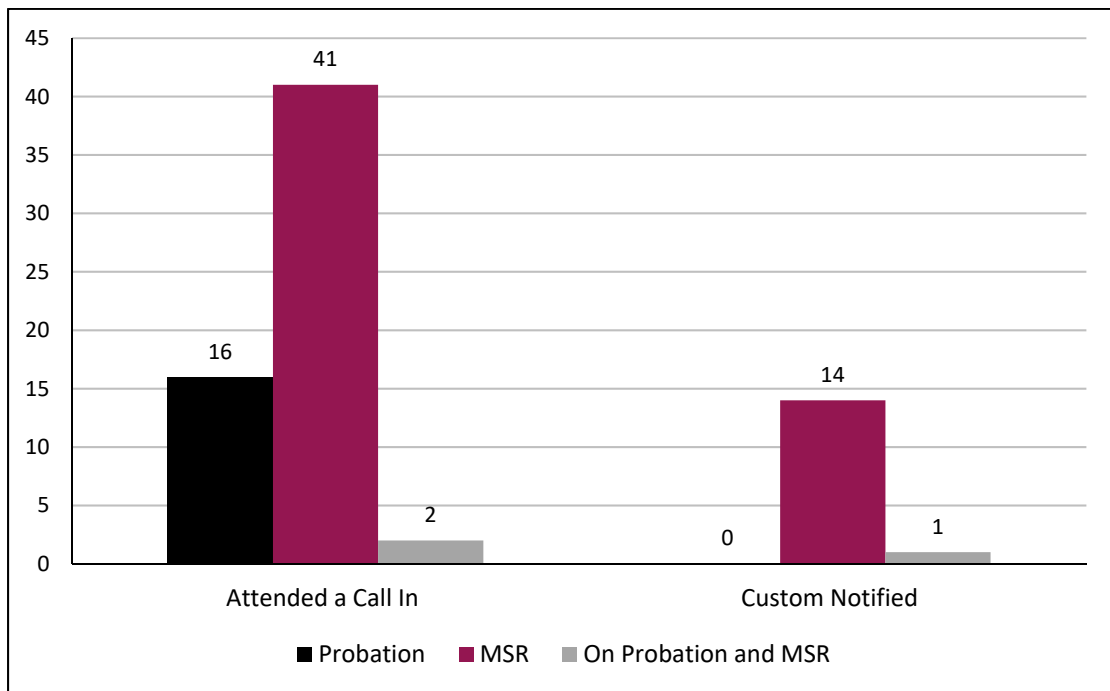


at the sight of the police on his doorstep. Subsequently, parole or probation agents informed participants of the custom notification meeting time in advance.

### Demographics of Intervention Participants

Ultimately, 74 individuals either attended a call-in (59) or a custom notification meeting (15) between January of 2018 and November of 2019. The attendees were predominately black (85%), followed by Hispanic (6%) and white (5%). All of the participants were adults (18 or older), and the median age for these attendees was 26 years old. Most of those who attended a call-in or custom notification (74%, or 55 participants) were on only on MSR following their release from prison (Figure 14). An additional 22% of the attendees (16 participants) were on probation only and 6% of the attendees (3 participants) were simultaneously on both MSR and probation.

**Figure 14: Program Participants by Introduction Type and Supervision Status**



### Surveillance and Sanctions

Part of the logic underlying focused deterrence interventions is that individuals are less likely to engage in criminal activity if they know that punishment will be certain, swift and fair. To increase the *certainty* of punishment, both probation and parole officers involved in supervising



intervention participants reported that they surveilled intervention participants more closely than the other high-risk men and women on their caseloads. While those on MSR are typically eligible at 90 days to have their case files reviewed for a supervision level reduction,<sup>23</sup> intervention participants were not. Parole and probation officers reported that frequent contact with the Navigator increased the speed with which concerning behavior would come to their attention. Additionally, the police department routinely notified probation and parole officers within 24 hours if program participants were arrested or had other police contact. Finally, both parole and probation reported closely monitoring and enforcing a greater degree of compliance to the technical rules of supervision (attending required programs, reporting, etc.) from the intervention participants. Stakeholders agreed that these measures increased the likelihood that an offense would be discovered and would be addressed at the supervisory level. Finally, although the role was primarily to provide case-management services, the Navigator was in active communication with parole and probation about the participants on her caseload, becoming, as one stakeholder put it, “an extra set of eyes and hands and feet on the street” to help the participants succeed.

Ensuring that the discovery of non-compliance would result in *certain, swift and fair* sanctions was a greater challenge. Stakeholders interviewed were less confident in the intervention’s ability to provide swift and certain punishment to intervention participants. While probation and parole reported they took quick action when they were made aware of non-compliance by, for example, requesting electronic monitoring (parole), requesting a sanction from the circuit court (probation), or requesting a petition for revocation (probation), the actual administering of that punishment can take a considerable amount of time. For example, when a probation agent notifies the court that a respondent has violated their probation, there is often considerable delay between that notification and the state’s attorney and court considering the violation. In some instances, this delay was due to the time required to get the violation scheduled before the judge who imposed the original probation sentence. This process can take weeks depending on the judge’s schedule and potentially results in no sanction whatsoever depending on awareness of the intervention’s goals and/or judgment regarding the sanctionability of the non-compliance. The delay could be even greater in instances where the probation agent is requesting the Assistant State’s Attorney’s Office file a petition for revocation. Because these requests are reviewed by the attorney who is assigned to the courtroom of the judge who imposed the original sentence, this process may also take weeks and/or result in no petition depending on the whether or not the attorney is aware of the intervention or its goals. Although the original grant proposal sought funding to have a dedicated Assistant State’s Attorney assigned to the program, that funding was not provided. As a result, while the Assistant State’s Attorney that was part of the operations group was



committed to the program and its goals, this program was in addition to that person's "normal" responsibilities. In addition, because those on probation had been originally sentenced by a number of different judges (with a number of different Assistant State's Attorney's), they too had a large number of their "normal" cases in addition to these unique cases.

Similarly, the ability of a parole officer to administer specific sanctions is limited, in part, by the conditions of MSR originally set by the statewide Prisoner Review Board (PRB). Getting approval from the PRB to have a participant be placed on electronic monitoring, for example, could take weeks. Further, because the PRB is a statewide agency handling ten of thousands of releases from prison a year, they were not familiar with the focused deterrence intervention or its goals, and thus there was no guarantee that the approval would be granted or expedited. As one stakeholder put it, the existing processes for sanctioning individuals on supervision are simply not "nimble" enough to accommodate speedy and consistent responses to noncompliance.

As noted previously, an important component of the Focused Deterrence approach is that the participants *perceive* the punishment to be swift, certain and fair. All the participants interviewed for this study reported being well aware that if they violated the terms of their probation or parole, they would be quickly apprehended, and that incarceration was a likely outcome. Further, most of the participants interviewed described themselves as being under high surveillance by the police as evidenced by the frequency with which they were stopped for traffic violations. They all noted the high level of personal attention they were receiving from their probation and parole agent, and some did express initial surprise at how quickly information seemed to travel between the police, the Navigator and their probation and/or parole officers. However, they didn't describe this increased attention and communication as "surveillance" or as increasing the likelihood that they would get caught and punished if they committed a crime. Rather, they interpreted this personal attention and communication as evidence that the Navigator and the probation and parole officer were part of a "supportive team" to help them pull their lives together and stay out of trouble.

When asked whether their punishment would be "fair" if they were arrested for committing an additional crime or otherwise found to be in non-compliance for with the rules of their supervision, responses varied. All participants interviewed agreed that incarceration was a likely and fair outcome for anyone who was arrested for engaging in street violence or any other criminal offense, regardless of whether they were in the program or not. However, some participants, particularly those on parole, noted that a relatively minor transgression, such as driving on a revoked license, missing an appointment or failing to call the "drop line" (used to notify individuals if they needed to come in for a random drug test) could result in weeks of incarceration and transfer back to prison as they awaited a PRB hearing. They argued that this would be an unfair outcome because it would take away things they had worked hard to



achieve with the Navigator, like finding work or reconnecting with family. Other participants felt as though they might be treated more favorably, which they saw as more fair, because the judge would view the progress they had made in the program as mitigating violations they may have had. Further, they felt the Navigator would advocate on their behalf for a lesser sanction.

### ***Surveillance and Sanctions: Lessons Learned and Opportunities for Improvement***

**Continue to Develop Strategies for Increasing the Swiftness of Sanctions:** Throughout the intervention, the Circuit Court (which oversees probation) was developing a plan for increasing the flexibility and swiftness with which the court could respond to non-compliant intervention participants who were on probation. The Court was working to develop a plan for the logistical management of these caseloads that decreased the time it took for a probation officer's request that a sanction be administered be considered by the court in a way that ensured adherence to the rules of the court, and the rights of the intervention participant. One possible solution under consideration was developing a focused deterrence caseload that is heard by a single judge, prosecuted by 1-2 specific assistant state's attorneys and defended by 1-2 specific assistant public defenders, all of whom would be well-versed in the program's goals and processes. However, doing so would either require focused deterrence cases be identified *prior* to sentencing and referred to that specific courtroom workgroup, or focused deterrence cases be identified post-sentencing, and then having those cases transferred from the original sentencing courtroom to the focused deterrence courtroom.

**A Focused Deterrence Assistant State's Attorney Caseload:** As described, the original grant application for the Focused Deterrence Program requested, but did not receive, funding for a designated assistant state's attorney whose caseload would include all intervention participants. It's likely that having a designated state's attorney could have increased the swiftness with which participants on probation who violate the conditions of their supervision would be sanctioned during this time period. This would not have addressed, however, the difficulty of coordinating judicial schedules or court calendars.

**Increase Flexibility of Parole Officer Responses to Violations:** The issue related to parole officers not being able to more swiftly impose certain types of sanctions (e.g., short periods of electronic monitoring) has been identified through this project, as well as other efforts in the state, and discussions are taking place to either grant parole officers greater discretion to impose certain conditions or expediting hearings before the PRB to reduce the delay in sanctions being imposed due to non-compliance.



**Maintain Current Parole Officer/Participant and Probation Officer/Participant Ratio:** The probation and parole agents interviewed indicated that with current staffing levels there is a maximum threshold of participants that can be accommodated, above which it would be prohibitively difficult to provide intervention participants with the high level of attention and surveillance necessary to administer swift and certain sanctions.

### **Participant Engagement with Navigator**

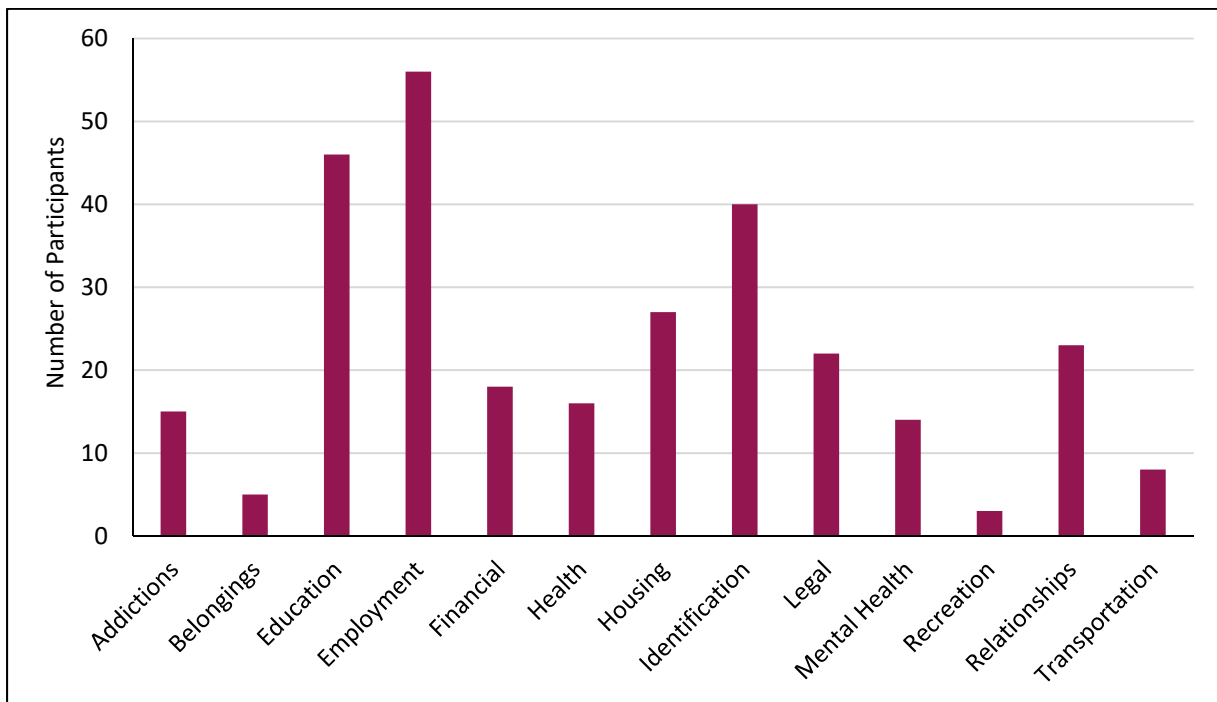
A key component of the Rockford Focused Deterrence Intervention was the provision of services designed to meet the criminogenic needs of individuals at the greatest risk of committing additional crimes. Participants in the Rockford Focused Deterrence Intervention were granted access to the Navigator, a counselor who provided case-management services and referrals to local social services and community programs that were tailored to each participant's needs. Unlike participation in the call-in meeting or custom notification meeting, which was compulsory for all individuals identified for the intervention, further interaction with the Navigator was voluntary. While all participants were encouraged to take advantage of the Navigator's case management services, they were not penalized if they failed to do so. Of the 74 participants who attended a call-in meeting or custom notification meeting, 66 ultimately followed up with the Navigator. Eight participants chose not to follow up with the Navigator, citing disinterest in services, their ability to meet their own needs and distrust of the program's intentions.<sup>24</sup> Participants who chose not to follow-up with the Navigator were not dropped from the program, but still received the same "certain, swift and fair" surveillance and sanctioning processes.

Participants who engaged with the Navigator received case-management services, beginning with a comprehensive intake process in which the Navigator questioned them about their current living situation, education level, employment, legal status, substance use, mental health, and support system to determine their needs. With the Navigator's aid, these participants set wide-ranging goals related to meeting their basic survival needs and bettering their lives, including obtaining housing, finding employment, accessing mental health treatment, connecting and/or reconnecting with prosocial family and friends, and furthering their education and job training. Key to the Navigator's approach was encouraging participants to identify the goals that they felt would help them go straight and avoid a return to criminal activity. Importantly, the Navigator's activities were in addition to any referrals and services offered by either the probation or parole officer. Due to the smaller caseload the Navigator had relative to the probation and parole officers, she was often able to provide more timely and thorough assistance for some of the participants' needs than they would have received otherwise.



The 66 participants who took advantage of the Navigator’s services set a cumulative total of 454 goals during the time period examined. Analysis of the Navigator’s case records reveal that goals related to employment (filling out resumes, distributing resumes, starting a full-time job, maintaining desired employment) were the most popular, with 56 (85%) of the engaged intervention participants asking the Navigator for help in this area (Figure 15). This was followed by goals related to educational attainment (obtaining a GED, enrolling in higher education/vocational training) with 46 (70%) of engaged participants, and obtaining identification (social security cards, driver’s licenses and/or birth certificates) with 40 (61%) of the engaged participants. The goals that participants set, particularly those related to finding work, attending counseling for substance abuse issues, completing their GEDs, paying off their legal fees, etc. were typically in-line with the mandates of their probation and MSR supervision.

**Figure 15: Participant Goals by Category**



Uniformly, intervention participants interviewed for this study reported that the Navigator provided hands-on guidance and support, assisting them to define their long- and short-term goals, determine their eligibility and provide referrals for services and/or programs that might help them meet those goals, gather any necessary documentation and fill out any relevant paperwork, and often personally accompanied them to help navigate application processes and advocate for them.

The Navigator's services extended beyond case-management and service referrals. Participants noted that the Navigator not only assisted them in taking steps to achieve their goals, but also held them accountable for progress on their goals by consistently following up with them for updates via phone and text. Further, most (15 of the 19) of the participants interviewed described the Navigator as an important part of their social support system because they perceived her to be an available and trustworthy person to confide their troubles to. Participants reported talking with the Navigator about conflicts with family members and romantic partners, their difficulties reconnecting with their children, and the pressures they felt to return to the "people, places and things" that had gotten them in trouble in the past. Indeed, eight participants interviewed for this study credited their ability to stay out of trouble during this time period, in part, to Navigator guidance and encouragement. For example, when asked to identify "the most important thing" that the navigator helped him with, Johnny offered the following:

Just, I mean, I would say, personally just to stay focused and keep my mind on the right goal instead of a negative one. So...She just you know, tell me like, like one time I be feeling some type of way and she actually helped talk about problems that I'm going through. And she would actually sit down and talk through it. And she'd just let you know, like she's be honest and straight up forward with you. Like, "you need to just keep your eye on the ball, don't let nothin throw you off." At the end of the day, you have kids to look after.

Additionally, the Navigator facilitated participant's compliance with the rules and requirements of their parole and/or probation. Participants often discussed their MSR board orders and probation requirements with the Navigator, looking to her to help clarify the rules of their community supervision and the reasoning behind those rules. The Navigator encouraged them to take their community supervision requirements seriously and to communicate with their probation or parole officer, particularly when they had committed a technical violation. Technical violations typically refer to instances in which someone on community supervision violates the rules of their supervision in a way that does not involve the commission of a crime, such as failing to call the drop line, missing an appointment or failing a drug test. As these kinds of violations are sanctionable with jail time and potentially revocation, participants often felt great anxiety when they violated the terms of the community supervision. Both stakeholders and the participants interviewed for this study reported instances in which a participant who was avoiding their probation and parole officer out of fear of being sanctioned with additional jail time was ultimately persuaded by the Navigator to contact their parole or probation officer. Finally, the parole officers and probation agents interviewed for this study reported that the Navigator was often a valuable source of information about the lives of the people on their



caseload. Because most of the participants in the study trusted the Navigator and checked in on a regular basis, the Navigator was often able to supply information to parole and probation that helped corroborate, refute or contextualize the information they were getting from the people on their caseloads. This information, they argued, helped them better monitor participants and provide appropriate sanctions. As one parole officer put it,

Sometimes it helps me just to have a backstory and know what's going on, like if a participant is going through some type of crisis, you know. I know just generally speaking, for example losing a child, or things like that that might drive other behavior, whether it be drug use, or drinking. Then I have kind of an idea of what's going on, you know in that person's day to day life that they don't always share with me when I'm making my contacts, because they know that I'm just going to ask them are they addressing their board orders. I'm focusing more on their parole compliance, you know, where the Navigator is able to get them engaged more in their day to day life, what's going on.

Further, because the Navigator was systematically checking in with participants, quick communication was facilitated between participants and their community corrections officers. Participants uniformly reported that it can be difficult to quickly get ahold of their parole officer or probation agent because there is an unwieldy process of calling in and leaving a message and then waiting for a return call from an unidentified number. Parole and probation agents, in turn, noted that it can sometimes be difficult to get the people on their caseloads to answer their phones. Because the Navigator was able to communicate with participants over text and community corrections officers via a direct line or email, she could connect the two.

### ***Participant Engagement with Navigator Lessons Learned and Suggestions for Improvement:***

#### **Require Participants Utilizing Navigator's Services to Share their Risk and Needs**

**Assessments with the Navigator:** Individuals on probation in Winnebago County complete risk and needs assessments as a routine part of the probation intake process. Similarly, individuals on MSR are often required to complete mental health and substance abuse assessments as part of their board orders. However, these assessments of those on MSR are not typically completed as part of the intake process and sometimes occur far later in the MSR process. Requiring that those on MSR utilizing the Navigator's services to complete these assessments in a timely manner and granting the Navigator access to the assessment of both those on probation and MSR (or even just the recommendations from these assessments) would relieve the Navigator of the duty of administering these assessments and help the Navigator better provide referrals that meet the participants criminogenic needs.



**Require Participants Utilizing Navigator’s Services to Share their Probation Requirements and Parole Board orders with the Navigator:** Granting access to probation requirements and parole board orders would decrease the likelihood that the Navigator provides referrals or aid that directly counter court or PRB orders. In a few instances, the Navigator worked with individuals on MSR to help them meet their goal of finding work, only to find out that doing so was in violation of their Parole Board Orders because they had not yet completed substance abuse programming.

**Develop Housing Referrals:** Both the Navigator and the participants interviewed for this study identified independent housing as a crucial, yet particularly difficult to access resource. No participant in the study was homeless. However, the Navigator noted that many participants were looking for alternative housing because they were living in locations where they were likely to get in trouble either because their romantic partner was pressuring them to return to criminal activity to make ends meet or because they were living with people with whom they were likely to get in physical altercations. Of the 27 participants who identified housing as a concern at intake, six (22%) were able to successfully find an apartment while working with the Navigator. Finding housing is difficult for people whose criminal records make them undesirable renters on the private housing market and often exclude them from housing programs. While the Navigator has identified potential housing opportunities via Section 8’s appeal process and Township Rental, the application processes are time-consuming, lengthy and, in some instances, prohibitively unwieldy. One participant interviewed, for example, was simply unable to complete Township Rental’s housing application process because the program requires that he present his application material in person during a weekly, two-hour timeslot during which he is invariably working.





## INTERVENTION OUTCOMES

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Most participants in the Focused Deterrence Intervention received services and were not charged with new violent cases in Winnebago County

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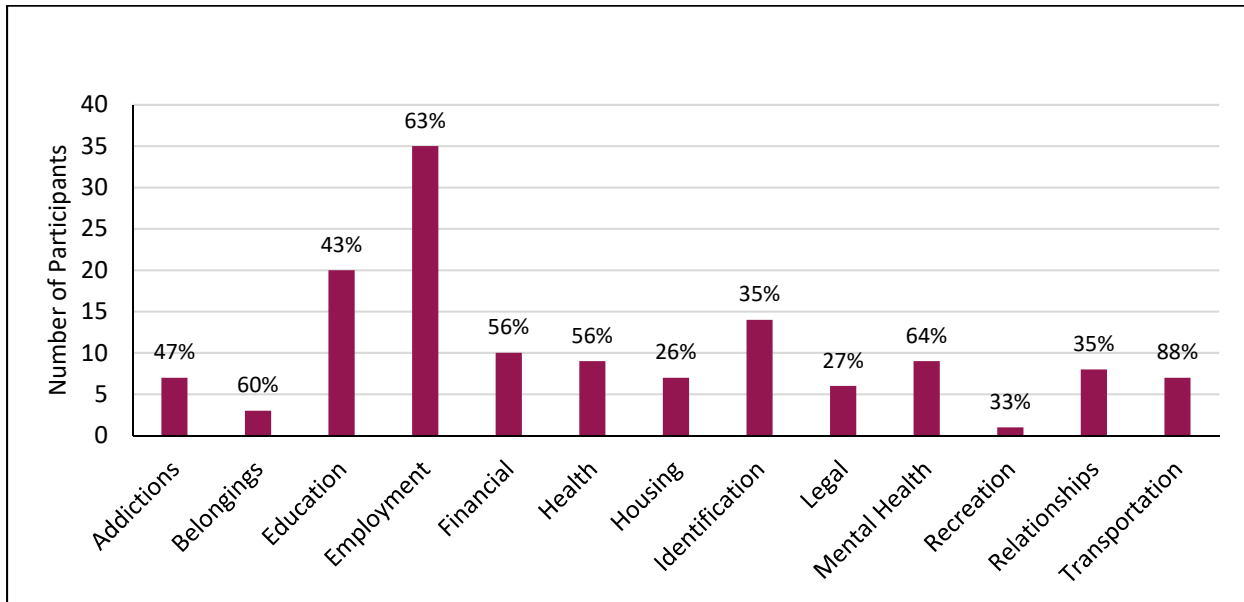
### Navigator Services Outcomes

In all, the case records indicated 51 participants completed a total 202 goals between January of 2018 and November of 2019.<sup>25</sup> Approximately a third (33%) of those goals were related to employment, followed by goals related to education (16%) and obtaining ID's (9%). An additional 49 goals were in process at the end of the program and 203 goals were abandoned because the participant no longer wanted to achieve that goal, the goal was deemed unachievable due to the limited availability of the services requested or the eligibility of the participant, or because the participant was incarcerated.

Of the 56 participants who set an employment goal, 63% achieved that goal (Figure 16). Thirty-one participants met their goal of finding full-time work, two participants met their goal of finding part-time work and one participant (who entered the program employed) met his goal of maintaining employment while enrolled in the program. With the help of the Navigator, 20 of the 46 participants (43%) who set education goals achieved at least one of their goals. Five participants achieved goals related to earning their GEDs, including enrolling in a GED program (3), completing a GED practice test (3) and completing portions of the GED (1). Four participants enrolled in a post-secondary training program (3) or community college course (1). The remaining 11 participants achieved one or more other goals related to furthering their education, such as completing education assessments (7), developing a post-secondary plan (6), and applying for benefits/assistance for attending a post-secondary program (2).



**Figure 16: Participant Goals Achieved by Category\***



\*Percentages indicate the proportion of participants who achieved at least one goal within the category relative to the number of participants who set a goal in that category (Figure 15).

Fourteen participants “graduated” from the Navigator’s services. Graduation requirements were developed by the operations committee and included not being convicted of a new non-traffic offense, completing all recommended levels of care for treatment, maintaining a drug free status, and achieving at least four out of seven recovery capital criteria that are associated with desistance from crime (ex: stable living environment, legitimate form of income). Graduates or result in early discharge from either their probation or MSR. took part in a graduation ceremony, but graduation did not alter their supervision requirements.

### Recidivism

Offenses committed by participants while in the Focused Deterrence Program can generally be divided into two categories: technical violations and criminal activity that results in an arrest/new charges filed in court. The term *technical violations* is commonly used to refer to instances where an individual has violated the conditions of their probation or MSR but has not been arrested for a new crime. Examples would include offenses such as missing a meeting with a community corrections agent, failing to attend mandated anger management classes, or testing positive for drugs and/or alcohol. *Arrests that result in new charges* occur when an individual is apprehended by the police because of probable cause that the person had engaged

in criminal activity and a criminal case is filed in the court by the Winnebago County State's Attorney's Office.

### **Technical Violations**

During the time period examined, 14 of the 66 individuals (21%) who completed an intake with the Navigator self-reported that they had been sanctioned for violating the conditions of their probation or MSR. In total, these individuals reported 27 violations, the most common of which was recorded as non-compliance or behavior (15), missing an appointment or failing to call the "drop line" (9), and testing positive for drugs (3). Most (70%) of the violations were sanctioned with jail time. The remaining sanctions included verbal reprimands, thinking report assignments and referrals to the GEO Day Reporting Center for MSR violations.

### **Arrests**

Another way to measure recidivism amongst the participants is to consider the number of participants who went on to experience an arrest following their induction into the program by participating in a call-in or being custom notified. However, some degree of caution needs to be taken when interpreting the recidivism rates of program participants due to: 1) the relatively short period of time most participants received support and services from the Navigator, 2) the heightened degree of supervision and surveillance of participants due to the program model, and 3) the relatively small sample size of participants, particularly when broken down between those on probation and MSR. That said, according to the Navigator's case records and analysis of booking data from the Rockford County Jail, 64% (47 out of 74) of the participants who either attended a call-in meeting or who were custom notified were *not* booked in jail while part of the intervention for new offenses other than non-serious traffic violations such as driving on a revoked license or failure to report an incident (Figure 17).<sup>26</sup>

Of the 66 participants who availed themselves of the Navigator's services by completing an intake and setting at least one goal with the Navigator, 64% (42 out of 66) were *not* booked in jail while part of the intervention for offenses other than non-serious traffic violations or IDOC holds for technical violations. Of the eight participants who attended a call-in or custom-notification meeting and did not follow-up with the Navigator, most (6) were not booked in jail while part of the intervention for offenses other than non-serious traffic violations or IDOC holds for technical violations.<sup>27</sup> Fifty-six percent of participants who were supervised on probation and 67% of those who were supervised on MSR were *not* booked in jail while part of the intervention on new offenses other than non-serious traffic violations.



**Figure 17: Participant Recidivism by Supervision Status and Engagement with Navigator**

Participant Supervision Status	Overall Number & Percent of Total*	Not Booked on any new arrest charge	Booked on any new arrest charge	Booked on new violent charge	Booked on any new gun charge
PROBATION	16 (22%)	9	7	5	3
Engaged	16 (100%)	9	7	5	3
Not engaged	0 (0%)	-	-	-	-
MSR	55 (74%)	37	18	11	0
Engaged	47	31	16	10	0
Not engaged	8	6	2	1	0
BOTH PROBATION AND MSR	3 (4%)	1	2	0	2
Total Participants	74 (100%)	47 (62%)	27 (38%) <sup>28</sup>	16 (22%)	5 (7%)

\*Percentages indicate the proportion of the total sample of 74 participants who attended a call-in or who were custom notified. Because some categories overlap, they will not sum to 100% across rows or columns.

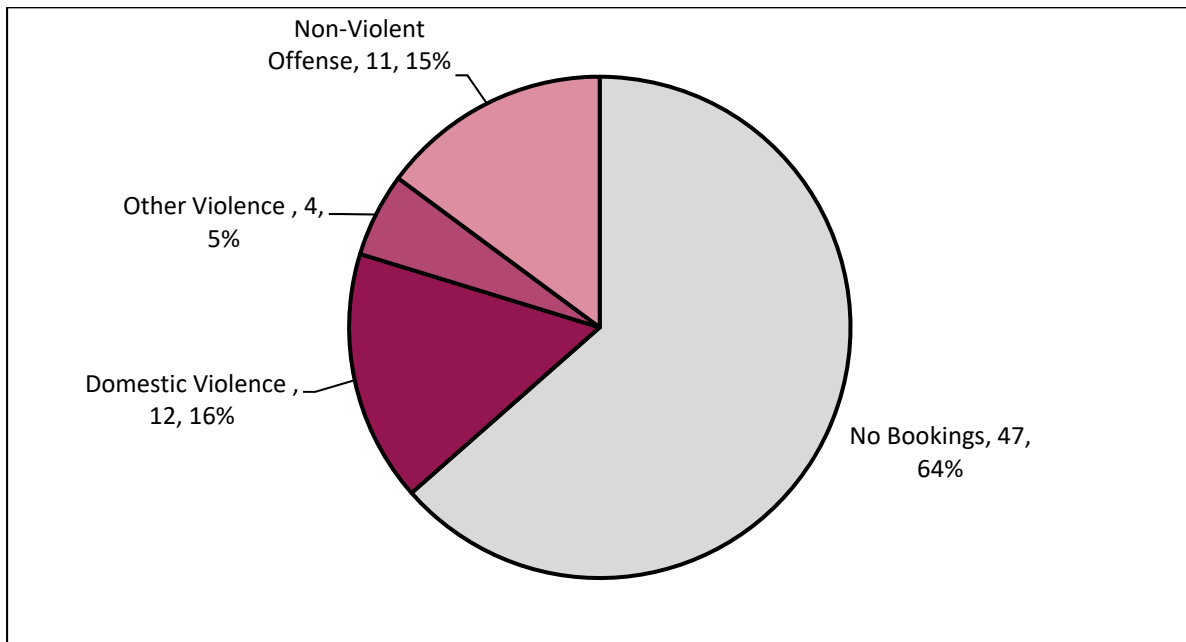
Of the 74 men and women who participated in a call-in or who were custom notified, 27 (38%) were booked in jail for offenses other than non-serious traffic violations. Twenty-one participants were booked once (28% of total sample), 2 participants were booked twice (3%) and 4 participants were booked three times (5%). Because participants were booked on multiple charges, the most serious offense for which they were booked was used to determine the recidivism offense. The most serious offenses tend to have the most serious repercussions, both in terms of the individual’s punishment at the hands of the criminal justice system and for public safety.

Sixteen participants (22% of total participants, Figure 18) were booked in jail on new violent charges, including domestic violence charges (12), aggravated battery (2), armed violence (1)



and armed robbery (1). An additional 11 participants were booked into jail on charges for non-violent crimes only, including illegal gun possession (2), property crimes (2), driving under the influence (2), manufacture/delivery of a controlled substance (2), and possession of cannabis (1), fleeing an officer (1), and violating an order of protection (1). Of the 5 participants who were booked into jail for offenses that involved a firearm (7% of the total sample), two were booked on charges that included the illegal possession (but not use) of a firearm only.<sup>29</sup> The remaining three were booked on violent charges that involved a firearm: armed robbery (1), armed violence (1) and aggravated battery of a police officer and illegal possession of a firearm.<sup>30</sup>

**Figure 18: Examining Recidivism Among Participants**



Of the 74 individuals who participated in the intervention (by at least attending a call-in or custom notification meeting), 42 were determined to be in good legal standing at the end of the intervention, meaning that they were not currently incarcerated in jail or prison for committing a new offense or violating the terms of their supervision and were not currently under investigation by the Rockford Police Department. Individuals in good legal standing included 16 participants who were no longer working with the Navigator (typically citing disinterest or lack of needs) but who were still enrolled in the intervention, 13 participants who had graduated and 11 participants who were actively engaged with the Navigator at the end of

the program. Thirty participants were unsuccessfully discharged from the program, because the police department was building cases against them for suspected violent criminal activity, because they were incarcerated in jail pending sentencing for a new crime or because their probation or parole was revoked and they were serving out the remainder of their sentence in jail or prison. Finally, four participants were dropped from the intervention either because they relocated from Winnebago County and were transferred to a new parole district (3) or because they were discovered to be on federal probation (1).

While it is still too early to draw definitive conclusions on the efficacy of the intervention, it is heartening that most participants in the Focused Deterrence Intervention were *not* charged with new violent cases in Winnebago County during the pilot years. Of the 74 individuals on probation and/or parole who either attended a call-in or a custom notification meeting, most (78%) were not booked on charges for *any violent crimes* and a significant proportion (63%) were not arrested for *any new crimes* in Winnebago County during the time period examined. Additionally, only 5 participants were arrested for gun-related charges and only three participants were charged for using a gun in the commission of a violent crime. Given that participants were chosen because they represent the highest risk to public safety, the relative lack of violent crime amongst participants, particularly violent crime that involves firearms, is promising.

### ***Recidivism Outcomes Lessons Learned and Suggestions for Improvement***

**Increase response to domestic violence.** Early in the program implementation process, it was decided that the intervention would focus primarily on individuals who were at high risk of committing gun-related violence. While domestic violence is clearly a serious and prevalent form of violence, stakeholders determined that the focused deterrence approach and services provided were not appropriate for combatting domestic violence, and the Mayor's Office was addressing domestic violence through other efforts. Domestic violence, however, ultimately drove some of the recidivism in this program evaluation. Arrests for domestic violence also have significant implications for MSR supervision and revocation, since under Illinois law anyone on MSR who is rearrested for a domestic violence offense must have a warrant issued to revoke their MSR and be returned to prison as an MSR violator. Ultimately, 12 participants in this intervention were unsuccessfully discharged from the program following an arrest for domestic battery or aggravated domestic battery.

**Analyze Probation and Parole Case Files to Assess Violations and Sanctions:** As noted earlier, the data about technical violations and sanctions described in this report come primarily from information reported to the Navigator by participants and do not fully



capture all of the violations and sanctions among program participants. There is a discrepancy, for example, between the apparent swiftness with which participants on parole reported being sanctioned for technical violations (within 24 hours) and the description that parole agents provided of the potentially lengthy process of sanctioning a participant.



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<sup>1</sup> Graduation requirements were developed by the operations committee and included not being convicted of a new non-traffic offense, completing all recommended levels of care for treatment, maintaining a drug free status, and achieving at least four out of seven recovery capital criteria that are associated with desistance from crime (ex: stable living environment, legitimate form of income).

<sup>2</sup> Anyone arrested in Winnebago County is booked into the jail for the processing of the arrestee. Thus, booking into the jail is a measure of new arrests that occurred in the county.

<sup>3</sup> It should be noted that those who were interviewed represent a specific subset of participants in the intervention; all were individuals who took advantage of the Navigator's services and had not recidivated by the time of the interview.

<sup>4</sup> Source: Analyses by Loyola's Center for Criminal Justice Research, Policy & Practice of aggregate, published I-UCR data.

<sup>5</sup> Source: Analyses by Loyola's Center for Criminal Justice Research, Policy & Practice of aggregate, published I-UCR data.

<sup>6</sup> See: <http://www.mystateline.com/news/rockford-listed-as-americas-5th-most-dangerous-city/820263454>;  
<http://1440wrok.com/website-declares-rockford-to-be-the-5th-most-dangerous-city-in-america/>

<sup>7</sup> Number reflects incidents in which the victim was actually struck by gunfire. Analyses by Loyola's Center for Criminal Justice Research, Policy & Practice of data provided by The Rockford Police Department.

<sup>8</sup> Source: Analyses by Loyola's Center for Criminal Justice Research, Policy & Practice of data provided by The Rockford Police Department.

<sup>9</sup> The first call-in took place in March of 2018 and the Navigator discontinued services to participants in December of 2019 when the grant ended.

<sup>10</sup> For full descriptions of the methodology, the sample, and the results, please see the "The Rockford Community Survey: Results," which was prepared by the Loyola University Chicago research team.

[https://wincoil.us/media/197427/2018\\_02\\_22\\_rockford\\_community\\_survey\\_results.pdf](https://wincoil.us/media/197427/2018_02_22_rockford_community_survey_results.pdf)

<sup>11</sup> For full descriptions of the methodology, the sample, and the results, please see the reports entitled "The 2019 Rockford Community Survey: Results" and "Rockford Community Perceptions of Crime Survey: A Comparison of survey responses from 2017 to 2019," which were both prepared by the Loyola University Chicago research team.

[https://www.luc.edu/media/lucedu/ccj/pdfs/The%202019%20Rockford%20Community%20Perceptions%20of%20Crime%20Survey\\_Results.pdf](https://www.luc.edu/media/lucedu/ccj/pdfs/The%202019%20Rockford%20Community%20Perceptions%20of%20Crime%20Survey_Results.pdf)

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<sup>12</sup> For full descriptions of the methodology, the sample, and the results, please see the report entitled "The Rockford Police Officer Survey: Results," which was prepared by the Loyola University Chicago research team.

[https://www.luc.edu/media/lucedu/ccj/pdfs/The%20Rockford%20Community%20Survey\\_Results.pdf](https://www.luc.edu/media/lucedu/ccj/pdfs/The%20Rockford%20Community%20Survey_Results.pdf)

<sup>13</sup> During 2018, the Winnebago County Probation began transitioning from using the LSI-R to using the IARA for risk assessment. In order to be considered for the intervention, an individual had score "high risk" on the risk assessment tool and have a history of violent behavior involving guns. In some instances, individuals who had a history of gun violence and scored "moderate" on the risk assessment were upgraded to "high risk" based on the probation officers' assessment of their case history and current behavior.

<sup>14</sup> It should be noted that those who were interviewed represent a specific subset of participants in the intervention, in that these were individual who took advantage of the Navigator's services and had not recidivated by the time of the interview.



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<sup>15</sup> Due to the grant supporting the program ending in December 2019, the fourth quarter call-in meeting for 2019 was not held due to operations group agreeing it would not be fair to the targeted participants to have a call-in with offered services, only to have the Navigator no longer able to serve them after the project end date.

<sup>16</sup> One of the call-in-meetings, 9/18/19, was moderated by retired Rockford Police Lieutenant Eric Bruno.

<sup>17</sup> One participant was turned away at the door due to lateness resulting from confusion over which entrance to the Rockford Rescue Mission to use. Another missed because he was caring for an ill child and the final participant was unable to attend due to requirements/restrictions associated with MSR conditions.

<sup>18</sup> Observation notes taken from researchers who were present for the November 28, 2018 call-in meeting confirm that the meeting was consistent in both structure and messaging as the other six meetings.

<sup>19</sup> Counts for each speaker include references to “Ending the Violence” made by designates sent in their place when they were unable to attend.

<sup>20</sup> All participant names indicated are pseudonyms.

<sup>21</sup> These 16 men and women do not include the three participants who were mandated to attend a custom notification following the failure to attend a call-in meeting.

<sup>22</sup> Efforts were made initially to include a respected member of the community (The Reverend) and a member of the research team but the difficulty of scheduling these meetings was a barrier.

<sup>23</sup> A supervision level reduction would decrease the amount of contact that the parolee would be expected to have with the parole agent. For example, they may transition from weekly check-ins by phone to monthly check-ins by phone.

<sup>24</sup> Based on interviews with the Navigator and review of Navigator case notes.

<sup>25</sup> It may be tempting to interpret the fact 202 of the 454 goals set were completed as a 46% goal achievement rate. This would be inappropriate for two reasons. First, participants were inducted into the intervention in waves and set goals multiple times throughout the time period examined. Many of the “in-process” goals for the latest cohort of participants were set in September of 2019. Additionally, some goals, like completing a GED, maintaining a job, and obtaining an apartment are long-term goals that likely would extend beyond the year or less that most participants were receiving support from the Navigator.

<sup>26</sup> Because the bookings data is being used to measure the number of participants who were arrested for additional crimes, these analyses exclude individuals who were booked on an IDOC hold for technical violations (e.g. failure to report) that did not involve an arrest for new crime.

<sup>27</sup> That a similar proportion of those who did not utilize the Navigator’s services (62%) were not arrested compared to those who did (62%) should not be interpreted to mean that the Navigator’s services were unrelated participant success. The number of those who did not avail themselves of the Navigator’s services is simply too small to make that comparison.

<sup>28</sup> For comparison purposes, out of all those released from IDOC to Winnebago County with characteristics similar to the program participants, approximately 68% were rearrested for any crime within 2 years of release. For high-risk probationers with similar characteristics to the program participants, more than 50% were rearrested for any crime while on probation.

<sup>29</sup> The illegal possession of a gun refers to the possession of a gun by persons prohibited from possessing guns due to their age, criminal record, or not having applied for/received a Firearm Owner’s Identification—FOID- card or a Concealed Carry Permit-CCP, or possessing a gun in prohibited places. In this sample, all individuals would be prohibited from possessing guns due to their criminal record and/or the terms of the supervision.

<sup>30</sup> Under Illinois’ Armed Violence statute, a person who illegally possesses a gun during the commission of any other felony (i.e., felony drug possession, drug sales, theft) can be charged and convicted of Armed Violence. In this instance, the individual was booked on Armed Violence charges for the possession of a gun alongside felony charges for manufacture and delivery of cannabis.

