Key considerations

Evaluating crime prevention programs
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Australia’s national research and knowledge centre on crime and justice
Key considerations

- Evaluation design and measurement
- Treatment decay
- Evaluating complex, multicomponent programs
- Ethical considerations
Measuring program impacts

- Many different ways to measure impacts
- Two common and practical ways
  - pre/post test
  - time series analysis
Pre/post measurement

- Measurement before and after intervention
- Compare measures and look for improvements
Time series measurement

- More rigorous than pre/post tests
- Measurement of the problem at multiple times before and after the intervention
Summary of strengths & limitations

Pre/post tests
Strengths:
• Simple & quick to implement
• Easily used with surveys
• Provides estimate of change in problem

Limitations:
• Shows short term changes only
• Cannot account for pre-existing trends
• Cannot rule out other explanations for change in problem

Time series
Strengths:
• Easy to use with routinely collected data over many time periods
• Can rule out pre-existing trends

Limitations:
• Hard to use with survey data
• Takes a long time to establish results
• Hard to interpret when there are few problem events before intervention
Decay of treatment effect

- **Common life cycle for crime prevention interventions**
  - Crime rates fall quickly
  - Program effect fades
  - Crime rates rise
Evaluating a multi component program

- Many components to MB

...So how do you know what is making a difference?
Consider...

- performance measures/indicators
- do not try to ‘do it all’
- use a mixed methods design
- know what data you need and what data you have access to
Ethical considerations

Surveying or engaging with young people requires more stringent checks and balances
Consider...

- Safety/well-being of young person
- Any future adverse impact
- Decision-making capacity
- Informed consent
End