



Crime Pattern Analysis and Predictive Policing

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In search of ‘what works’: a short introduction to evidence-based policing

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“Police practices should be based on scientific evidence about what works best.”

Lawrence Sherman, 1998

Paradox: police science as a successful failure?

'there is no discernible, sustained and consistent effort within policing to make the basic premise that 'knowledge informs practice' a routine part of policing' Goldstein (2003):

'the notion that science should matter is often trumped by the reality that public opinion, political will, or consensus-based opinions about best practices are what should underpin and drive police practices. Lum et al (2012)

The challenge....

- *The identification of effective and cost-efficient practices and policies is essential if policing is to gain legitimacy and secure investment in an increasingly sceptical world of public services in which the competition for public finance is growing ever more acute (Ayling, Grabosky, and Shearing, 2009).*

Doing less but with more impact: Why evidence based approaches are needed



- *Research alone cannot tell us what [the police] should do –we need the experience of practitioners as well as the experiments of science (Moore, 2010).*

Evidence-based approaches

- Using the best available evidence to **inform** decisions about policies and practices;
- The need to **Ask** (reflect on practice), **Learn** (about what works), **Test** (via rigorous evaluation) and **Adapt** (policy and practice).

Evidence-based policing: demolishing some myths



- **The ‘3 Rs’ of policing:**
- **Random patrol**
- **Rapid response**
- **Reactive investigation**

Towards evidence-based policing: replacing the 3 Rs with 4 Ps...

- **Place:** focus on high crime places
- **People:** tackling the most harmful and persistent offenders;
- **Protecting victims:** focus on vulnerability;
- **Procedural justice:** importance of police legitimacy

Why?: The evidence shows that...

- 50% of crimes are associated with less than 5% of addresses – so focus on places**
- 1% of people experience 59% of personal crimes - so focus on vulnerable groups;**
- 10% of offenders are responsible for 50% of crime – so focus on prolific offenders;**
- Citizens care more about the quality of their interaction with the police than police effectiveness – so focus on fairness, neutrality and respect.**

What we know: The potential of ‘hotspots policing’

Targeted policing activity in high crime locations can reduce crime;

A range of tactics can be effective – directed patrol, crackdowns, problem-solving;

It is unlikely to lead to displacement and more likely to lead to crime reduction spreading to adjacent areas (‘diffusion of benefits’);



What we know: the importance of problem-solving approaches

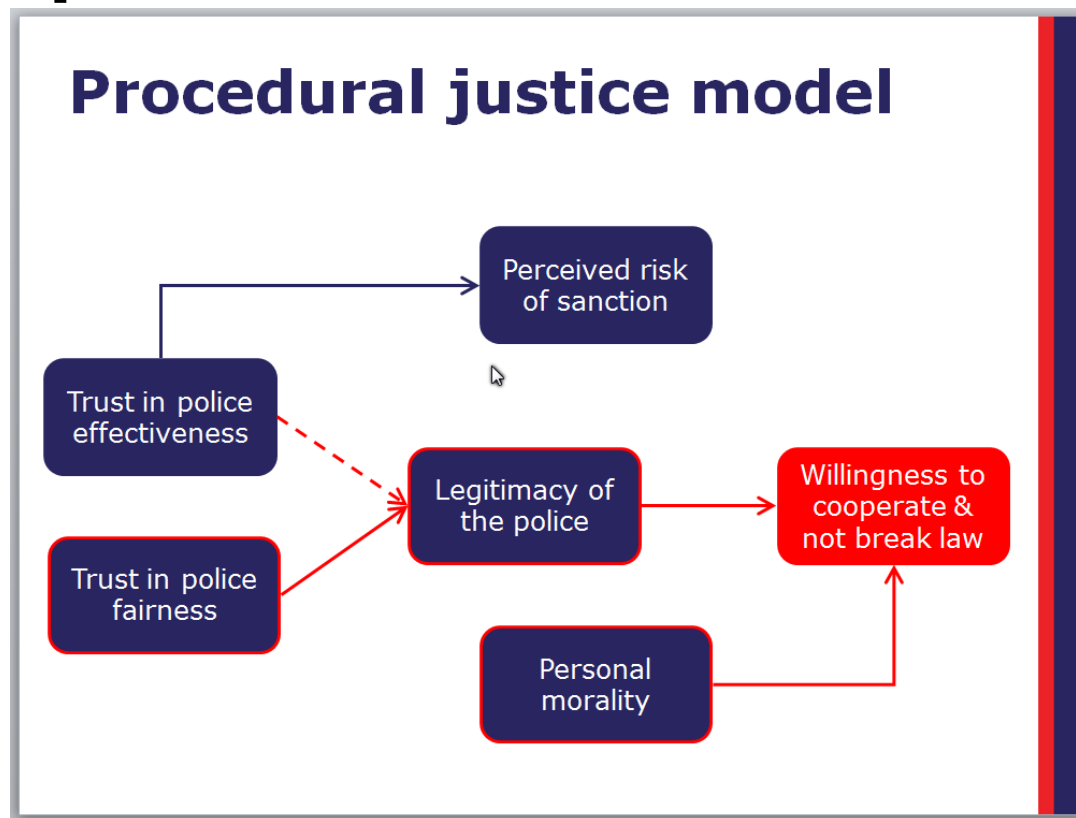
Problem-solving (involving the SARA model) is an effective overall policing strategy;

It requires the police to work in partnership with local people and organisations to create sustainable solutions;

Importance of using community intelligence to identify 'signal' crimes and disorders.



What we know: focusing on enhancing police legitimacy leads to greater public cooperation and crime reduction



What we know: procedural justice matters

- **The most important factor motivating people to cooperate and not break the law is the legitimacy of the police;**
- **The key aspects of legitimacy are trust and shared values and these are fostered by perception of police fairness (not effectiveness);**
- **Fair-decision-making by, and positive public interaction with, the police are crucial for long term crime reduction, achieved via prevention rather than deterrence, enforcement or detection;**

So evidence-based approaches require knowledge about:

- ***Why action is required...***
- ***What works...***
- ***The nature of the problems...***
- ***How to put into practice...***
- ***Who to involve...***
- ***What the costs are...***
- ***Will it work here...***

Barriers to research use?

- **Survey respondents say they lack time to locate research to help resource decisions (54%)**
- **Under half think academics produce research that is relevant (42%)**
- **Research findings are unclearly presented and full of jargon (48%)**
- **Research evidence doesn't give clear enough answers to be usable (34%)**


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[About the toolkit](#)

[Our effect scale](#)

[Our quality scale](#)

Key

 Quality of evidence

Filters

Impact on Crime
(select a range using the markers below)



Violent Crime

☐ Off ☐ On

Property Crime

☐ Off ☐ On

Offender Based

☐ Off ☐ On

Victim Based

☐ Off ☐ On































































































Location Based

☐ Off ☐ On

[Clear pins](#)

[Reset toolkit](#)

Crime Reduction Toolkit

Intervention 	Impact on crime  Effect	How it works  Mechanism	Where it works  Moderator	How to do it  Implementation	What it costs  Economic cost	
"Scared Straight" Programmes	 	 	 	 	 	
Alcohol ignition interlock	 	 	 	 	 	
CCTV	 	 	 	 	 	
CPTED (Robbery)	 	 	 	 	 	
Electronic monitoring	 	 	 	 	 	
Increased police patrol	 	 	 	 	 	
Mass media campaigns	 	 	 	 	 	
Multisystemic Therapy	 	 	 	 	 	

EMMIE

- **E**ffect - How effective is it and how strong is the evidence?
- **M**echanism: How does it work?
- **M**oderators: In which contexts does it work best?
- **I**mplementation: What can be said about implementation?
- **E**conomics: How much might it cost?

Summary

- The output from this exercise will not tell you what works
- It will tell you what might work, where and how; how you might implement it and what it might cost
- It is not a substitute for thinking, experience, knowledge or skills – but it can enhance them
- It is based on the best available research we have but the research base is far from complete

What does all this mean for policing?

- We need to know what works, for whom, in what circumstances and how
- We need to know how best to implement it
- We need to know what it might cost in your circumstances
- We are looking for evidence informed judgement

Concluding thoughts...

- *The world of crime and policing is far too important, far too complex ... to leave entirely in the hands of scientists. We need a great deal of practical wisdom as well as a rigorous and responsive science' (Moore, 2010)*
- *Evidence-informed judgement rather than evidence-based approaches...*



Thank You

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