

Implementing the St. Louis Model in Other Jurisdictions

The researchers concluded that randomized controlled studies of individualized focused deterrence are feasible and, based on the St. Louis experience, are an effective method of crime reduction. Previous evaluations of focused deterrence have reported problems with maintaining program integrity through the evaluation period (Braga et al., 2018). The following are 10 basic requirements for successfully adopting individualized focused deterrence programs, maintaining their integrity over time, and bringing them to scale. We emphasize that these are the minimal necessary preconditions for successful implementation of individualized focused deterrence initiatives based on the St. Louis model. Depending on the specific features of the local context (e.g., police union opposition, budget shortages, extreme police-community tensions), additional steps may need to be taken to prepare the ground for adoption.

1. Carefully select participating police officers

The six original police detectives assigned to the Partnership were selected by program stakeholders and supervisors. In interviews, these detectives were spoken of quite highly by program staff and participants alike for their willingness to go the extra mile for program participants. One detective said, “One of our goals is to build that relationship, something that we can meet throughout the program and after the program. I’m still in contact [with] and get invited to baby showers from subjects that we dealt with in 2017.” Participants described detectives as “down to earth” and “not judgmental” and said that they were available for them whenever they needed to talk. One participant elaborated on his support team’s availability:

He goes out of his way because he gave me his phone number and was like, “Hey bro, call me anytime you need anything.” He said, “Even if you just need to talk. Just give me a call man.” And that’s huge to know you got that type of support from somebody who don’t even know you....But that makes me believe in who he is as a person and what it is he trying to accomplish. And [probation and parole officer] was like this too. Yes. She was great. And then she used to tell me all the time, “Call [detective]” and I’d be telling her about stuff. She’d be like, “Call [detective]. That’s what he there for. ”...Yeah. And so anytime I called him, like I say, he was able to point me in the right direction and like I said, he never made me feel like he was judging me. And he said it many times. He understood that the problems the guys like me have growing up in the neighborhoods that we grew up in. And he also, when I was telling him what I wanted to accomplish

