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# Understanding Risk and Needs in Misdemeanor Populations

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## A Case Study in New York City

By Michael Rempel, Suvi Hynynen Lambson, Sarah Picard-Fritsche,  
Julian Adler, and Warren A. Reich

 Center  
for  
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Center for Court Innovation  
520 Eighth Avenue, 18<sup>th</sup> Floor  
New York, New York 10018  
646.386.3100 fax 212.397.0985  
[www.courtinnovation.org](http://www.courtinnovation.org)

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For correspondence, please contact: Sarah Picard-Fritsche at [fritsches@courtinnovation.org](mailto:fritsches@courtinnovation.org).

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# Executive Summary

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Nationally, even after more than a decade of gradually declining caseloads, an estimated 18.1 million criminal cases were arraigned in 2015. Of these, four in five cases were misdemeanors or other lesser offenses (Schauffler et al. 2016). Despite the low-level nature of most criminal behavior, many defendants have serious needs for treatment and services that, if left unmet, can lead to a revolving door of more low-level arrests and re-arrests. For instance, among New York City misdemeanor defendants studied as part of the current research, 40% were re-arrested over a six-month period of time, the vast majority for future misdemeanor offenses. In short, most defendants in our sample did not pose a serious threat to public safety, but nonetheless posed a sizable risk of continued low-level misconduct.

If the criminal justice system were refashioned to replace jail and other traditional sanctions with services and treatment for misdemeanor defendants, what kinds of services would be necessary? Unfortunately, too little is known about the drivers of misdemeanor offending, with much of the existing risk-needs literature focused on more serious felony populations.

Through a case study in New York City, the current research examines the prevalence of clinical and criminogenic needs in a misdemeanor population. Findings are intended to lay the groundwork for the development of interventions and diversion strategies that are both effective in reducing recidivism and legally proportionate for misdemeanor case resolution.

## Research Methodology

Data were collected from 964 individuals charged with a misdemeanor or lesser offense in one of three New York City diversion programs: (1) Bronx Community Solutions, which serves more than 8,000 diverted misdemeanor defendants per year in the centralized Bronx Criminal Court; (2) the Midtown Community Court, which processes more than 6,000 low-level misdemeanor defendants per year who are arrested in Midtown Manhattan; and (3) the Red Hook Community Justice Center, which processes from 3,000 to 4,000 misdemeanor defendants per year who are arrested in three police precincts in southwest Brooklyn.

Study participants were either approached by researchers shortly after their cases were disposed or in the holding areas prior to their arraignment. Participation was voluntary. The interview

questionnaire consisted of 183 items covering 16 domains: criminal history, employment, education, housing/neighborhood, peer associations, impulsivity, intimate relationships, finances and money, mental health, substance abuse, family relationships, trauma, violent victimization, criminal thinking, legal cynicism, and social support/leisure time. We obtained official criminal history and six-month re-arrest data for 888 (92%) of the original sample of 964 individuals.

Summary scales and need flags were constructed using standard statistical methods, yielding simple findings regarding the prevalence of various treatment needs without having to sift through responses to every interview question separately.

Both the interview questionnaire and plan for analyzing the data were explicitly influenced by an interest in testing the Risk-Need-Responsivity model in a misdemeanor population (see especially, Andrews and Bonta 2010; Bonta and Andrews 2007). This model is a widely studied theory of criminal offending that links an individual's likelihood of recidivism to prior criminal history and seven specific "criminogenic" needs, known collectively as the "Central Eight" risk/need factors:

1. Criminal History
2. Antisocial Temperament/Impulsivity
3. Criminal Thinking/Antisocial Beliefs
4. Criminal Peer Networks
5. Education/Employment Deficits
6. Family/Relationship Problems
7. Substance Abuse
8. Lack of Prosocial Leisure Activities

Only the first factor, history of criminal behavior, is *static* in that it cannot be reversed or improved. The other seven factors are dynamic, meaning that they are amenable, in varying degrees, to change and therefore may be responsive to evidence-based treatment. By addressing specific dynamic factors through treatment or social service interventions, recidivism can be reduced. To date, empirical tests of the Risk- Need-Responsivity model tend to focus primarily on more serious offender groups (e.g., felony offenders or individuals in residential treatment or community supervision settings) rather than on the low-level misdemeanor defendants whose cases fill the courts in New York City and other jurisdictions across the country

(Natapoff, 2012). Accordingly, we sought to test the applicability of the Risk-Need-Responsivity model to a misdemeanor population. We also hypothesized that factors outside of the Central Eight, such as mental health, housing instability, and untreated trauma symptoms, might also play a role in an individual's likelihood of recidivism.

## Study Limitations

Notably, some differences exist between the misdemeanor population interviewed as part of the current study and the general New York City misdemeanor population. One difference relates to the distribution of specific charges, since the Midtown Community Court does not process misdemeanor cases arrested on charges deemed particularly serious, such as misdemeanor assault, and neither the Bronx nor Midtown programs serve domestic violence cases. Another difference has to do with the above-average likelihood that first-time misdemeanor defendants will have their cases dismissed outright in all three study sites (and hence be omitted from our sample) rather than diverted to services. Our study sample still includes some first-time defendants, but they are clearly underrepresented and the sample is thus best generalized to other high-risk misdemeanor populations, as opposed to New York City misdemeanor defendants as a whole. The risk-need profile and assessment instruments developed from this initial study were later validated on a more representative misdemeanor and felony defendant population (see Picard-Fritsche, Rempel, Kerodal, and Adler 2018).

## Profile of the Study Sample

- **Criminal History:** Almost six in ten (57%) study participants had a prior criminal conviction, and almost seven in ten (69%) had at least one prior warrant for failing to appear in court. This evidence suggests that our study accessed a chronic misdemeanor population, significantly enmeshed in the criminal justice system.
- **Criminogenic Needs:** Of the seven criminogenic needs most commonly associated with recidivism in the existing Risk-Need-Responsivity literature, the most prevalent in the present study were: (1) criminal thinking—and, especially, attitudes supportive of the use of violence and manipulation (79%); (2) an impulsive style of behavior and decision-making (67%); (3) current drug use (61%); and (4) unemployment (56%).
- **Mental Health and Trauma:** A sizable fraction of defendants showed evidence of mental health problems or a history of trauma. More than a third (35%) had received a mental health diagnosis in the past, one-quarter had been hospitalized for mental health reasons,

19% were currently in mental health treatment, 18% had attempted suicide, 37% had a history of physical, sexual, or emotional abuse victimization, and 22% flagged for Post-Traumatic Stress Syndrome (PTSD) on the broadly-used PTSD checklist, which was administered as part of our interview instrument.

- **Housing Needs:** Almost a quarter of the population was either homeless (13%) or living in a shelter (10%). Further demonstrating housing instability, less than a third (32%) of the sample had resided at their current address for four or more years.
- **Legal Cynicism:** In general, the sample demonstrated extremely negative views concerning the legitimacy of laws and the fairness of the police or courts. Across 14 individual question-items, more than half endorsed a negative view of the criminal justice system on at least eight items. For example, 72% agreed that “Most police treat some people better than others”; 66% agreed that “Laws are enforced more when some people break them than when others do”; and 64% agreed that “There are two systems of justice, one for poor people and one for the wealthy.”

## Risk Factors for Recidivism

- **Impact of the Seven Criminogenic Needs on Recidivism:** Our research largely confirmed the importance of the Central Eight factors proposed by the Risk-Need- Responsivity model.
- **Role of Violence and Manipulation:** Our sample provided qualified support for the specific criminogenic need known as “criminal thinking.” Attitudes supportive of violence and manipulation were prevalent and strongly associated with re-arrest, whereas several other classic criminal thinking domains (e.g., lack of empathy and “system blame”) were not important risk factors in the sample.
- **Impact of Criminal History on Recidivism:** In keeping with prior studies, criminal history factors dwarfed need-based factors in predicting re-arrest. However, several of the needs variables were found to be highly correlated with prior criminal history in the first place, suggesting a possible causal chain whereby underlying criminogenic needs increase the likelihood of early criminal activity, which in turn accelerates the likelihood of recidivism.

- **Additional Needs:** Although not in the traditional Risk-Need-Responsivity model, homelessness was among the most powerful risk factors for re-arrest. In keeping with prior studies, a history of mental illness and trauma did not directly predict re-arrest.

## Importance of Gender and Age

Male gender and a younger age both predicted re-arrest. Further, results pointed to vast differences in the underlying needs of women and men who are charged with misdemeanors: women had significantly fewer criminogenic needs that were most linked to recidivism (e.g., criminal history, endorsement of violence and manipulation, prior gang involvement, current drug use, or homelessness). Conversely, women had significantly greater mental health needs and histories of physical, sexual, and emotional abuse victimization; women were also significantly more likely than men to flag for PTSD. In short, while less at-risk in terms of likelihood of re-offense, many women in the criminal justice system urgently need treatment to improve their life circumstances.

## Conclusions and Recommendations

Study findings reveal a population at high-risk for repeated misdemeanor arrests, although felony and violent recidivism rates were low. The findings also reveal a high-need population. Most defendants in the sample had a history of involvement in the criminal justice system, primarily for low-level and nonviolent criminal activities. Unemployment, lack of education, housing instability, and financial stress were common. Moreover, participants did not feel safe or secure in the neighborhoods they called home and many suffered from symptoms of post-traumatic stress. Scores on legal cynicism scales reflected pervasive negative views of legal actors and the justice system more generally.

Overall, the results largely supported the applicability of the Risk-Need-Responsivity model to misdemeanor defendants in New York City, and in particular to those defendants with prior criminal histories who are diverted to community-based services. This model draws attention to the importance of treating the seven criminogenic needs in order to reduce recidivism, as well as increasing the effectiveness of treatment by addressing underlying trauma and mental health problems. However, our findings also point to refinements that could inform the development of more effective treatment for this population.

First, our results suggest attitudes supportive of violence and manipulation should receive special attention.

Second, our sample provides evidence that homelessness and housing instability should be added to the list of major criminogenic needs for misdemeanants. In other words, proactive housing policy is also a proactive crime prevention policy.

Third, our study strongly confirmed that men have greater criminogenic needs than women, but women have greater needs in areas that are important to their overall well-being, mental health and trauma specifically. Accordingly, the results support gender-responsive and trauma-sensitive interventions. In addition, both gender and age— factors sometimes excluded from risk assessment tools—proved important for predicting re- arrest.

Fourth, while not directly predictive of recidivism, participants' high scores on legal cynicism scales reflected a pervasive pattern of negative interactions with representatives of the criminal justice system, leading to perceptions of the system as biased and unfair.

## Chapter 1

# Introduction and Methodology

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Nationally, even after more than a decade of gradually declining caseloads, an estimated 18.1 million criminal cases were arraigned in 2015. Of these, only one in five cases was a felony, 77% were misdemeanors, and 3% were other lesser offenses (Schauffler et al. 2016). In New York City in 2016, just five low-level charges accounted for over 100,000 new filings and represented 41% of the total criminal caseload: committing petty larceny, jumping the subway turnstile, possessing a small amount of marijuana, possessing a small amount of other drugs, and driving without a license (Independent Commission on NYC Criminal Justice and Incarceration Reform 2017).

The outsized number of low-level misdemeanor cases that are subject to arrest and court processing places enormous pressure on resource-strained courts, prosecutors, and defense agencies to achieve speedy dispositions. This pressure leads to large numbers of rapid guilty pleas. It also leads to missed opportunities to address the underlying problems that drive low-level criminal behavior (Boruchowitz et al. 2009; Carroll 2015; Feeley 1979; Kohler-Hausmann 2013; Natapoff 2012).

Absent thoughtful intervention, misdemeanor defendants may land in a chronic cycle of untreated problems and repeated low-level misconduct. Among New York City misdemeanor defendants studied as part of the current research, 40% were re-arrested over just a six-month period of time, but only 13% of the total were re-arrested for a felony and only 2.6% for a violent felony. In short, most defendants in our sample did not pose a sizable threat to public safety, yet exemplified the revolving door of low-level arrest and re-arrest.

If the criminal justice system was, instead, refashioned to interrupt that cycle with services and treatment for low-level defendants, what kinds of services would be necessary? Unfortunately, too little is known about the drivers of misdemeanor offending, with much of the existing literature focused on the needs of more serious felony populations. What little evidence we have points to a wide range of treatable needs in areas such as substance abuse, homelessness, mental illness, and employment deficits (Gehring and Van Voorhis 2014).

## Purpose of the Current Research

Through a case study in New York City, the current research sought to gain a better understanding of criminal risk and associated treatment needs in urban misdemeanor populations.

### Research Questions

**Needs Profile** What are the most prevalent needs of misdemeanor defendants, in particular with respect to behavioral health disorders, anti-social or impulsive attitudes, negative views of the law and legal institutions, and educational or employment needs?

**Risk Factors** Of the prevalent needs, which are the most “criminogenic? In other words, which needs, if they are not addressed through appropriate treatment, are most closely tied to recidivism among misdemeanor defendants?

**Risk-Need-Responsivity Model** To what extent does the Risk-Need-Responsivity model accurately explain the underlying factors that drive misdemeanor recidivism? Do any additional needs not anticipated by this popular theory of criminal behavior nonetheless carry importance?

**Misdemeanor Sub-Populations** To what extent does the risk and need profile of misdemeanor defendants vary by gender or age, providing a potential rationale for gender-responsive or other individualized or subgroup-based treatment strategies?

## Theoretical Backdrop

We approached the study through lens of the Risk-Need-Responsivity model. Rooted in behavioral psychology and supported by nearly three decades of research (see, e.g., Bonta and Andrews 2007; Andrews and Bonta 2010; Looman and Abracen 2013), the model rests on three fundamental principles:

1. The *Risk Principle* holds that treatment is most effective with individuals at a higher risk of reoffending.
2. The *Need Principle* holds that treatment should target those needs that, if left unaddressed, are most likely to fuel ongoing criminal behavior and lead to re-arrest.
3. The *Responsivity Principle* holds that treatment should be tailored to the characteristics and learning styles of the individual.

## The “Central Eight” Risk-Need Factors

For purposes of the current research project, an especially important aspect of the Risk-Need-Responsivity model is its postulation of eight specific risk-need factors, known as the “Central Eight,” which have been repeatedly shown to contribute to recidivism:

1. Criminal History
2. Antisocial Temperament/Impulsivity
3. Criminal Thinking/Antisocial Beliefs
4. Criminal Peer Networks
5. Education/Employment Deficits
6. Family/Relationship Problems
7. Substance Abuse
8. Lack of Prosocial Leisure Activities

Only the first factor, history of criminal behavior, is *static* in that it cannot be reversed or improved. The other seven factors are *dynamic*, meaning that they are amenable, in varying degrees, to change—and, therefore, are believed to be responsive to evidence-based treatment. These latter seven factors are sometimes termed the “seven criminogenic needs” (Bonta and Andrews 2007). Ultimately, criminogenic needs are viewed as an opportunity for targeted rehabilitation that might interrupt an individual’s cycle of recidivism. Additionally, the Risk-Need-Responsivity model considers strategies that address other needs, such as trauma and mental illness, to be important elements of effective treatment and risk reduction, even though these latter needs do not directly predict recidivism.

## Exploring Recidivism in Misdemeanor Populations

Risk-Need-Responsivity theory has received strong empirical support in studies of both adult and juvenile populations (Andrews et al., 1990; Andrews and Bonta 2010; Bonta, Law, and Hanson 1998; Dowden and Andrews 1999; Lipsey 2009; Lipsey, Landenberger and Wilson 2007; Lowenkamp, Latessa and Holsinger 2006). Yet, as introduced above, the model remains relatively understudied among low-level misdemeanants. For this reason, even though our research adopts the model as a guiding analytic framework, we also explored many other factors with potential relevance to the cycle of arrest and re-arrest among misdemeanants (e.g., legal cynicism, mental health, victimization, housing, and other environmental factors).

# Research Methodology

## Assessment Instrument

Drawing on Risk-Need-Responsivity theory, a comprehensive 183-item risk and needs assessment was developed and administered to 964 defendants facing misdemeanor or lesser charges in New York City. Many of the items in the instrument are drawn or adapted from existing risk-needs assessment tools, combined with input from clinical, academic and legal experts affiliated with the Center for Court Innovation and with universities and nongovernmental agencies across the country. The final instrument covered demographic characteristics and 16 distinct risk or need domains. Table 1.1 lists the domains in the order in which they appeared in the tool, and lays out models that the domain draws on, as well as specific scales in the literature that were replicated or adapted, where applicable.

## Data Collection

We administered the assessment instrument at three specific locations. Two were community courts, respectively the Midtown Community Court (described in Sviridoff et al. 2001) and the Red Hook Community Justice Center (described in Lee et al. 2013), and one a misdemeanor diversion program located in the Bronx Criminal Court.<sup>1</sup> We thus obtained a citywide sample, although it should be noted that this is not a representative sample of all misdemeanor defendants in New York City, as the eligibility criteria for participation in the community court programs excludes some parts of the misdemeanor population. All of the study participants, except for those interviewed in holding cells at the Red Hook Community Justice Center and the Midtown Community Court, had been ordered to a social service or community service intervention as part of a mandate or condition of their sentence. Because

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<sup>1</sup> The Midtown Community Court sees all low-level misdemeanor and violation cases (excluding select misdemeanors deemed serious or violent) that are arrested in Midtown Manhattan and arraigned during weekdays when the court is in session; the Red Hook Community Justice Center sees all misdemeanors and violations—without exception based on type of misdemeanor—that are arraigned when the court is in session in several southwest Brooklyn neighborhoods, including Red Hook, Cobble Hill, Park Slope, Gowanus, and Sunset Park. Bronx Community Solutions, an alternative to incarceration program, serves about 10,000 misdemeanor defendants each year who are ordered to perform community service or to receive social services in the Bronx. The Bronx program serves a relatively large and diverse sample of misdemeanor defendants, but excludes misdemeanors facing domestic violence charges.

there is lower likelihood that a first-time offender will be diverted to programming in these sites, our sample skewed toward the higher risk range.

## **Participant Recruitment**

Research participants were typically recruited *after* their court arraignment and disposition to community service or social services in one of the three participating programs, although some participants were recruited from pre-arraignment holding cells. Research participation was voluntary, subject to informed consent, and all participants received a \$20 stipend for participation. Study subjects were eligible if they were 18 years old or older and had a current misdemeanor or lesser charge. The consent and survey administration took place in semi-private rooms in each of the courthouses, with multiple survey participants taking the survey at one time. The survey took approximately forty-five minutes and was administered via ACASI (a self-administered audio interview program) and therefore responses were anonymous. Surveying took place in the Bronx site between May and August 2013, and in Midtown and Red Hook sites between September 2013 and January 2014.

Of the 964 total interviews, 382 were conducted in the Bronx, 308 at Red Hook, and 274 at the Midtown Community Court. Since participants were free to refuse to answer any question, the sample size was lower than 964 for many individual items. Of the total 964 interviews, only 888 cases could be matched to criminal history and re-arrest data provided. In general, to maintain a comparable sample across analyses, most results are computed using these 888 cases.

**Table 1.1. Comprehensive Risk-Needs Assessment Tool: Domains and Models**

Assessment Tool Domain	# of items	RNR Domains(s)	Model Tools	Scale Replication
1. Criminal History	12	Criminal History	LSI-R; TCU CRHSFORM; GAIN; ORAS	None
2. Employment	8	Education and Employment	COMPAS; GAIN	None
3. Education	8	Education and Employment	GAIN; WRNA; ORAS Self-Report	None
4. Housing/Neighborhood	12	Not in RNR model	ORAS-CST; COMPAS	None
5. Peer Associations	8	Antisocial peer networks	COMPAS	Partial scale
6. Impulsivity	7	Antisocial temperament	UPPS-P	Partial scale
7. Intimate Relationships	6	Family and marital problems	WRNA; TCU A-FMFRFORM; GAIN	Partial scale
8. Finances and Money	8	Not in RNR model		None
9. Mental Health	13	Not in RNR model	WRNA; BJMHS	Full scale
10. Substance Abuse	20	Substance abuse	TCUDS II; WRNA: Substance Abuse; COMPAS; GAIN	None
11. Family Relationships	13	Family and marital problems	WRNA; TCU A-FMFRFORM; COMPAS	Partial scale
12. Trauma	17	Not in RNR model	PCL -C	Full scale
13. Violent Victimization	2	Not in RNR model		None
14. Legal Cynicism	15	Criminal Thinking	TCU CTS	Partial scale
15. Criminal Thinking	15	Criminal Thinking	TCU CTS; COMPAS Criminal Attitudes	Partial scale
16. Leisure Time/Social Isolation	8	Lack of Prosocial Recreation	COMPAS	Partial scale

Sources for model tools and scales: BMHJS: Brief Jail Mental Health Screen by Policy Research Associates, Inc.; GAIN: Global Assessment of Individual Needs, owned by Lighthouse Institute, [www.gaincc.org](http://www.gaincc.org); COMPAS: Correctional Offender Management Profiling for Alternative Sanctions, developed by Northpointe, owned by Equivant, <http://www.equivant.com/>; LSI-R: Level of Service Inventory, owned by MHS.com; ORAS: Ohio Risk Assessment System, developed at the University of Cincinnati, available through Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections: <http://www.drc.ohio.gov/oras>; PCL-C: PTSD Checklist - Civilian version, [ptsd.va.gov](http://ptsd.va.gov); Texas Christian University Scales (TCUDS, TCU CTS, TCU CHR), available at: <https://ibr.tcu.edu/>; UPPS-P: Urgency, Premeditation, Perseverance, Sensation-seeking, Positive Urgency Measure, by the Nathan Kline Institute; WRNA: Women's Risk Needs Assessment, developed by the University of Cincinnati, <http://www.uc.edu/womenoffenders.html>

## **Official Data**

Research participants were asked to share identifying data – their name, date of birth and New York State Identification Number (NYSID), allowing the research team to link their survey responses to official criminal records. Official criminal records were used to confirm criminal history variables in the assessment as well as to construct recidivism variables relevant to the risk profile presented in Chapter 3. After all interviews were complete, researchers submitted the interview dataset, including unique identifiers for each study participant, to the New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) for matching to criminal records data. DCJS returned to the researchers a de-identified dataset including complete criminal history for each research participant.

## **Description of the Sample**

Table 1.2 provides a demographic overview of the full study sample. The average age of the of research participants was 35 years, with 31% ages 18 to 24. Almost three-quarters of the sample (74%) was male. The sample was 42% black, 34% Hispanic, 10% non-Hispanic white, and 15% other racial or ethnic identities. Over two-thirds had graduated from high school or obtained a GED and 45% were currently employed. Half of the sample was experiencing housing instability at the time of the study. Overall, the study sample was relatively young, primarily male and nonwhite, and faced significant employment and housing challenges.

As with misdemeanants generally in New York City, more than half of the sample consisted of just three common low-level charges: petty larceny (22%), theft of services (generally turnstile jumping, 18%), and misdemeanor drug possession (12%). Nearly all of the remaining charges were also nonviolent, with only 7% arraigned on misdemeanor assault, menacing, stalking, or related crimes against persons.

## **Sample Differences by Research Site**

In general, the findings were relatively homogenous across sites. Among the few notable site-specific differences, respondents from the Midtown Manhattan site were significantly more likely than respondents in the two other sites to be older, black, homeless, and to have a high school degree or GED. By contrast, the Bronx respondents averaged the most extensive criminal histories of the three sites, while the Red Hook respondents averaged the least extensive criminal histories. In addition, the Bronx saw significantly more misdemeanor drug possession and significantly fewer petty larceny cases than the two other sites.

**Table 1.2. Sample Characteristics**

<b>Total Sample Size</b>	<b>964</b>
Average Age	35
Male	74%
<b>Race</b>	
Black (Non-Hispanic)	42%
Hispanic/Latino	34%
White (Non-Hispanic)	10%
Other	15%
Currently Employed	45%
Graduated High School or Earned GED	67%
<b>Living Situation</b>	
Homeless (street or car)	13%
Transitional Living	37%
Permanent Residence	50%
<b>Current Charge Type</b>	
Petty Larceny	22%
Theft of Services	18%
Misdemeanor Drug Possession	12%
Other nonviolent misdemeanor	41%
Violent Misdemeanor	7%

## Analysis

As summarized in Table 1.1, the full assessment tool was an amalgamation of formal scales available in the public domain, original scales developed by the project staff, and individual items or partial scales taken from existing evidence-based assessments. The primary analytic task of the research was to reduce the data to short scales and individual items that were important for understanding the misdemeanor population (i.e., items that represented needs that are either highly prevalent in the sample, or that Risk-Need-Responsivity theory or preliminary analyses suggested were related to recidivism).

## Summary Scales and Flags

In an effort to make sense of the prevalence and significance of risk-need factors in each domain, we sought to create summary scales, or singular measures, in place of reporting results on a potentially unmanageable and confusing array of specific items.

Reliability tests were run on each of the 16 domains to establish scales. A reliability test is a statistical test designed to measure the strength of the correlations among individual items that are believed to be theoretically related. As a general rule, we sought reliability statistics of .700 or higher, connoting strong inter-correlations among the constituent question-items. In plain language, scales with high reliability statistics contain items that reliably hold together to measure a singular overarching concept; for example, the 14 items that constitute our “legal cynicism” scale can be said to illuminate a singular phenomenon. Ultimately, nine scales were created and had strong enough reliability for analysis.

Appendix B describes all summary scales that were created in detail, including the resulting reliability statistics and the constituent question-items from the original interview instrument. In total, nine summary scales were created representing each of the following phenomena: 1) Criminal History; (2) Impulsive Decision-Making; (3) Criminal Thinking (Violence and Manipulation); (4) Criminal Thinking (Entitlement and External Blame); (5) Criminal Thinking (Lack of Empathy); (6) Antisocial Peer Networks; (7) Antisocial Family Members; (8) Positive Family Relationships; (9) Legal Cynicism.

Where scale creation was not possible, single or multiple assessment items from each domain were analyzed using simple descriptive techniques, depending on which (if any) items from that domain were predictive of recidivism or appeared to signify a substantial need pattern in the sample. This strategy applied to the following domains: housing, education, employment, and family relationships. Some domains that were theorized to be important to the population did not yield useful information and were dropped from the profile (e.g. financial, social isolation/leisure time).

Ultimately, those needs that were highly prevalent in the sample, dovetailed with the Risk-Need-Responsivity model, or are key responsivity factors discussed in the literature (e.g., mental health, trauma, or housing) were retained in the analysis, detailed in the next chapter.

## Chapter 2

# Needs Profile

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This chapter presents an in-depth needs profile of all misdemeanor defendants in our sample. The first section focuses on the “Central Eight” risk-need factors emphasized by the Risk-Need-Responsivity model. The second section explores the prevalence of mental health and trauma symptoms, along with additional needs, characteristics, and respondent attitudes. The final section indicates the extent to which respondent needs varied by gender and age.

## The Risk-Need-Responsivity Model

Major findings on the “Central Eight” Risk-Need-Responsivity factors are as follows:

### Criminal History

Almost 60% of the sample had a prior felony or misdemeanor conviction. Much of the sample showed evidence of chronic—and recent—misdemeanor offending, with nearly a third having three or more misdemeanor or lower level violation convictions in the past three years alone.

**Table 2.1. Criminal History**

	%
Prior criminal conviction (felony or misdemeanor)	57%
Prior misdemeanor or violation convictions in past 3 years	
Zero (0)	40%
One (1)	20%
Two (2)	10%
Three (3) to Nine (9)	26%
Ten (10) or more	5%
Current open (pending) criminal case	39%
Prior warrant for failure to appear/absconding	69%
Prior sentence to jail or prison	51%

## Educational or Employment Problems

Just over half (56%) of respondents were not employed at the time of the current arrest. Although only one-third lacked a high school degree or GED, many reported a history of learning disorders or school problems, with 27% reporting a history of special education or services, 19% reporting that they were diagnosed with a learning disability, and more than half (51%) indicating that they were suspended or expelled from school at some point.

**Table 2.2. Education and Employment Problems**

Education Deficits	
Lacks high school degree or GED	32%
Ever in special education classes or services	27%
Ever diagnosed with a learning disability	19%
Ever suspended or expelled from school	51%
Employment Problems	
Not currently employed	56%
Ever fired from a job	21%

## Impulsivity

Impulsivity was measured as a proxy for “antisocial temperament,” one of the seven criminogenic factors. A proclivity for impulsive decision-making, addictive behaviors, and low self-control was prevalent in the sample. For example, more than half of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they have “trouble resisting cravings” (57%), and “often act without thinking” (52%).

**Table 2.3. Impulsive Decisionmaking**

	(% agree or strongly agree)
I have trouble resisting cravings.	57%
When I am upset I often act without thinking.	52%
When I am very sad, I tend to do things that cause problems in my life.	42%
When I am really excited, I tend to not think of the consequences of my actions.	38%
When I am very angry, I feel it is okay to give into cravings or overindulge.	38%

## Criminal Thinking

Items drawn or adapted from criminal thinking scales in the existing tools were divided into three sub-scales.<sup>2</sup> The results indicate high endorsement of attitudes supportive of responding to conflict using violence or manipulation. For example, 58% agreed that they “wouldn’t hesitate to hit or threaten people” as retaliation; another 29% agreed with the statement: “Some people must be treated roughly or beaten up [to send] a message.”

**Table 2.4. Criminal Thinking**

	(% agree or strongly agree)
<b>Violence and Manipulation</b>	
I wouldn't hesitate to hit or threaten people if they...hurt my friends or family.	58%
The trouble with getting close to people is they start making demands on you.	40%
I am really good at talking my way out of problems.	33%
I have the ability to "sweet talk" people to get what I want.	29%
Some people must be treated roughly or beaten up to send them a clear message.	29%
<b>Entitlement &amp; External Blame for Problems</b>	
...people get into trouble...because society has not given...education, jobs...a future.	52%
Society owes you a better life.	27%
You have paid your dues in life ...therefore justified in taking what you want.	17%
A hungry person has a right to steal.	17%
It's okay to break the law to pay for things you need.	10%
<b>Lack of Empathy</b>	
You do not get upset when you hear someone has lost everything in an accident.	14%
It doesn't bother me to see someone get hurt.	10%
I [do not] feel bad if I break a promise I have made.	7%
Seeing someone in pain [does not make] you feel concerned.	7%

<sup>2</sup> As indicated in Table 1.1, the interview instrument specifically drew on criminal thinking items developed by Texas Christian University (TCU CTS) and Northpointe (developers of the Correctional Offender Management Profiling for Alternative Sanctions (COMPAS)).

## Substance Abuse

More than four in five respondents (82%) had ever used illegal drugs, and more than half reported regular drug use—about once per week for 17% of respondents and daily drug use for 37%. Marijuana and alcohol were the mostly commonly cited drugs of choice.

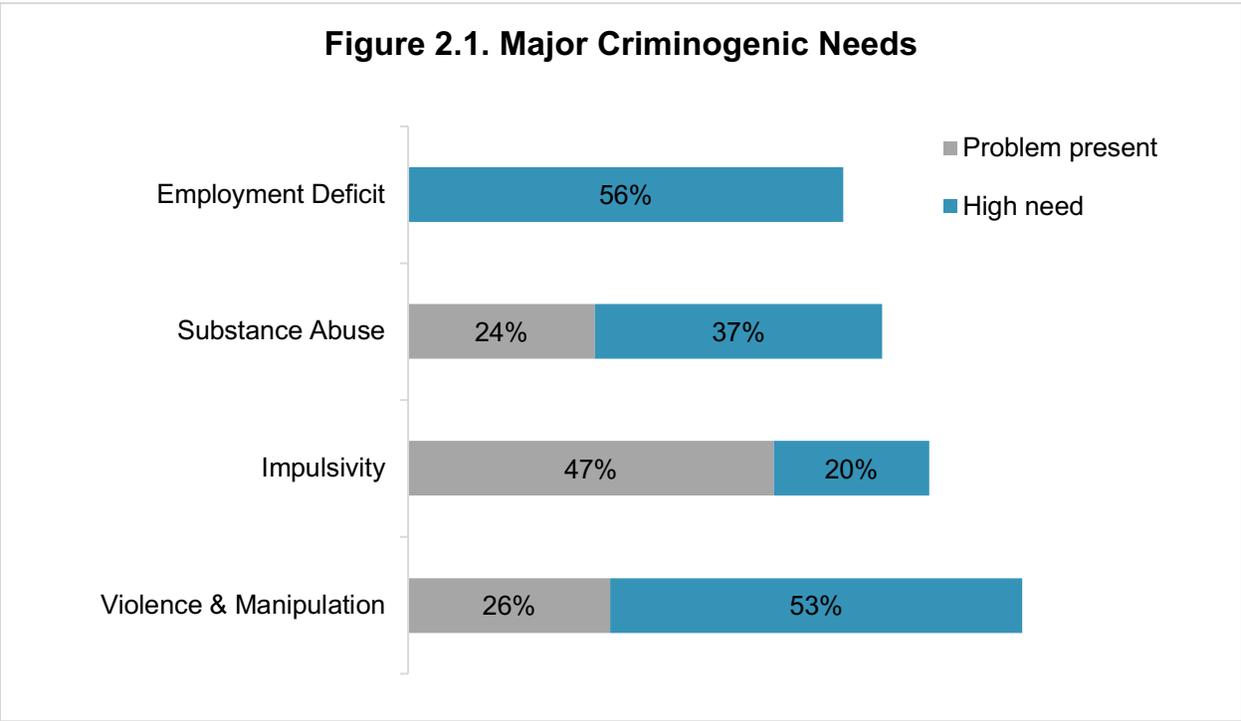
**Table 2.5. Substance Abuse**

Ever used illegal drugs	82%
<b>Frequency of current drug use</b>	
Never	27%
Only a few times per year	11%
About once per month	8%
About once per week	16%
About daily (4 or more times per week)	37%
<b>Drug of choice (if currently using drugs)</b>	
Marijuana	48%
Alcohol	24%
Heroin	12%
Cocaine or crack	12%
Other	4%

Figure 2.1 provides a graphical representation of the Central Eight risk-need factors most prevalent in the study sample. The greatest needs were in the areas of criminal thinking—with 79% of respondents expressing views that endorsed the use of violence and manipulation. More than half the sample also flagged for problems with impulsive decision-making (67%), substance abuse (61%), and unemployment (56%). By contrast, exposure to antisocial peers and to negative family influences were among the less prevalent problems in our sample. Ultimately, the study sample provides partial support for the Risk-Need-Responsivity model—nearly all criminogenic needs included in the model were found in the misdemeanor population, but not all highly prevalent or significantly associated with recidivism.

## Other Key Need Areas

Other key need areas identified in the sample include mental health, trauma, housing instability, and legal cynicism.



**Mental Health and Trauma**

Results show that nearly one in five respondents (18%) reported a suicide attempt, which is about six times the estimated 3% reported in the general population (Winkur & Black, 1992). More than a third of the sample had received a mental health or psychiatric diagnosis, a quarter had been hospitalized in the past for mental health reasons, and 19% were in mental health treatment at the time of the interview.

The results also point to a widespread history of victimization among those in our sample, with about a one-third (34%) having witnessed a shooting in their lifetime, 23% reporting a history of physical abuse, and 15% reporting a history of sexual abuse.

Presumably related to their history of exposure to potentially traumatic events, just under one-quarter of respondents (22%) screened positive for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder on the PCL-C trauma checklist. The most common trauma symptoms were feeling “super-alert,” having sleep problems, and seeking to avoid talking about or feeling upset when reminded of a stressful experience.

**Table 2.6. Mental Health and Trauma**

	%
<b>Mental Health</b>	
Ever attempted suicide	18%
Ever had mental health diagnosis	35%
Ever hospitalized for mental health	25%
Currently in mental health treatment	19%
<b>Trauma</b>	
Victim of violent crime in past year	18%
Ever seen someone shot	34%
Victim of physical abuse	23%
Victim of sexual abuse	15%
Victim of emotional abuse	29%
Flags for PTSD on trauma checklist	22%

## Housing

Thirteen percent of respondents reported that they were homeless, with an additional 10% living in a shelter, and 9% living in public housing. Demonstrating significant instability in housing arrangements, less than a third (32%) of the sample had spent four or more years continuously at their current address. This lack of stable housing highlights a major need for criminal justice populations that has—to-date—been under-acknowledged by the field.

**Table 2.7. Housing**

	%
Homeless	13%
Living in a long-term shelter	10%
Living in public housing	9%
<b>Housing stability</b>	
One year or less at current address	38%
One (1) to three (3) years at current address	17%
Four (4) or more years at current address	32%

## Legal Cynicism

A pattern of negative perceptions of legal actors and the justice system (i.e., “legal cynicism”) was common in our sample. For seven of the 14 individual items included in our summary legal cynicism scale, more than half of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with a negative view of the legal system; and for 13 of the 14 items, more than 45% agreed with

the given negative view. We created a legal cynicism flag based on a mean response of 3.00 or higher (on a 1-5 scale) to the 14 items. Based on this coding, 76% of respondents flagged for legal cynicism, with 46 % of respondents flagging for a “high need” in this area. Table 2.9 presents detailed results from the scale.

Previous research has found that when individuals perceive the justice system as legitimate, they are more likely to engage in law-abiding behavior and cooperate with the police (Sunshine and Tyler 2003) and the court system (Canada and Hiday 2014). Perceptions of procedural fairness have also recently been linked to reduced recidivism among youth in probation (Penner et al. 2014) to fewer mental health problems among prisoners (Beijersbergen et al. 2014). In short, widespread negative perceptions of the justice system can have real public safety consequences.

**Table 2.9. Legal Cynicism**

	(% agree or strongly agree)
Anything can be fixed in court if you have the right connections.	50%
In general, this country's justice system was designed to treat everyone equally. [Disagree]	54%
Police do worse things than the criminals they lock up.	64%
It is unfair that you are imprisoned for crimes when bank presidents, lawyers and politicians get away with their crimes.	71%
Prosecutors often tell witnesses to lie in court.	47%
Laws do not protect people like me.	47%
Laws only protect white people.	23%
Laws only protect rich people.	47%
Money can buy you protection.	71%
There are two systems of justice, one for poor people and one for the wealthy.	64%
Laws are enforced more when some people break them than when others do.	66%
Most police treat people with respect. [Disagree]	48%
Most police treat some people better than others.	72%
Most police are dishonest.	47%
Mean response (1-5 scale)	3.4
Problem not present	24%
Problem present	30%
High need	46%

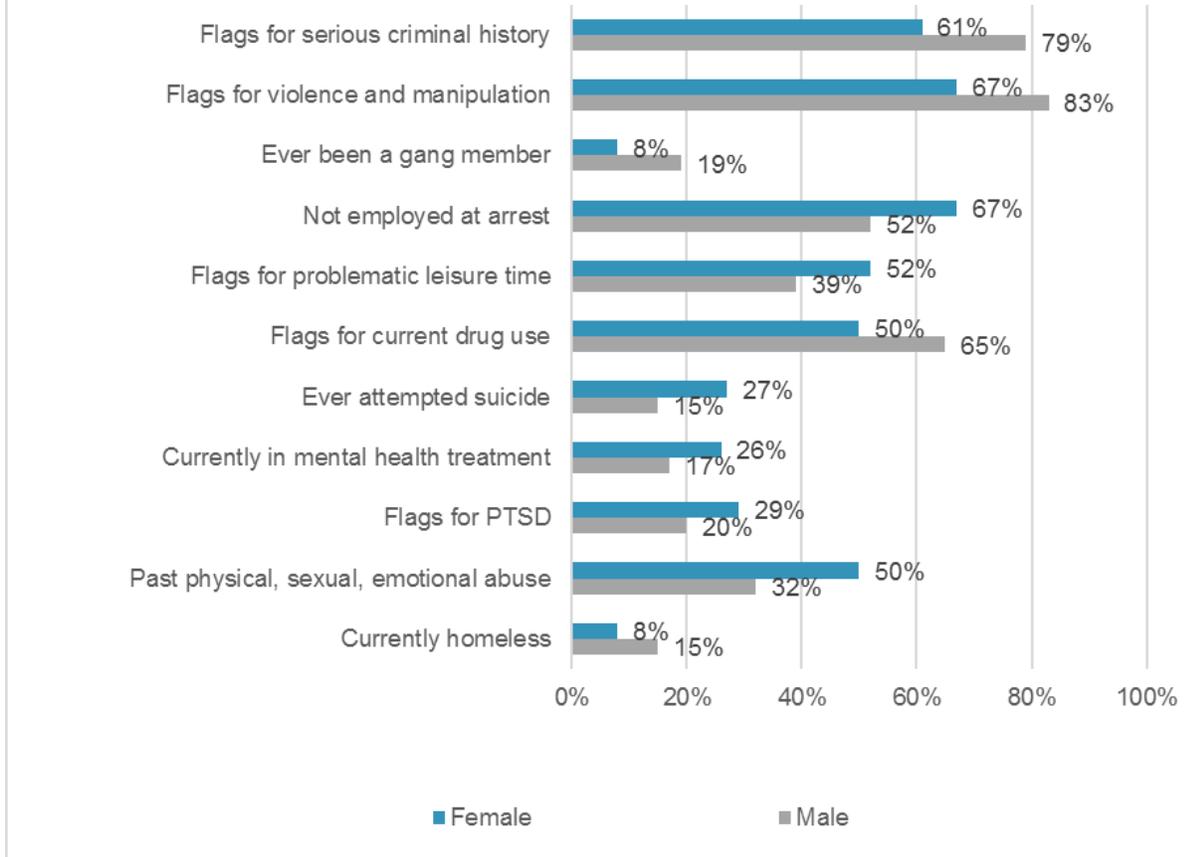
## Influence of Gender and Age

Finally, we examined variations in defendants' needs by gender and age. We hypothesized, as has been found in other literature, that the needs of women and men in the criminal justice system would differ, as would those of younger defendants as compared to older defendants. In creating our assessment, we drew from the Women's Risk Needs Assessment (as seen in Table 1.1), which specifically focuses on women's distinct pathways to crime.

### Women

As Figure 2.2 illustrates, significant variation was observed in the needs of women and men in the sample. Women were significantly *less* likely than men to have an extensive criminal history, to endorse violence and manipulation, to have antisocial peers or a history of gang involvement, to use drugs, or to be homeless. Conversely, women were significantly *more* likely than men to be unemployed, to face problems during their leisure time, to have indications of mental health or post-traumatic stress problems, and to have a history of abuse. Overall, women had fewer of the most important criminogenic needs identified in the Central Eight framework, but were more likely to face complicating clinical issues such as trauma or mental health problems.

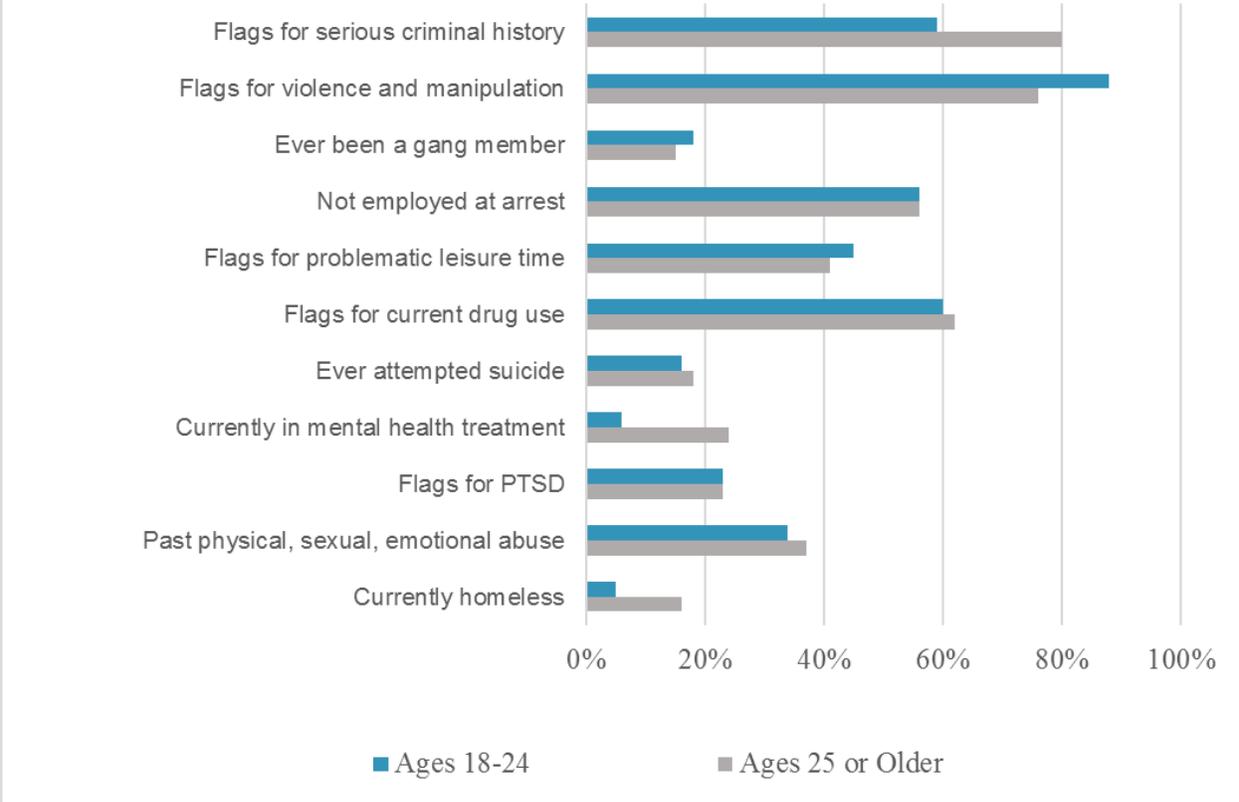
Figure 2.2. Need Prevalence by Gender



## Youth

Finally, as shown in Figure 2.3, we found only a small number of differences in the needs profiles of youth ages 18-24 and older adults. Youth averaged significantly shorter criminal histories (logically, since their age means they had less time to accumulate priors), and youth were also significantly more likely to endorse violence and manipulation. Older defendants were significantly more likely to be homeless and to be receiving mental health treatment at the time of arrest.

Figure 2.3. Need Prevalence by Age



## Conclusion

Our findings generally suggest many misdemeanor defendants are *high* need, in terms of those need factors that fuel justice system involvement or are implicated in effective treatment. Thus, even though misdemeanor offenses are often not severe and do not warrant long sentences, there is a high chance that many misdemeanants will be quickly drawn back into the justice system. Our findings regarding women and youth further suggest that misdemeanor defendants cannot be treated as a monolithic group, with the same risk-need profile, and that care should therefore be taken in conducting thorough needs assessments and creating tailored interventions for specific groups of defendants.

## Chapter 3

# Predicting Recidivism

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More than one-third of our study sample was re-arrested within six months of their interview. Notably, most re-arrests were at the misdemeanor level, with only 13% of the total re-arrested on a felony charge and less than 3% on a violent felony charge. The goal of this chapter is to explore which of the defendant needs identified in Chapter 2 are criminogenic (associated with a higher likelihood of recidivism). We also specifically sought to test the applicability of the Risk-Need-Responsivity model to misdemeanants by determining whether the Central Eight risk-need factors were the primary predictors of recidivism in our sample.

Table 3.1 shows the results of three logistic regression models developed to predict recidivism using different combinations of static risk and dynamic needs factors. The first model tests the Risk-Need-Responsivity model specifically by analyzing the predictive power of *only* the seven criminogenic needs postulated by the model (Bonta and Andrews 2007). The second model adds select “minor” or “non-criminogenic” needs, including mental illness, trauma, homelessness, and legal cynicism. The third model adds criminal history, age, and gender—i.e., static factors that generally predict recidivism but are not amenable to change and hence do not constitute “needs.”<sup>1</sup> To facilitate interpretation of the models, blue shading indicates a modest effect that approaches but does not reach statistical significance ( $p < .10$ ). Red shading indicates a large and significant effect ( $p < .05$ ).

## Major Findings

### Criminogenic Needs

Collectively, five of the seven criminogenic needs hypothesized by the Risk-Need-Responsivity model were confirmed to predict re-arrest in the current sample.<sup>2</sup> The strongest

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<sup>1</sup> Exploratory models whose results are not shown included additional needs discussed in the previous chapter. If a need measure does not appear in Table 3.1, except where otherwise stated, this generally means that it was tested in exploratory models but found not to be significant.

<sup>2</sup> The two criminogenic need factor from the original RNR model that were weak to non-significant predictors of recidivism in our sample are problematic use of leisure time and antisocial temperament as measured by an impulsivity scale. It is possible that, in both cases, the findings result from the design of the interview questions being insufficient to measure the originally hypothesized criminogenic needs.

predictors drawing from the model were a history of gang involvement, problems in an intimate relationship, and lack of a high school degree or GED. Endorsement of attitudes supporting violence and manipulation, current unemployment, and substance abuse also increased the probability of re-arrest, but with less predictive strength. The two exceptions were “lack of prosocial leisure activities” and “antisocial temperament” (as measured by an impulsivity scale), neither of which were significant predictors of re-arrest.

## **Impact of Homelessness**

Although not a factor in the classic Risk-Need-Responsivity model, current homelessness was among the most powerful risk factors for re-arrest ( $p < .001$ ) in our sample, and was also confirmed as a predictive factor in a companion piece that draws on the same dataset (Picard-Fritsche, Rempel, Kerodal, and Adler 2018). Housing instability, broadly defined as living at one’s address for less than a year, was also modestly associated with re-arrest in the current sample.

## **Static Factors**

In keeping with other recent studies of recidivism prediction (e.g., see Andrews and Bonta 2007; Laura and John Arnold Foundation 2014; Reich, Picard-Fritsche, Barber-Rioja and Rotter 2016), criminal history factors dwarfed dynamic need factors in predicting re-arrest. Additionally, other static factors such as younger age and male sex were significant predictors of recidivism. In fact, as shown in the third model in Table 3.1, age, sex, and criminal history alone explained more than twice as much variation in the likelihood of re-arrest as the 14 need factors combined.

## **Mental Health, Trauma and Re-arrest**

Factors such as receiving mental health treatment, flagging for PTSD on the trauma checklist, and other measures of mental illness had no relationship to recidivism. In short, our findings regarding factors related to mental health dovetail with the Risk-Needs-Responsivity model which posits that mental illness is not a direct predictor of re-arrest.

**Table 3.1. Predictors of Re-Arrest within Six Months**

	Model 1 Criminogenic Needs	Model 2 Additional Needs	Model 3 Static Factors
<b>Sample Size</b>	<b>652</b>	<b>652</b>	<b>652</b>
<b>Cumulative Variance Explained<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>28%</b>
<b>Seven Criminogenic Needs</b>			
Impulsive decision-making scale	0.055	0.089	0.072
Violence and manipulation scale	.066+	.068+	.077+
Antisocial peers scale	0.103	0.104	-0.014
Ever a gang member	.590*	.605*	.449+
Intimate partner status <sup>2</sup>	.440***	.385*	.435**
Currently unemployed	.294+	.297+	0.249
Lacks high school degree	.360*	0.283	.358+
Problematic use of leisure time (on 1-4 scale) <sup>3</sup>	-.125+	-0.103	-0.092
Currently use drugs	.417+	.445+	0.372
<b>Additional Needs</b>			
Homeless		1.028***	.933**
Ever attempted suicide		-.548*	-.474+
Currently receiving mental health treatment		0.009	-0.134
Flags for PTSD on trauma checklist		-0.174	0.009
Legal cynicism scale		-0.004	-0.003
<b>Static Factors</b>			
Criminal history scale			.233***
Age			-.021**
Male sex			.447+
<i>Constant</i>	-1.955***	-1.897***	-2.570***

+ p < .10, \* p < .05, \*\* p < .01, \*\*\* p < .001

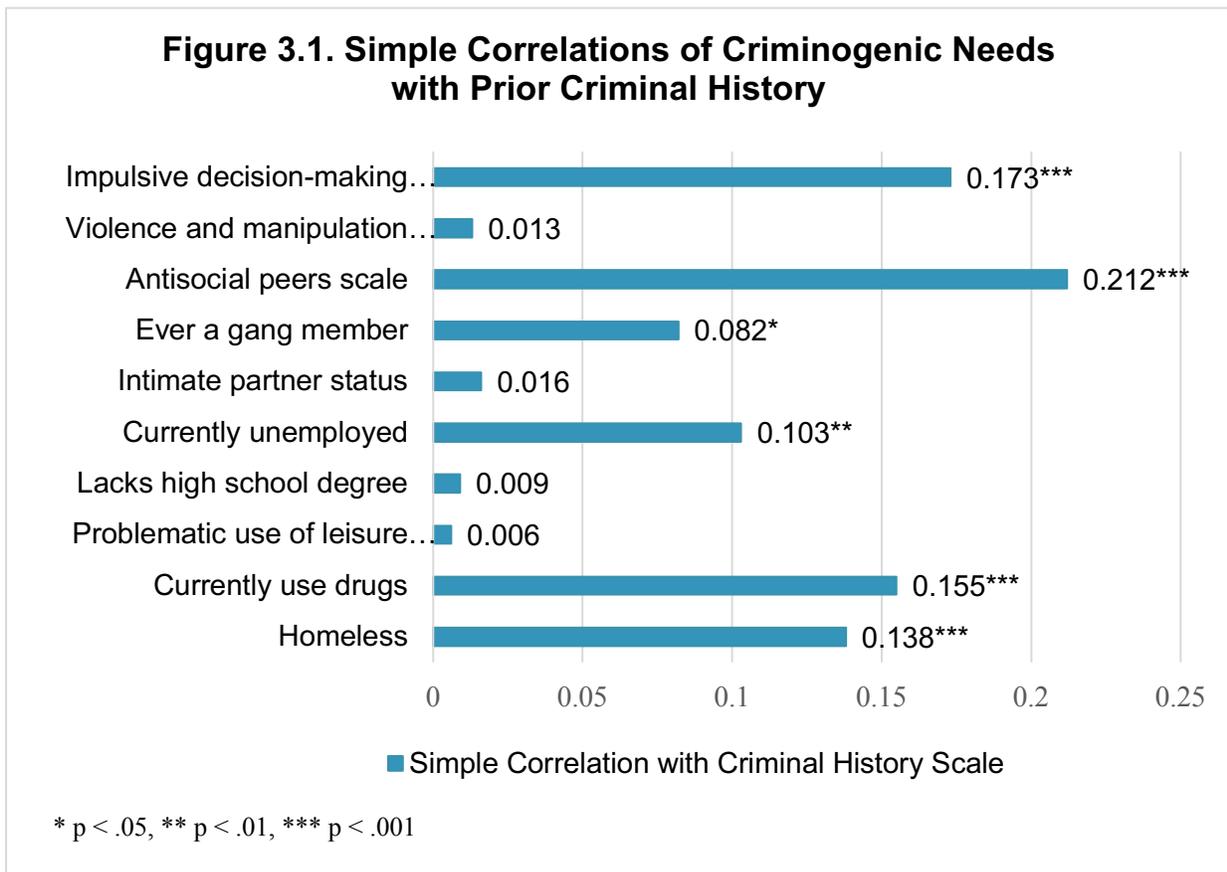
Note: All three models were produced by a single logistic regression, run in steps. Coefficients are unstandardized regression coefficients.

<sup>1</sup> Percents based on Naglekerke R Squared values, which indicate the amount of variance in the outcome (re-arrest over six months) that is explained by the variables in each model.

<sup>2</sup> Intimate partner status is a three-value continuous index, where 0 = has intimate partner, 1 = does not have intimate partner, and 2 = does not have intimate partner and went through a break up or divorce in the past year.

<sup>3</sup> Intimate partner status is a three-value continuous index, where 0 = has intimate partner, 1 = does not have intimate partner, and 2 = does not have intimate partner and went through a break up or divorce in the past year.

Finally, the research team wished to explore the possibility of a more complex relationship between underlying needs and recidivism by examining correlations between criminal history and dynamic needs factors. As shown in Figure 3.1, most of the “classic” seven criminogenic needs—i.e., impulsive decision-making, antisocial peers, history of gang involvement, unemployment, and drug use—as well as homelessness, are significantly correlated with higher scores on our criminal history scale (see Appendix A for detail on the scale). These findings suggest that individual criminal histories are—at least partially—shaped by the underlying needs in the first place. In other words, criminogenic needs influence why people commit their very first criminal act, even if from that point forward, tabulations of prior criminal acts most strongly predict re-arrest.



## Chapter 4

# Conclusion and Implications

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The primary goal of the present study was to gain a better understanding of criminal risk and associated treatment needs through a sample of misdemeanor defendants in New York City. Our findings support the applicability of the Risk-Need-Responsivity model to misdemeanor populations. Specifically, as the Risk-Need-Responsivity model would anticipate, criminal history was the strongest predictor of re-arrest in the current sample. Also in keeping with the model, we confirmed that antisocial attitudes, employment and education problems, relationship problems, and substance abuse were “criminogenic needs” (needs associated with re-arrest).

However, several important departures from the classic Risk-Need-Responsivity model were observed that may have policy implications. First, our sample provided only qualified support for “criminal thinking” as a key factor in predicting re-arrest. Second, beyond the standard Central Eight framework, our analysis shows strong support for the addition of homelessness and housing instability to the list of major criminogenic needs—and suggests that supportive housing programs have the potential to reduce recidivism in misdemeanor populations. Third, age and gender—factors sometimes excluded from risk assessment tools—both proved important for predicting re-arrest and for understanding needs.

Irrespective of which factors directly predict re-arrest, our findings revealed a high-risk population—at least for repeated misdemeanor arrests, although felony and violent recidivism rates were low. The findings also reveal a high-need population. Most defendants in the sample had a history of involvement in the criminal justice system, primarily for low-level and nonviolent criminal activities. Unemployment, lack of education, housing instability, and financial stress were common. Moreover, participants did not feel safe or secure in the neighborhoods they called home and many suffered from symptoms of post-traumatic stress. Scores on legal cynicism scales reflect a pervasive pattern of negative views of legal actors and the justice system more generally.

## Policy Implications

Taken together, our findings suggest that any criminal justice response to misdemeanor populations would be most effective if its design were:

- Capable of accommodating or individualizing treatment to the multiple, overlapping needs of the population;
- Gender responsive, given our findings that women and men show somewhat distinct need profiles;
- Informed by trauma-sensitive treatment approaches that take into account high rates of trauma and mental health problems;
- Informed by procedural justice principles and, therefore, capable of addressing high rates of legal cynicism;
- Prepared to provide supportive housing or otherwise address what manifested as serious housing problems for a notable fraction of the population.

Finally, it is important to note that this sample of misdemeanants was not, by and large, socially isolated. Most had satisfying family lives and at least one key social support network member. Interventions might consider capitalizing on these protective factors.

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# Appendix A. Assessment Instrument

## Questionnaire (English)

Hi, thanks for taking part in the MEBA questionnaire. Some of the questions will be personal in nature; remember, your answers will be kept private by the researchers and your name will not be on the questionnaire. Your answers will have no effect on your participation in the community court or your case. Some general instructions are:

- **To always raise your hand and ask if an item confuses you or you need help,**
- **If the next question does not automatically appear when you finish answering an item, please select next question button on the right side of the screen**

When you are ready to begin the questionnaire, select *next question*.

The first questions are about **your background**. When you are ready, select next question on the right hand side of your screen.

- 1) How old are you today?  \_\_\_\_\_  
998 Refuse to answer
- 2) What is your gender? (choose one)  
1 Male  
2 Female  
3 Transgender  
98 Refuse to answer
- 3) What race do you identify with? (Check all that apply)  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Black/African American  
 \_\_\_\_\_ White/Caucasian  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Hispanic/Latino  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Asian/Pacific Islander  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Native American  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Other  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Refuse to answer

*If Question 3) is not equal to 1, then skip to Question 5).*

4) If you marked 'Other' for race, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

5) What is your marital status? (Choose one)

- 1 Single, never married
- 2 Married
- 3 Divorced or separated
- 4 Widowed
- 5 In a long-term relationship
- 98 Refuse to answer

6) Have you served in the United States armed forces (for example, have you been in the Army, Navy, Marines, or Air Force?) (Choose one)

- 1 No
- 2 Yes, I am currently on active duty
- 3 Yes, I am currently in the reserves
- 4 Yes, I am retired
- 5 Yes, but I have been discharged
- 98 Refuse to answer

7) Which of the following best describes your citizenship status? (Choose one)

- 1 U.S. Citizen (born in the US or naturalized citizen)
- 2 Permanent Resident (have a green card)
- 3 Temporary Resident (have visa)
- 4 Other
- 98 Refuse to answer

- 8) What is your primary language? (Choose one)
- 1 English
  - 2 Spanish
  - 3 Other
  - 7 Don't know
  - 8 Refuse to answer
  - 9 Not applicable

*If Question 8) is not equal to 3, then skip to instruction before Question 10).*

- 9) If your primary language is "Other", please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

### Criminal History

The next questions are about your **history in the criminal justice system**. When you are ready to begin, select *Next Question*.

- 10) Is this your first arrest?
- 2 Yes **Skip to Question 13**
  - 1 No
  - 7 Don't know
  - 8 Refuse to answer

- 11) About how old were you the first time you were arrested? \_\_\_\_\_

- 97 Don't know
- 98 Refuse to answer
- 99 Not Applicable

- 12) If you were arrested before age 16, approximately how many times were you arrested before the age 16?

- \_\_\_\_\_ times
- 97 Don't know
- 98 Refuse to answer
- 99 Not applicable

- 13) Approximately how many times have you ever been arrested, including your current arrest?

- \_\_\_\_\_ times
- 97 Don't know
- 98 Refuse to answer
- 99 Not applicable

14) Prior to your current case, had you ever been convicted of a misdemeanor? By convicted, we mean you pled guilty to a crime or were found guilty at trial.

- 2 Yes
- 1 No
- 7 Don't know
- 8 Refuse to answer

15) Have you ever been convicted of a felony?

- 2 Yes
- 1 No
- 7 Don't know
- 8 Refuse to answer

16) Were you ever incarcerated as a result of a prior conviction? By incarcerated, we mean sent to jail, or prison, or "locked up", as a result of pleading guilty or being found guilty of a crime.

- 2 Yes
- 1 No
- 7 Don't know
- 8 Refuse to answer

***If Question 16) is equal to 1, then skip to Question 21).***

17) How old were you the first time you were ever *incarcerated*?

- \_\_\_\_\_ years old
- 97 Don't know
- 98 Refuse to answer
- 99 Not applicable

18) How many times have you been in jail (such as Rikers Island for one year or less)?

- \_\_\_\_\_ times
- 97 Don't know
- 98 Refuse to answer
- 99 Not applicable

19) How many times have you been to prison (upstate or out of state for a year or more)?

- \_\_\_\_\_ times
- 97 Don't know
- 98 Refuse to answer
- 99 Not applicable

20) Have you ever gotten in trouble for breaking the rules in jail, prison, or in a residential detention program?

- 2 Yes
- 1 No
- 7 Don't know
- 8 Refuse to answer
- 9 Not applicable

21) Were you on probation or parole at the time of your arrest?

- 2 Yes
- 1 No
- 8 Refuse to answer

### Employment

Now I'm going to ask you some questions about **your employment and education history**. When you are ready, select *Next Question*.

22) Were you employed at the time of your arrest (including self-employment but not including illegal activities)?

- 2 Yes
- 1 No

8 Refuse to answer

*If Question 22) is equal to 1, then skip to Question 24).*

23) How many hours on average do you work each week?

- \_\_\_\_\_ hours/week
- 97 Don't know
- 98 Refuse to answer
- 99 Not applicable

*If Question 22) is equal to 2, then skip to instruction before Question 25).*

24) If you are **currently unemployed**, when was the last time you had a job or were self-employed? (Choose one)

- 1 Less than six months ago
- 2 Between six months and one year ago
- 3 More than one year ago
- 4 I have never had a job or been self-employed
- 7 Don't know
- 8 Refuse to answer
- 9 Not applicable

*If Question 24) is equal to 4, then skip to Question 28).*

25) The last time you had a job, what was your weekly take-home pay? For example, 500 dollars per week.

- \_\_\_\_\_ \$/week
- 97 Don't know
- 98 Refuse to answer

26) Have you ever been fired from a job?

- 2 Yes

- 1 No
- 8 Refuse to answer

27) Have you ever quit a job without having a new one to go to?

- 2 Yes
- 1 No
- 8 Refuse to answer

28) Right now, do you feel you need job training?

- 2 Yes
- 1 No
- 8 Refuse to answer

29) Right now, are you looking for work?

- 2 Yes
- 1 No
- 8 Refuse to answer
- 9 Not applicable

### Education

30) How many years of school have you attended? For example, if you graduated from high school, you attended 12 years of school.

- \_\_\_\_\_ years
- 97 Don't know
- 98 Refuse to Answer

31) Did you complete high school? (Choose one)

- 1 Yes, I graduated from high school
- 2 No, I did not graduate but I completed a GED
- 3 No, I did not graduate or complete a GED

8 Refuse to answer

32) In school, were you ever suspended or expelled?

- 2 Yes
- 1 No
- 8 Refuse to answer

33) In school, how often were you typically absent during the school year? (Choose one)

- 1 Never or only once or twice
- 2 A few times (3 or more times)
- 3 Often (once a month or more)
- 4 Very often (once a week or more)
- 7 Don't know
- 8 Refuse to answer

34) Do you currently have trouble reading? For example, you have trouble reading signs, or understanding the newspaper. We are not asking about your vision.

- 2 Yes
- 1 No
- 8 Refuse to answer

35) Were you ever in special education classes, or treatment for learning disabilities?

- 2 Yes
- 1 No
- 7 Don't know
- 8 Refuse to answer

36) Have you ever been diagnosed with a learning disability?

- 2 Yes
- 1 No
- 7 Don't know
- 8 Refuse to answer

37) Are you currently enrolled in any school, or vocational training? By vocational training, we mean things like plumbing, construction, or medical billing programs.

- 2 Yes
- 1 No
- 8 Refuse to answer

### Housing/ Neighborhood

Now I'm going to ask about **your housing situation and your neighborhood**. When you are ready to start, select *Next Question*.

38) Describe your current living situation: (Choose one)

- 1 Homeless (for example, living on the streets, in a car, in a drop-in shelter)
- 2 Living in a long-term shelter (such as a transitional, or supportive housing)
- 3 Living in a halfway house
- 4 Temporarily living with friends, or family
- 5 Living in a rented room, apartment, or house
- 6 Living in NYCHA public housing
- 7 Living in an apartment, or house that you own
- 8 Other
- 98 Refuse to Answer

***If Question 38 is not equal to 8, then skip to Question 40.***

39) If you marked "Other" for your living situation, please specify:

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40) Who do you living with? (Check all that apply)

\_\_\_\_\_ Alone

- \_\_\_\_\_ Family
- \_\_\_\_\_ Friends
- \_\_\_\_\_ People you do not know
- \_\_\_\_\_ Roommates(s)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Refuse to answer

41) How long have you been at your current address? (Choose one)

- 1 0-6 months
- 2 7-12 months
- 3 1-3 years
- 4 4 or more years
- 8 Refuse to answer

42) How many times have you moved in the last year?

- \_\_\_\_\_ years
- 97 Don't know
- 98 Refuse to Answer
- 99 Not applicable

43) How safe do you feel inside your home? (Choose one)

- 1 Very safe
- 2 Somewhat safe
- 3 Somewhat unsafe
- 4 Very unsafe
- 8 Refuse to answer

44) How safe do you feel outside in your neighborhood? (Choose one)

- 1 Very safe
- 2 Somewhat safe
- 3 Somewhat unsafe
- 4 Very unsafe
- 8 Refuse to answer

45) How would you rate the level of crime in your neighborhood? (Choose one)

- 1 Crime is very common
- 2 Crime is somewhat common
- 3 Crime is somewhat uncommon
- 4 Crime is very uncommon
- 7 Don't know
- 8 Refuse to answer

46) Do you feel the need to carry a weapon to protect yourself or others?

- 2 Yes
- 1 No
- 7 Don't know
- 8 Refuse to answer

47) If there was a fight in front of your home, how likely is it that your neighbors would try to help? (Choose one)

- 1 Very likely
- 2 Somewhat likely
- 3 Somewhat unlikely
- 4 Very unlikely
- 7 Don't know
- 8 Refuse to answer

48) How easy is it for someone to get access to a gun in your neighborhood (whether to borrow it or buy it)? (Choose one)

- 1 Very likely
- 2 Somewhat likely
- 3 Somewhat unlikely
- 4 Very unlikely
- 7 Don't know
- 8 Refuse to answer

49) How easy is it for someone to get drugs in your neighborhood? (Choose one)

- 1 Very likely
- 2 Somewhat likely
- 3 Somewhat unlikely
- 4 Very unlikely
- 7 Don't know
- 8 Refuse to answer

**Peer Associations**

Now I am going to ask you some questions about **the people you spend time with on a regular basis**. When you are ready to start, select *Next Question*.

50)people      Approximately how many people do you spend time with on a regular basis?  
 (For instance, friends, acquaintances, or family that you choose to spend time  
 with at least once per week)

\_\_\_\_\_   
 998      Refuse to answer

51)      About how many of the people that you spend time with on a regular basis have ever  
 been arrested? (Choose one)

- 1 None
- 2 Few
- 3 Half
- 4 Most, or all
- 7 Don't know
- 8 Refuse to answer

52)      About how many of the people that you spend time with on a regular basis have  
 served time in jail or prison? (Choose one)

- 1 None
- 2 Few
- 3 Half
- 4 Most, or all
- 7 Don't know

8 Refuse to answer

53) About how many of the people that you spend time with on a regular basis are gang members? (Choose one)

- 1 None
- 2 Few
- 3 Half
- 4 Most, or all
- 7 Don't know
- 8 Refuse to answer

54) About how many of the people you spend time with on a regular basis use drugs regularly) By regularly, I mean more than a couple times a month. (Choose one)

- 1 None
- 2 Few
- 3 Half
- 4 Most, or all
- 7 Don't know
- 8 Refuse to answer

55) About how many of the people you spend time with on a regular basis engage in criminal activities, regardless of whether or not they have been caught? (Choose one)

- 1 None
- 2 Few
- 3 Half
- 4 Most, or all
- 7 Don't know
- 8 Refuse to answer

56) Are you currently a gang member? This includes a gang, a street crew or set.

- 2 Yes
- 1 No
- 8 Refuse to answer

*If Question 56) is equal to 2, then skip to instruction before Question 58).*

57) Have you ever been a gang member? This includes a gang, street crew, or a set.

- 2 Yes
- 1 No
- 8 Refuse to answer

### **Impulsivity**

Now I am going to ask you some questions **about the types of moods you experienced in day-to-day life**. There is no right or wrong answer, just choose the best answer based on your experiences. When you are ready to start, select Next Question.

58) I tend to lose control when I am in a great mood. (Choose one)

- 1 Strongly agree
- 2 Agree
- 3 Disagree
- 4 Strongly disagree
- 8 Refuse to answer

59) When I am very happy, I tend to do things that cause problems in my life. (Choose one)

- 1 Strongly agree
- 2 Agree
- 3 Disagree
- 4 Strongly disagree
- 8 Refuse to answer

60) When I am very sad, I tend to do things that cause problems in my life. (Choose one)

- 1 Strongly agree
- 2 Agree
- 3 Disagree
- 4 Strongly disagree

8 Refuse to answer

61) When I am really excited, I tend to not think of the consequences of my actions.  
(Choose one)

- 1 Strongly agree
- 2 Agree
- 3 Disagree
- 4 Strongly disagree
- 8 Refuse to answer

62) When I am very angry, I feel it is okay to give in to cravings or overindulge. (Choose one)

- 1 Strongly agree
- 2 Agree
- 3 Disagree
- 4 Strongly disagree
- 8 Refuse to answer

63) I have trouble resisting cravings, such as for food, cigarettes, and other things.  
(Choose one)

- 1 Strongly agree
- 2 Agree
- 3 Disagree
- 4 Strongly disagree
- 8 Refuse to answer

64) When I am upset I often act without thinking. (Choose one)

- 1 Strongly agree
- 2 Agree
- 3 Disagree
- 4 Strongly disagree
- 8 Refuse to answer

## Intimate Relationships

Now I am going to ask you some questions about **your romantic relationship if you are in one right now**. Some questions will be personal in nature, but remember, your name will not be connected to any of your responses. When you are ready to start, select *Next Question*.

65) Do you currently have a primary or “main” intimate partner? By intimate partner, we mean a girlfriend, boyfriend, spouse or other.

- 2 Yes
- 1 No
- 8 Refuse to answer

***If Question 65) is equal to 2, then skip to Question 66years.***

66) If you do not currently have a primary intimate partner, have you been through a separation or divorce in the last year?

- 2 Yes
- 1 No
- 8 Refuse to answer

***If Question 65) is equal to 1, then skip to instruction before Question 40).***

66years) If you currently have a primary intimate partner, how long have you been together? (Choose one)

- 1 0-6 months
- 2 7-12 months
- 3 1-3 years
- 4 4 or more years
- 8 Refuse to answer

67) How satisfied do you feel in your current relationship? (Choose one)

- 1 Very satisfied
- 2 Somewhat satisfied

- 3 Somewhat unsatisfied
- 4 Very unsatisfied
- 7 Don't know
- 8 Refuse to answer
- 9 Not applicable

68) In the past 30 days, how often have you had serious arguments, or fights, with your partner? (Choose one)

- 1 Frequently
- 2 Occasionally
- 3 Rarely
- 4 Never
- 8 Refuse to answer

69) How often have you, or your partner, ever been physical with each other in one of these arguments? (Choose one)

- 1 Frequently
- 2 Occasionally
- 3 Rarely
- 4 Never
- 8 Refuse to answer

### Financial

Now I am going to ask you some questions about **money and your financial situation**. When you are ready to start, select *Next Question*.

70) Do you receive public assistance, or welfare, for example, social security, Medicaid, disability payments, WIC, or TANF?

- 2 Yes
- 1 No
- 7 Don't know
- 8 Refuse to answer

71) Currently, what are your sources of income? Check all that apply.

- Wages or salary, from a job or self-employment (on, or off “the books”)
- Unemployment insurance
- Public assistance (welfare, or disability payments)
- Income from a spouse, family or friends
- Hustling, or drug dealing
- Sex work
- Other
- Don’t know
- Refuse to answer

*If Question 71) is not equal to 1, then skip to Question 73).*

72) If you indicated “Other”, please specify:

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73) Do you make enough money to pay your bills?

- 2 Yes
- 1 No
- 7 Don’t know
- 8 Refuse to answer

74) Are you in debt? For example, do you owe money for student loans, credit card payments, car payments, or other. (Choose one)

- 1 No, not in debt
- 2 Yes, but it is manageable
- 3 Yes, a lot
- 7 Don’t know
- 8 Refuse to answer
- 9 Not applicable

75) Are you currently giving a substantial amount of your income to someone else?

- 2 Yes
- 1 No
- 8 Refuse to answer

*If Question 75 is equal to 1, then skip to instruction before Question 78).*

76) If you are currently giving a substantial amount of your income to someone else, who are you giving it to? (Check all that apply)

- My spouse/ girlfriend/ boyfriend
- Other family members (except for children)
- Government enforced child support
- My pimp
- My boss
- Other
- Refuse to answer

*If Question 76) is not equal to 1, then skip to instruction before Question 78).*

77) If you indicated “Other”, please specify:

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### **Mental Health**

Now I am going to ask you some questions about **your mental and emotional health**. Some of these questions may be personal in nature, or make you feel upset. If that happens, you may take a moment to relax, or talk to the researcher present for assistance. When you are ready, select *Next Question*.

78) Have you ever attempted suicide?

- 1 Yes

- 0 No
- 8 Refuse to answer

*If Question 78) is equal to 0, then skip to Question 80.*

79) If you have attempted suicide, how long ago was it?

- \_\_\_\_\_ years
- \_\_\_\_\_ months
- 97 Don't know (years)
- 98 Refuse to answer

80) Have you ever been given a mental health, or psychiatric diagnosis by a therapist, or doctor? By diagnosis, we mean that the therapist told you that you have a mental illness such as depression, or bipolar disorder.

- 2 Yes
- 1 No
- 7 Don't know
- 8 Refuse to answer

81) Have you ever been in a hospital for emotional, or mental health problems?

- 2 Yes
- 1 No
- 7 Don't know
- 8 Refuse to answer

82) Are you currently in treatment for a mental illness?

- 2 Yes
- 1 No
- 7 Don't know
- 8 Refuse to answer

83) Are you currently on any medication for a mental illness?

- 2 Yes
- 1 No
- 7 Don't know
- 8 Refuse to answer

84) Do you currently believe that someone can control you thoughts by putting thoughts into your head, or taking thoughts out of your head?

- 2 Yes
- 1 No
- 7 Don't know
- 8 Refuse to answer

85) Do you currently feel that other people know your thoughts, and can read your mind?

- 2 Yes
- 1 No
- 7 Don't know
- 8 Refuse to answer

86) Have you recently lost, or gained a large amount of weight, for several weeks without even trying?

- 2 Yes
- 1 No
- 7 Don't know
- 8 Refuse to answer

87) Do you currently feel like you have to talk, or move more, slowly than you usually do?

- 2 Yes
- 1 No
- 7 Don't know
- 8 Refuse to answer

88) Recently, have you been sleeping more than you usually do for no apparent reason?

- 2 Yes
- 1 No
- 7 Don't know
- 8 Refuse to answer

89) Have your friends, or family, noticed that you are currently more hyper than usual;?

- 2 Yes
- 1 No
- 7 Don't know
- 8 Refuse to answer

90) Has there recently been a few weeks where you felt useless or sinful?

- 2 Yes
- 1 No
- 7 Don't know
- 8 Refuse to answer

**Substance Abuse**

Now I am going to ask you some questions about **your drug and alcohol use**. When you are ready to begin, select *Next Question*.

91) Have you ever drank alcohol?

- 2 Yes
- 1 No
- 8 Refuse to answer

***If Question 91 is not equal to 2, then skip to Question 92.***

91years old) How old (in years) were you when you first drank alcohol?

- \_\_\_\_\_ years
- 97 Don't know
- 98 Refuse to answer

92) Have you ever used illegal drugs?

- 2 Yes
- 1 No
- 8 Refuse to answer

*If Question 92) is not equal to 2, then skip to instruction before Question 93).*

92years old) How old (in years) were you when you first used illegal drugs?

- \_\_\_\_\_ years
- 97 Don't know
- 98 Refuse to answer

*If Question 91) is not equal to 2, and Question 92) is not equal to 2, then skip to instruction before Question 110).*

93) In the past year, has your drug or alcohol use resulted in marital or family fights?

- 2 Yes
- 1 No
- 8 Refuse to answer

94) In the past year, has your drug or alcohol use resulted in accidents or injuries to yourself or others?

- 2 Yes
- 1 No
- 8 Refuse to answer

95) In the past year, has your drug or alcohol use gotten you in trouble with the law?

- 2 Yes
- 1 No
- 8 Refuse to answer

96) Have you ever experienced drug or alcohol withdrawal symptoms? For example, the “shakes” or the “DTs”?

- 2 Yes
- 1 No
- 7 Don't know
- 8 Refuse to answer

97) Were you drunk or high at the time of your arrest?

- 2 Yes
- 1 No
- 7 Don't know
- 8 Refuse to answer

98) Have you ever done anything illegal to get drugs? (For example, sold stolen property, sold drugs, or traded sex for drugs)

- 2 Yes
- 1 No
- 8 Refuse to answer

99) Have you ever done anything violent when using drugs?

- 2 Yes
- 1 No
- 7 Don't know
- 8 Refuse to answer

100) Are you currently in formal treatment for alcohol or drugs such as outpatient, inpatient, or counseling?

- 2 Yes
- 1 No
- 8 Refuse to answer

101) Have you ever been in formal treatment for substance abuse?

- 2 Yes
- 1 No

8 Refuse to answer

*If Question 101 is equal to 0, then skip to 103.*

101times) How many times have you been informal treatment for alcohol or drugs (not including AA or NA)?

98 Refuse to answer

102times) If you have been in treatment, how many times have you completed treatment successfully?

98 Refuse to answer

103) What is your first drug of choice? For example, marijuana, cocaine, or heroin. Please provide only one. (Choose one)

- 1 Alcohol
- 2 Marijuana
- 3 Hallucinogens (LSD or Mushrooms)
- 4 Inhalants (glue, paint)
- 5 Crack/Freebase
- 6 Heroin and Cocaine mixed together (speedball)
- 7 Cocaine
- 8 Heroin
- 9 Street Methadone
- 10 Other Opiates (Oxycontin)
- 11 Methamphetamines
- 12 Amphetamines or Other Uppers
- 13 Tranquilizers (downers)
- 14 Other
- 98 Refuse to answer

*If Question 103 is not equal to 14, then skip to Question 105).*

104) If other, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

105) What is your second drug of choice? For example, marijuana, cocaine, heroin. Please provide only one. (Choose one)

- 1 Alcohol
- 2 Marijuana
- 3 Hallucinogens (LSD or Mushrooms)
- 4 Inhalants (glue, paint)
- 5 Crack/Freebase
- 6 Heroin and Cocaine mixed together (speedball)
- 7 Cocaine
- 8 Heroin
- 9 Street Methadone
- 10 Other Opiates (Oxycontin)
- 11 Methamphetamines
- 12 Amphetamines or Other Uppers
- 13 Tranquilizers (downers)
- 14 Other
- 98 Refuse to answer
- 99 Not applicable

*If 105) is not equal to 14, then skip to Question 107.*

106) If other, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

107) How often do you use your first drug of choice? (Choose one)

- 1 Only a few times over the year
- 2 About once per month
- 3 About once per week
- 4 About every day (four or more times a week)
- 8 Refuse to answer

108) How often do you use your second drug of choice? (Choose one)

- 1 Only a few times over the year

- 2 About once per month
- 3 About once per week
- 4 About every day (four or more times a week)
- 5 I do not have a second drug of choice
- 8 Refuse to answer

109) Do you use anything available or do you stick to your drug of choice or second drug of choice? (Choose one)

- 1 Only first drug of choice
- 2 First or second drug of choice
- 3 Anything available to get high
- 8 Refuse to answer

### Family Relationships

Now I am going to ask you some questions about **your family relationships**. When you are ready to begin, select *Next Question*.

110) Do you currently have any immediate family (such as parents, siblings, grandparents, aunts, uncles, children) that you see regularly?

- 2 Yes
- 1 No
- 8 Refuse to answer

***If Question 110) is equal to 1, then skip to instruction before Question 123.***

Describe your current relationships with family that you **see on a regular basis** (parents, brothers, sisters, grandparents, aunts, uncles). When you are ready, select *Next Question*.

111) Your family gets along well together. (Choose one)

- 1 Strongly disagree
- 2 Disagree
- 3 Neutral
- 4 Agree

- 5 Strongly agree
- 7 Don't know
- 8 Refuse to answer
- 9 Not applicable

112) You really enjoy being together. (Choose one)

- 1 Strongly disagree
- 2 Disagree
- 3 Neutral
- 4 Agree
- 5 Strongly agree
- 8 Refuse to answer

113) You use illegal drugs together. (Choose one)

- 1 Never
- 2 Sometimes
- 3 Frequently
- 4 Daily
- 8 Refuse to answer

114) You get drunk together. (Choose one)

- 1 Never
- 2 Sometimes
- 3 Frequently
- 4 Daily
- 8 Refuse to answer

115) You have serious talks about each other's interests and needs. (Choose one)

- 1 Strongly disagree
- 2 Disagree
- 3 Neutral
- 4 Agree
- 5 Strongly agree

8 Refuse to answer

116) You help each other deal with problems. (Choose one)

1 Strongly disagree

2 Disagree

3 Neutral

4 Agree

5 Strongly agree

8 Refuse to answer

117) You often have serious arguments or fights. (Choose one)

1 Strongly disagree

2 Disagree

3 Neutral

4 Agree

5 Strongly agree

8 Refuse to answer

118) How many of your family members have ever been arrested? (Choose one)

1 None

2 Few

3 Half

4 Most or all

7 Don't know

8 Refuse to answer

119) About how many of your family members have served time in jail or prison? (Choose one)

1 None

2 Few

3 Half

4 Most or all

7 Don't know

8 Refuse to answer

120) About how many of your family members are gang members? (Choose one)

- 1 None
- 2 Few
- 3 Half
- 4 Most or all
- 7 Don't know
- 8 Refuse to answer

121) About how many of your family members use drugs regularly? B regularly we mean more than a couple times a month. (Choose one)

- 1 None
- 2 Few
- 3 Half
- 4 Most or all
- 7 Don't know
- 8 Refuse to answer

122) About how many of your family members engage in criminal activities, regardless of whether or not they have been caught? (Choose one)

- 1 None
- 2 Few
- 3 Half
- 4 Most or all
- 7 Don't know
- 8 Refuse to answer

### Recent Trauma Symptoms

Now I am going to ask you some questions about **emotional or mental health symptoms you may have experienced in the last month**. Again, if any of these questions upset you, feel free to take a moment to relax or to talk to the researcher present for help. When you are ready, sect *Next Question*.

*In the past month, to what extent have you had the following experiences...*

123) In the past month, how often have you had repeated disturbing memories, thoughts, or images of a stressful experience? (Choose one)

- 1 Not at all
- 2 A little bit
- 3 Moderately
- 4 Quite a bit
- 5 Extremely
- 8 Refuse to answer

124) In the past month, how often have you had...Repeated, disturbing dreams of a stressful experience. (Choose one)

- 1 Not at all
- 2 A little bit
- 3 Moderately
- 4 Quite a bit
- 5 Extremely
- 8 Refuse to answer

125) In the past month, how often have you ... Suddenly acted or felt as if a stressful experience was happening again or as if you were reliving it. (Choose one)

- 1 Not at all
- 2 A little bit
- 3 Moderately
- 4 Quite a bit
- 5 Extremely
- 8 Refuse to answer

126) In the past month, how often have you... Felt very upset when something reminded you of a stressful experience. (Choose one)

- 1 Not at all
- 2 A little bit

- 3 Moderately
- 4 Quite a bit
- 5 Extremely
- 8 Refuse to answer

127) In the past month, how often have you had... physical reactions, for example, heart pounding, trouble breathing, or sweating, when reminded of a stressful experience. (Choose one)

- 1 Not at all
- 2 A little bit
- 3 Moderately
- 4 Quite a bit
- 5 Extremely
- 8 Refuse to answer

128) In the past month, how often have you... Avoided thinking or talking about a stressful experience. (Choose one)

- 1 Not at all
- 2 A little bit
- 3 Moderately
- 4 Quite a bit
- 5 Extremely
- 8 Refuse to answer

129) In the past month, how often have you... Avoided activities or situations because they remind you of a stressful experience. (Choose one)

- 1 Not at all
- 2 A little bit
- 3 Moderately
- 4 Quite a bit
- 5 Extremely
- 8 Refuse to answer

130) In the past month, how often have you had... Trouble remembering important parts of a stressful situation. (Choose one)

- 1 Not at all
- 2 A little bit
- 3 Moderately
- 4 Quite a bit
- 5 Extremely
- 8 Refuse to answer

131) In the past month, how often have you had... Loss of interest in activities that you used to enjoy. (Choose one)

- 1 Not at all
- 2 A little bit
- 3 Moderately
- 4 Quite a bit
- 5 Extremely
- 8 Refuse to answer

132) In the past month, how often have you... Felt distant or cut off from other people. (Choose one)

- 1 Not at all
- 2 A little bit
- 3 Moderately
- 4 Quite a bit
- 5 Extremely
- 8 Refuse to answer

133) In the past month, how often have you... Felt emotionally numb or being unable to have loving feelings for those close to you. (Choose one)

- 1 Not at all
- 2 A little bit
- 3 Moderately
- 4 Quite a bit

- 5 Extremely
- 8 Refuse to answer

134) In the past month, how often have you... Felt as if your future will be cut short.  
(Choose one)

- 1 Not at all
- 2 A little bit
- 3 Moderately
- 4 Quite a bit
- 5 Extremely
- 8 Refuse to answer

135) In the past month, how often have you had... Trouble falling or staying asleep.  
(Choose one)

- 1 Not at all
- 2 A little bit
- 3 Moderately
- 4 Quite a bit
- 5 Extremely
- 8 Refuse to answer

136) In the past month, how often have you... Felt irritable or had angry outbursts.  
(Choose one)

- 1 Not at all
- 2 A little bit
- 3 Moderately
- 4 Quite a bit
- 5 Extremely
- 8 Refuse to answer

137) In the past month, how often have you had... difficulty concentrating (Choose one)

- 1 Not at all
- 2 A little bit

- 3 Moderately
- 4 Quite a bit
- 5 Extremely
- 8 Refuse to answer

138) In the past month, how often have you... Been “super-alert” or watchful or on guard.  
(Choose one)

- 1 Not at all
- 2 A little bit
- 3 Moderately
- 4 Quite a bit
- 5 Extremely
- 8 Refuse to answer

139) In the past month, how often have you had... Felt jumpy or easily startled.  
(Choose one)

- 1 Not at all
- 2 A little bit
- 3 Moderately
- 4 Quite a bit
- 5 Extremely
- 8 Refuse to answer

### Lifetime Trauma Experiences

140) Some people who come through the court system were abused as children, either physically, sexually, or emotionally. Have you ever experienced something like that?  
(Check all that apply)

- Physical abuse
- Emotional abuse

- \_\_\_\_\_ Sexual abuse
- \_\_\_\_\_ Neglect
- \_\_\_\_\_ I have never experienced something like that
- \_\_\_\_\_ Refuse to answer

141) If you have ever been incarcerated, or “locked up”, did you ever spend time in solitary confinement, otherwise known as the “boot”, “bing”, or “box”? (Choose one)

- 1 No
- 2 Yes
- 3 I have never been incarcerated
- 8 Refuse to answer

### Violent Victimization

142) In the last year, regardless of whether the police were called, have you been the victim of a violent crime? By violent crime, we mean assault, robbery, witnessing a murder.

- 2 Yes
- 1 No
- 8 Refuse to answer

143) Have you ever seen someone shot or witnessed another violent event? (Choose one)

- 1 No
- 2 Yes, seen someone shot
- 3 Yes, witness another type of violent event
- 4 Yes, both
- 8 Refuse to answer

### Legal Cynicism

Now I am going to ask you **how much you agree with some statements about the justice system in the United States**. Indicate whether you *Strongly Agree*, *Disagree*, are *Not Sure*, *Agree*, or *Strongly Agree*. When you are ready to begin, select *Next Question*.

144) Anything can be fixed in court if you have the right connections. (Choose one)

- 1 Strongly disagree
- 2 Disagree
- 3 Neutral
- 4 Agree
- 5 Strongly agree
- 8 Refuse to answer

145) In general, this country's justice system was designed to treat everyone equally.  
(Choose one)

- 1 Strongly disagree
- 2 Disagree
- 3 Neutral
- 4 Agree
- 5 Strongly agree
- 8 Refuse to answer

146) Police do worse things than the "criminals" they lock up. (choose one)

- 1 Strongly disagree
- 2 Disagree
- 3 Neutral
- 4 Agree
- 5 Strongly agree
- 8 Refuse to answer

147) It is unfair that you are imprisoned for crimes when bank presidents, lawyers and politicians get away with their crimes. (Choose one)

- 1 Strongly disagree
- 2 Disagree
- 3 Neutral
- 4 Agree
- 5 Strongly agree
- 8 Refuse to answer

148) Prosecutors often tell witnesses to lie in court. (Choose one)

- 1 Strongly disagree
- 2 Disagree
- 3 Neutral
- 4 Agree
- 5 Strongly agree
- 8 Refuse to answer

149) Laws do not protect people like me. (Choose one)

- 1 Strongly disagree
- 2 Disagree
- 3 Neutral
- 4 Agree
- 5 Strongly agree
- 8 Refuse to answer

150) Laws only protect white people. (Choose one)

- 1 Strongly disagree
- 2 Disagree
- 3 Neutral
- 4 Agree
- 5 Strongly agree
- 8 Refuse to answer

151) Laws only protect rich people. (Choose one)

- 1 Strongly disagree
- 2 Disagree
- 3 Neutral
- 4 Agree
- 5 Strongly agree
- 8 Refuse to answer

152) Money can buy you protection. (Choose one)

- 1 Strongly disagree
- 2 Disagree
- 3 Neutral
- 4 Agree
- 5 Strongly agree
- 8 Refuse to answer

153) There are two systems of justices, one for poor people and one for the wealthy.  
(Choose one)

- 1 Strongly disagree
- 2 Disagree
- 3 Neutral
- 4 Agree
- 5 Strongly agree
- 8 Refuse to answer

154) Laws are enforced more when some people break them than when others do. (Choose one)

- 1 Strongly disagree
- 2 Disagree
- 3 Neutral
- 4 Agree
- 5 Strongly agree
- 8 Refuse to answer

155) People should obey the law even if it goes against what they think is right. (Choose one)

- 1 Strongly disagree
- 2 Disagree
- 3 Neutral
- 4 Agree
- 5 Strongly agree
- 8 Refuse to answer

156) Most police treat people with respect. (Choose one)

- 1 Strongly disagree
- 2 Disagree
- 3 Neutral
- 4 Agree
- 5 Strongly agree
- 8 Refuse to answer

157) Most police treat some people better than others. (Choose one)

- 1 Strongly disagree
- 2 Disagree
- 3 Neutral
- 4 Agree
- 5 Strongly agree
- 8 Refuse to answer

158) Most police are dishonest. (Choose one)

- 1 Strongly disagree
- 2 Disagree
- 3 Neutral
- 4 Agree
- 5 Strongly agree
- 8 Refuse to answer

### **Criminal Thinking**

159) You have paid your dues in life and therefore are justified in taking what you want.  
(Choose one)

- 1 Strongly disagree
- 2 Disagree
- 3 Neutral
- 4 Agree
- 5 Strongly agree

8 Refuse to answer

160) It's okay to break the law in order to pay for things that you need. (Choose one)

- 1 Strongly disagree
- 2 Disagree
- 3 Neutral
- 4 Agree
- 5 Strongly agree
- 8 Refuse to answer

161) Society owes you a better life. (Choose one)

- 1 Strongly disagree
- 2 Disagree
- 3 Neutral
- 4 Agree
- 5 Strongly agree
- 8 Refuse to answer

162) You get upset when you hear about someone who has lost everything in a natural disaster. (Choose one)

- 1 Strongly disagree
- 2 Disagree
- 3 Neutral
- 4 Agree
- 5 Strongly agree
- 8 Refuse to answer

163) Seeing someone in pain makes you feel concerned. (Choose one)

- 1 Strongly disagree
- 2 Disagree
- 3 Neutral
- 4 Agree
- 5 Strongly agree

8 Refuse to answer

164) It doesn't bother me to see someone get hurt. (Choose one)

1 Strongly disagree

2 Disagree

3 Neutral

4 Agree

5 Strongly agree

8 Refuse to answer

165) In general, many people get into trouble or use drugs because society has not given them enough education, jobs, or a future. (Choose one)

1 Strongly disagree

2 Disagree

3 Neutral

4 Agree

5 Strongly agree

8 Refuse to answer

166) I wouldn't hesitate to hit threaten people if they have done something to hurt my friends or family. (Choose one)

1 Strongly disagree

2 Disagree

3 Neutral

4 Agree

5 Strongly agree

8 Refuse to answer

167) Some people must be treated roughly or beaten up just to send them a clear message. (Choose one)

1 Strongly disagree

2 Disagree

3 Neutral

- 4 Agree
- 5 Strongly agree
- 8 Refuse to answer

168) A hungry person has a right to steal. (Choose one)

- 1 Strongly disagree
- 2 Disagree
- 3 Neutral
- 4 Agree
- 5 Strongly agree
- 8 Refuse to answer

169) The trouble with getting close to people is that they start making demands on you. (Choose one)

- 1 Strongly disagree
- 2 Disagree
- 3 Neutral
- 4 Agree
- 5 Strongly agree
- 8 Refuse to answer

170) I have the ability to “sweet talk” people to get what I want. (Choose one)

- 1 Strongly disagree
- 2 Disagree
- 3 Neutral
- 4 Agree
- 5 Strongly agree
- 8 Refuse to answer

171) I am really good at talking my way out of problems. (Choose one)

- 1 Strongly disagree
- 2 Disagree
- 3 Neutral

- 4 Agree
- 5 Strongly agree
- 8 Refuse to answer

172) I feel bad if I break a promise I have made to someone. (Choose one)

- 1 Strongly disagree
- 2 Disagree
- 3 Neutral
- 4 Agree
- 5 Strongly agree
- 8 Refuse to answer

173) To get ahead in life, you must always put yourself first. (Choose one)

- 1 Strongly disagree
- 2 Disagree
- 3 Neutral
- 4 Agree
- 5 Strongly agree
- 8 Refuse to answer

### **Leisure Time/Social Isolation**

Now I am going to ask you some questions about **your free time**. When you are ready, select *Next Question*.

174) How much free time do you have each week? By free time, we mean time during which you are not obligated to work, do chores, or errands, or take care of others. (Choose one)

- 1 Weekends only
- 2 Weekends and sometimes in the evenings during the week
- 3 Rarely (one day/night per week)
- 4 Never
- 8 Refuse to answer

175) When you have free time, do you usually spend it... (Choose one)

- 1 Alone
- 2 With family
- 3 With close friends
- 4 With acquaintances or strangers
- 5 Other
- 8 Refuse to answer

*If Question 175) is not equal to 5, then skip to Question 177.*

176) Please list other people you spend your free time with.

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177) When you have free time, do you find yourself feeling... (please mark all that apply)

- Bored
- Lonely
- Restless
- Anxious
- Happy
- Other
- Refuse to answer

*If Question 177 is not equal to 1, then skip to Question 179.*

178) Please list feelings you have during your free time.

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179) Do you have people in your life who believe in you and encourage you to reach your goals? (Choose one)

- 1 No, none
- 2 Yes, one or two
- 3 Yes, many
- 8 Refuse to answer

180) What accomplishment in life are you most proud of. For example, high school graduation, the birth of a child, an artistic or sports accomplishment. Please use the keyboard to type your answers.

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181) Are you active in any social or community organizations, for example, neighborhood sports team, church, social club, or other?

- 2 Yes
- 1 No
- 8 Refuse to answer

You have reached the end of the survey. Thank you for your time. Please take this tablet to the researcher and they will instruct you on what to do next.

## Appendix B. Summary Scales

### **Criminal History (6 items, alpha = .753)**

Prior criminal conviction (felony or misdemeanor)  
Number of prior misdemeanor or violation convictions in past 3 years (0, 1, 2, 3 or more)  
Ten or more prior misdemeanor or violation convictions  
Current open (pending) criminal case  
Prior warrant for failure to appear/absconding  
Prior sentence to jail or prison

### **Impulsive Decision-Making (5 items, alpha = .832)**

I have trouble resisting cravings.  
When I am upset I often act without thinking.  
When I am very sad, I tend to do things that cause problems in my life.  
When I am really excited, I tend to not think of the consequences of my actions.  
When I am very angry, I feel it is okay to give into cravings or overindulge.

### **Violence and Manipulation (5 items, alpha = .736)**

I wouldn't hesitate to hit or threaten people if they have done something to hurt my friends or family.  
The trouble with getting close to people is they start making demands on you.  
I am really good at talking my way out of problems.  
I have the ability to "sweet talk" people to get what I want.  
Some people must be treated roughly or beaten up to send them a clear message.

### **Entitlement & External Blame for Problems (5 items, alpha = .696)**

Many people get into trouble or use drugs because society has not given them enough education, jobs, or a future.  
Society owes you a better life.  
You have paid your dues in life and are therefore justified in taking what you want.  
A hungry person has a right to steal.  
It's okay to break the law to pay for things you need.

### **Lack of Empathy (4 items, alpha = .695)**

You do not get upset when you hear someone has lost everything in an accident.  
It doesn't bother me to see someone get hurt.  
I feel bad if I break a promise I have made. [Reverse Coded]  
Seeing someone in pain makes you feel concerned. [Reverse Coded]

### **Antisocial Peers (3 items, alpha = .778)**

*Now I'm going to ask you some questions about the people you spend time with on a regular basis. (Options = none, few, half, or most)*  
About how many use drugs regularly?  
About how many have served time in jail or prison?  
About how many engage in criminal activities, regardless of whether or not they have been caught.

**Antisocial Family Members (4 items, alpha = .857)**

*(Options below = none, few, half, most)*

How many of your family members have ever been arrested?

How many of your family members have served time in state prison?

How many of your family members use drugs regularly?

How many of your family members engage in criminal activities regardless of whether or not they have been caught?

**Positive Family Relationships (4 items, alpha = .819)**

*Describe your current relationships with family that you see on a regular basis (parents, brothers, sisters, grandparents, aunts/uncles).*

You help each other deal with problems.

You really enjoy being together.

You have serious talks about each other's interests and needs.

Your family gets along well together.

**Legal Cynicism (14 items, alpha = .836)**

*(Options = strongly disagree, disagree, not sure, agree, strongly agree)*

Anything can be fixed in court if you have the right connections.

In general, this country's justice system was designed to treat everyone equally.

[Reverse coded]

Police do worse things than the criminals they lock up.

It is unfair that you are imprisoned for crimes when bank presidents, lawyers and politicians get away with their crimes.

Prosecutors often tell witnesses to lie in court.

Laws do not protect people like me.

Laws only protect white people.

Laws only protect rich people.

Money can buy you protection.

There are two systems of justice, one for poor people and one for the wealthy.

Laws are enforced more when some people break them than when others do.

Most police treat people with respect [Reverse coded]

Most police treat some people better than others.

Most police are dishonest.

During free time, find yourself feeling anxious

Feel at least two of the above

Usually spend free time alone

## Appendix C. Need Flags

<p><b>Impulsive Decision-Making</b>  <b>(5 items, same as impulsivity scale, 0-3 scale per item, min. =0, max. = 15)</b>  <i>Four options per item: Strongly disagree, disagree, agree, strongly agree</i>  <i>Flag definition: 0-6 = no problem, 7-11 = problem present, 12-15 = high need</i></p>
<p><b>Violence and Manipulation</b>  <b>(5 items, same items as violence and manipulation scale, 0-4 on original scale recoded to 0-2 scale where 0 = 0, 1 = 1, 2 through 4 = 2, min. = 0, max. = 10)</b>  <i>Five options per item: Strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, strongly agree</i>  <i>(Prior to flag creation, strongly disagree recoded to 0, disagree to 1, and neutral, agree, strongly agree to 2)</i>  <i>Flag definition: 0-5 = no problem, 6-7 = problem present, 8-10 = high need</i></p>
<p><b>Antisocial Peers</b>  <b>(3 items, same as antisocial peers scale, 0-3 scale per item, min. =0, max. = 9)</b>  <i>Four options per item: none, few, half, most</i>  <i>Flag definition: 0-2 = no problem, 3-5 = problem present, 6-12 = high need</i></p>
<p><b>Antisocial Family Members</b>  <b>(4 items, same as antisocial family scale, 0-3 scale per item, min. = 0, max. =12)</b>  <i>Four options per item: none, few, half, most</i>  <i>Flag definition: 0-2 = no problem, 3-5 = problem present, 6-12 = high need</i></p>
<p><b>Education Deficit (defined as lacks high school degree or GED)</b>  <b>Employment Deficit (defined as unemployed at time of arrest)</b>  <b>Problematic Leisure Time (answers “yes” to 2 or more of bored, lonely, restless, and anxious at leisure)</b>  <b>Substance Abuse (1 item)</b></p>
<p><i>How often do you use your first drug of choice?</i>  <i>Flag definition: never used drugs, not currently using, or using only a few times over the year = problem not present, using a few times per month or a few times per week = problem present, using about every day (4 or more times per week) = high need</i></p>
<p><b>Legal Cynicism</b>  <b>(14 items, same as legal cynicism scale, 1=5 scale per item, min. = 14, max. =90)</b>  <i>Five options per item = strongly disagree, disagree, not sure, agree, strongly agree</i>  <i>Flag definition: 14-41 = no problem, 42-49 = problem present, 50-90 = high need</i></p>
<p><b>Trauma Checklist Flag (17 items, scoring of original trauma checklist tool adopted without changes, see PTSD Checklist, Civilian Version (PCL-C), see <a href="https://www.mirecc.va.gov/docs/visn6/3_PTSD_CheckList_and_Scoring.pdf">https://www.mirecc.va.gov/docs/visn6/3_PTSD_CheckList_and_Scoring.pdf</a>)</b></p>