Research into Action

John Weil & Dr. Stacy Sechrist

North Carolina Network for Safe Communities, University of North Carolina at Greensboro

Who we are

UNCG has been the PSN MDNC research and training/technical assistance partner for over 15 years. Their role in PSN has developed to include:

- Provision of operationally relevant <u>on-the-ground training and technical assistance</u> to sites
- <u>Convener of partners</u> statewide doing PSN work to share best practices
- <u>Documenter of best practices</u> in PSN and other focused deterrence work
- <u>Research and evaluation</u> to measure the impact of violence reduction work

Transparency Builds Partnership

PSN partnership guidelines:

ℴ Partnership is built by having <u>data-driven</u> strategies

ℴ Leads to <u>transparency</u> in the process

ℴ Builds <u>accountability</u>

ℴ Through transparency and accountability, <u>true partnership and trust</u> is built amongst stakeholders

Research & Evaluation Helps Us Reach Partnership and Strategy Goals

- Show what is effective in our strategies.
  - What is working?
- Identify where to improve or adapt.
  - What is not working?
- Through data collection and analysis, we can examine our current status in reference to where we were before.
  - Are we doing better now than we were before?

Evaluation of the Vision

- We have learned many lessons in the implementation and sustainability of violence reduction strategies and the partnerships necessary to make them thrive.
- How do we measure success of a strategy?
  - Depends on who you ask...
- Define what success looks like to multiple partners involved *including the community and those invested in offenders*
  - Violence reduction alone as an outcome does not take into account the mechanisms needed to change the trajectory of offenders
    - BUT Re-entry and other programs do!
- We need to take a holistic approach when determining the success of an initiative and use lessons learned to inform current strategies and strengthen prevention efforts.

Evaluation Steps

- Define
  - What is success? Have we accounted for all input?
- Operationalize
  - What specifically do we measure to determine if an initiative has been successful? Is it feasible to measure?
- Track
  - Do we have systems in place to track measures over time?
- Analyze
  - What does the data tell us? Do we have meaningful data we can compare to?
- Interpret and Apply
  - What do analysis results mean in terms of real world application?
    - Who specifically does the intervention work for? Who does it not work for?
  - Can we use data to make improvements to the initiative?
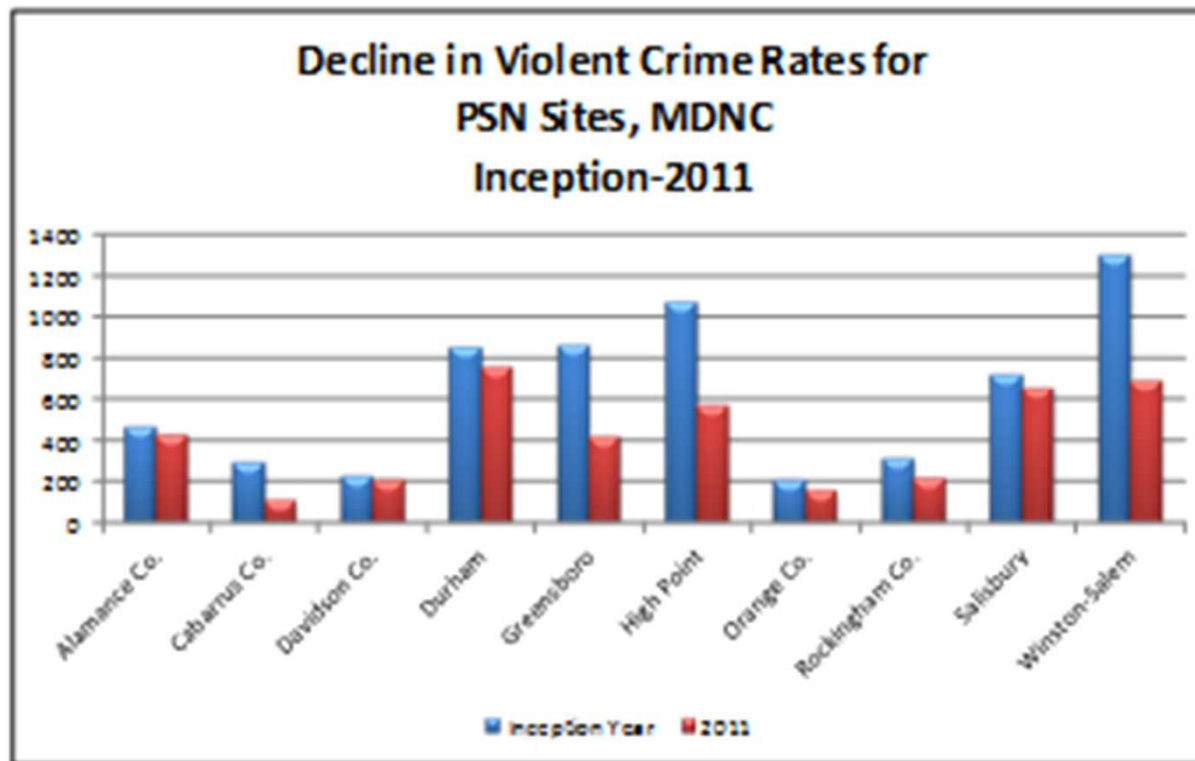- Report and Disseminate
  - Get the information back out to the stakeholders invested in the initiative

Audience Brainstorming

- With the current vision, what outcomes will we want to measure to determine how effective the strategy is?

- What do we do with the results of our evaluation?
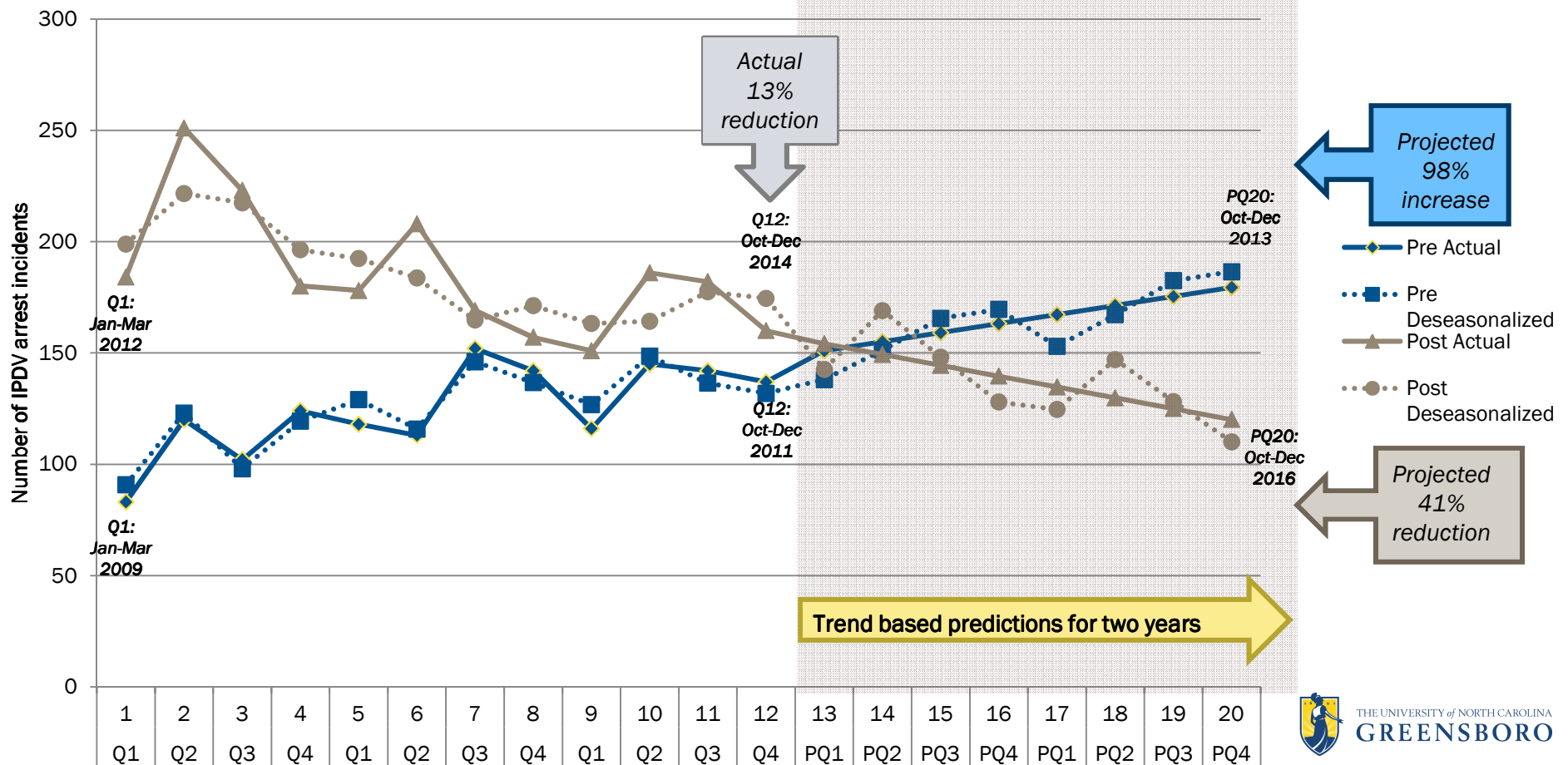
Let the Data Tell the Story & Sell the Strategy

❧ Pre- and post-PSN implementation success

Decline in Violent Crime Rates for PSN Sites, MDNC Inception-2011

- All sites show reductions in violent crime rate since PSN inception.
- UNCG, <u>a neutral third party</u>, produced a brochure highlighting this success with USAO funding.
- Brochure is used for marketing and educational purposes.

Is offender behavior changing?

Pre and Post OFVDI Comparison of Quarterly IPDV Arrest Incidents

Document and Share Best Practices with Others

UNCG believes in contributing perspectives in best practices, sharing best practices, and documenting them.

- Developed a training and technical assistance manual for gang/group strategy implementation
- Documented High Point's domestic violence implementation process and is doing ongoing evaluation
- Has fostered peer-to-peer mentoring to better teach best practices across sites

Adapt Strategies to Make Them Better

UNCG is on the ground and involved in the implementation of strategies with new sites and sustainability of strategies within existing sites, ensuring fidelity in the process.

- Violent Incident Review/Group Audits (data collection)
- Community & Law Enforcement Training (strategy)
  - Available for immediate assistance to site partners
- Call-in Rehearsals/Preparation/Debriefing/Feedback (fidelity)
- Longitudinal data collection (evaluation)

Conclusions

UNCG has been relevant to the livelihood of MDNC sites and bridged a statewide partnership in the PSN effort.

- Research and data analysis is but one important piece of UNCG's contribution to the effort.
- They are a trusted resource that sites can rely on for information and data analysis/interpretation.
- They play a vital role in assisting sites to be <u>smart on crime</u> by ensuring that sites move smoothly through the implementation process and sustain over time.
- Looking forward to continued partnership in the new vision.

Contact Information

John Weil

jdweil@uncg.edu

Dr. Stacy Sechrist

smsechri@uncg.edu

North Carolina Network for Safe Communities

Website: ncnsc.uncg.edu