

# Juvenile Probation Professionals' Perceptions of Community-Based Probation Strategies

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## **Abstract**

Recent budget restraints and heightened concerns for juvenile offenders' safety and well-being have compelled juvenile justice policymakers and practitioners to implement community-based approaches for reducing juvenile recidivism. This paper explores whether individual, organizational, and attitudinal factors influence juvenile probation professionals' perceptions of the community-based probation (CBP) model, a supervision strategy that emphasizes establishing community partnerships to rehabilitate youths. Seventy-one juvenile probation professionals working in probation agencies across Texas completed questionnaires asking them about their perceptions of CBP and its impact on current juvenile offending trends. Results of regression analyses revealed that rehabilitation-oriented juvenile probation professionals were more likely to attribute current decreases in juvenile offending to CBP and more likely to believe that CBP does not endanger public safety. Interestingly, the age of juvenile probation professionals was correlated with an increased probability that professionals believed that CBP poses no threat to public safety. The article concludes with a discussion of the implications for supervision strategies and directions for future research.

**Keywords:** Probation, Juveniles, Rehabilitation, Punishment

## 1. Introduction

The juvenile justice system's primary function is protecting the public while guiding wayward youths toward making better life choices. A combination of social factors has forced policymakers and juvenile justice practitioners to employ more innovative and cost-effective tactics to accomplish these goals. Juvenile probation represents one way that justice professionals have long attempted to balance the goal of rehabilitating youth on the one hand and restoring a measure of safety to the public on the other. The "workhorse" of the juvenile justice system, juvenile probation, is the most frequent sanction imposed for juveniles in the courts (Brezina, 2010). Several factors have contributed to the courts' reliance on probation as its primary sanction, including cost associated with incarcerating juveniles, research showing incarceration's ineptness in reducing juvenile crime, and a surge in the popularity of evidence-based practices.

Regarding cost, a recent analysis by Piquero and Steinberg (2010) found that the average cost of incarcerating juveniles in secure facilities across the nation was \$306 a day, equaling an annual cost of \$111,000 per juvenile. The alternative, rehabilitation within the community, was estimated at only \$10,000 annually. According to the American Correctional Association (2008), the nation spent an estimated 8 billion dollars incarcerating juveniles in secure facilities. These findings highlight incarceration's costliness and thus make probation a more desirable disposition. Second, recent findings indicate that incarcerating youths does not effectively curb juvenile offending or make the public safer (Lambie & Randell, 2013). The general purpose of confinement for juveniles is to protect the public against further offending through rehabilitative efforts. However, recent studies have found that incarcerating youths for extended periods does not reduce recidivism rates (Lipsey & Cullen, 2007; Winokur, Smith, Bontrager, & Blankenship, 2008). Recently, Boulger and Olson (2011) found that, within six months of release, juvenile offenders returned to juvenile facilities at a rate of 45 percent while 17 percent returned to adult facilities. These findings are in line with evidence that suggests youths are at a crucial stage in their development in which they are especially vulnerable to being adversely influenced by their stays in facilities (Lambie et al., 2013). Incarceration in a secure facility has been shown to be associated with higher levels of temperance and irresponsibility in youths and impedes the development of their autonomy (Dmitrieva, Monahan, Cauffman, & Steinberg, 2012). Many incarcerated youths receive inadequate rehabilitative services while incarcerated (Fagan & Kupchik, 2011; Sedlak & McPherson, 2010). Moreover, Fagan and Kupchik's (2011) qualitative study showed that incarcerated juveniles were less likely to report receiving rehabilitative services than incarcerated adults.

A third factor influencing the decline in popularity of incarceration is the unlikely threat a substantial number of detained juveniles pose for the law-abiding public. Many youths residing in secure facilities have committed less serious offenses than the serious offenders they are housed with, a fact that negates the necessity of their confinement. For instance, of the juveniles committed to placement in 2007, only 26 percent had committed one of the four violent index offenses (i.e., murder, rape, robbery, or aggravated assault) (Sickmund, 2011). By extension, research has confirmed that between ages 20 and 30 even chronic offenders

desist from offending, bringing into question the necessity of justice system intervention (Piquero, Farrington, & Blumstein, 2007; Sampson & Laub, 2003). Likewise, Schur (1973) has argued for a policy of radical non-intervention to avoid the harmful effects of labeling from juvenile justice agencies.

Finally, the rise of evidence-based practices and associated research has contributed to the declining popularity of incarceration. Research on juvenile interventions and programming show that delinquent youths' rehabilitation is more effective when conducted within a community setting (Henggeler & Schoenwald, 2011; Lipsey, 2009). Community-based treatment works best because the problems associated with delinquency occur within the community context that youths reside; and receiving support from families, neighbors, schools and service vendors in the community are vital to implementing effective rehabilitation (Henggeler et al., 2011).

Taken together, the research on incarceration costs, ineffectiveness in reducing recidivism, failure to incapacitate serious offenders, and evidence-based practices lends enhanced value to probation as a tool in reducing juvenile delinquency. However, similar to other aspects of the juvenile justice system, juvenile probation has struggled to overcome the ideological and practical impediments to adopting and implementing evidenced-based practices. One of the more recent obstacles involves juvenile probation professionals' use of supervision strategies that rely less on punitive responses (i.e., returning youths to court where they face the risk of incarceration) and more on community rehabilitation efforts. Community-based Probation (CBP) is a method of supervision that requires juvenile probation officers to supervise youths within the community with the help of community service providers. Guided by rehabilitative ideals, this supervision model entails that juvenile probation officers only send noncompliant youths back to the court after all rehabilitative efforts have been exhausted in the community.

The CBP model benefits the justice system, youths and the broader community for at least three reasons. First, CBP is a socially and fiscally cost-effective alternative to incarcerating youths (Alarid & Del Carmen, 2008; Zhang, Roberts & Callanan, 2006). Second, it integrates restorative justice principles, allowing community and victim involvement in the rehabilitation of the juvenile offender – which is a more effective means of reducing delinquency and crime (Alarid et al., 2008; Taxman, 2002). Third, the use of CBP gives the juvenile offender an avenue to repair harm done to the community due to their offense while avoiding the alienation that is often a consequence of incarceration. CBP proponents maintain that pursuing rehabilitative efforts within the community creates supports and opportunities for youths that will sustain them when supervision ends.

For the CBP model to have the intended effect on juvenile recidivism, it is necessary to know which factors influence juvenile probation professionals' decision to implement it (Seave, 2011). To this author's knowledge, no empirical analyses of these factors in relation to CBP have been undertaken. This study seeks to address this gap in the current literature by examining juvenile probation professionals' perceptions of the effectiveness of the CBP model in reducing delinquency and protecting the public. The current study also evaluates the impact of juvenile probation professionals' demographic, organizational, and attitudinal

characteristics on their perceptions of the CBP model's ability to curb delinquency and protect the public. In addition, we asked juvenile probation professionals if they believed the current use of the CBP model is responsible for recent declining rates of juvenile offending.

## **2. Literature Review**

Strategies for supervising youths within their communities have undergone significant changes since juvenile probation was first used in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. These changes came about due to ideological arguments concerning the amenability and culpability of youthful offenders. Early pioneers of probation believed juveniles could be rehabilitated and were only partially liable for their delinquent behaviors (Alarid et al., 2008; Drowns & Hess, 2000). For the next two centuries, the role of the probation officer was counselor and broker of community resources. However, in the 1980s, a paradigm shift occurred and the justice model of probation arose in response to increasing rates of juvenile offending. This new paradigm viewed probation less as a rehabilitative alternative to incarceration and more as punishment for dangerous offenders who were beyond saving. Probation officers embraced a punitive orientation, emphasizing court sanctions, community restitution, and offender accountability as goals (Alarid et al., 2008).

In recent years, CBP has reemerged as the dominant ideological framework for supervising youths, calling for a more balanced approach to supervising youths. Retaining aspects from previous models of probation, CBP was adopted in response to budgetary and ideological concerns about the treatment of youths within secure juvenile facilities (Alarid, et al., 2008). Moreover, research began showing that rehabilitative efforts were most effective when implemented in the community (Taxman, 2002). This change is evident in probation services in Texas. In 2007, juvenile probation departments in Texas put into practice the CBP model in response to allegations of sexual and physical abuse of youths in residential facilities. Around this time policymakers directed their efforts towards saving money by keeping youths in their homes where they could benefit from community resources (Springer, 2007). For Texas juvenile probation departments, this meant that returning youths to court where they would face the risk of incarceration was a "last-resort" response to noncompliance and that a combination of imposing progressive sanctions and referring youths to community agencies for therapeutic and vocational services was preferable. As a result, the primary role of juvenile probation professionals shifted from juvenile custodians to brokers of services.

According to Alarid (2008), the CBP model contains unique elements specific to the supervision and community liaison functions of probation officers. In terms of supervision, CBP requires that a written supervision plan be written, documenting goals and objectives that are to be achieved. The plan will be periodically reviewed and probationers are to be held accountable through the use of sanctions if goals are not met. In terms of the liaison function, CBP requires that probation officers identify the strengths of probationers and subsequently provide resources to add onto those strengths. To this end, probation officers will establish relationships with entities within the community who can provide needed resources for probationers.

Since the probation departments changed supervision styles, Texas witnessed a sharp decline

in juvenile offending. For example, from fiscal year 2007 to 2010, the number of Texas youths referred to the courts decreased from 71,166 to 61,619 (Texas Juvenile Probation Commission, 2011). What's more, this same report found that the number of dispositions issued in juvenile courts in Texas decreased between 2009 and 2010: adjudicated probation (26,872 to 22,076); deferred prosecution (24,009 to 21,796); supervisory caution (21,720 to 19,527) and dismissals (20,371 to 18,643). The decrease in referrals to the courts and probation departments were accompanied by a sharp decrease in the number of violation of probation referrals received by juvenile courts. According to the Texas Juvenile Probation Commission (2011), between 2007 and 2010, violation of probation referrals decreased from 13,678 referrals to 11,494 referrals.

The decline in law enforcement and probation officer referrals to the court coincides with the shift in supervision strategies practiced by Texas juvenile probation agencies. While it can be inferred that shifts in supervision strategies are responsible for decreases in juvenile offending, juvenile offending was declining prior the changes in probation strategies. Nonetheless, juvenile probation professionals may attribute this continuing trend to their efforts to rehabilitate youths in their communities. Knowing how juvenile probation professionals gauge their role in producing current trends in juvenile offending rates by logic, then, provides insight into how willing they are to implement established strategies and practices.

Prior research has found that successful implementation of programs and strategies in the juvenile justice system are largely dependent on drafting a plan of action, training supervisory and line-level personnel, implementing a plan for quality improvement, and creating measures and methods of evaluating an organization's progress (Mihalic, et al., 2004). Still, little is known about which factors contribute to juvenile probation professionals' support for strategy implementation. Indeed, whether juvenile probation professionals attribute juvenile crime reduction to CBP or support the implementation of CBP may be connected to individual, organizational, and attitudinal factors. We now review the research examining these factors and their relationship to support for rehabilitative practices similar to CBP.

### *2.1 Predicting Support for Community-Based Probation*

The philosophy undergirding the juvenile justice system is *parens patriae*, the doctrine that the state oversees the welfare of the child in the absence of effective supervision (Champion, 2010). Following this philosophy, the historical role of the juvenile probation professional has been the training and socializing of youths particularly through making referrals for service (Lopez & Russell, 2008). However, the importation model, when applied to justice practitioners, predicts that willingness to adhere to the rehabilitative ideals of the justice system is affected by the personal orientations they bring to their jobs (Van Voorhis, Cullen, Link, & Wolfe, 1991). Moreover, this perspective suggests that these attributes include individual characteristics like race, age, and gender among others (Leiber, Schwarze, Mack, & Farnworth, 2002; Van Voorhis et al., 1991). A competing model, the work/role model, suggests that orientations towards punishment and rehabilitation are influenced by work-related variables and experiences (Van Voorhis et al., 1991).

To the author's knowledge, few studies have examined correlations between justice professionals' individual (i.e., age, gender, race, political affiliation, education, job tenure, caseload) and organizational (feelings of respect and appreciation) characteristics and support for rehabilitative practices. The few that have been conducted have produced mixed results (Cochran, Boots, & Chamlin, 2006; Cochran, Boots, & Heide, 2003; Farrell, Young & Taxman, 2011; Jalbert et al., 2011; Leiber et al., 2002; Lopez et al., 2008; Mitchell, MacKenzie, Gover & Styve, 2001; Schwalbe & Maschi, 2009; Steiner, Purkiss, Kifer, Roberts & Hemmens, 2004; Unnever & Cullen, 2005; Ward & Kupchik, 2010). Therefore, we include these variables in the current study as controls.

Ward and Kupchik (2010) argue that a stronger predictor of justice professionals' orientations towards punishment and rehabilitation are measures of attitudinal resonance. They describe attitudinal resonances as justice professionals' worldview, belief system and personal ideology. It contains justice professionals' moral and ethical beliefs, which they argued is the strongest attitudinal resonance. As such, attitudinal characteristics are distinctly different from individual and organizational factors as they capture the degree of optimism juvenile justice professionals have about the youths they work with. Ward and Kupchik (2010) described attitudinal resonance as the link between justice professionals' individual attributes and orientations toward punishment and rehabilitation, as it is conditioned by individual characteristics like race. They argued that attitudinal resonance would be a stronger predictor of justice professionals' orientation rather than individual characteristics.

To examine this principle, they surveyed 399 juvenile court probation officers to obtain information about their orientations toward the administration of juvenile justice. Results of regression analyses revealed that probation officers who attributed more importance to moral character and victim's rights were more likely to be oriented to treatment. They noted that the inclusion of attitudinal variables significantly improved the explanatory power of their model and reduced individual characteristics to insignificance with the exception of gender. These findings were only partially replicated when orientation towards punishment was treated as an outcome variable. In particular, attitudinal measures of importance attributed to victim's rights and offense severity were significantly correlated with juvenile court probation officers' punitive orientation. However, juvenile probation officers' age and gender were also significantly and negatively associated with orientation toward punishment.

To summarize, the role of the probation officer is one characterized by dueling extremes. On one hand, the probation officer's responsibility is to serve as a mentor to youths on their caseload, advocate for youths, and connect them to valuable community resources. On the other hand, the probation officer must impose sanctions on youths in response to noncompliance with conditions of probation, enforce rules specified by court orders, report infractions to the court, and conduct surveillance on youths at the home, school and community. As a result, the probation officer is constantly shifting between roles that emphasize both punishment and treatment.

While it is debated which of these orientations is most dominant, rehabilitative and punitive orientations are the product of individual, organizational, and attitudinal characteristics. The

juvenile probation professional that readily embraces a punitive orientation would likely view CBP as ineffective in curbing delinquency and youthful offending and, therefore, believe its use places the public in danger. On the contrary, the juvenile justice professional that embraces a rehabilitation orientation will likely view the CBP model as a productive and effective approach to curbing delinquency and juvenile offending and protecting the public.

### 3. Method

The current study is an exploratory study using quantitative data obtained from questionnaires distributed to juvenile probation professionals across the state of Texas. This is an attractive approach because it allows juvenile probation professionals to provide insight not only into their individual characteristics, but also their perceptions of the organization in which they work, attitudes towards the juveniles they supervise and, most importantly, the extent to which they value CBP as a strategy for reducing juvenile offending and protecting the public. Knowing which factors influence their perceptions is important because staff “buy-in” impacts the success of such initiatives.

#### 3.1 Sample and Participant Selection

Of the surveys distributed, 71 juvenile probation professionals’ responses were included after dropping cases with missing values and three cases due to small number of respondents classifying their racial membership as “other”. Frequencies, mean scores and standard deviations for the sample are presented in Table 1. Nearly thirty five percent of the participants were male and 65 % were female. Most of the participants classified themselves as White (71.8%), 8.7% as Black, 19.4% Latino. All other racial groups were excluded from the study. Age of participants ranged from 26 to 62 ( $M = 43.74$ ,  $SD = 9.74$ ). In terms of education, most participants completed a four year degree (65%), 26.8% a Master’s degree, 2% a doctoral or professional degree, and 4.1% an associate’s degree or some college. Regarding political affiliation, 45.7% of the participants classified their political affiliation as conservative, 18.5% liberal, 8.7 % independent, 5.4% other and 21.7% not affiliated.

Table. 1: Percentages, Means and Standard Deviations for Predictor and Outcome

Variables			
	%	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Gender			
Female	65.35		
Male	34.65		
Race			
Black	8.74		
Latino	19.42		

White	71.84		
Age		43.74	9.74
Education			
Associates	1.03		
Some College	3.09		
Bachelors	64.95		
Masters	26.8		
Doctoral	2.06		
Professional	2.06		
Political affiliation			
Liberal	18.48		
Conservative	45.65		
Independent	8.7		
Other	5.43		
Not affiliated	21.74		
Caseload size		21.87	16.56
Job tenure		14.35	9.36
Organization		22.69	9.94
JJ system too lenient		2.88	1.33
Punishment reduces offending		2.37	1.10
Supervision improves behavior		3.01	1.25
CBP reduces delinquency		3.72	1.20
CBP responsible decline		3.35	1.03
CBP not endangered public safety		3.39	1.03
n = 71			

% = Percentage; M = mean; SD = standard deviation

### 3.2 Procedures

The survey software program, Qualtrics, was used to email questionnaires to juvenile probation chiefs (JPCs) currently working at probation departments in Texas' 254 counties. JPCs were asked to e-mail the surveys to juvenile probation officers and juvenile probation administrators employed in their respective agencies. A reminder email was sent two weeks following the initial email asking JPCs to encourage employees to participate and no



follow-up emails were sent thereafter. The survey included questions about juvenile probation professionals' demographic and occupational attributes, opinions about the organizational functioning of their agencies, attitudes toward rehabilitation and perceptions about the effectiveness of the CBP model in reducing delinquency and protecting the public. Contained within the survey were closed and open-ended questions. This allowed respondents to provide additional information regarding their responses to questions of the CBP model's usefulness. Bivariate correlation and ordinal logistic regression analysis were used to examine the associations between individual, organizational and attitudinal factors and juvenile probation professionals' perceptions of CBP. Data was processed and analyzed using STATA 12 software.

### *3.3 Measures*

#### 3.3.1 Individual Factors

Dummy variables were created for gender (male = 1, female = 0) and race (Black, Latino), with Whites treated as the reference group. Education was treated as a continuous variable (associates degree = 1, some college = 2, college graduate = 3, master's degree = 4, doctoral degree = 5, professional = 6). Political affiliation was treated as a continuous variables (Liberal = 1, Conservative = 2, Independent = 3, Other = 4, Not affiliated = 5). Caseload size and job tenure were treated as continuous variables.

#### 3.3.2 Organizational Factors

To measure juvenile probation professionals' attitudes towards their agencies and leadership, a Likert-type scale was used with answers ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Juvenile probation professionals were asked to what extent they agreed with the following statements: (a) I am treated fairly by my manager, (b) My manager treats me with respect, (c) My manager values my talents and the contributions that I make, (d) This organization respects its employees, and (e) The reports I generate and the recommendations I make are taken into consideration by justice practitioners. A composite variable was created using all five questions ( $\alpha = .89$ ).

#### 3.3.3 Attitudinal Factors

To measure juvenile probation professionals' attitudes towards rehabilitation, a Likert-type scale was used ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Juvenile probation professionals were asked to what extent they agreed with the following statements: (a) The juvenile justice system is often too lenient on juveniles, (b) Fear of more severe punishment reduces juvenile offending behaviors, and (c) Providing youth with greater and more restrictive supervision will improve their behavior.

#### 3.3.4 Perceptions of the Community-Based Probation Model

The dependent variables, perceptions of the CBP model, were measured by asking juvenile probation professionals to rank how strongly they agreed with the following statements: (a) Using services located in the community rather than incarcerating youth is a more effective means of fighting juvenile delinquency, (b) The strategy of connecting juveniles to

counseling and other community-based services is responsible for current reduced rates in juvenile offending, and (c) Referring juveniles to services within the community rather than incarcerating them has not put the safety of the public in danger. These three indicators were analyzed as separate outcomes.

#### **4. Results**

Bivariate analysis demonstrated that there was not a significant relationship between the dependent variable that measured the perception that the use of CBP reduces delinquency and any of the variables in the model. It was, therefore, not included in further analyses. However, the perception that CBP is responsible for reduced offending and does not endanger public safety were positively associated education ( $r = .25$ ) and age ( $r = .30$ ), respectively. Both outcome variables were also positively and significantly associated with the perception that the juvenile justice system is too lenient and restrictive supervision improves juveniles' behavior (e.g., Table 2). Thus, education, age and the perception that the juvenile justice system is too lenient and restrictive supervision improves juveniles' behavior were included in regression analysis while the remaining variables were excluded from further analyses.

Table 2: Correlation Matrix for Predictor and Perceptions that COP Reduces Delinquency, is Responsible for Decline in Juvenile Offending and does not Endanger Public Safety

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
1. Gender														
2. Race	0.05													
3. Age	0.23*	0.19												
4. Education	0.03	0.14	0.02											
5. Political affiliation	-0.03	0.08	-0.23	0.00										
6. Caseload size	0.16	0.23	0.11	-0.13	0.10									
7. Job tenure	0.12	0.15	0.59*	0.11	0.10	0.07								
8. Organization	-0.12	0.13	0.18	0.07	0.08	0.25	0.05							
9. JJ system too lenient	0.02	0.07	-0.13	-0.18	0.12	0.07	-0.17	0.10						
10. Punishment reduces offending	-0.07	0.09	-0.07	-0.04	0.05	0.13	0.34*	0.19	0.12					
11. Supervision improves behavior	0.00	0.11	-0.11	0.32*	0.03	0.11	0.27*	0.16	0.38*	0.36*				
12. CBP reduces delinquency	0.10	0.17	0.14	0.18	0.05	0.06	0.15	0.02	-0.19	-0.20	-0.06			
13. CBP responsible decline	-0.10	0.12	0.06	0.25*	0.12	0.26	0.17	0.10	0.43*	0.05	0.28*	0.26*		
14. CBP not endangered safety	-0.08	0.01	0.30*	0.15	0.14	0.23	0.20	0.12	0.32*	-0.17	0.45*	0.24	0.31*	

Note: \* =  $p < .05$

Results of the subsequent ordinal regression analysis revealed that education, age, and the extent to which juvenile probation professionals believed restrictive supervision improves juveniles' behavior was not significantly associated with perceptions of CBP being responsible for recent declines in juvenile offending. For a one-unit increase in the perception that the juvenile justice system is too lenient, the odds of probation professionals with the highest agreement that CBP is responsible for the decline in juvenile offending versus those with the other levels of agreement are .65 lower, given that all of the other variables in the model are held constant. As expected, probation professionals who were more likely to believe that the juvenile justice system is too lenient were less likely to believe that CBP was responsible for the current drop in juvenile offending (OR = .65,  $p = .03$ ) (e.g., Table 3).

In terms of the second outcome, juvenile probation professionals' perception that the use of CBP has not endangered public safety was not significantly correlated with juvenile probation professionals' educational attainment or their perception that the juvenile justice system is too lenient. However, for a one-unit increase in age, the odds of probation professionals with the highest agreement that CBP has not endangered the public versus those with the other levels of agreement are 1.06 greater, given that all of the other variables in the model are held constant. Likewise, for a one-unit increase in the perception that restrictive supervision improves juvenile behavior, the odds of probation professionals with the highest agreement that CBP has not endangered the public versus those with other levels of agreement are .53 lower, given that all of the other variables in the model are held constant. In summary, being younger probation professionals who supported restrictive supervision were less likely to support CBP (e.g., Table 3).

Table 3: Ordinal Logistic Regression for Outcome Variables: CBP Responsible for Decline in Offending and CBP have not Endangered Public Safety

Predictor Variable	<u>CBP responsible for</u>				<u>CBP has not endangered</u>			
	<u>decline in offending</u>				<u>public safety</u>			
	<i>OR</i>	<i>p</i>	95% CI		<i>OR</i>	<i>p</i>	95% CI	
Age	0.99	0.82	0.95	1.04	1.06	0.02	1.01	1.12
Education	1.59	0.19	0.79	3.18	0.95	0.89	0.49	1.87
JJ system too lenient	0.65	0.03	0.44	0.96	0.73	0.14	0.48	1.10
Supervision improves behavior	0.79	0.31	0.50	1.25	0.53	0.01	0.33	0.85
Prob > $X^2$	0.02				0.00			
R <sup>2</sup>	0.08				0.13			
Note. <i>OR</i> = odds ratio. CI = confidence interval.								

## 5. Discussion

This investigation aimed to assess whether probation professionals' individual, organizational and attitudinal factors associated with juvenile probation professionals' perceptions of the CBP model. More specifically, it explored which factors predict whether probation professionals believe that CBP is useful in reducing delinquency, protecting the public,

decreasing rates of juvenile offending. Identifying the factors that are associated with juvenile probation professionals' support for CBP is important because this strategy cannot be effectively and consistently implemented without it. Furthermore, the use of CBP and similar interventions benefits juvenile offenders and communities according to recent evidence-based practice research. Community-based responses to crime and delinquency more effectively lower recidivism rates for juvenile offenders and costs taxpayers far less than incarcerating youths. These goals are worthy of pursuing.

With regards to the aforementioned questions presented in the current study, it appears that one individual and several attitudinal factors significantly predicted juvenile probation professionals' confidence in CBP's ability to reduce delinquency and protect the public. Juvenile probation professionals that were more rehabilitation oriented were more likely to believe CBP did not endanger public safety and is responsible for declining rates of juvenile offending. These findings suggest that rehabilitative orientations are key to understanding probation professionals' views as opposed to their feelings about the organizations in which they work or demographic characteristics (i.e., race, gender, political affiliation). One of the more interesting findings was that age was positively correlated with perceptions that CBP does not endanger the public. This association was the strongest of the significant predictors and warrants further research.

The results of this research support the idea that the rehabilitation orientation of juvenile justice professionals is a stronger predictor of support for CBP and similar community-based practices than individual and organizational factors. Taken together, these findings suggest that juvenile probation professionals' belief in the utility of CBP is significantly influenced by their attitudes about youths' amenability to treatment. A limitation of this study is that the sample was relatively small, which may have resulted in a lack of variation in key variables. Further studies are needed to improve understanding of the factors that are predictive of rehabilitation orientations and probation professionals' support for rehabilitative modes of supervising youths. Future research should, therefore, concentrate on the investigation of juvenile probation professionals' early role socialization and experiences working with youths.

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