

Public Abstract

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Department:Psychology

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Title:Cost-benefit analysis of multisystemic therapy for serious and violent juvenile offenders and their siblings

This study compared the economic benefits of a family-based treatment (multisystemic therapy, MST) versus individual therapy (IT) over 25 years using a sample of 176 serious and violent juvenile offenders and 110 of their siblings. The study included three categories of benefits from reduced crime: (1) avoided criminal justice system costs, (2) avoided monetary losses to crime victims, and (3) avoided pain and suffering of crime victims. Taken together, the benefits of MST over IT ranged up to \$34,955 per juvenile offender and up to \$37,433 per family (when siblings were included). Overall, every dollar spent on MST recovered up to \$4.98 in the years ahead by preventing future crimes. The economic benefits of MST are important for administrators and policymakers to consider when allocating funding to interventions for serious juvenile offenders.