Presentation of Results of RJ Research

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How has RJ been tested?

- Many studies of RJ
- Fewer studies of RJ <u>conferencing</u>
- But often weak designs
- Most rigorous evaluation via experiments
- These results today only from most rigorous experiments – randomised controlled trials (RCTs)
- These RCTs are on medical model of testing new drugs: eligible cases are randomly assigned either to get the treatment or NOT to get the treatment

What sort of RJ has been tested with RCTs?

- Face to face RJ conferences (RJC) between crime victim and offender
- In the presence of a trained facilitator
- And of their supporters (family and friends) and others affected
- Offender must have accepted responsibility for offence
- Direct discussion between victim and offender focused on feelings rather than facts
- May be either instead of formal justice processes or in addition to them

How has RJC been tested?

- Over eight years 11 RCTs conducted on RJ in Aust + UK + US
  - Different offences
  - Different offenders
  - Different locations
  - Different points in the justice system
- Objective to field test as broadly as possible
- Equal probability of assignment: court as usual compared with diversion to RJ (Australia) or court as usual compared with court plus RJ (United Kingdom)
- Outcomes measures: reoffending and victim satisfaction

RCTs Comparing RJC with Conventional Justice

	Offender N
1. Australia <30 years violence (diversion)	121
2. Australia juvenile personal property (diversion)	248
3. Australia juvenile shoplifting (diversion)	142
4. US Indianapolis juvenile property/violence (diversion)	782
5. UK juvenile property/violence (police Final Warning)	208
6. UK adult property (Magistrates Courts)	63
7. UK adult assault (Magistrates Courts)	44
8. UK robbery (Crown Courts)	88
9. UK burglary (Crown Courts)	167
10. UK violence – Probation	64
11. UK violence – Prison	94
Total offender N =	2021

What Does the Review of These Studies Conclude?

- Offenders –
- Slows some down, others stop reoffending completely while others are unaffected
- May be better for the most prolific offenders

  On average 27% reduction in repeat convictions across British trials

Offences –

- Works better for violence than property offences
- Wasted on minor offences
- Victims -
- Unequivocal evidence on greater benefit for most of those willing to meet their offenders

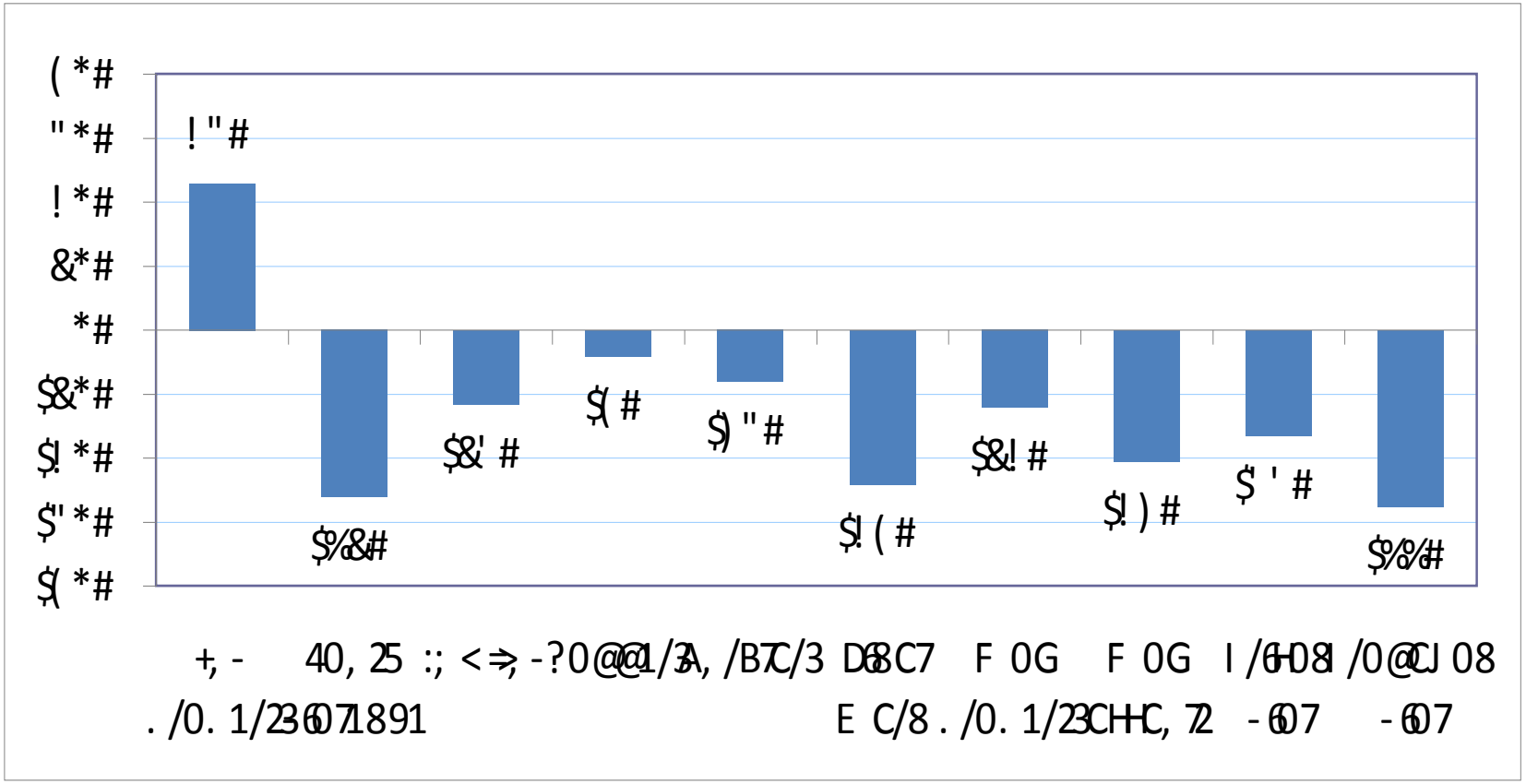
1. What effect do face-to-face RJ conferences have on…

- Frequency of reconvictions
  - across different points of criminal justice process
  - with personal victims intended to be there?

- ANSWER: 9 out of 10 tests with personal victims show less crime for RJ than CJ (Australian juvenile property experiment failed for RJ)

- NB especially results for prison and probation experiments

Personal Victims Present: % Change* in Reconviction Frequency



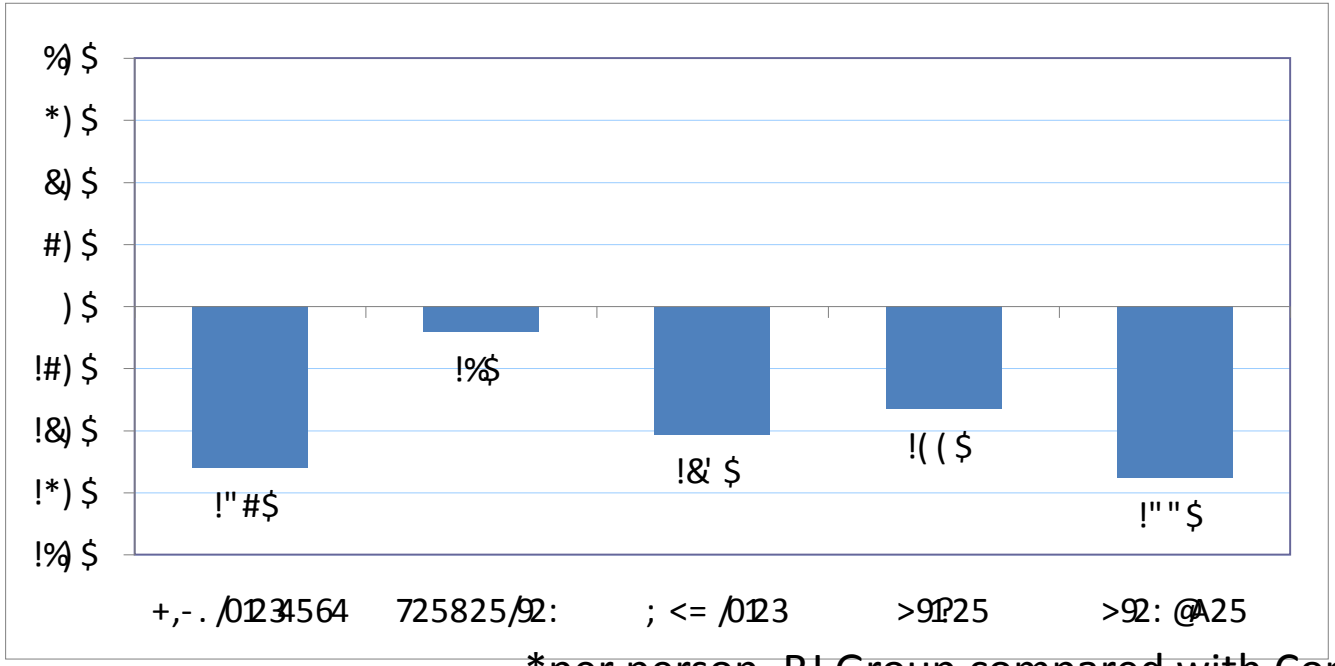
*per person, RJ Group compared with Control Group

What about RJC and violent crime?

- Frequency of Reconviction
- In Violent Crime Experiments
- Youth and Adult Combined
- All levels of seriousness from simple assault to grievous bodily harm

- ANSWER: 5 out of 5 violence tests show less crime for RJ

Percent Change* in the Frequency of Reconviction – Violence Experiments



*per person, RJ Group compared with Control Group

What about RJC and property crime?

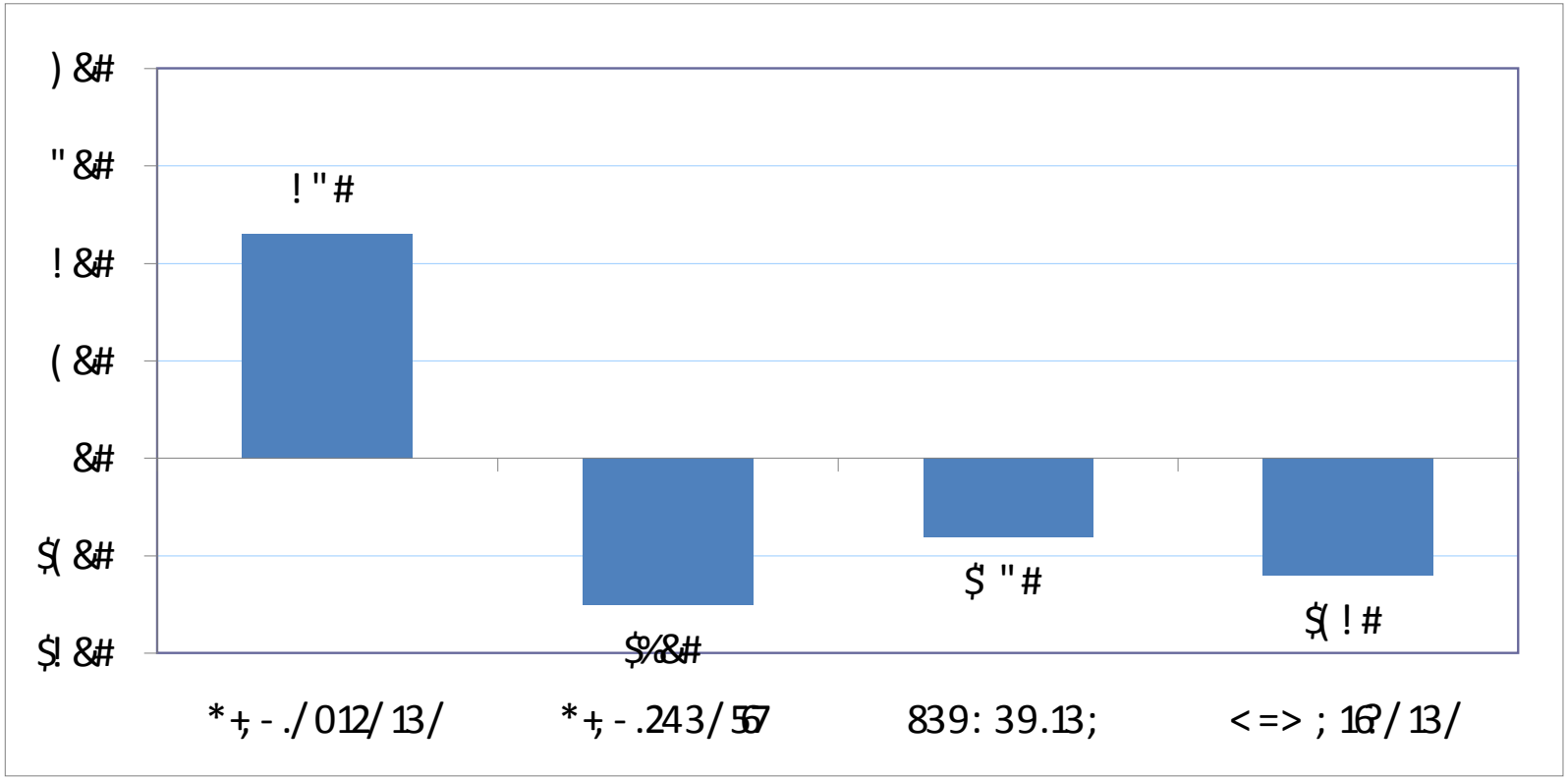
What Effect Does RJ have on

- Frequency of Reconviction on
- Property Crime Offenders
- Youth and Adult Combined

- ANSWER: 3 out 4 tests show less crime for RJ
- Effects not as big, or as prevalent, as for violence

- ***RJ WORKS BETTER FOR MORE SERIOUS CRIME***

Percent Change* in the Frequency of Reconviction – Property Experiments



*per person, RJ Group compared with Control Group

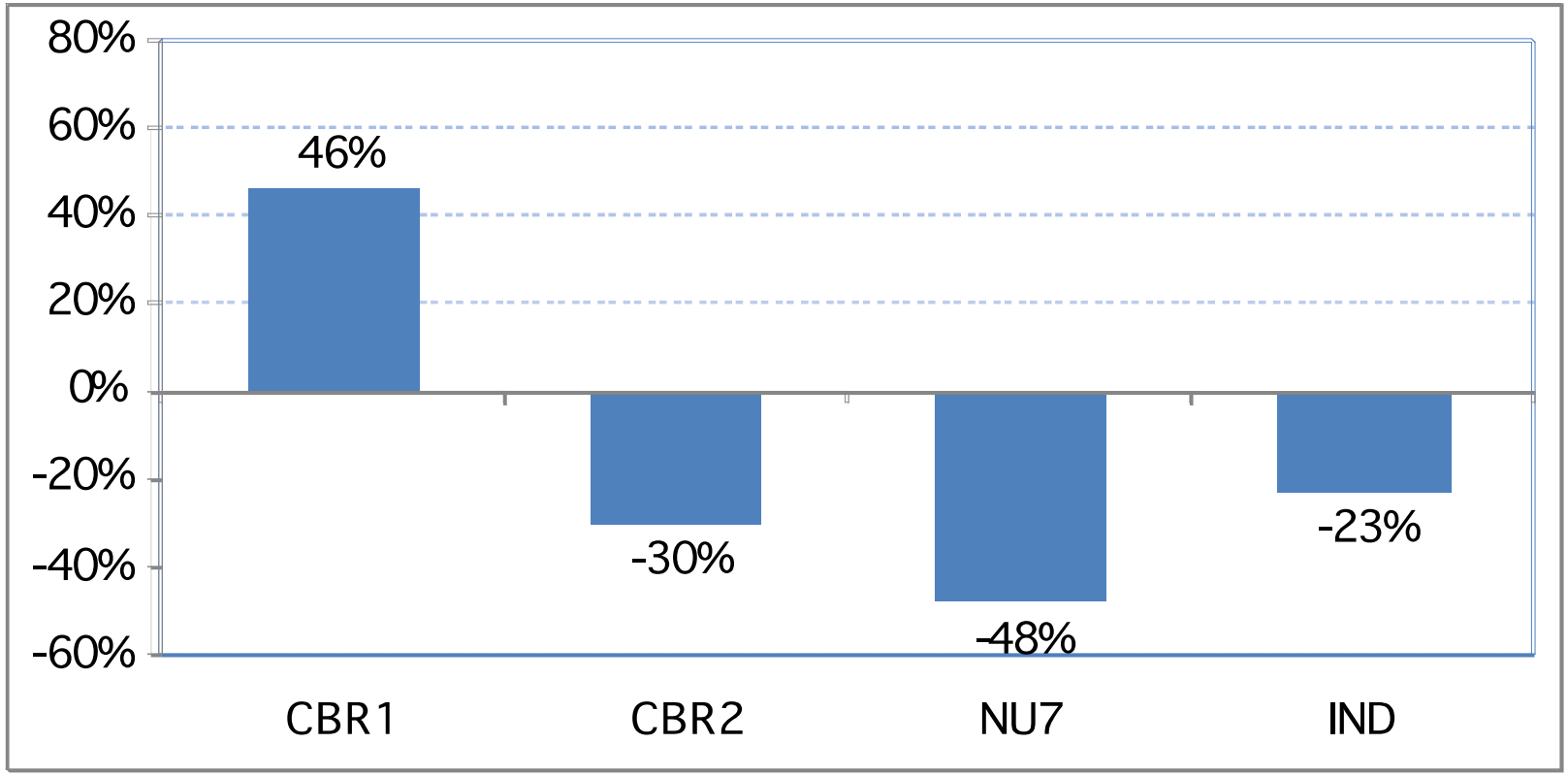
What about RJC and Youth Crime?

What Effect Does Face-to-Face RJ Have on

- Youth Crime
- Property and Violent
- US, UK, Australia?

- ANSWER: 3 out of 4 tests show less crime for RJ

Percent Change* in the Frequency of Reconviction – Youth Experiments



*per person, RJ Group compared with Control Group

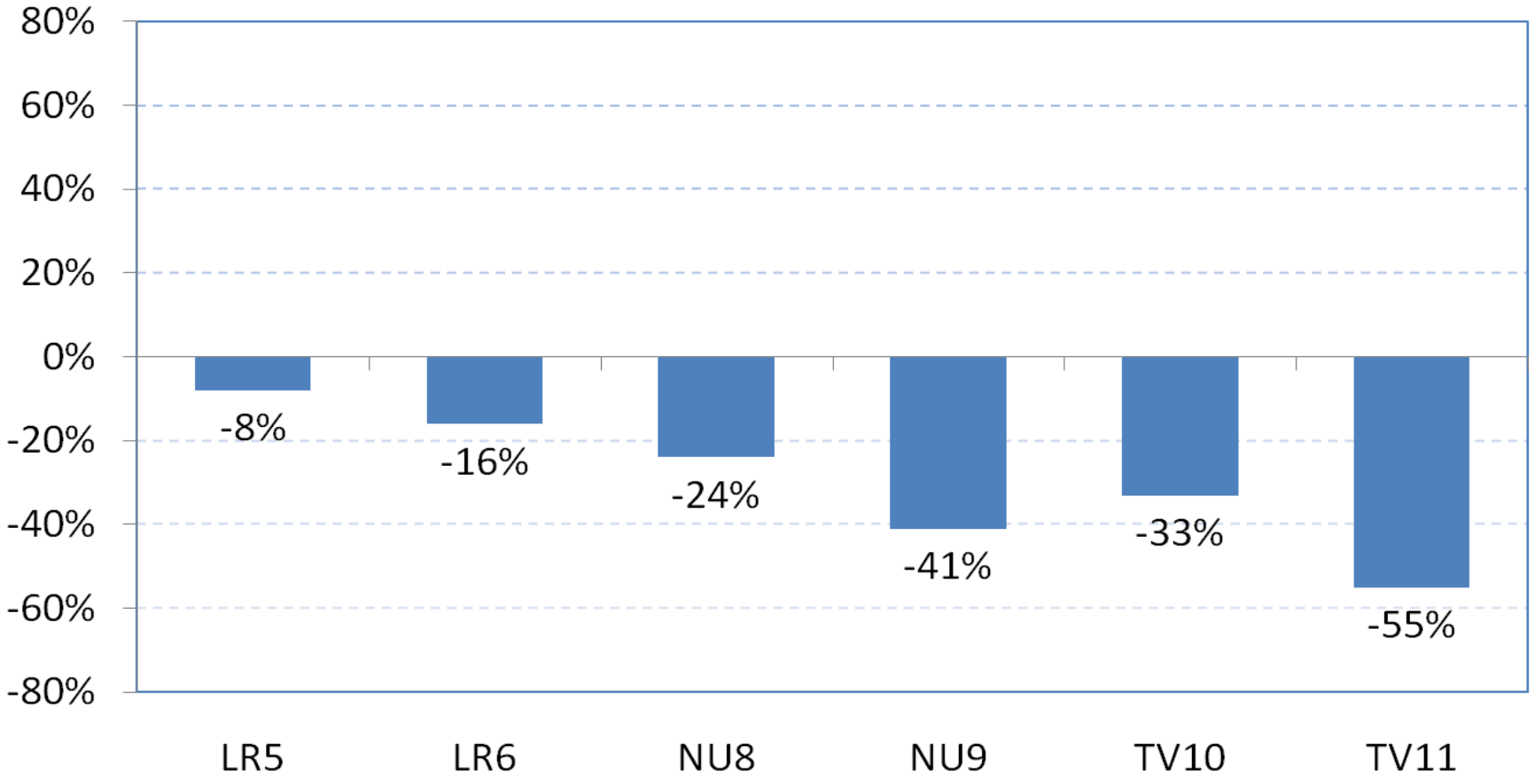
What about RJC and adult crime?

What Effect Does Face-to-Face RJ Have on

- Adult Crime
- Property and Violent
- US, UK, Australia?
- Answer:
- 6 out of 6 tests on adults = less crime for RJ

- *Effects bigger for adults than for juveniles*

Percent Change* in the Frequency of Reconviction – Adult Experiments



*per person, RJ Group compared with Control Group

What about Prevalence and Frequency of Reoffending?

- What is the effect of Face-to-Face RJ on the *prevalence* and *frequency* of any reconviction over 2 years (percentage with 1 or more conviction or arrest)

- *16% Reduction in Prevalence* across all tests, on border of significance, across 3,140 offenders (i.e. 16% fewer RJ offenders re-offended than CJ)

- *27% Reduction in Frequency* across all tests, statistically significant (i.e. 27% less crime among offenders who had RJ in addition to CJ)

Cost-Benefit Ratios: UK Tests

SITE	RJ Cost	CJ Benefit Ratio	Total Benefit Ratio
London	598,848	1:3	1:14
N'Umbria	275,411	1:0.26	1:1.2
Thames Valley	222,463	1:0.46	1:2
Total	1,096,722	1:1.8	1:8

- *CJ benefit is benefit from costs of crimes prevented, estimated at average 22% of total costs of crime (property loss, insurance, medical/hospital costs, victim wellbeing etc).

Effects for Victims

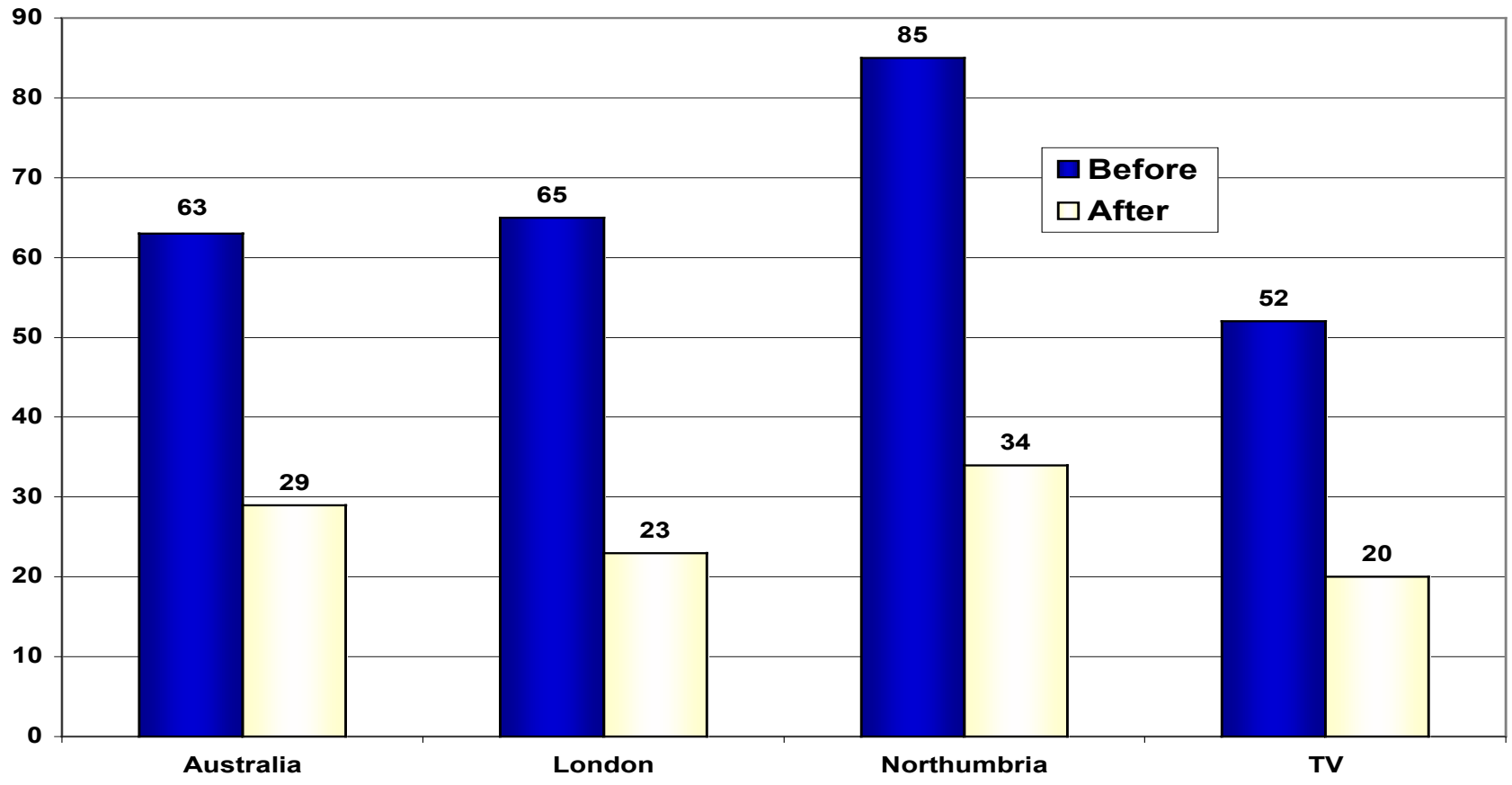
BENEFITS:

- participation
- information
- fairness and respect
- apologies (and sometimes forgiveness)

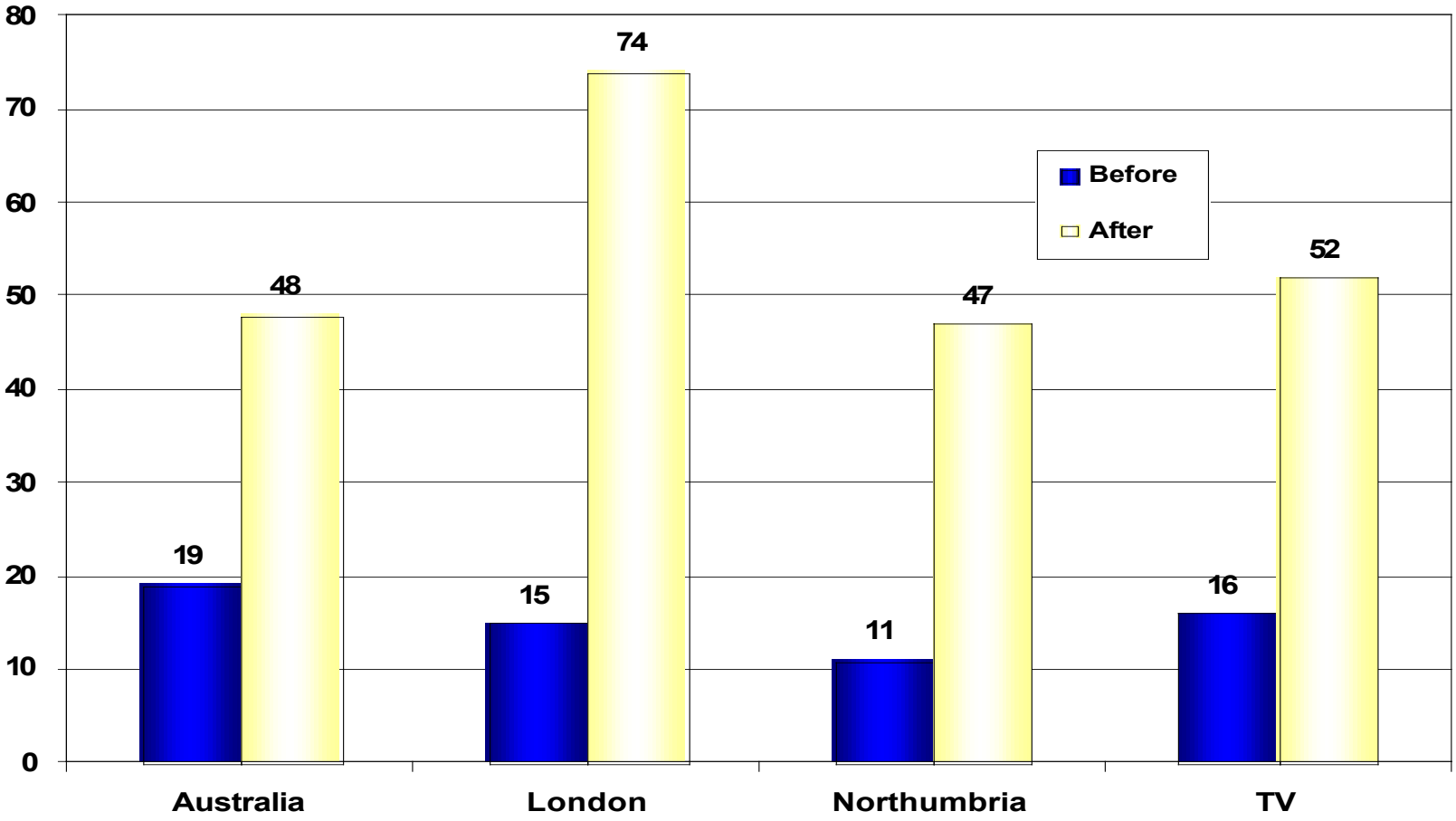
EFFECTS:

- Fear, Anger, Sympathy for Offender
- Post-Traumatic Stress measures
- Desire for Retaliation
- Satisfaction With Process

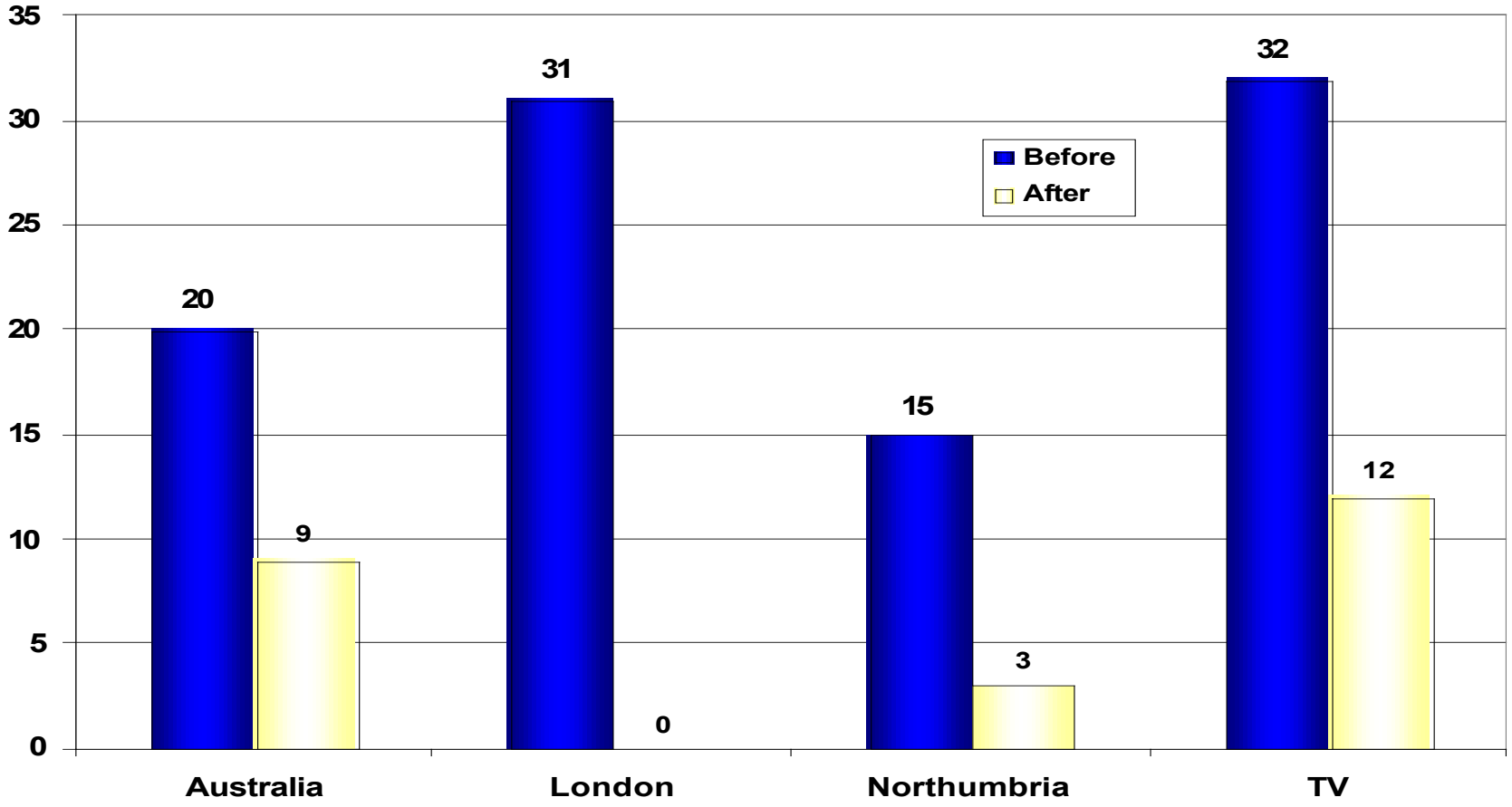
Percentage of victims angry before/after meeting. Preliminary UK & Australia



Percentage of victims sympathetic before/after meeting. Preliminary UK & Australia



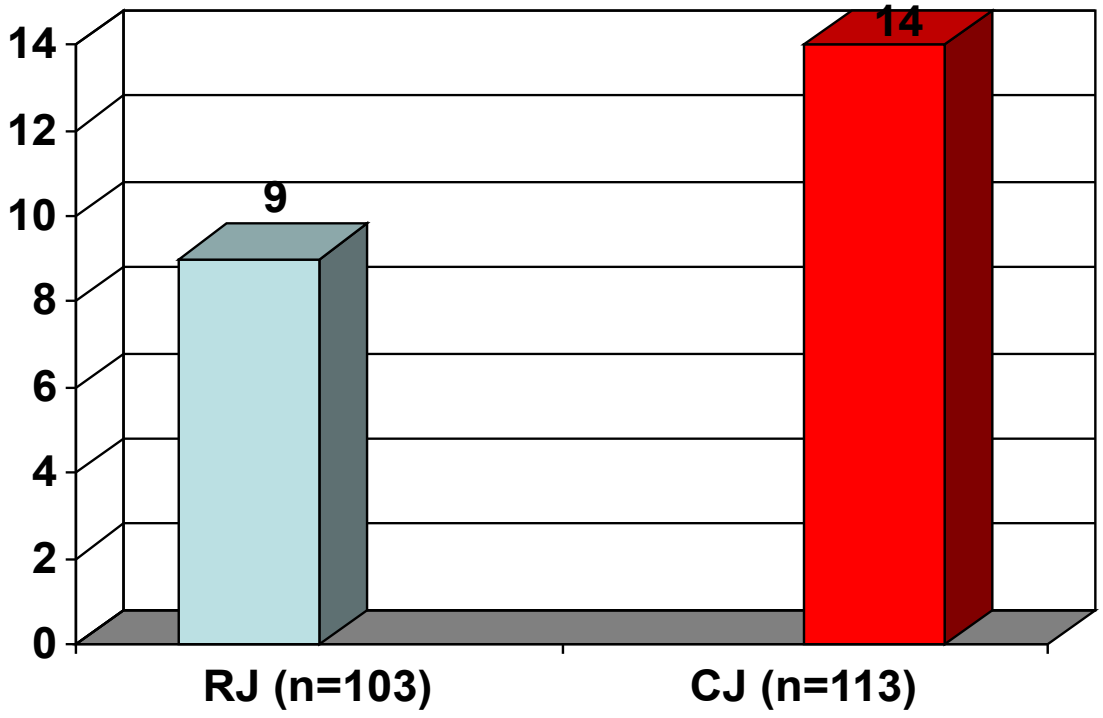
Percentage of victims afraid before/after RJ meeting. Preliminary UK & Australia



Findings on Victim Post-traumatic Stress

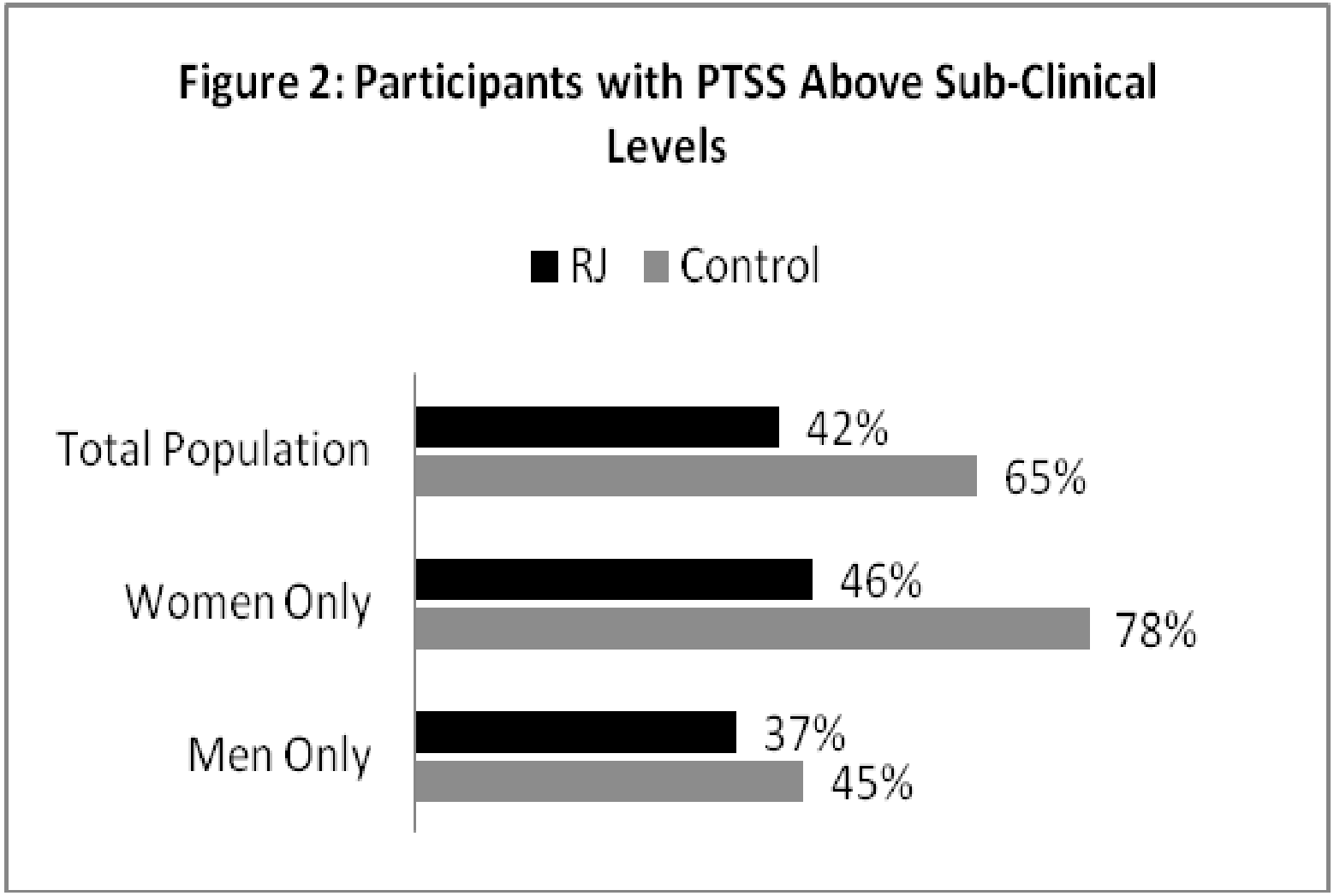
- London Crown Courts
- Burglary & Robbery
- Most meetings in prisons
- Telephone interviews
- Standard scale to measure psychological trauma

Average level of Victim Post Traumatic Stress Both Robbery & Burglary



$p \leq 0.010$

RJ Helps Women Victims PTSS *More*

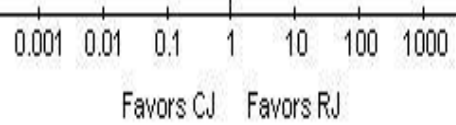


Reduction in Victim Revenge

Review: Restorative Justice & Revenge
Comparison: 01 Desire for Revenge
Outcome: 01 Desire for Revenge

Study or sub-category	CJ n/N	RJ n/N	OR (fixed) 95% CI	Weight %	OR (fixed) 95% CI
RISE-JPP-Females	2/29	2/34		21.66	1.19 [0.16, 8.99]
RISE-JPP-Males	5/51	2/37		26.42	1.90 [0.35, 10.39]
RISE-JVC-Females	5/14	1/12		8.75	6.11 [0.60, 62.23]
RISE-JVC-Males	11/22	3/33		15.17	10.00 [2.34, 42.70]
London-Burg-Females	2/45	0/39		6.39	4.54 [0.21, 97.49]
London-Burg-Males	2/29	0/29		5.79	5.36 [0.25, 116.76]
London-Rob-Females	4/18	0/16		5.09	10.24 [0.51, 206.88]
London-Rob-Males	1/15	1/18		10.72	1.21 [0.07, 21.22]
Total (95% CI)	223	218		100.00	4.06 [1.95, 8.48]

Total events: 32 (CJ), 9 (RJ)
Test for heterogeneity: $Chi^2 = 4.87$, df = 7 (P = 0.68), $I^2 = 0\%$
Test for overall effect: Z = 3.73 (P = 0.0002)



Victim Benefits

Compared with conventional justice, RJ provides

- significantly higher victim satisfaction than court justice
- significantly higher levels of apology
- significant greater reduction in desire for revenge
- significantly greater reduction (approx 40%) in post-traumatic stress symptoms (PTSS) for robbery and burglary victims.

Summary of RJ Effects, compared with conventional justice

- Violent Crime: Biggest, clearest effects of RJ
- Property Crime: positive, not so big

- RJ better for adult offenders than youth
- RJ appears more effective than court alone post-sentence than pre-sentence

- RJ better for women victims than men (but good for both)

- UK: RJ Cost effective for government costs

- Across all studies:
  - significantly fewer crimes
  - Significantly better for victims

Policy Implications for RJC in Crime

- Investment of RJC in more serious crimes (when victims want to do it)
- Particularly effective in reducing reoffending after conviction in court and prior to sentencing
- Need more tests of RJC re race and minorities groups
- Need more tests of RJC at point of release (weak statistical power in our research) - but promising here
- Cost effective in reduced reoffending in all studies where RJC used in addition to court.

•USE RJ IN THE WAYS IT HAS BEEN FOUND TO BE EFFECTIVE - AND DON'T LABEL AS RJ WHAT ISN'T RJ.