

GIFT Research Phase III  
Recidivism Outcomes

Final Report on GIFT Research  
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UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

# A Hennepin-University Partnership

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Gaining Independence for Women in Transition (GIFT) is a probation model designed to reduce prostitution recidivism for women on probation for prostitution-related charges originating in Minneapolis and with 0-3 prior prostitution charges.

This is the final report in the research design to determine whether the GIFT probation model (N=78) is successful in reducing prostitution recidivism when compared to a “business-as-usual” probation model from a Historical sample of women (N=125). We have been collecting data on GIFT since 2009, in order to develop a large enough sample of women who completed probation for this analysis.

Now that we have completed the three-phased research design, we find that GIFT is an evidence-based model for reducing prostitution recidivism. We strongly recommend continuation of adherence to program design as described in the GIFT Logic Model.

Our Findings include the following:

- GIFT significantly reduces prostitution recidivism for individuals who completed probation and even for those who did not complete probation. Those who completed GIFT had zero re-convictions for prostitution one year after probation start.
- In the GIFT group that completed probation, only two people recidivated and these were for non-prostitution related offenses.
- For the GIFT and Historical sample groups that recidivated, participation in GIFT shifted the types and severity of crime. The GIFT sample had a much lower proportion of prostitution recidivism and a higher proportion of crimes against the administration of justice and theft. GIFT also had a higher proportion of misdemeanors compared to the Historical sample.
- The GIFT sample was more likely to have at least one Adult Correctional Facility booking post-probation start compared to the Historical sample. But, when we compared the subset of GIFT and Historical sample that completed probation, the rate of ACF bookings were similar.

We recommend considering the following program refinements.

1. Develop more opportunities for job training toward the end of probation.
2. Implement more cognitive behavioral intervention to address types of in-program recidivism observed.
3. Explore expansion of GIFT to include all women on probation for prostitution-related charges in Hennepin County, including those whose charges did not originate in Minneapolis.
4. More inquiry into the role of bookings into the Adult Correctional Facility, and whether this is a program component or a result of closer scrutiny. If the latter, we recommend refining the graduated sanction model to avoid unnecessary bookings.

## INTRODUCTION

Gaining Independence for Females in Transition (GIFT) is an evidence-based approach to the supervision of prostitution offenses and a research project. It was launched on January 1, 2009 after a two-year formative and program development period. The goal of GIFT is to reduce prostitution crime in the city of Minneapolis by improving the life circumstances of women on probation for prostitution offenses.

GIFT is also a research project commissioned by the Department of Community Corrections and Rehabilitation (DOCCR) to test whether the GIFT program design reduces criminogenic risk and recidivism of women in the GIFT program. The GIFT Research Team is comprised of a contracted external research consultant, Lauren Martin (Ph.D.), and an internal DOCCR researcher, Julie Rud (M.S.). In 2013, Jose Palma joined the GIFT research team to support with quantitative data analysis.

To evaluate program effectiveness the research project was divided into three phases to answer three basic questions.

Phase I (2009)

Is GIFT operating according to plan?

**The answer is YES, GIFT does operate according to its' program logic model.**

Phase II (2012)

Does GIFT reduce the risk of re-offense for program participants?

**The answer is YES, completion of GIFT does reduce criminogenic risk measured by the LSI-R.**

Phase III (2015)

"Does GIFT reduce recidivism?"

**The answer is YES, those who complete GIFT had no prostitution recidivism one year after probation start.**

This report finds that GIFT dramatically reduces prostitution crime for those who complete the program compared to both those who were assigned to GIFT but did not complete the program and a comparable population of women on probation for prostitution offenses who did not participate in GIFT.<sup>1</sup> In addition to prostitution recidivism, we also analyze general recidivism one year after probation start, types of recidivism offense, and patterns in bookings to the Adult Correctional Facility (ACF) in Hennepin County two years after the probation start date.

This remainder of this report provides more detail on the GIFT model, describes the research design, presents outcome findings, recommendations for future programming, and study limitations.

## GIFT MODEL DESCRIPTION

The GIFT program targets women with 0-3 prior convictions for prostitution, although women with more convictions can be referred with an "over ride." DOCCR collaborates with District Court, The PRIDE Program of the Family Partnership, the Minneapolis City Attorney's Office, Hennepin's Human Service and Public Health department and several other community agencies to administer the GIFT program.

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<sup>1</sup> Full research design and plans available upon request.

All system partners have clearly defined roles to provide a continuity of supervision using a holistic and client-centered approach. These roles are delineated in the GIFT model of authority.<sup>2</sup> The model outlines the need for GIFT probation officers' utilization of supportive therapeutic relationships, gender-responsive interventions and intentional service delivery to address criminogenic risk and decrease barriers to rehabilitation.

The GIFT program has five goals: (1) Abate future involvement in prostitution crime; (2) Target chemical dependency and mental health concerns; (3) Improve financial stability; (4) Stabilize housing; (5) Address the physical, mental and spiritual health of participants.

The following conditions are assigned to GIFT participants at sentencing, as appropriate:

- a. Participate in judicial reviews to monitor progress.
- b. Successfully complete group sessions at PRIDE (or similar agency).
- c. No use of alcohol or illegal drugs.
- d. Take all medications as prescribed, if applicable.
- e. Submit to random urinalysis (UA) and breathalyzers as requested.
- f. Complete a chemical health evaluation and follow recommendations, if any.
- g. Maintain contact with supervising Agent as directed.
- h. Participate in mental health therapy if applicable.
- i. Have no contact with specified places, if part of sentencing.
- j. Sign all releases of information for supervising Agent.
- k. No new charges (supported by probable cause).

The full program design is provided in the GIFT Logic Model in the appendix. It includes all model inputs, program activities, and outputs, as well as short, medium and long-term outcomes.

## RESEARCH DESIGN

It was not possible to create a randomized control group for this study because GIFT is probation and serves all women with prostitution charges from the City of Minneapolis. Instead, we compared women who entered the GIFT probation model with a similar historical sample of women who were on probation for prostitution prior to the creation of GIFT (a quasi-experimental research design). In order to avoid potential cross-over of probation periods for women in both the historical and GIFT sample, we pulled the historical sample based on women who completed probation at least five years before the GIFT model was developed.

This study explores recidivism defined as prostitution-specific reconvictions under State Statute 609.324. It further examines a more general definition of recidivism to include a new conviction in the State of Minnesota for a misdemeanor, gross misdemeanor or felony offense. Recidivism offense dates during a one year period post-probation start designate the recidivism event, ensuring the closest approximation to when the behavior occurred as compared to the time the court processed the case. Finally, this study explores re-incarceration at the Adult Corrections Facility for two years post-probation start, inclusive of jail time imposed for both technical probation violations and new offenses.

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<sup>2</sup> Full description of the GIFT Model of Authority available upon request.

## The Sample

A sample of 203 cases were considered for the analysis (GIFT = 78; Historical = 125). The historical sample consists of cases from 2000 through 2003 who would have met GIFT criteria had they been convicted after January 1, 2009. The historical sample was matched to the GIFT sample based on the following variables: race, age, diversion status, prior prostitution conviction, and general criminal history. These variables were considered for matching because of their research and practical significance. In a previous study, they were also found to be important variables in predicting GIFT completion.<sup>3</sup>

DOCCR, at the time of the historical sample, utilized three different probation approaches:

- 1) Women deemed at low-risk for re-offense were assigned to the Probation Reporting Center (PRC) in a large-group format;
- 2) Women deemed medium risk were assigned to the PRC with an individual approach and assigned probation officer;
- 3) Women deemed at high risk were assigned to a street outreach and individual approach in Neighborhood Probation.

Assignment to these categories was at the discretion of probation and the courts and was thus, by definition individual rather than systematized<sup>4</sup>. A prior study by the GIFT research team in 2012 determined that when we controlled for prior conviction, the recidivism rates for these approaches were comparable and thus it was appropriate to include all approaches in the same historical sample.<sup>5</sup>

Data comparison points in this report are limited to those data that were collected as part of probation in both time periods. As a result of this research project, a great deal of additional data were collected only with women in GIFT during Phase II of the study (including intake, prostitution questionnaire, and actuarial assessments). That data is not reported here.<sup>6</sup>

## Data Preparation

The GIFT model allows for system partners (probation, court, prosecutor, public defender) or the client herself to recommend an “over ride” of the GIFT criteria to this probation model. In order to make certain that our GIFT and historical samples were comparable (i.e. comparing apples to apples; not apples to oranges), we exclude from this analysis the four participants in the GIFT sample that were overrides and who did not meet the GIFT inclusion criteria. This means that all cases where the woman had more than three prior prostitution convictions (N=4) were excluded.

In order to more fully understand recidivism rates, we developed a “completion” variable to indicate whether or not the client successfully finished their probation sentence. Those who were compliant with conditions at the time of probation expiration were coded as completed, and those who were revoked to expiration of their probation sentence or were otherwise in violation at probation expiration were coded as having not having completed probation.

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<sup>3</sup> More information about covariates predicting GIFT completion can be found in Phase II Outcomes report, 2013.

<sup>4</sup> Risk levels were assigned using a variety of criteria most often related to level of offense and criminal history on a case-by-case basis; actuarial assessment tools did not guide the risk designation as is common practice today.

<sup>5</sup> Full report on recidivism rates for historical probation models is available upon request.

<sup>6</sup> The final report for Phase II is available upon request.

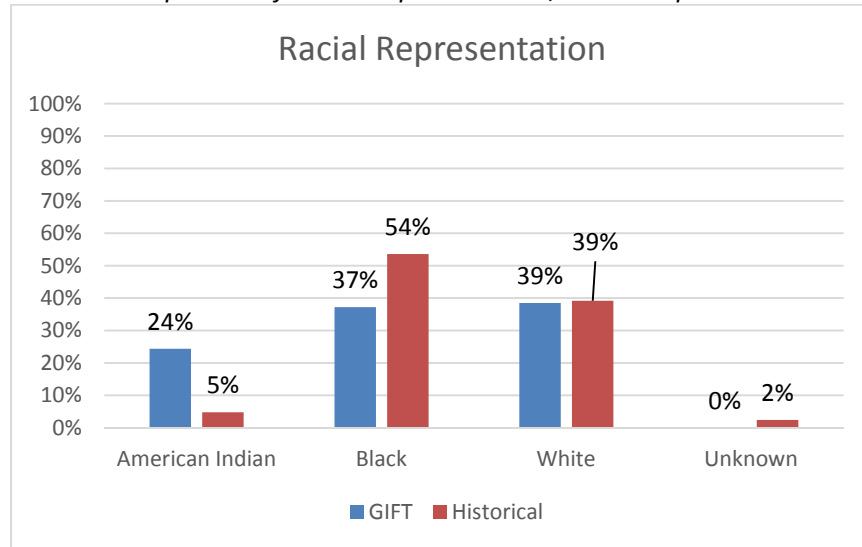
## COMPARISON OF THE GIFT AND HISTORICAL SAMPLES

### Demographic Comparison of the Samples (Age and Race)

The average age at start of probation was roughly comparable between the two samples. The GIFT sample had an average age of probation start of 32.5 years of age (SD=8.7) and the historical sample was 32.9 years of age (SD=8.1).

The racial distributions were different. There was a substantial increase in American Indian women in the GIFT probation model. In our study of the impact of GIFT on criminogenic risk (Phase II final report), when all clients were combined we found that GIFT decreased risk criminogenic risk. However, when we analyzed GIFT by race, we found that GIFT had less impact on American Indian clients.<sup>7</sup>

*Chart 1: Comparison of Racial Representation, GIFT Sample and Historical Sample*



### Comparison of Probation Completion Rates

Between GIFT and the historical sample the probation completions rates were comparable. In GIFT, 53% completed their probation sentence, while 57% of the Historical sample completed their probation sentence. Using a chi-square test, this difference was found to be not statistically significant – suggesting there are no differences in completion rates between the two samples and that the completion rates are comparable.

*Table 1: Comparison of Probation Completion, Historical Sample and GIFT Sample*

	Historical Sample	GIFT Sample
Not Completed Probation	54 (43%)	37 (47%)
Completed Probation	71 (57%)	41 (53%)
TOTAL	125	78

<sup>7</sup> There may be many reasons for this including: need for culturally specific programming, greater criminogenic risk among American Indian clients, more substantial economic need, or other factors. However, our research does not specifically address the reasons why.



## Comparison of Prior Prostitution Charges

We also compared prior prostitution charges between the two samples. We examined the distribution of individuals in each sample with prior prostitution charges of zero, one, two and three and found that they were roughly equivalent (Chart 2). We also dichotomized the prior prostitution charges variable to make sure the samples were equivalent with respect to criminal history related to prostitution. We found that the distributions looked similar and a chi-square test was non-significant (Table 2) – meaning the samples are comparable.

Chart 2: Prior Prostitution Charges for GIFT and Historical samples

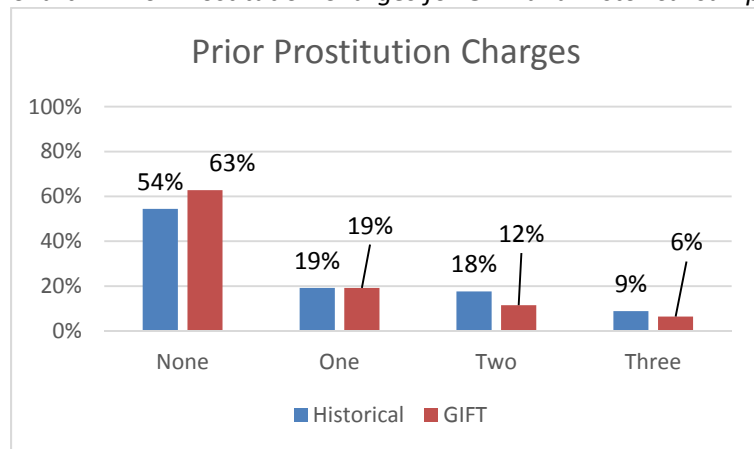


Table 2: Prior Prostitution Charge, Yes or No, for Historical and GIFT Samples

	Historical	GIFT
No Prior Prostitution Charge	68 (54.4%)	49 (62.8%)
At least one Prior Prostitution Charge	57 (45.6%)	29 (37.2%)
TOTAL	125	78

## OUTCOME VARIABLES, GIFT COMPARED TO THE HISTORICAL SAMPLE

In this study we explore two primary outcomes. (1) Prostitution and general recidivism one year after probation start. (2) Bookings in the Adult Correctional Facility (ACF) in Hennepin County two years after probation start. In this section we present the data. Implications are discussed in the section “Findings and Conclusions.”

### Comparison of Prostitution and General Recidivism

As noted above, recidivism is recorded for one year post-probation start, thus is most reflective of in-program recidivism. The average probation period for GIFT and Historical sample is approximately two years. Post-probation recidivism will not be available until the fourth quarter of 2016 in order for enough time to pass for GIFT participants.

In comparing the prostitution recidivism rates of the Historical sample (57%) and GIFT (20%), we found a statistically significant difference in prostitution recidivism at year one. The GIFT sample had a lower rate compared to the historical sample. When comparing a more general recidivism definition of reconviction at the misdemeanor offense or above, we did not find statistical differences between the

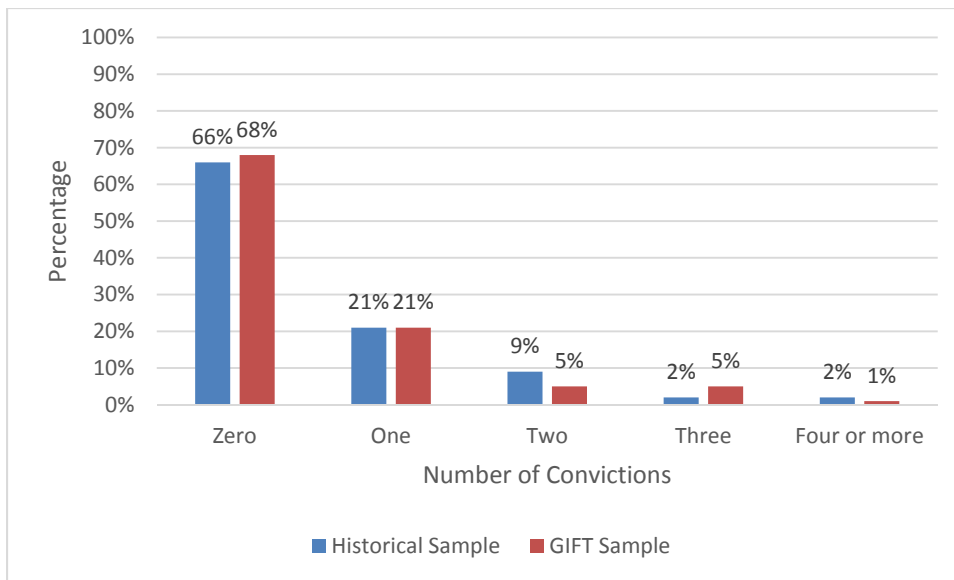
two groups. General recidivism rates for the total historical sample (33.6%) and total GIFT sample (32.1%) were very similar as seen in Table 3. Chi-square tests were non-significant, meaning general recidivism rates are similar. Below we explore recidivism in a bit more depth.

*Table 3: First year General Recidivism, Historical Sample and GIFT Sample*

	Recidivism=No	Recidivism=Yes
Historical Sample	83 (66.4%)	42 (33.6%)
GIFT Sample	53 (67.9%)	25 (32.1%)
Total	136 (67.0%)	67 (33.0%)

We also compared the number of new convictions for the Historical sample and the GIFT sample after probation. We found a very similar rate in the number of new convictions for the GIFT and the Historical sample. The range was from 0-7 new convictions. In both samples most individuals had had zero convictions. For those with a conviction the majority had between one and three.

*Chart 3: Number of new convictions, Historical Sample and GIFT Sample*



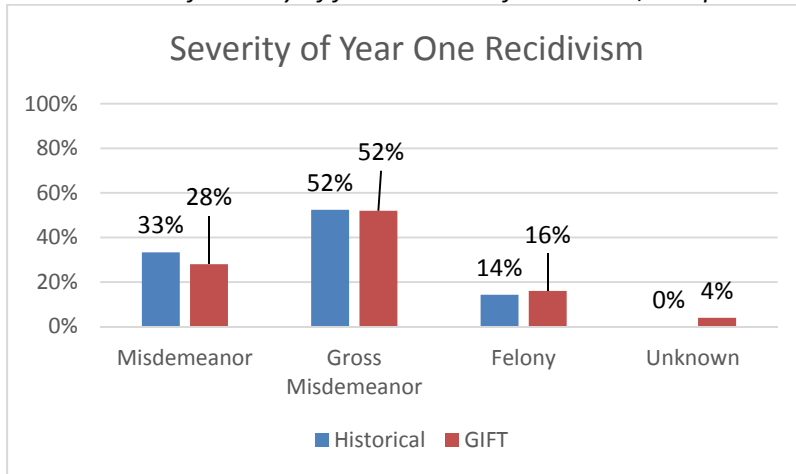
Visual inspection of the types of crimes with which individuals were convicted shows some differences between the Historical sample and the GIFT sample. The GIFT sample had a lower rate of prostitution related recidivism and higher rates of new convictions for crimes against the administration of justice (i.e. providing a false information, fleeing from the police, etc.) and theft. This is displayed in Table 4.

Table 4: Recidivism First New Conviction Description

Charge	Historical Sample	GIFT Sample
Prostitution	24 (57.1%)	5 (20%)
Theft	4 (9.5%)	6 (24%)
Crimes against Admin of Justice	0 (0%)	9 (36%)
Drugs	3 (7.1%)	2 (8%)
Counterfeiting/Fraud	4 (9.5%)	0 (0%)
Trespass	1 (2.4%)	1 (4%)
Assault	1 (2.4%)	0 (0%)
Promote Prostitution	1 (2.4%)	0 (0%)
Other	4 (9.5%)	2 (8%)
TOTAL	42	25

The distribution of the first recidivism incident by severity of crime is roughly commensurate, with both the historical and GIFT samples having just over half of their first recidivism events at the level of a gross misdemeanor.

Chart 4: Level of severity of first incident of recidivism, comparison Historical and GIFT Samples



Finally, we explored whether there were any differences between the Historical and GIFT samples in bookings at the Adult Correctional Facility (ACF) in Hennepin County looking two years after probation start. The historical sample had a range of 0-12 bookings at the ACF, with the majority (65%) at zero bookings. The GIFT sample had a range of only 0-6 booking at the ACF, with 42.3% at zero bookings. When we dichotomized the variable to whether or not a person was booked at least once (i.e. a yes/no variable) we found that the GIFT sample was more likely to have at least one ACF booking post-probation start as compared to the Historical sample and this difference was statistically significant (Chi-square 10.6, p-value at .001).

We also explored ACF bookings by comparing ACF booking (Y/N) by general recidivism (Y/N) among the Historical and GIFT samples. Table 5, below, shows that for individuals with no recidivism, GIFT had a higher rate of at least one ACF booking compared to the Historical sample; chi-square tests confirmed

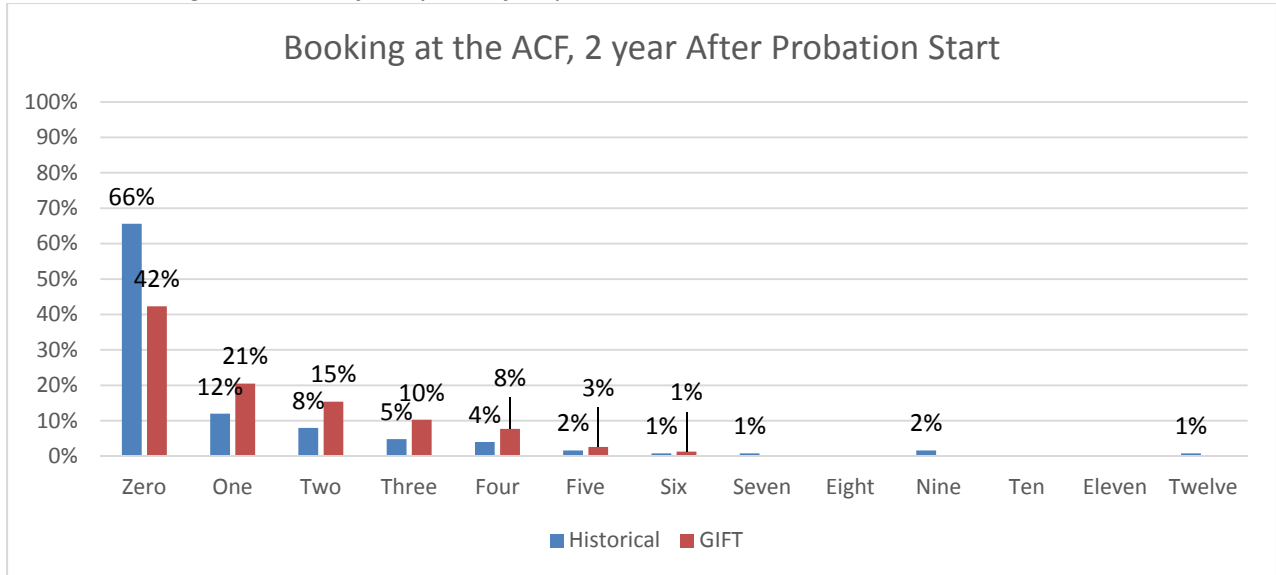
this was statistically significant. Similar trends were found when comparing prostitution recidivism by ACF bookings. For individuals with at least one recidivism incident, GIFT appears to have a slightly higher rate of ACF bookings, but this was not found to be a statistically significant difference.

*Table 5: ACF Booking (Y/N) and general recidivism (Y/N) by group*

	No ACF Booking	Yes ACF Booking	Total
<b>NO Recidivism</b>			
Historical	70 (84%)	13 (16%)	83
GIFT	29 (55%)	24 (45%)	53
<b>YES Recidivism</b>			
Historical	12 (29%)	30 (71%)	42
GIFT	4 (16%)	21 (84%)	25

Chart 5 displays the number of ACF bookings among the Historical and GIFT samples. Visual inspection of this chart confirms the trend that GIFT clients, overall, had higher incidence of ACF booking even though as noted above they had a lower recidivism rate than the Historical sample. The range of post-probation bookings for the GIFT sample was shorter than the Historical sample.

*Chart 5: Bookings at the ACF, for 2 years after probation start*



## HISTORICAL AND GIFT SAMPLES BY PROBATION COMPLETION STATUS

In order to truly understand the impact of GIFT on recidivism, it is necessary to examine recidivism based on whether or not probation was completed. As noted above, we created a variable to indicate those who completed their probation sentence (“completers”) and those who did not (“non-completers”). As noted above in Table 1, we found roughly equivalent rates of probation completion in the historical sample when compared to the GIFT sample—slightly over half of each population.

Thus, the Historical and GIFT samples each have two categories, yielding four comparison groups: historical sample completers, historical sample non-completers, GIFT sample completers, and GIFT sample non-completers. We would expect in both samples that those who did not complete probation would be more likely to recidivate than those who did complete probation. NOTE: When the sample is broken into four groups, the numbers are relatively small. In some instances, the numbers were too small to sustain rigorous statistical analysis. We did not test for statistical significance in these instances.

### Completion Status Historical and GIFT, Age and Race

We found that on average, those who completed GIFT tend to be older (34 years old) compared to those who did not complete GIFT (30 years old). Using a t-test, this was found to be a significant difference at the .05 level. In the Historical sample the average age of probation start was the same for completers and non-completers (see table 6 below).

*Table 6: Age at probation start for completers and non-completers, Historical and GIFT Samples*

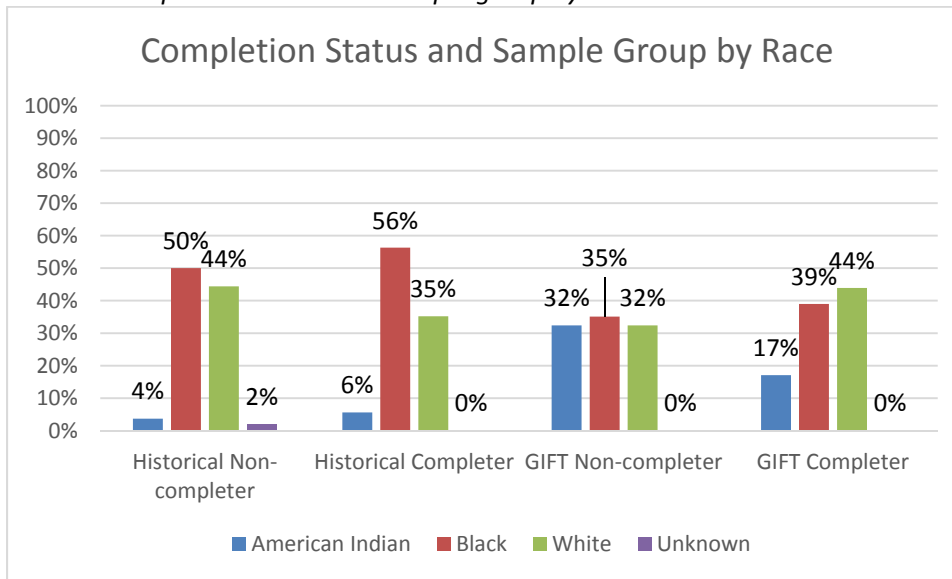
		Mean Age	N	Std. Deviation
Historical	Non-completers	33	54	8.417
	Completers	33	71	7.872
	Total	33	125	8.079
GIFT	Non-completers	30	37	7.818
	Completers	34	41	9.1
	Total	32	78	8.71
Total	Non-completers	33	91	8.237
	Completers	33	112	8.333
	Total	33	203	8.308

Table 7 shows the distribution of racial representation within each of the four groups. It shows that the four groups are not similar by race. As noted above, a much higher proportion of women in GIFT compared to the historical sample were American Indian. Chart 6 below shows the percentages within each group.

*Table 7: Number of completers/non-completers by race in historical and GIFT samples*

	HISTORICAL			GIFT		
	completer	non-completer	<b>Total</b>	completer	non-completer	<b>Total</b>
Black	40	27	<b>67</b>	16	13	<b>29</b>
White	25	24	<b>49</b>	18	12	<b>30</b>
American Indian	4	2	<b>6</b>	7	12	<b>19</b>
Unknown	2	1	<b>3</b>	0	0	<b>0</b>

Chart 6: Completion Status and sample group by race



An important variable beyond the descriptions provided in Table 8 and Chart 6, is a comparison of the proportion of completion by race in the Historical and GIFT samples. This is provided, below, in Table 9.

Table 8: Proportion of completion in each sample by race

	Black	White	American Indian	Unknown
Historical	60%	51%	n/a	n/a
GIFT	55%	60%	37%	n/a

In the historical sample, 60% of the African-American women and 51% of the Caucasian-American women completed probation. The numbers of American Indian women and those with an unknown race were too small to report. There were only 6 American Indian women in the Historical sample and 4 successfully completed probation. In the GIFT sample, American Indian women had much lower completion rates than others in GIFT, out of 19 women only 7 completed probation (37%). Among the 29 African-American women in GIFT, 55% completed probation. Among the 30 Caucasian-American women in GIFT, 60% completed probation. Our analysis for the GIFT report on intermediate outcomes found that this pattern was statistically significant with respect to American Indian women in GIFT.

### Recidivism by Completion Status

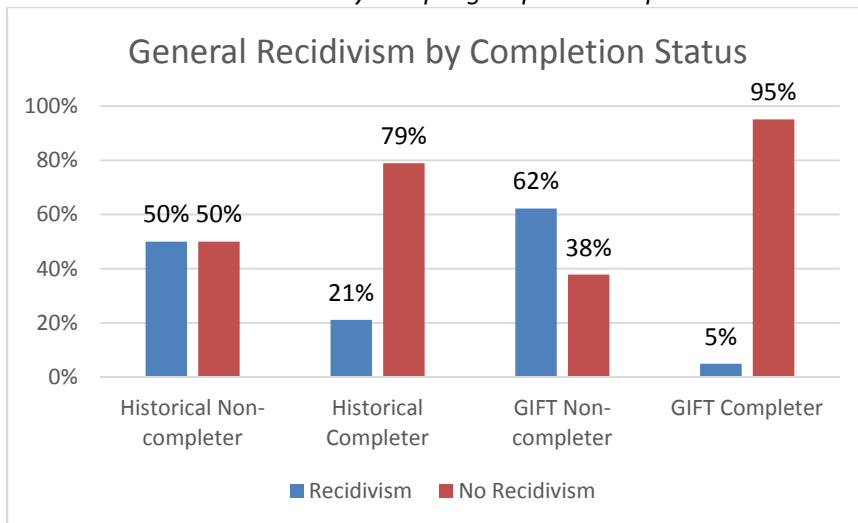
Prostitution recidivism rates one year after probation start was significantly lower for those who completed probation in GIFT compared to those who completed probation in the Historical sample. We found a zero percent prostitution recidivism rate for those who completed GIFT; whereas 14% of the completers in the Historical group had at least one prostitution charge one year after starting probation. For the non-completers GIFT also had a lower recidivism rate for prostitution charges, 16% compared to 33%. Table 9 below shows this data. We were not able to reliably test statistical significance of these patterns because the numbers in each group are too small.

Table 9: Recidivism rate by completion status, prostitution and general

	Historical Non-completer	Historical Completer	GIFT Non-completer	GIFT Completer
Prostitution Recidivism rate	33%	14%	16%	0%
General Recidivism rate	50%	20%	60%	5%

We found a similar trend in general recidivism after one year, as shown in Table 10. It is clear that in both the GIFT and Historical samples, those who completed probation had much lower rates of recidivism overall. In the Historical sample, we found a 20% general recidivism rate for those who completed probation and a 50% one year general recidivism rate for those who did not. In the GIFT sample there was a 5% general recidivism rate for those who did complete probation and a 60% general recidivism rate for those who did not. In the GIFT group that completed probation, only two people recidivated and these were for non-prostitute related offenses.

Chart 8: General Recidivism by sample group and completion status



An important factor in recidivism is the severity of new crimes. Table 10 shows the recidivism severity on first new conviction one year after probation start. There was roughly the same proportion of misdemeanors, gross misdemeanors and felonies for those with at least one recidivism incident who did not complete probation in the Historical and GIFT samples. GIFT was slightly lower on misdemeanor and felony charges and slightly higher on gross misdemeanors. However, those who completed GIFT and recidivated had lower severity compared to the Historical sample that completed probation and the GIFT group who did not complete probation.

Table 10: Recidivism severity by group and completion status, count and percent

	Historical Non-completer	Historical Completer	GIFT Non-completer	GIFT Completer
Misdemeanor	9 (33%)	5 (33%)	6 (26%)	1 (50%)
Gross Misdemeanor	13 (48%)	9 (60%)	12 (52%)	1 (50%)
Felony	5 (19%)	1 (7%)	4 (17%)	0

Finally, for recidivism outcomes we compare the types of new convictions among the Historical and GIFT samples by probation completion status. **We find that only two people who successfully completed GIFT had new convictions after completing probation, these were for theft and “other.”** Whereas 15 people who successfully completed probation in the historical sample were charged with another crime after probation, the most common re-offense was prostitution (N=10), followed by theft (N=3), then trespass (N=1) and counterfeiting/fraud (N=1). Table 11 displays this data.

Table 11: Recidivism offense type by completion status

	Historical Non-completer	Historical Completer	GIFT Non-completer	GIFT Completer
Prostitution	14	10	5	0
Theft	1	3	5	1
Crimes/Admin of justice	0	0	9	0
Drugs	3	0	2	0
Counterfeiting/Fraud	3	1	0	0
Trespass	0	1	1	0
Assault	1	0	0	0
Promote Prostitution	1	0	0	0
Other	4	0	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>2</b>

### Bookings in the Adult Correctional Facility (ACF) by Completion Status

Our third outcome related to recidivism is ACF booking two years after probation start. As noted above, it is clear that GIFT participants generally had more ACF bookings than the historical sample. Table 12 below displays a comparison of ACF Booking (Y/N) between those who completed probation and those who did not complete probation in the Historical and GIFT sample. It shows that for those who did not complete probation, the GIFT sample had a larger rate of at least one ACF booking (89%) compared to the historical sample (52%). This difference was found to be statistically significant at the .05 level. For those who completed probation, GIFT had a slightly larger rate of ACF booking (29%) compared to the Historical sample (21%). This difference was found to be non-significant using a chi-square test.



Table 12: ACF Bookings at least once at 2 years from probation start by group and completion status

	Historical	GIFT
<b>COMPLETERS</b>		
No ACF Booking	56 (79%)	29 (71%)
Yes ACF Booking	15 (21%)	12 (29%)
<b>Total, completers</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>NON-COMPLETERS</b>		
No ACF Booking	26 (48%)	4 (11%)
Yes ACF Booking	28 (52%)	33 (89%)
<b>Total, non-completers</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>37</b>

We also examined the number of ACF booking for the Historical and GIFT samples by completion status. For those in the Historical sample who did not complete probation the range was 0-12 bookings; however, nearly half (48%) had no ACF bookings, almost all the rest (43%) had between 1-4 bookings. The GIFT sample who did not complete probation ranged from 0-6 booking; with 11% at zero and over 80% between 1-4 bookings. For those who completed probation the Historical sample ranged from 0-9 ACF booking, with a large majority at zero (79%). The GIFT sample ranged from 0-3 ACF bookings, with the majority at zero (71%).

## FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

### GIFT and Prostitution-related Recidivism

The purpose of this analysis was understand the impact of GIFT for women on probation for prostitution related offenses as compared to a comparable sample of women on probation for prostitution related offenses who did not participate in GIFT. None of the women who completed GIFT had a recidivism incident related to prostitution. We found that GIFT did significantly reduce recidivism for prostitution related offenses for women who completed GIFT (and therefore their probation sentence) compared to women who completed a “business as usual” non-specialized probation model (the historical sample). There was a 0% prostitution recidivism rate after one year on probation for women who completed GIFT compared to a 14% prostitution recidivism rate for the historical sample women who completed probation. We also found that prostitution recidivism was lower for women who started in GIFT but did not complete their probation compared to women in the historical sample who did not complete probation (16% compared to 33%). Thus, GIFT appears to impact prostitution recidivism even for those women who did not complete GIFT and whose probation was revoked.

### GIFT and General Recidivism

When we compared a more general definition of recidivism (new convictions in the State of Minnesota for a misdemeanor offense or above), rates of GIFT recidivism were not significantly lower than the Historical sample. However, when we drilled down to look at general recidivism rates for those who completed probation in the Historical sample and the GIFT sample we found that general recidivism was lower for those who completed GIFT; 20% for the Historical sample and 5% for GIFT. Thus, completion of GIFT did have a net effect of lowering both prostitution and general recidivism.

Completion of GIFT also seems to have shifted the severity level of recidivism. When comparing those who did not complete probation, the severity of recidivism of the Historical sample and the GIFT sample seem roughly equivalent. However, for those who completed probation, the GIFT sample had no recidivism at the felony level and 10% lower recidivism at the gross misdemeanor level when compared to the Historical sample. The sample is too low in each category for a more definitive conclusion.

While participation in GIFT without completion did not reduce recidivism, we found that it did shift the patterns of recidivism charges from prostitution to theft and a category called 'crimes against administration of justice' when compared to those who did not complete probation in the Historical sample. This suggests that GIFT was successful at impacting prostitution-related issues early in program participation, but not the underlying issues of poverty one year post-probation start. Prostitution charges on a person's record can significantly limit their options for housing and employment, a fact that may also contribute to incidents of theft-related in-program recidivism.

### GIFT and ACF Bookings

It seems clear from our analysis that the GIFT probation model led to an increase in the number of women booked at the ACF when compared to the Historical sample. This was true for both GIFT clients who did not complete probation and also for those who did complete probation. We believe this is likely a function of the GIFT model that includes more intensive contact with a probation officer and more regular judicial reviews compared to the Historical sample.

All specialty courts with intensive supervision models – such as mental health court, drug court, DUI court, etc. – run the risk of disproportionately incarcerating those they seek to serve compared to less intensive models. GIFT does rely on a judicial review process for monitoring program participation. As a general principle system players agree to use the least-restrictive option for gaining court compliance, including referral to service providers, before imposing jail time. The GIFT court calendar graduated sanction system includes:

1. Use judicial reviews to restructure, add court conditions, monitor engagement in program services;
2. Impose 10-60 days incarceration based on the participant's criminal history. If an indication of drug use continues, use an in-custody chemical health evaluation with possible furlough to treatment if recommended;
3. Impose 30, 60, 90 days with an assessment at the ACF and possibly furlough to treatment or mental health therapy. Option to execute the sentence is based on the violation and the participant's criminal history;
4. Executing remainder of stayed time. Unaddressed mental health issues may mitigate this recommendation.

While the GIFT system sought to avoid disproportional punishment by operating with a graduated sanction system, participants did spend more time incarcerated than did historical groups. This raises important questions: Is the use of local confinement worth the gains in recidivism reductions, specifically prostitution recidivism? Are there strategies the GIFT calendar can put in place to minimize the use of jail as part of the program structure beyond the above guidelines?

The issue of increased ACF bookings does warrant more study. It may be that short bookings at the ACF were useful in helping GIFT clients reduce prostitution-related re-offense by helping with chemical dependency. It may be that early and short stays at the ACF are part of the active ingredients of the GIFT model.

## RECOMMENDATIONS ABOUT GIFT FOR HENNEPIN COUNTY

It seems clear from this study that GIFT does reduce prostitution crime by improving the life circumstances of women on probation for prostitution related offenses. This was proven in our final report for Phase II that found a significant reduction in criminogenic risk for women who completed probation in the GIFT model. We found here that GIFT substantially reduces prostitution reconviction for those who complete GIFT; and even for women who do not complete probation in the GIFT model.

Through completion of the three-phased research design, we find that GIFT is now an evidence-based approach to reducing prostitution recidivism. Hennepin County should continue the GIFT model as designed. This includes maintaining specialized probation supervision within Neighborhood Probation as well as the specific responsibilities of systems players as laid out in the model of authority. The program should continue efforts tied to accomplishing their five goals and continuously improve processes and practices to that end. Warm hand-offs, intentional service referrals, and the rest of the program as described in the GIFT logic model should also continue. Any changes to the model implementation, may impact outcomes.

We recommend the following improvements and adjustments to the model based on our findings here:

1. To address underlying poverty of women on probation for prostitution, we recommend building intentional connections to job training and job placement. This should start near the end of probation and continue as a “warm hand-off” post probation.
2. To address in-program recidivism in the areas of theft and crimes against administration of justice, GIFT could explore implementation and systematic participation in cognitive behavioral interventions, whether in group format or in an individualized approach as part of supervision contacts between participants and probation officers.
3. GIFT could consider expanding eligibility criteria to all women on probation for prostitution related offenses.
4. Increased ACF bookings observed as a result of GIFT warrant further study. We recommend conducting a more detailed examination of this trend, including looking at variation according to presiding judge, probation officer, and other factors. It will be important to understand the impact of increased ACF bookings on women and whether this represents further criminalization or if it is a critical step to reducing criminal justice involvement.

## LIMITATIONS

One limitation of this study is that the factors contributing to completion of probation were not consistent between GIFT and the historical sample. Women in the GIFT sample had closer supervision than the Historical sample. Clients in the GIFT model received standardized conditions of probation coupled with individual attention from the probation officer and a regular judicial review. Probation completion was determined by the team after it was determined that the client completed the conditions of probation. Clients in the historical sample may not have received the same degree of attention and they did not receive standardized conditions of probation from the court. Since the criteria for completion of probation prior to GIFT was less stringent, it is possible the recidivism rate for the Historical sample that completed probation may be inflated.

Another limitation is that the racial make-up of the GIFT and historical samples were not the same. Previous GIFT research on criminogenic risk found that GIFT was not as impactful for American Indian women. This study finds similar result with recidivism outcomes within the GIFT sample. Comparison to the Historical sample is not possible given the difference in racial make-up between the two groups.