



101 Park Street
Chelsea, MA 02150

TEL (617) 889-5210
FAX (617) 889-2145

www.rocainc.org

Roca's Impact: ***An Update on External Evaluation Results***

September 9, 2021

External Evaluation Results

In 2021, Abt Associates completed (1) a three-year implementation evaluation of Roca's Intervention Model and (2) a three-year outcomes evaluation of Roca's CBT curriculum. The period of 2018 - 2020 was observed.

These evaluation reports have affirmed Roca's strong effect on the young people we serve. Through their analysis, Abt has found that, **for young people served in Massachusetts between 2018 and 2021:**

- Among all Roca youth served, 85% did not recidivate within one year of enrollment, 76% did not recidivate within two years, and 70% did not recidivate within three years.
 - This is a 42%-46% reduction in recidivism when compared to a similar group analyzed by the Council on State Governments. CSG recently reported three-year re-incarceration rates of 52% and 56% for youth ages 18-24 who were released from Massachusetts county jails and state prisons, respectively.
- Equally important, Abt has noted that Roca impacts the trajectory of a young person's criminal activity. While 66% of Massachusetts participants come to Roca with violent history, only 18% recidivated for a violent offense within three years.
 - Typically, young people with violent offenses recidivate with similar or more violent offenses rather than less violent offenses as shown through this evaluation. This reaffirms our belief in Roca's Intervention Model as a harm reduction model.
- Transitional Employment Program (TEP) enrollment is associated with a lower likelihood of any new conviction and a violent new conviction. For example, participation in TEP reduces the odds of violent recidivism by 66%.
- Programming and Youth Worker contact are linked to increased odds of and reduced time to unsubsidized employment. Almost 40 percent of Roca participants obtained unsubsidized employment, inclusive of the COVID-19 pandemic period.
- Early CBT exposure and practice was strongly related to longer engagement with Roca and higher probabilities of employment and was related to lower probability of later arrest.
- Increases in the number of different CBT skills reviewed increased the probability of both TEP participation and unsubsidized employment.
- Increased monthly CBT programming attendance decreased the probability of an arrest for any offense.

- Respondents who engaged with CBT more frequently were also more likely than those who had never tried CBT to use drugs less often since coming to Roca.
- Receipt of CBT in higher frequencies (i.e., Informal practice with youth worker 8x/month or more, formal CBT sessions 4x/month or more, and/or receipt of all 7 skills) was linked to a reduced time to TEP enrollment.
- When respondents were asked to select among various situations for which they had used the skills to cope, violence was the most commonly selected situation (67%), followed by relationship problems (59%), job loss (50%), educational setbacks (38%), the COVID-19 pandemic (35%), and childcare issues (23%).

Please see the full Abt Associates reports posted separately on RocaInc.org.

Related Evaluations & Timelines for Completion

| Evaluator | Initiative/Project | Timeline |
|-----------------------------------|---|-----------------|
| MDRC | Roca Baltimore Implementation and Outcomes Evaluation | 2022 |
| Center for Law and Brain Behavior | Alignment of Young Adult Brain Science to the Roca Model (to include key modifications needed to serve younger populations) | 2022 |
| Akiva Lieberman Associates | Massachusetts Juvenile Justice Pay for Success (PFS) Initiative Random Control Trial Evaluation | 2024 |
| Abt Associates | PFS Outcomes Companion Analysis | 2024 |
| TBD | Roca Young Mothers Program Implementation and Outcomes Evaluation (including both Massachusetts and Hartford, CT) | 2024 |
| Abt Associates | Roca Young Men’s Program Impact Evaluation (rigorous quasi-experimental focused on Roca Baltimore) | 2025 |
| TBD | Roca Impact Institute | TBD |