

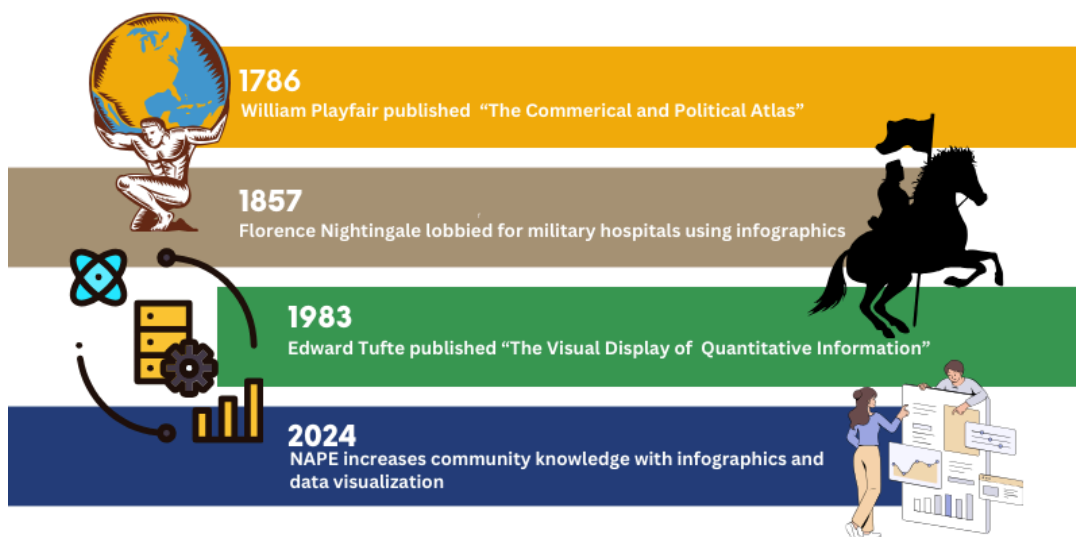
NAPE

National Association of Probation Executives

Supporting Executives in Community Supervision Agencies

American Astronaut Neil Armstrong once said, "Research is creating new knowledge." One of the best ways to inform elected officials, policy makers, stakeholders, and the community of the benefits of community corrections is to equip them with "new knowledge." The new knowledge is often best received and understood in the form of an annual report and regular research from trusted, credible sources.

HISTORY OF INFOGRAPHICS & DATA VISUALIZATION



Annual Report: Show Your Data

Using pictures to tell stories dates as far back as 3100 B.C. when Egyptians began using hieroglyphics on papyrus. This communication style continued for thousands of years. Fast forward to the late 1700s/early 1800s, and William Playfair founded graphical statistics (bar chart, circle graph, pie chart, etc.) to provide people a visual understanding of data. As time went on, people like Florence Nightingale used data visualization to improve public health. After publishing “The Visual Display of Quantitative Information” in 1983, Edward Tufte became known as the “father of information visualization.” Tufte was once quoted as saying, “Above all else, show the data.”

When compiling your annual report and other similar documents, lead with and show your data—don’t make the reader have to look for it. Images, whether charts or photographs, can and do tell the stories of the people you serve and the communities who benefit from your services.

Examples of annual reports that use images, infographics, and/or data visualization include:

- [Health Information Technology \(IT\) Advisory Committee: 2023 Annual Report](#)
- [Rock & Roll Hall of Fame: 2022 Annual Report](#)
- [King Memorial Library: 2022 Annual Report](#)
- [Health Resources & Services Administration: 2021 Year in Review](#)
- [National Volunteer Fire Council: 2020 Annual Report](#)

Through infographics and data visualization, agencies can quickly share important data points that engage and inform the reader. Using these design styles for annual reports makes them easier to understand as well as easier to share and view on social media sites, where the majority of the public tend to go these days for information and news.

If there is a need to create a more in-depth annual report, the one to two-page infographic could be included at the front of the report to provide a summary or at the end of the report as part of the appendix.

Lastly, if you intend to include a director’s message:

- Keep it short
- Include the director’s personality
- Reiterate elements of your agency’s brand
- Give a nod to significant events highlighted in the report
- Direct/invite people to exciting details within
- Share messages focused on an aspirational new year
- Include the agency’s mission



Review and Utilize Credible Research

As probation executives, research and data regularly drive and inform our practices. For these reasons, it is important for the research that we're reviewing, utilizing, and citing to come from a credible source. Several factors to consider include:

- Who is the author?
- How long has the author and/or publisher been considered a trusted source by peers?
- What other trusted organizations have similar data/information and how does the data/information compare?
- When was the research completed and when were the findings published?

Checking the date that studies were completed and when findings were published matters because if the date is more than a few years old the information may no longer be relevant. The only time this may not be the case is with government statistics and data because it is not uncommon for this information to only be updated every five to ten years depending on the topic.

Below are a few examples of relatively recent (within the last five–six years) research/sources specific to community corrections:

- Pew: [Five Evidence-Based Policies Can Improve Community Supervision](#) (1/27/22)

- U.S. Department of Justice, Office of the Attorney General: [First Step Act Annual Report, April 2022](#)
- Virginia Department of Corrections, Research - Evaluation Unit: [Recidivism of Supervisees Starting Community Supervision During FY2018](#) (February 2023)
- Alabama Commission on the Evaluation of Services: [Community Corrections Programs](#) (December 2020)
- Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority: [Effective Strategies in Community Supervision: Core Correctional Practices and Motivational Interviewing](#) (8/25/20)
- Colorado Department of Public Safety, Division of Criminal Justice, Office of Research and Statistics: [Community Corrections in Colorado: Program Outcomes and Recidivism, Terminations January 2014–December 2016](#) (April 2018, revised August 2019 with additional clarification)

For additional support locating credible sources and recent studies/findings, local libraries and universities are great partners/resources for probation executives.



Linda Brady
Chief Probation Officer
Monroe Circuit Court Probation Department
Bloomington, IN

"To access and keep grant funding, we must demonstrate that we are achieving the promised outcomes. Therefore, research involvement has become an essential part of our daily operations. We are fortunate to have Indiana University in our town to partner with us on various research projects. As a community corrections leader, I encourage other leaders to establish research partnerships, especially with educational institutions in your areas and states."

- Linda Brady

Findings from the Monroe County *Reducing Revocation Challenge Project*

Monroe County was one of ten jurisdictions across the United States that participated in the Reducing Revocations Challenge. This initiative aimed to transform probation supervision and reduce unnecessary failures that contribute to mass incarceration. The challenge was funded by Arnold Ventures and supported by the City University of New York Institute for State and Local Governance. The challenge supported action research that aimed to understand why revocations occur and how they can be prevented. Monroe County's findings were published in a [Final Report \(June 30, 2021\)](#), which helped the agency identify opportunities for improvement.

Monroe County was then selected as one of the five sites to continue with Phase 2 of the Challenge. In this second phase, Arnold Ventures funded probation officer training and other interventions to disrupt pathways that lead to revocation. The ultimate goal was to increase client success in community supervision. From September 2021 to 2023, the probation department implemented interventions to interrupt probation revocations and track their impact. Three strategies were implemented:

1. Increase fidelity to Motivational Interviewing, Effective Practices in Community Supervision (EPICS), and effective case planning.
2. Revise standard conditions of probation.
3. Increase the use of incentives for probation officers and clients, including earned early termination from probation supervision.

Since an average probation case lasts between one and two years, we will not have a complete picture of the impact of interventions until probationers sentenced under the old norms have been processed out. We can collect data on the experiences of a full group of probationers sentenced under the new norms. Nonetheless, the implementation phase yielded critical insights. The [Indiana Probation Policy Brief](#) covers what was learned in Phase 2, including the "why" and "how" of probation revocations.

A Few Favorite Community Corrections Related Publications

Like many of you, I subscribe to various criminal justice and community supervision publications via email listservs. No more hard copies of these publications sitting on the corner of my desk, unread, making me feel guilty that I am months behind on my professional reading. The publications I like to read now are delivered via email and usually have their articles pared down to very readable summaries, with hyperlinks to source materials if I want to delve deeper into particular subjects. I like to reach about current research, reform efforts, and innovative programming to help our clients and constituents. Some examples of my favorites are:

- **American Probation and Parole Association (APPA) CC Headlines.** Note: My personal always-read publication.

APPA's semi-monthly, [members-only](#) e-newsletter brings you the latest probation, parole and community corrections news headlines.

- **APPA Perspectives Magazine.**

APPA's quarterly, members only journal addresses topic on the latest peer-reviewed field research, innovative program evaluations, and supervision strategies.

- **Justice Briefing, Council of State Governments (CSG)**

The [Justice Center](#) brings together state and local officials and subject matter experts to discuss challenges and best practices in policy areas directly related to issues of public safety and justice in order to strengthen communities.

- **CUNY (City University of New York) Institute for State & Local Governance (ISLG) Newsletters.**

ISLG sends out to its [mailing list](#) subscribers information about data-informed approaches that can measurably improve the way government and public institutions operate, equitably serve all constituents, and ultimately solve social policy problems.

- **International Community Justice Association (ICJA) Newsletter**

The [ICJA](#) has a vision to change the public perception of justice system-involved individuals, end the overuse of incarceration and correctional supervision, and achieve a more just society.

- **National Institute of Corrections (NIC).**

NIC is the only federal agency with a legislative mandate ([Public Law 93-41.5](#)) to provide specialized services to corrections from a national perspective. NIC staff provides leadership to influence correctional

policies, practices, and operations nationwide in areas of emerging interest and concern to correctional executives and practitioners, as well as public policymakers. [Subscribe to NIC's News and Announcements.](#)

- **Arnold Ventures (AV).**

Founded in 2010 by Laura and John Arnold, Arnold Ventures is a philanthropy dedicated to improving the lives of all Americans through evidence-based policy solutions that maximize opportunity and minimize injustice. [Sign up for AV's Newsletter, The Abstract.](#)

We invite members to share information about NAPE with other community supervision executives to help expand our network and strengthen our opportunities, data, and expertise. Affordable annual NAPE membership options are available and can be purchased/renewed at napehome.org

- Individual (recurring discount available)
- Retired
- Organizational
- Corporate

NAPE is dedicated to enhancing the professionalism and effectiveness in the field of community corrections by creating a national network for executives, bringing about positive change in the field, and making available a pool of experts in community corrections management, program development, training, and research.

Learn more: napehome.org

Contact NAPE

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