

Restorative Justice Programs Still Have Work To Do To Successfully Remedy Racial and Economic Inequalities in the Criminal Justice System



Sonja Eiseman
Inequality and Power Colloquium
April 2021

Research Question:

In what ways are the first problem-solving court and Resolve To Stop The Violence Project not as effective at addressing racial and economic inequities in the criminal justice system as they could be?

Argument:

The two programs could better address economic and racial inequalities if key components of traditional restorative justice were not missing from their initiatives

1. Participants voluntarily consent to the process
2. Defendants and victims are generally not involved enough
3. There are unequal power dynamics



2

Restorative Justice

a rehabilitative approach centering the belief that humans have a capacity for growth



4

50% decline in arrest rates after problem-solving court process
46% lower rearrest rates for violent crimes after RSVP

Recidivism

50% improvement in community service compliance

Accountability

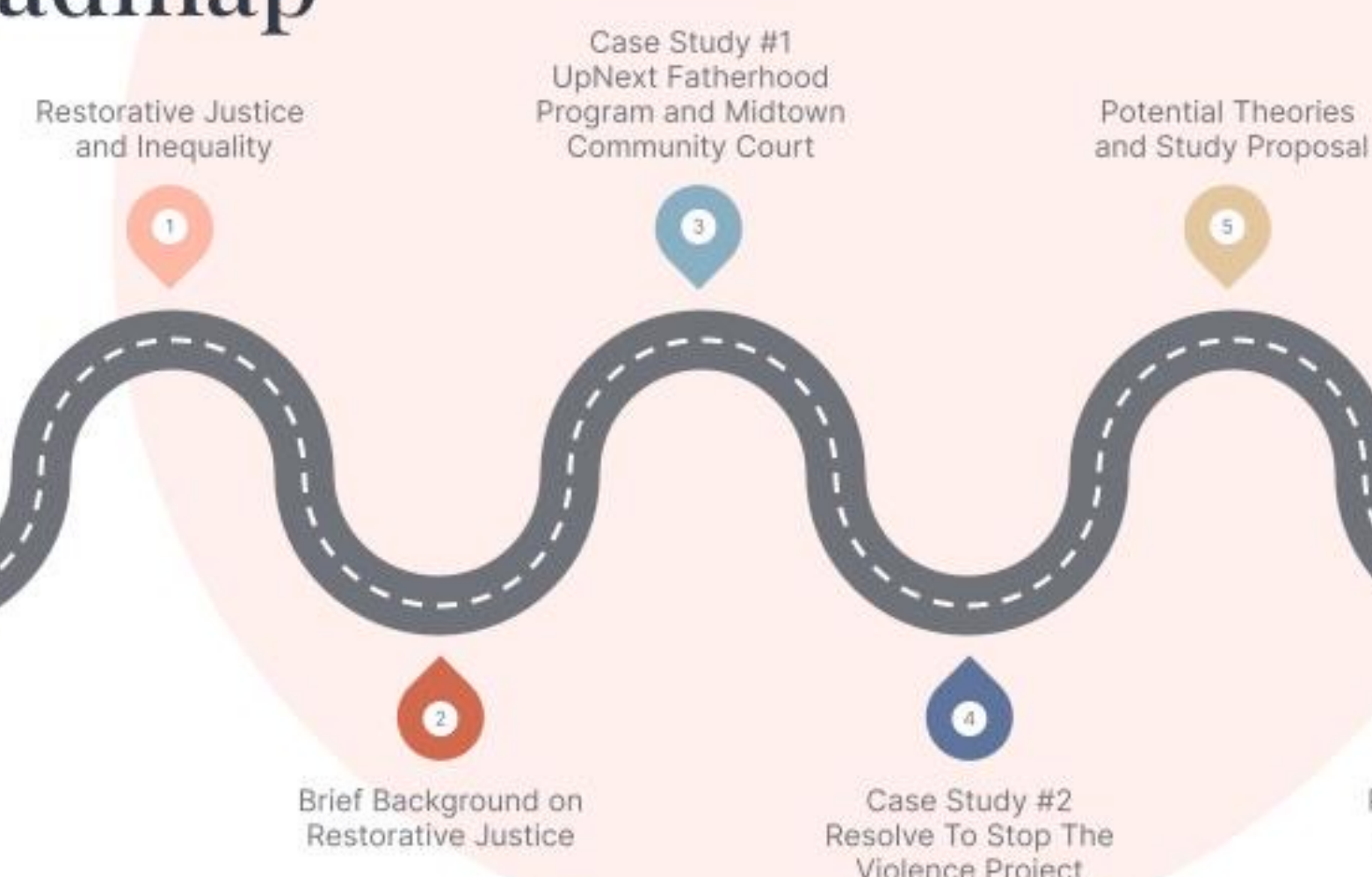
53% decrease in violent rearrests after RSVP for 12 weeks
83% decrease after 16 weeks or more

Participation



6

Roadmap



3

Problem-Solving Court

October 2019 Sample Case



5

How Could These Programs Be Further Improved?

Why are UpNext and RSVP are not adequately remedying racial and economic inequalities?



7