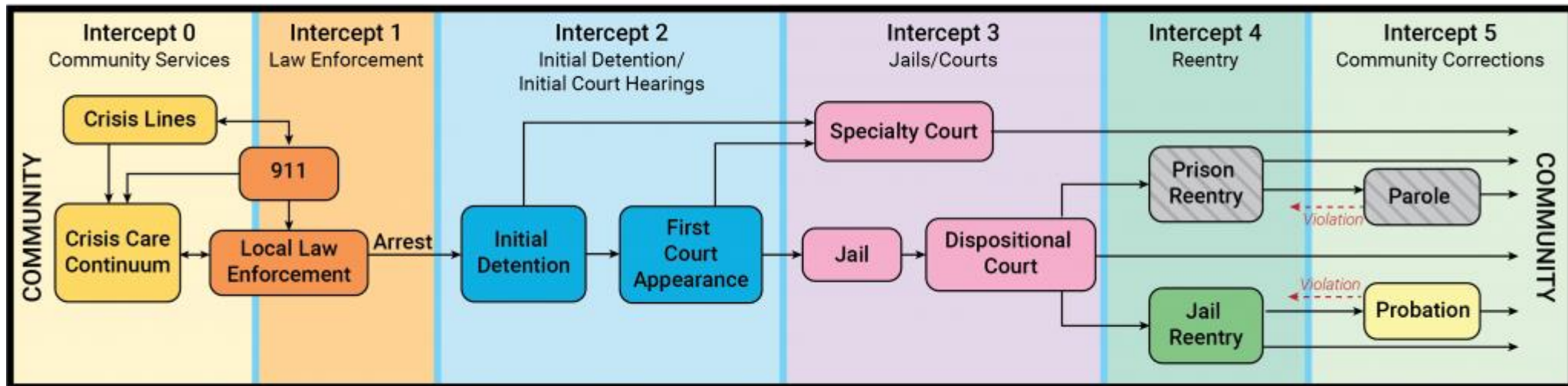


Women-Centered Community-Based model

In the early 2000s, the [Sequential Intercept Model \(SIM\)](#) was developed as a strategic planning tool by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's (SAMHSA) Gains Centre. This linear model informed community-based responses to the involvement of people with mental health and substance use disorders in the criminal justice system.



Abreu, D., Parker, T. W., Noether, C. D., Steadman, H. J., & Case, B. (2017). Revising the paradigm for jail diversion for people with mental and substance use disorders: Intercept 0. *Behavioral Sciences & the Law*, 35(5-6), 380-395. <https://doi.org/10.1002/bsl.2300>
© 2019 Policy Research Associates, Inc.

The Task Force recognizes the importance of this model to community corrections, and sought to complement this model by developing a **holistic, women-centered model** where community options are represented as the **primary option** no matter where a woman is within the judicial process.

Community-based
interventions as the first
choice at every stage of
the criminal justice process
for women

Women-Centered Approach



Trauma-Informed

Relational

Holistic

Strengths-Based

Culturally Responsive

Intercept	Examples of Interventions: Informed by research and lived experiences
Crime Prevention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support to at-risk women and community groups e.g. sex workers/ foreign nationals / minority groups • Conflict resolution
Diversion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alternatives to arrest / charging • Alternatives to pre-trial detention • Screening for mental health issues • Bail supervision • Gender-informed pre-trial / sentencing reports
Community Supervision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suspended sentences • Community orders • Rehabilitation • Restorative Justice • Women-centered training • Gender-specific assessment and programming • Wrap-around services
Institutional – last resort	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mother/child programs • Community-focused liaison • Gender-specific assessment and programming • Focus on release planning • Women-centered training
Post-Institutional community supervision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wrap-around services • Early release • Halfway houses/ transitional housing • Reintegration support • Reunification with children/family

Five Guiding Principles for working with criminalized women

<https://womensjustice.net/gender-lens>



Within women-focused interventions and programming, multiple models exist with differing guiding principles. The Taskforce recently adopted the same Five CORE Principles of Gender Responsiveness as the US-based [Women's Justice Institute](#), created by Alyssa Benedict, MPH. All the best practices highlighted by the Taskforce respect these guiding principles.

Guiding Principle	Description https://womensjustice.net/gender-lens	Why is it important?
Relational	Relationship-based programs/services are rooted in relational-cultural theory and relational psychology. They acknowledge the centrality of relationships and social capital in women’s lives, including those among children and families.	Understand that women’s primary motivation throughout life is the establishment of a strong sense of connection with others. Power imbalances between practitioners and clients in the criminal justice system are experienced acutely by women, and particularly racialized women. Empowering women to participate in creating and making choices gives agency to criminalized women.
Strengths-Based	Strengths-based programs and services adopt an intentional movement away from a deficit approach with justice-involved women and girls, and, instead: focus on strengths, talents and assets; recast “negative” behaviors as survival behaviors; and restore healthy power and control.	Women have different protective factors significant to desistance. For example, having a supportive family relationship has been shown to be a statistically significant protective factor for females, but not for male offenders. Recent scholarship has also shown higher education to be especially significant to women’s desistance.

Guiding Principle	Description https://womensjustice.net/gender-lens	Why is it important?
Trauma-Informed	Trauma-informed practices incorporate knowledge about the disproportionate impact of gender-based violence and the unique impact of trauma on women and girls, thereby increasing effectiveness. They help prevent trauma triggering reactions, and grow coping capacity and empowerment of survivors to manage symptoms successfully.	Research shows criminalized women tend to have long histories of physical and sexual abuse, poverty, and substance abuse, and that these are more significant factors in female than male offending. As girls are more likely than boys to be abused by someone close to them over a long period, this produces acute impacts on mental health and addictive behaviours, which then affects recidivism. While male offenders may have had similar traumatic events in their lives, the timing and context of such events are gendered, and are significant in terms of how they shape the experiences, opportunities, and reactions of women in comparison to men.

Guiding Principle	Description https://womensjustice.net/gender-lens	Why is it important?
Culturally Responsive	Culturally competent programs and services have a defined set of values and principles, and demonstrate behaviors, attitudes, policies and structures that enable them to work effectively cross-culturally. They ensure practitioners value diversity, conduct self evaluation, can manage the dynamics of difference and can adapt to the cultural contexts of the communities they serve.	Programs and services that are not offered in a culturally sensitive manner may hamper women's progress/reintegration efforts.
Holistic	Holistic programs/services acknowledge the larger context of females' lives, and, in turn, the larger context of their thoughts, feelings, behaviors and decision-making. This means that practitioners understand pathways theory and the unique causes and correlates of females' justice system involvement. Holistic programs are also oriented toward empowerment and advocacy.	Women's needs are usually inter-connected, requiring a holistic approach and wraparound services.