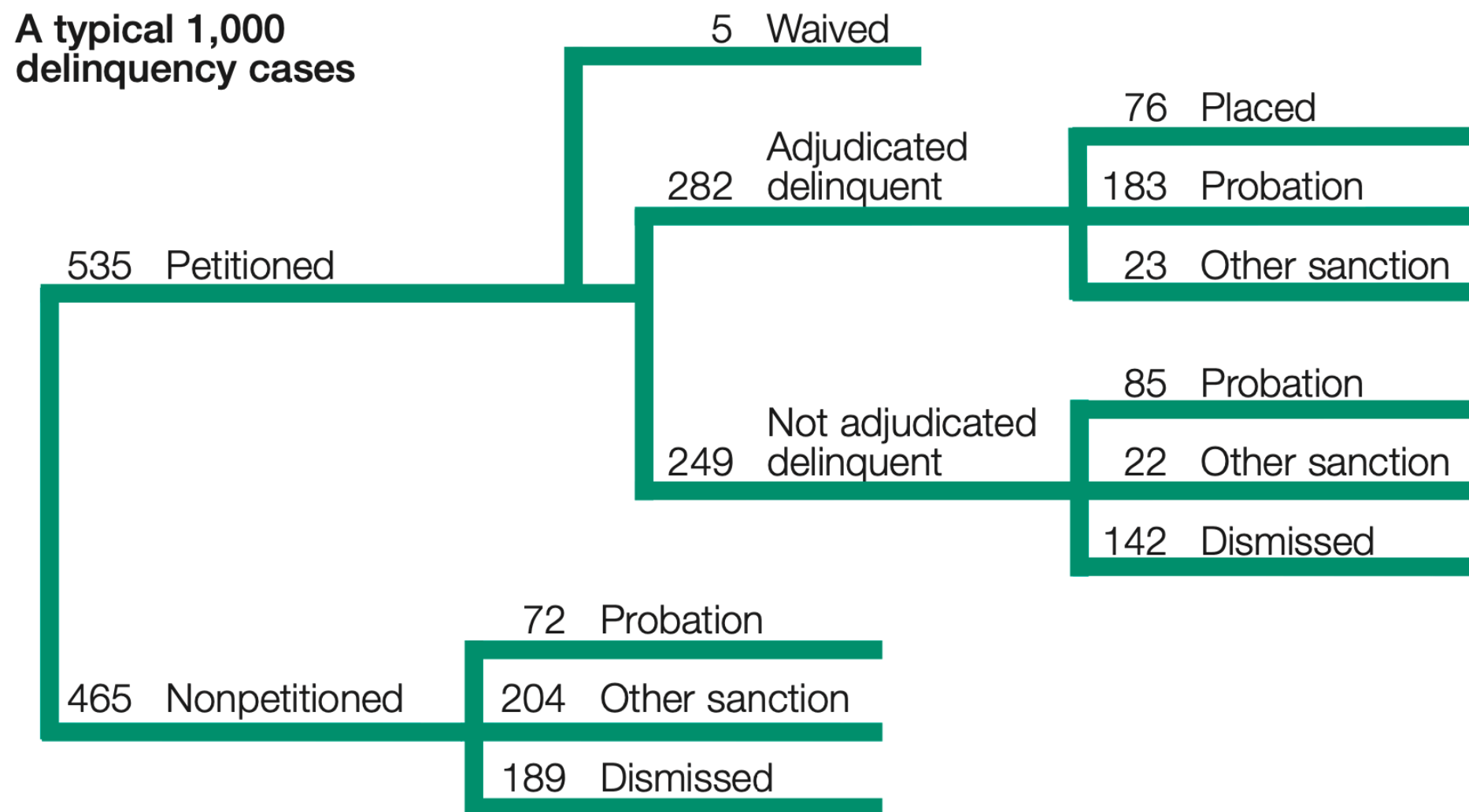


Lesson 14

Thursday March 14, 2024

Juvenile Court Case Flowchart (p. 158 in your book)



Notes: Cases are categorized by their most severe or restrictive sanction. Detail may not add to totals because of rounding. Annual case processing flow diagrams for 1985 through 2010 are available online at ojjdp.gov/ojstatbb/court/faqs.asp.

Potential Effects of Residential Placement for Serious Juvenile Offenders

- Incapacitating offenders during the period they are committed to a facility or group home.
- Specific deterrence - leading to less recidivism when offenders return to the community.
- Stigmatization or labeling - leading to more recidivism when offenders return to the community.
- No effect at all.

The Deterrence Perspective

- Assumes people are utilitarian and rational.
- Emphasis on sanction threats
- Specific vs. general deterrence
- Certainty, swiftness, and severity of sanctions
- Challenge 1: when deterrence is most effective, we are trying to measure something that doesn't happen.
- Challenge 2: can't usually experimentally manipulate sanctions.

The Labeling Perspective

- Part 1: why are some people labeled and other people are not labeled (status characteristics hypothesis).
- Part 2: what are the effects of the label on subsequent criminality (secondary deviance or deviance amplification hypothesis).
- Idea is that labels can be a source of stratification that can set people up for a lifetime of adversity.
- Challenge: maybe the people who are the highest risks for criminal behavior are the ones who get labeled.

Manski and Nagin (1998)

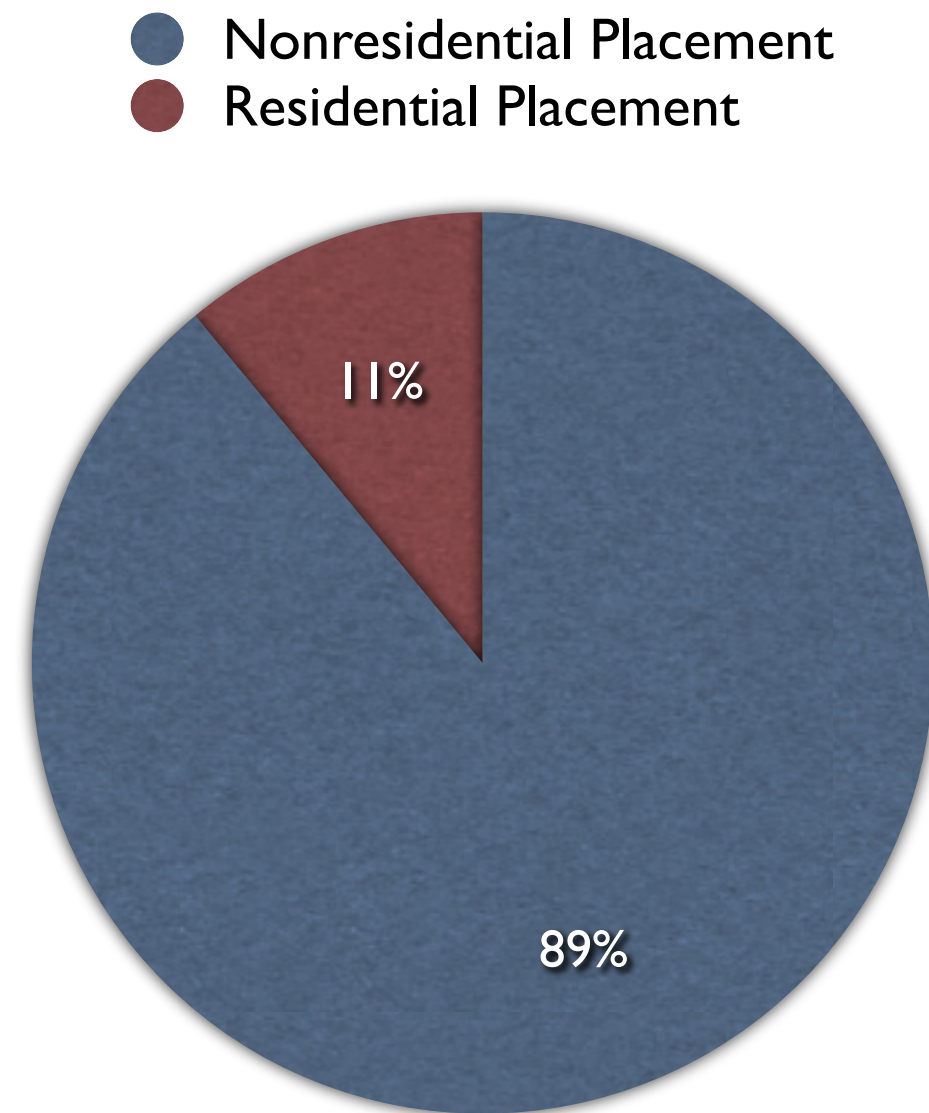
- Utah data on adolescents in the state juvenile justice system.
- Male offenders born between 1970 and 1974.
- Eligibility criteria: adjudicated delinquent before the age of 16 years old.
- Each individual was followed for 24 months after the disposition date to determine whether he was referred to the Utah juvenile justice system for a new offense.
- Data include 13,197 youths whose cases were disposed in Utah juvenile courts.
- Additional data on the number of prior juvenile justice system referrals and the judicial district of Utah in which the case was processed.

Sanction Range

- Residential treatment: confinement in secure facilities and nonsecure group homes (in accord with Utah's policy of decarceration in the 1980's). Sentences to residential placement were "usually less than six months in length."
- Nonresidential treatment: probation, restitution, or counseling (control group).

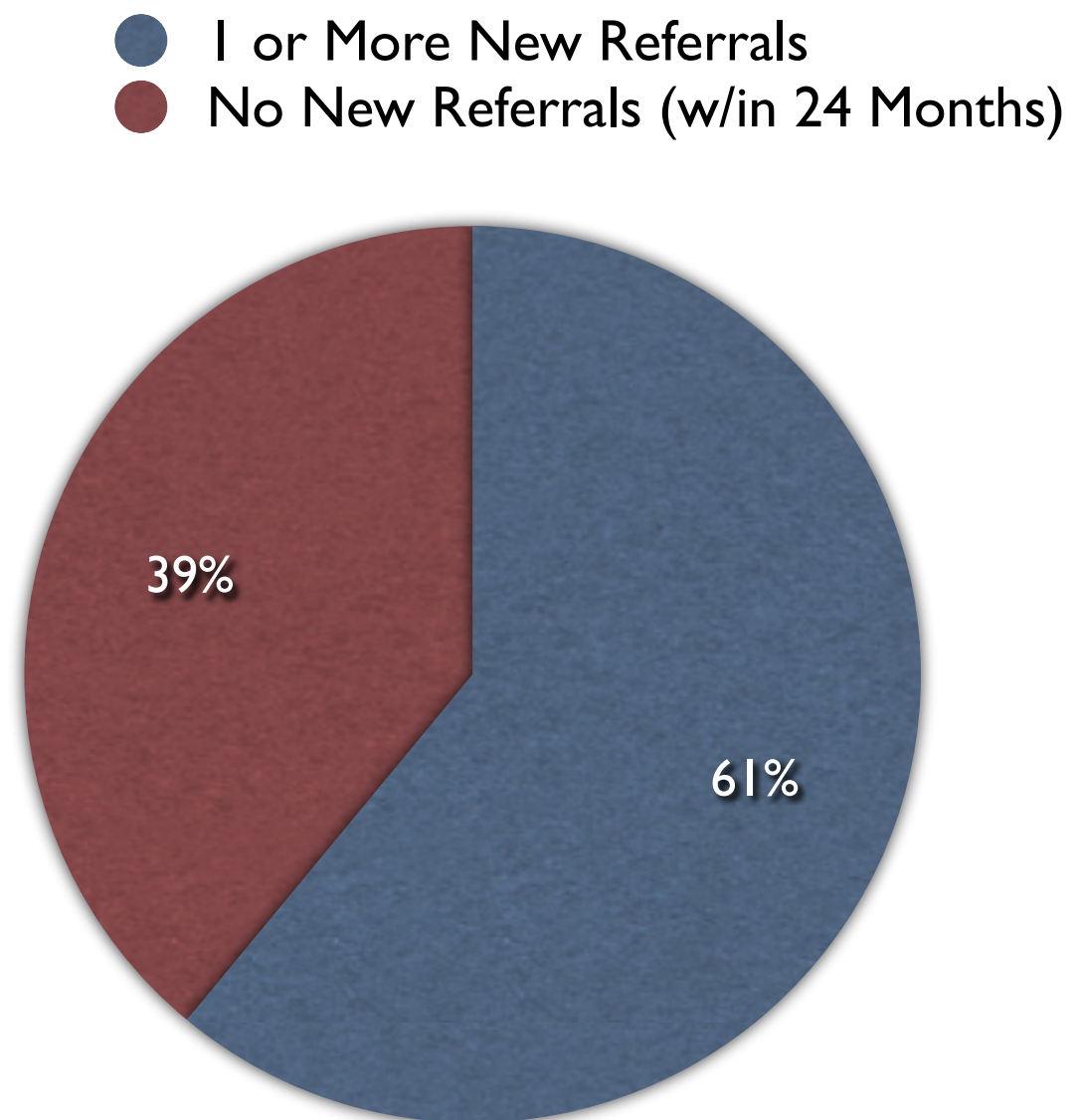
Placement to Residential and Nonresidential Treatment

- Residential and nonresidential placement represent the two most widely implemented dispositions by juvenile court judges.
- In Utah, 89% of youths processed in the jj system receive nonresidential placement; the other 11% receive residential placement.



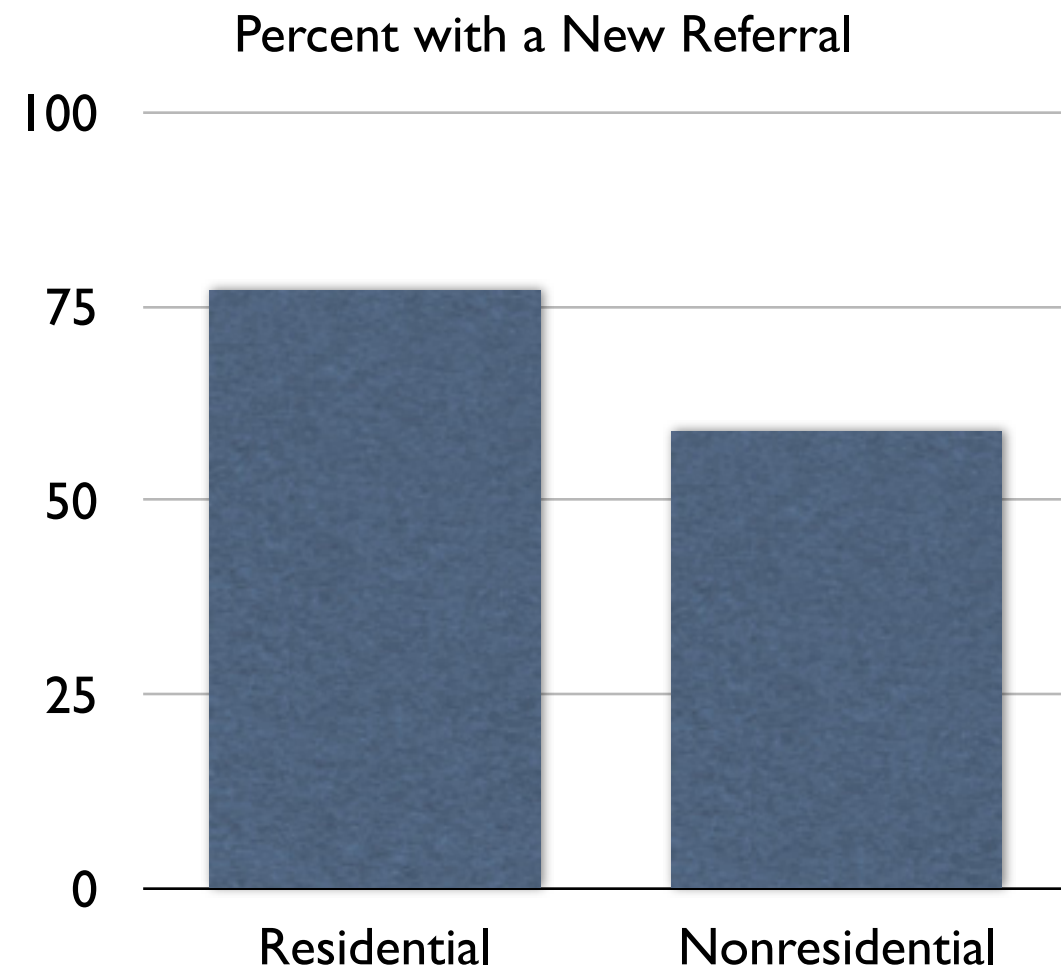
Overall Recidivism Rate

- Recidivism is defined as a new referral in juvenile court.
- The follow-up period is two years long.
- Under this definition, the recidivism rate is 61%.

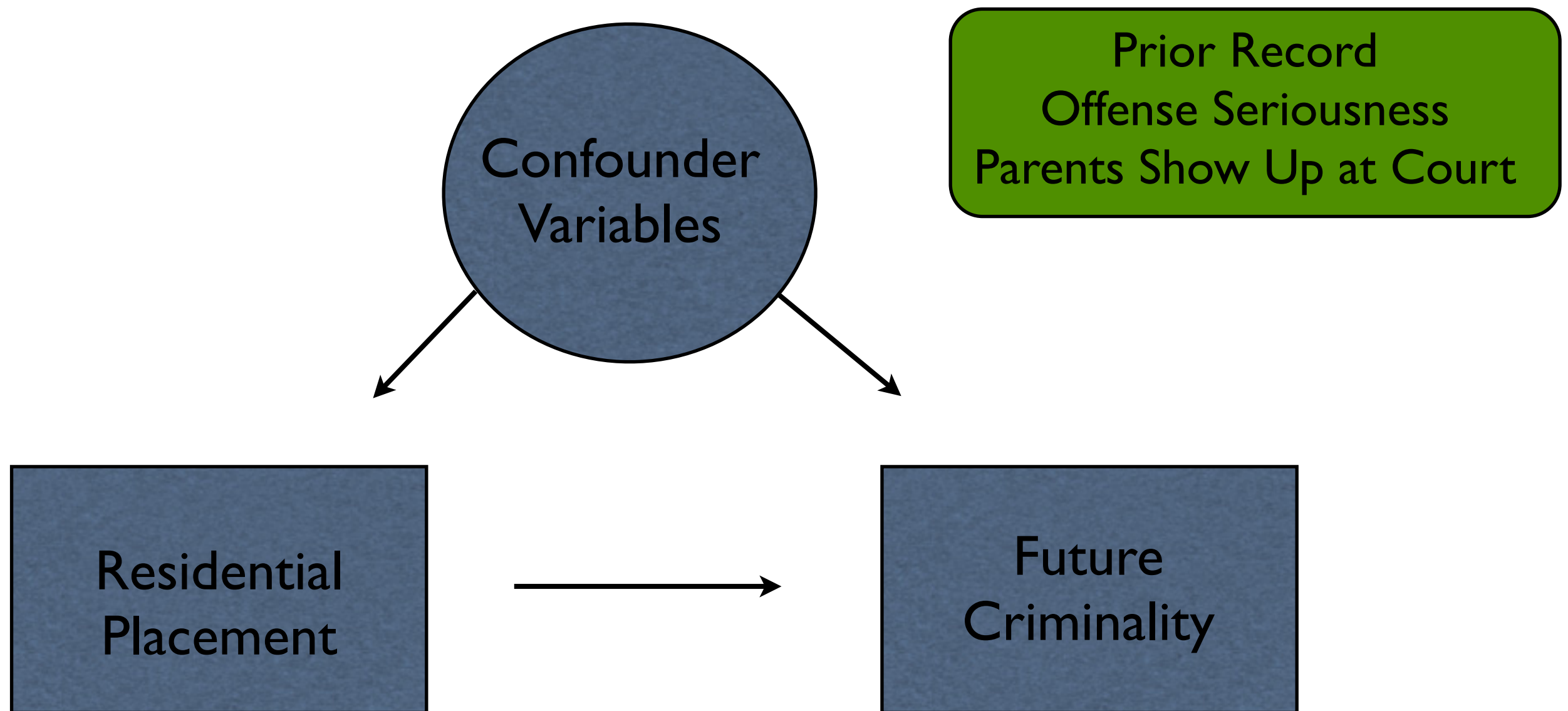


Estimate of Treatment Effect From Utah Data

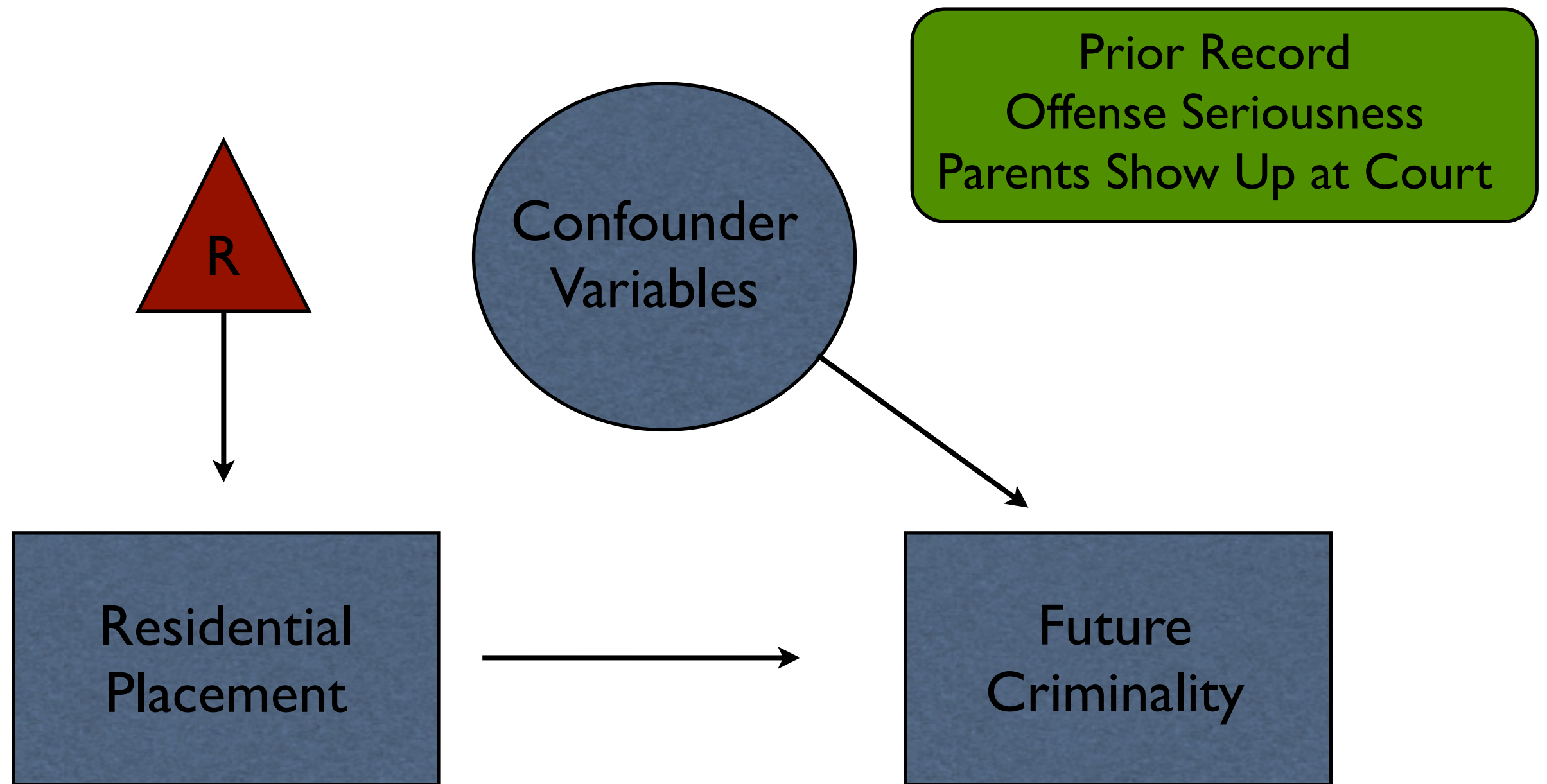
- Among those who received residential treatment, 77% had a new referral within 24 months.
- Among those who received nonresidential treatment, 59% had a new referral within 24 months.
- Estimated Treatment Effect = $77\% - 59\% = 18\%$.
- Compared to RT, the Non-RT group was 23.3% less likely to recidivate ($18/77 \times 100 = 23.3\%$).



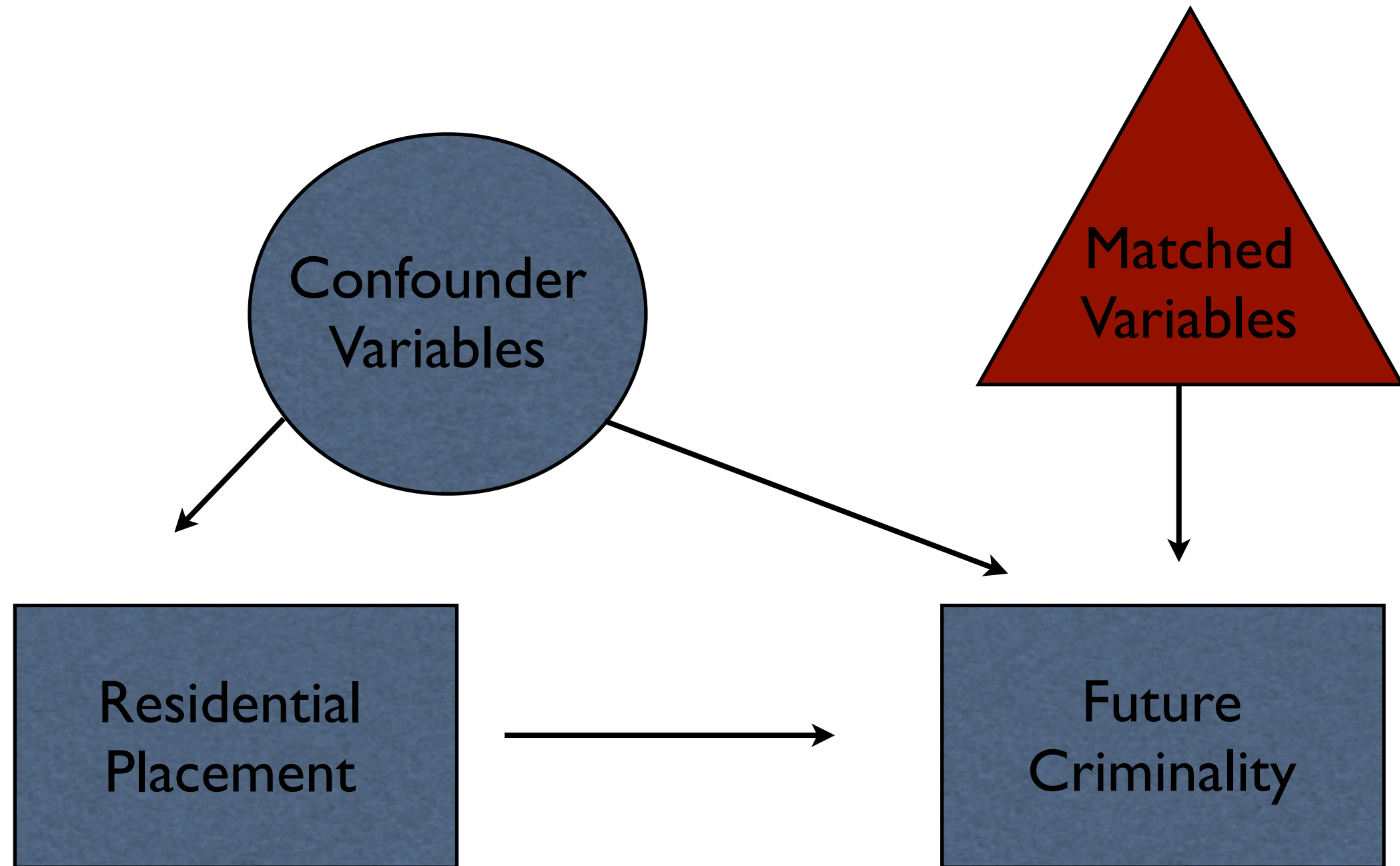
Does Placement Increase Recidivism?



Experimental Design

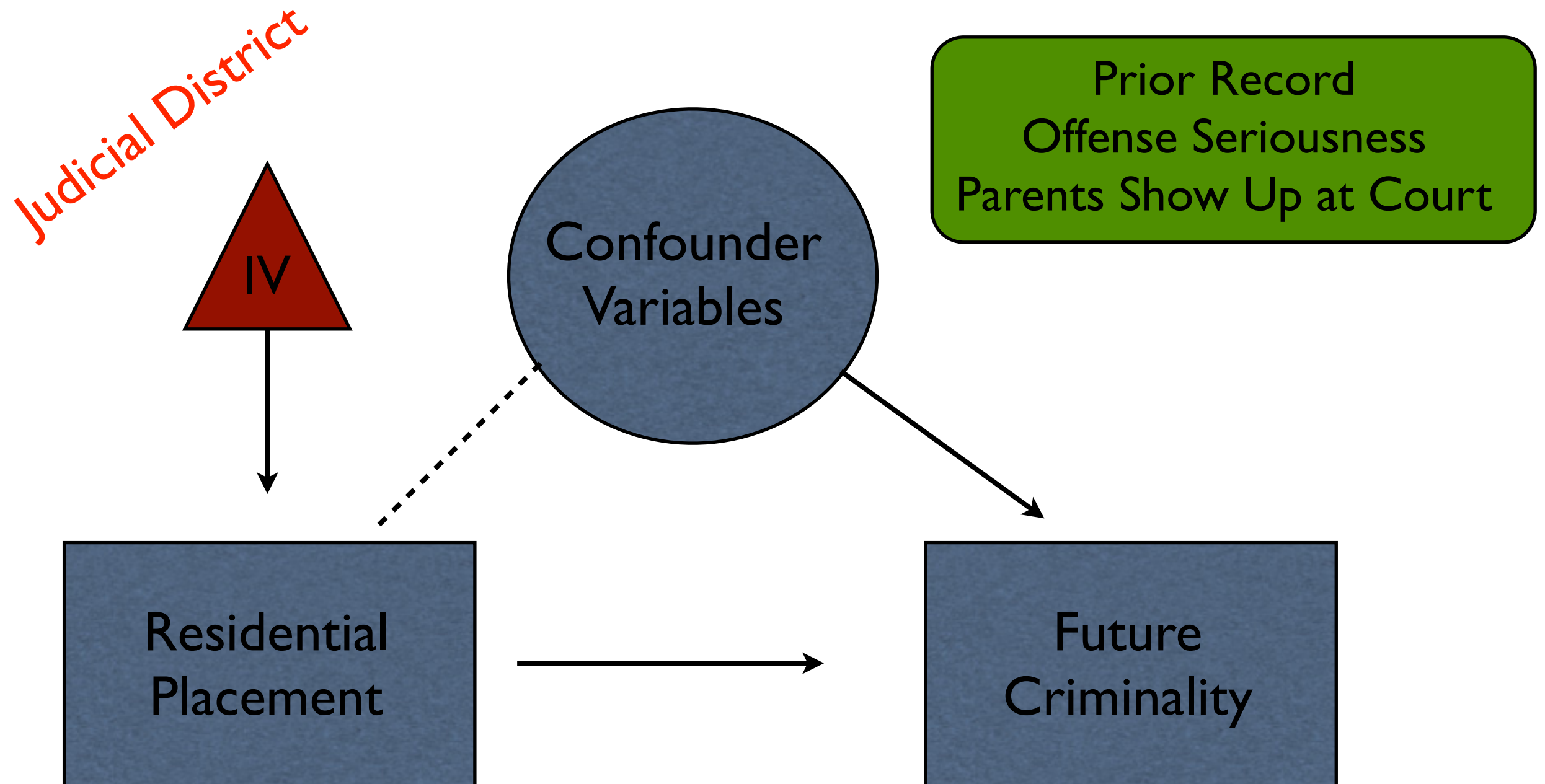


Matching Design



Matching is one type of observational study. Matched variables can be ruled out as confounders. Unmatched variables can still be confounders.

Natural Experiment



Limitation: measures the effect of residential placement among those people who were treated differently depending upon the judicial district in which the case was heard.

Different Sentencing Models

- Outcome optimization model: match people with the services that will be most likely to reduce recidivism.
- Skimming model: push the highest risk people toward placement and confinement.
- Note: these are models of judicial decisionmaking.

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Research Findings

- If outcome optimization model is correct, the results suggest that placement increases recidivism.
- If the skimming model is correct, then placement seems to reduce recidivism.
- Only way to make progress is to better understand why judges assign some people to placement and others to probation.