

# Graduated Response in Juvenile Probation in Pennsylvania



The opinions expressed are  
those of the authors and do not  
necessarily reflect the views of  
Stoneleigh Foundation

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## State Level

JJSES – Phase 3  
Behavioral change activity

Builds on recent initiatives

PA GR Workgroup –  
Guiding Principles

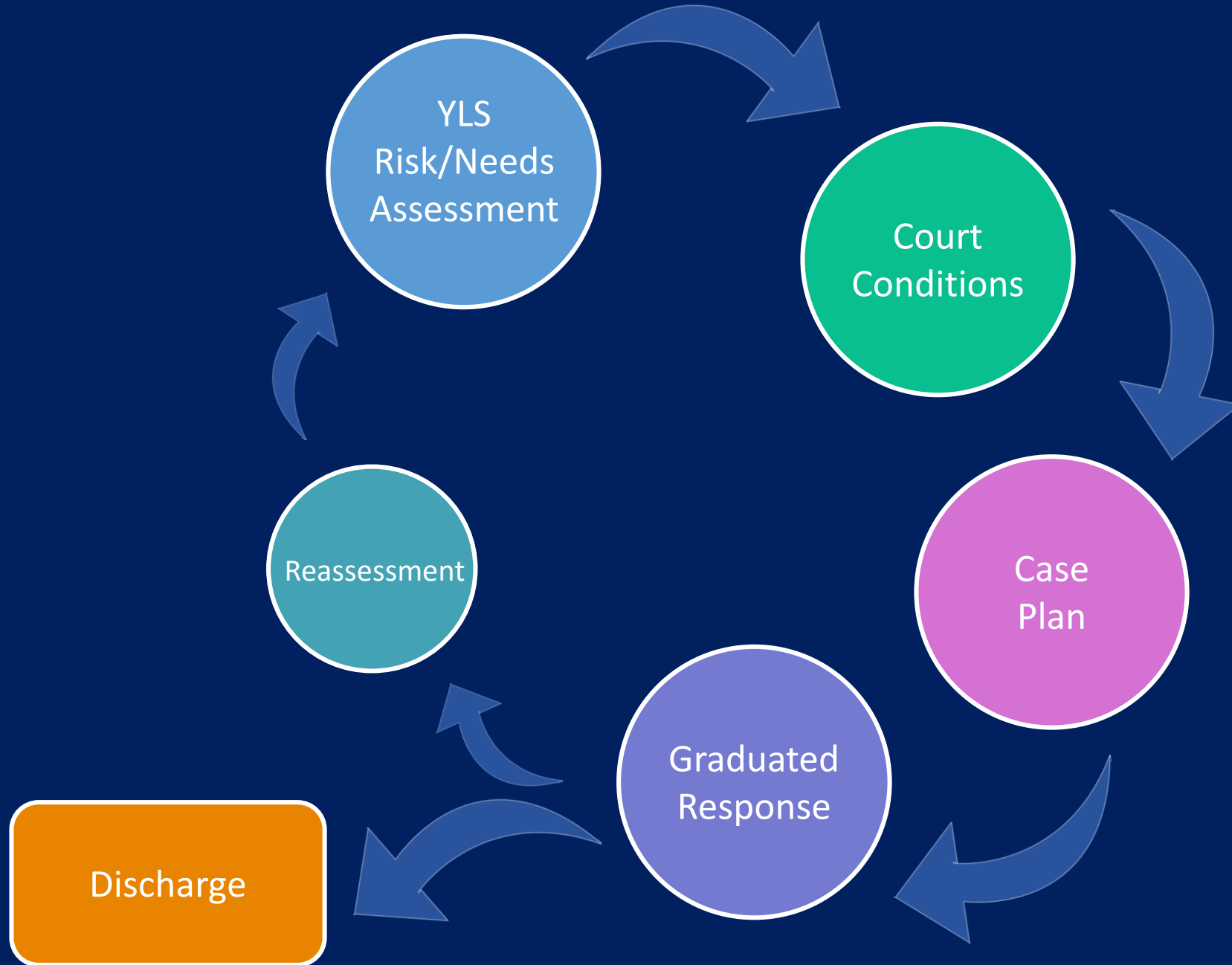
## Local Level

County-level trainings

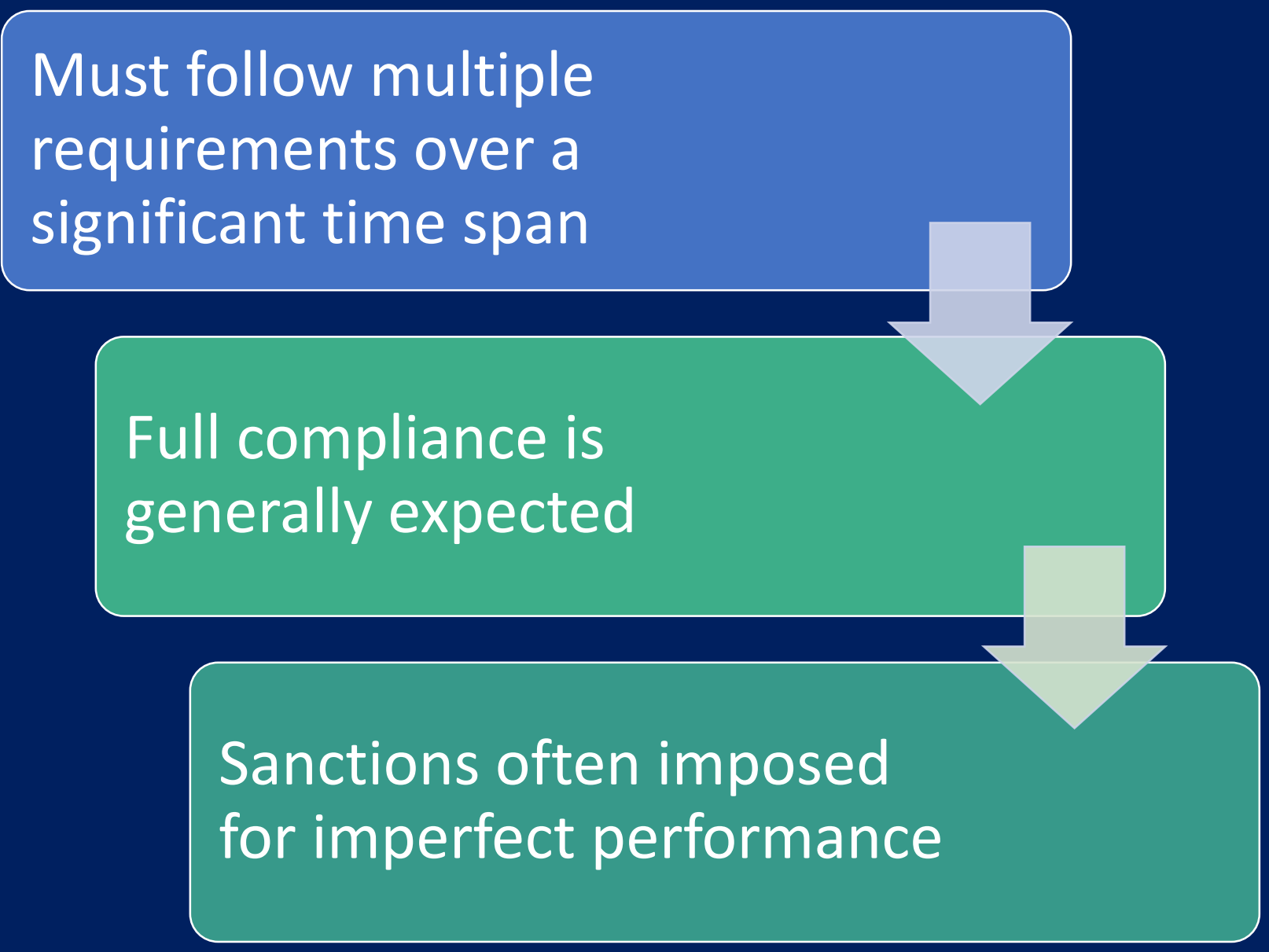
Approaching roll out phase

Philadelphia –  
Driven by behavior change  
research, culture shift

# How Does Graduated Response Fit With Other Initiatives?



Must follow multiple requirements over a significant time span



Full compliance is generally expected

Sanctions often imposed for imperfect performance

Traditional juvenile probation structure establishes many developmentally incompatible expectations of youth



What's Missing?

Adolescent Development

## Cognitive

- Prefrontal cortex
- Reasoning, planning, problem solving

## Emotional

- Limbic system – emotional reactivity
- Dopaminergic system – reward sensitivity

## Psychosocial

- Psychosocial immaturity
- Controlling impulses, delaying gratification, considering future consequences

## **Cold Context**

Non-emotional situations



## **Hot Context**

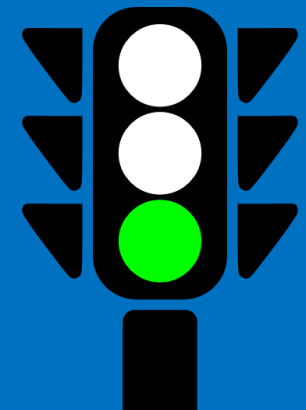
Emotionally charged situations



Difficulty Regulating Emotions



Susceptibility to Peer Influence



Heightened Impulsivity

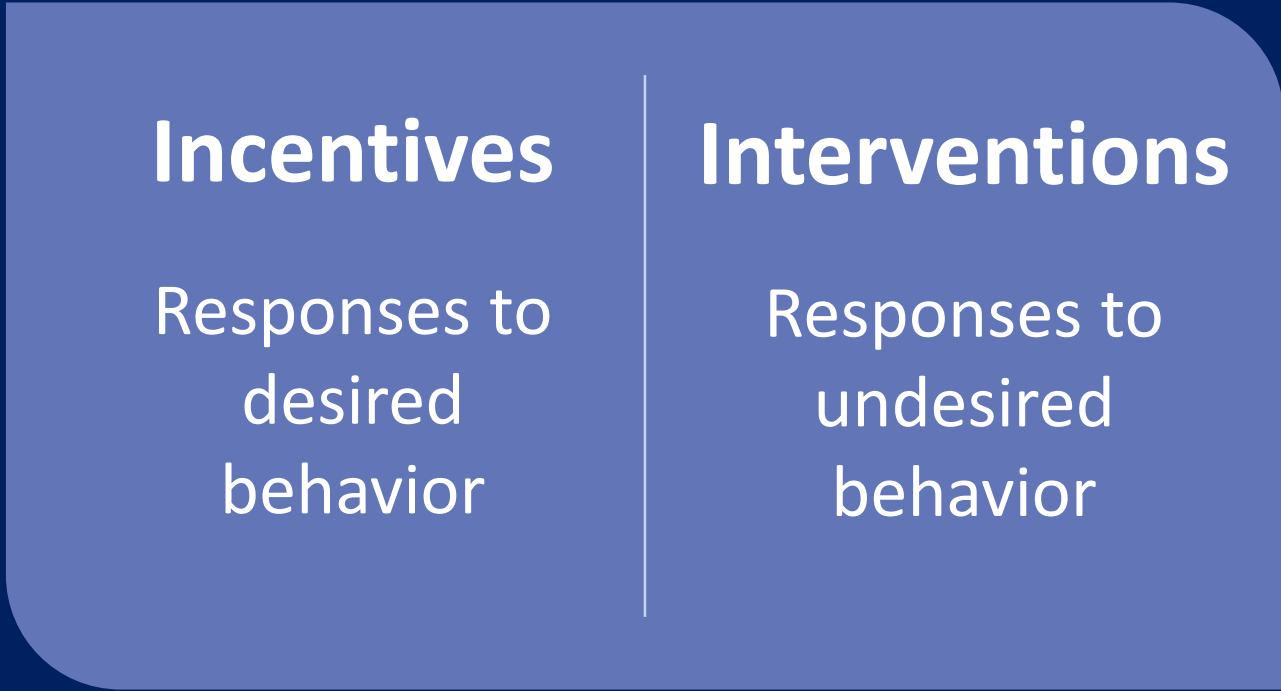
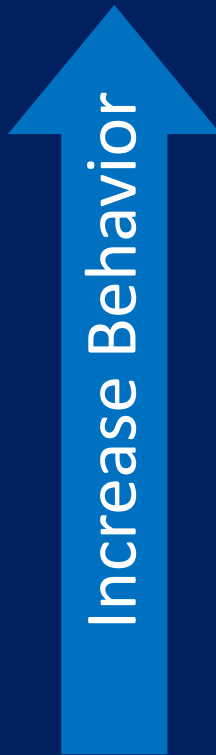


# Psychosocial

Long-term Negative  
Consequences



Short-term  
Positive Outcomes



Sanction for  
positive drug  
screen

Short-term behavioral suppression

Long-term behavior change

Incentives for  
clean drug screens  
and program  
attendance

# Bringing It All Together...

Adolescence is a time of rapid brain development

Mistakes offer opportunities for learning

Probation offers opportunities for learning  
in real-life settings

Level 1:  
Q/A Training

- Do JPOs *understand* what they are supposed to be doing and why?

Level 2:  
Q/A Implementation

- Are JPOs *doing* what they are supposed to be doing?

Level 3:  
Outcome Evaluation

- Is the system having the intended effects?

# Challenges: Considerations for Future Development

Creation of concrete behavioral definitions

Early involvement of judges

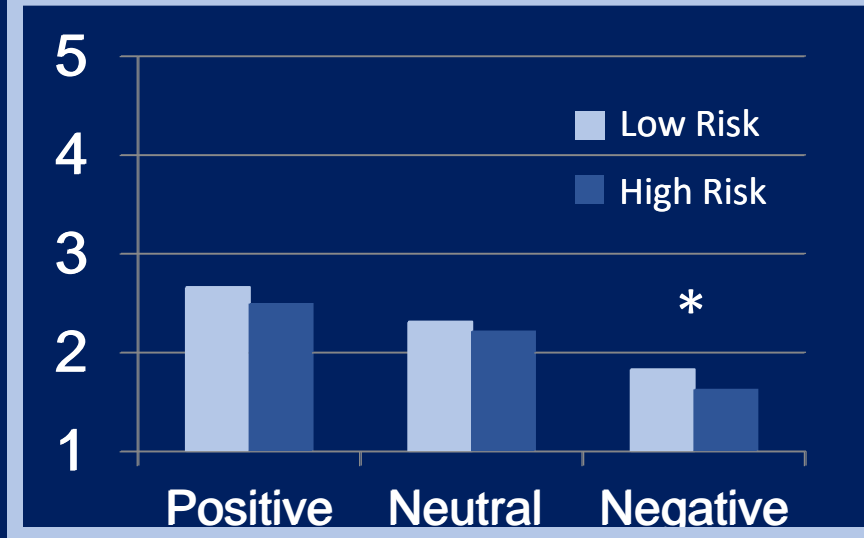
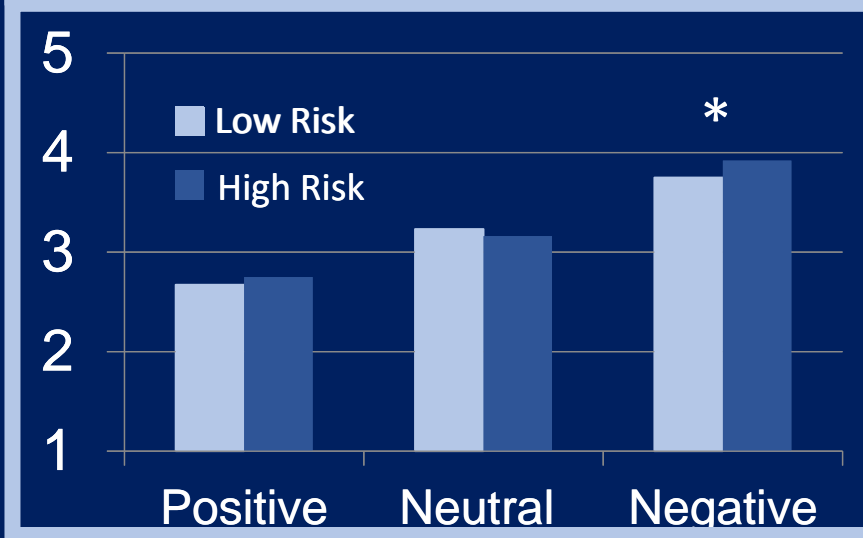
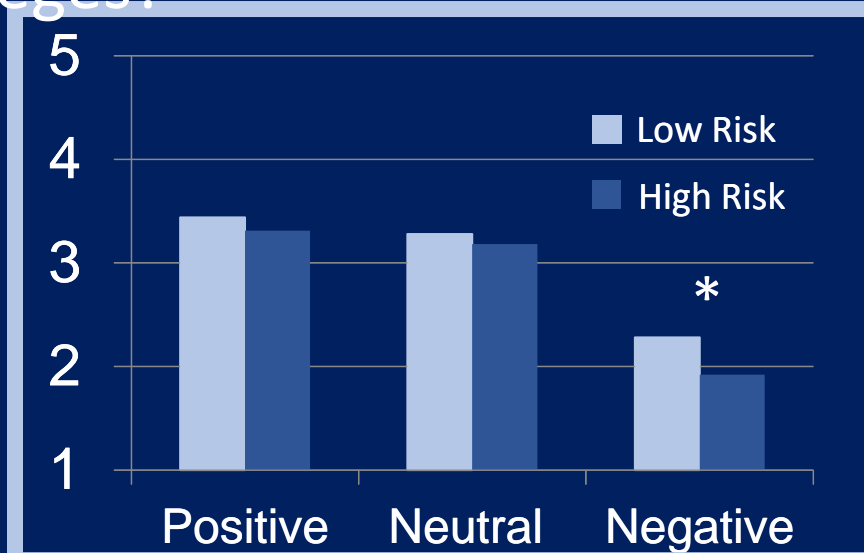
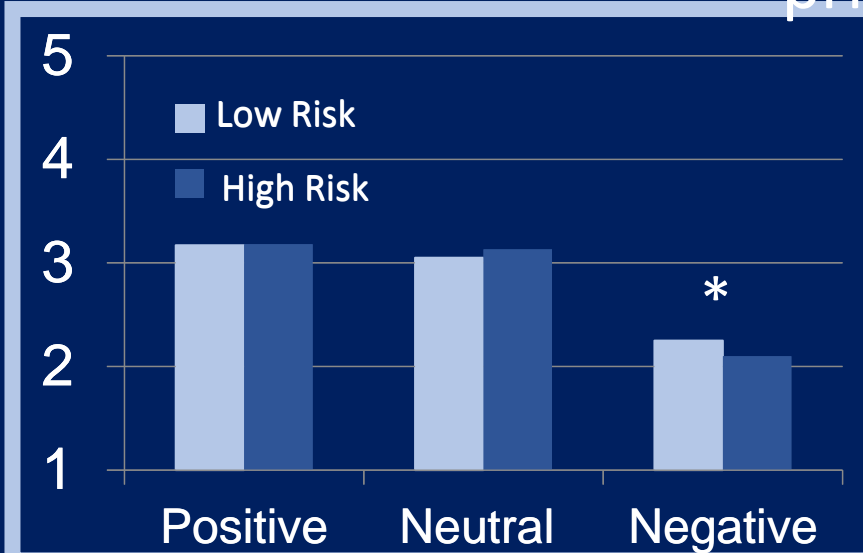
County-specific data systems

Without Clear Structure,  
Different Interpretations of the  
Same Behaviors Can Lead to  
Different Responses

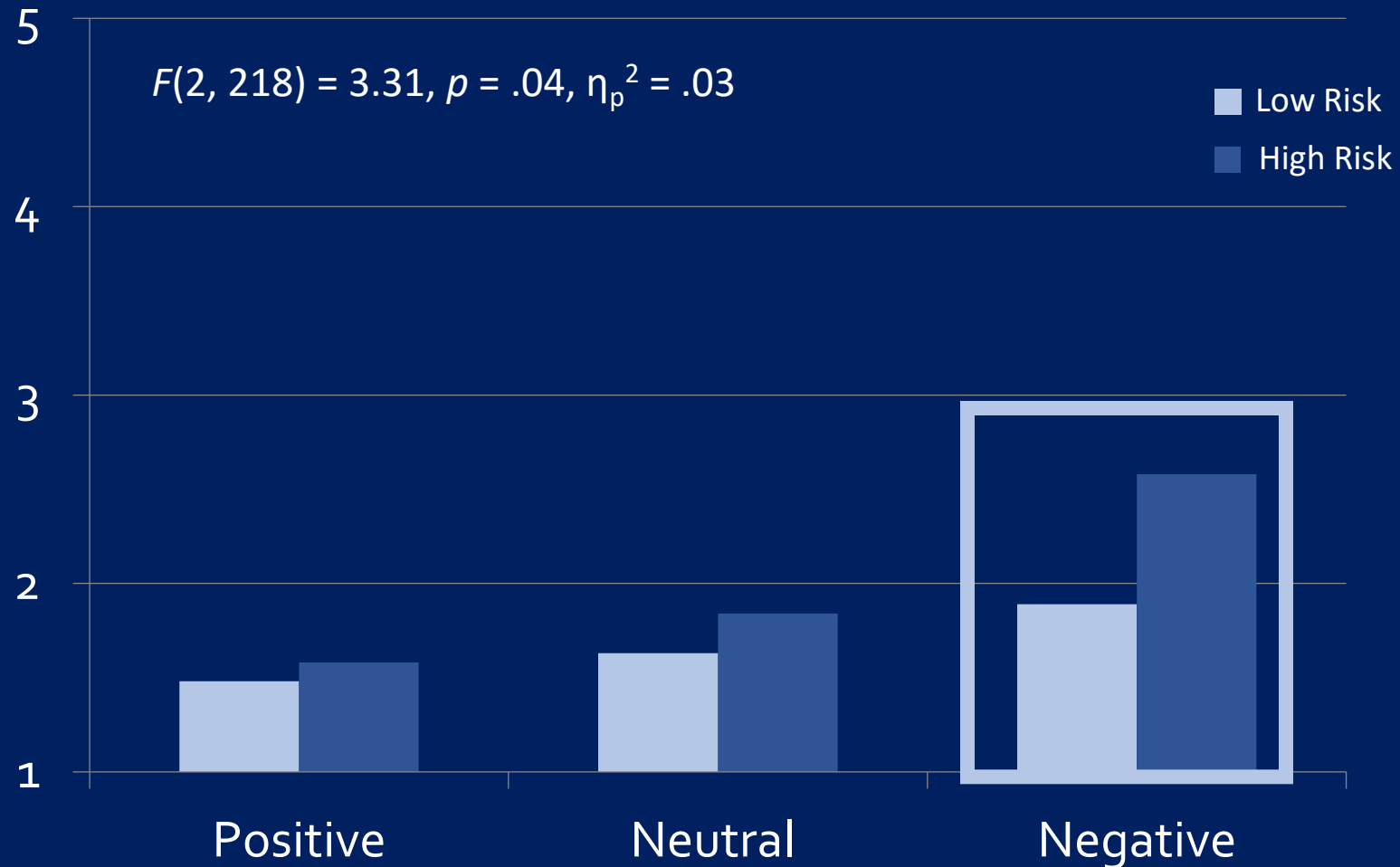
As part of his probation requirements, Anthony is required to attend weekly life skills classes at The Community Center. Anthony has attended 10 out of the 15 sessions, and has provided documentation for 2 of his 5 absences. Regarding his participation during the sessions he attended, Anthony has been an active contributor to group discussions in 75% of the required activities, but was not an active contributor in 25% of the activities. With respect to his behavior, Anthony was involved in an incident, a physical scuffle with another youth during the second week of the program.



How likely do you think it is that the company will do nothing with responses regarding the probability of equity investments adding privileges?



# How likely would you be to recommend probation revocation and residential placement?





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