

September 2026

Responding to Firearm Possession Charges in New York City:

Initial Findings from the Multimethod Evaluation of the Bronx Osborne
Gun Accountability and Prevention Program (BOGAP)

THE BRONX



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Center

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Initial Findings from the Multimethod Evaluation of the
Bronx Osborne Gun Accountability and Prevention Program (BOGAP)

Conducted with funding from the
National Institute of Justice, U.S. Department of Justice

Final Report Forthcoming

September 2026

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Recommended Citation

Tomberg, Kathleen A. Rebecca Balletto, Gina Moreno, Sheyla A. Delgado, Kwan-Lamar Blount-Hill, Patricia Cobar and Jeffrey A. Butts (2026). Responding to Firearm Possession Charges in New York City: Initial Findings from the Multimethod Evaluation of the Bronx Osborne Gun Accountability and Prevention Program (BOGAP). New York, NY: Research and Evaluation Center, John Jay College of Criminal Justice.

Abstract

The John Jay College Research and Evaluation Center evaluated the Bronx Osborne Gun Accountability and Prevention (BOGAP) program, a firearm possession diversion program developed by the Osborne Association of New York City in partnership with the Bronx District Attorney's Office. The evaluation measured the effectiveness of BOGAP in advancing public safety by preventing additional crime while avoiding the legal complexities and social costs of felony prosecution and possible incarceration. Researchers assembled a wide array of data, including interviews with program participants and their loved ones, BOGAP program staff, and staff from the Bronx District Attorney's Office. The team observed court hearings to gain insight into the legal experiences of BOGAP participants, the structure and dynamics of court proceedings, and the procedural context of the program. Researchers also conducted a series of online surveys with BOGAP participants to measure their attitudes and perceptions of guns, violence, conflict resolution, mental health, social support, and community connections. Finally, the research team analyzed several sources of administrative data, including program records from the Osborne Association, case-level data from the Bronx District Attorney's Office, and New York State criminal history records. The study found that BOGAP helped participants change gun-related behaviors and attitudes in positive and pro-social ways. Participation in the program did not pose a greater risk to public safety than business-as-usual prosecutions. Individuals diverted to BOGAP even had lower rearrest rates than two comparison groups developed using two different methodologies.

Acknowledgments

The research team at the John Jay Research and Evaluation Center appreciates the time and input of all BOGAP participants who shared their views and experiences with us. The project would not have been possible without the input and support of past and current staff members at the Osborne Association, including Michelle Portlock, Heidi Andrianos, Bruce Simpson, Maurice deFrietas, and the entire BOGAP team.

The research team sincerely appreciates the support of the Office of the Bronx District Attorney and all DA staff involved in the BOGAP initiative, especially past and present members from the Bronx DA research office, including Cindy Redcross, Mia Krause, Dr. Sydney (Hsin) Jaw, and Dr. Sean Houlihan.

The project would also not have been possible without data from the New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS). The authors appreciate the efforts and guidance of Leigh Bates, Colin Gruner, Michael Morgan, and everyone from DCJS's Research Request Team.

The authors are very grateful for support from the Office for the Advancement of Research and the Office of Sponsored Programs at John Jay College of Criminal Justice, as well as all current and former colleagues from the Research and Evaluation Center who contributed to the project, specifically Dr. Maureen Allwood, Dr. Alessandra Early, and Danilo Diaz Garcia. Dr. Allwood and Dr. Early brought considerable qualitative research expertise to this project by helping to shape the survey and interview instruments and conducting the staff interviews. The team would also like to thank our project consultant and co-author, Dr. Kwan-Lamar Blount-Hill. His expertise was key to conducting and analyzing interviews with BOGAP participants and their loved ones.

Finally, the authors thank the program team at the National Institute of Justice for their guidance and assistance during the development and execution of this project.

Criminal records data used in this study were provided by the New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS). All opinions, findings, and conclusions in the report are those of the authors and not those of DCJS. Neither New York State nor DCJS assumes liability for its contents or use thereof.

Introduction

In September 2022, the [National Institute of Justice](#) (NIJ), an office within the U.S. Department of Justice, provided funding to the John Jay College [Research and Evaluation Center](#) (JohnJayREC) to evaluate the Bronx Osborne Gun Accountability and Prevention (BOGAP) initiative. BOGAP is a community-based diversion program developed by the [Osborne Association](#) in partnership with the [Bronx District Attorney's Office](#) (Bronx DA). The goal of the program is to provide personal support for young adults facing their first firearm-related possession charge. Services include therapeutic programming and conflict resolution training delivered by credible mentors. Participants who complete the program successfully may have their charges reduced or dismissed, thus avoiding felony convictions and possible incarceration.

The JohnJayREC evaluation, conducted from 2022 to 2026, was designed to measure the effectiveness of BOGAP in advancing public safety by fostering positive life changes among participants and preventing their return to criminality, while avoiding the legal complexities and social cost of felony prosecution. Researchers found that everyone involved in BOGAP (participants, staff, and the Bronx DA) believed the program effectively helped participants to change their gun-related behaviors and attitudes. Individuals referred to BOGAP even had slightly lower rearrest rates than defendants in similar cases processed in more standard ways. Small sample sizes limited the study's overall statistical power, but BOGAP appeared to be a promising program posing no additional risk to public safety.

Addressing Social Harms Related to Firearms

Gun violence and crimes related to firearm possession are persistent threats in communities across the United States, including New York City. In a 2023 survey of U.S. adults, approximately 40 percent reported living in a household with at least one gun owner (Schaeffer 2024). In the same survey, 61 percent believed it was "too easy" for Americans to obtain firearms, even legally. In urban areas, the "too easy" figure was 72 percent. In a 2019 nationally representative sample of handgun owners, 30 percent reported carrying a firearm in public at least monthly (Rowhani-Rahbar 2022).

The main harms of firearm possession, of course, are the injuries and deaths suffered by shooting victims. New York City has seen steep declines in gun violence in recent years, but firearms continue to bring serious harm to neighborhoods across the city (DOHMH 2024). The 2023 rate of firearm-related [hospitalizations](#) for residents ages 15-34 in the Bronx was 40 per 100,000, which was more than twice the rate observed in the two next highest areas of the city: Brooklyn (16) and Manhattan (8).

Beyond the immediate physical toll on shooting victims, the misuse of firearms inflicts lasting harm on communities and the well-being of neighborhoods. The consequences of gun violence include psychological trauma, reduced economic opportunity, deteriorated social cohesion, and increased healthcare costs. [Public officials](#) in New York City link high rates of firearm violence to elevated unemployment, poverty, and mental distress in ways that reinforce violence (New York City Public Advocate 2022). Ripple effects extend to families, friends, neighbors, and bystanders. Survivors, witnesses, and bereaved relatives experience grief, PTSD, and diminished quality of life long after individual shooting incidents.

The harm caused by firearms requires an effective response from lawmakers and public officials. The key question is: which actions are effective and just? A conventional response would be to rely on the criminal justice system to hold gun users accountable by enacting laws governing the possession and use of firearms, relying on law enforcement to arrest violators, and using the courts to prosecute and penalize them. Pursuing the most severe actions in every instance, however, comes with unintended consequences and harmful collateral damage.

Felony convictions do not simply end when an offender completes a court-ordered sentence. The consequences may be lifelong. Civil penalties, disabilities, and disqualifications may flow automatically from felony records. Many domains of daily life are potentially affected, including employment, housing, education, and even voting (Uggen et al. 2024). Employment barriers are among the most economically devastating collateral consequences. Federal and state laws often prohibit individuals with felony convictions from working in licensed professions, including healthcare, law, education, and financial services (Rodriguez and Emsellem 2011). Employers are permitted — and in some sectors required — to conduct criminal background checks, leading to widespread informal discrimination in hiring.

Research Funding

The evaluation of BOGAP was funded through the U.S. Department of Justice's Community Violence Intervention and Prevention Initiative (CVIPI). Launched in 2022, CVIPI supported research-based strategies to reduce violent crime in communities across the United States. The initiative funded numerous programs to connect people with community resources and address many social and economic factors contributing to violence. The Osborne Association received a CVIPI grant from the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) to operate BOGAP. In 2025, BJA canceled funding for the program as part of widespread cuts in federal CVIPI funding. With NIJ's support, researchers continued the study to produce a final project report, and BOGAP continued to operate on a smaller scale with funding from other sources.

The National Inventory of the Collateral Consequences of Conviction recorded more than 44,000 such provisions across federal and state law, underscoring the extraordinary breadth of post-conviction burdens placed on those with felony records. When collateral consequences result in widespread opposition to law, they may even undermine the legitimacy of the legal system and impair a society's ability to hold citizens accountable for harmful behavior (Poama and Tripkovic 2024). The enduring harms associated with felony convictions can also reduce defendants' incentives to accept plea agreements, leading to court delays and higher prosecution and sentencing costs (Lee and Jaynes 2024). Understanding the varied uses and risks of collateral consequences is essential for any serious conversation about public safety, deterrence, recidivism, and social reintegration. For at least these reasons, the Bronx District Attorney enlisted the help of nonprofit partners in New York City to launch and operate diversion alternatives for first-time gun possession defendants who were willing to avoid felony convictions by participating in an intensive program of services and supports.

The fundamental question for policymakers and Bronx residents is whether implementing BOGAP was a good decision from a public safety perspective. Does it risk the safety and well-being of Bronx neighborhoods to offer less severe legal consequences for gun possession in exchange for a defendant's cooperation with a preventive services program? Does a reduction in legal penalties make offenders more likely to reoffend? Do they go on to commit future crimes more often than they would have if the District Attorney had refused the diversion option and instead used the power of the prosecutor's office to secure convictions and impose severe sentences?

Felony prosecution and criminal sentencing for gun possession charges would likely take more time, risk more public resources, and impose potentially lifelong consequences on defendants, but is it worth it otherwise? Do defendants going through the traditional legal process and facing the possibility of felony prosecution have less recidivism and fewer criminal arrests in the future? Or can the legal system achieve the goals of public safety and offender redemption just as well with lower social costs by leveraging a prosecution diversion program like BOGAP? These are the questions investigated by the research team at John Jay College's Research and Evaluation Center.

The NIJ Evaluation

The JohnJayREC research team used a comprehensive multimethod approach to evaluate the BOGAP program, combining qualitative and quantitative analyses to assess its design and performance, document its implementation, and identify necessary adaptations. The project included interviews of participants, program staff, individuals close to participants, and staff from the Bronx District Attorney's Office. The team observed participant court hearings to gain insight

into their legal experiences, the structure and dynamics of court proceedings, and the procedural context of the program. Researchers conducted a series of online surveys with active BOGAP participants to measure changes in their attitudes and perceptions of guns, violence, conflict resolution, mental health, social supports, and community connections. The team also analyzed administrative data, including program engagement records from the Osborne Association, case-level data from the Bronx DA, and criminal history records from New York State's Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS). The multifaceted approach allowed researchers to gain a thorough understanding of how BOGAP operated and its potential effects on participants. Administrative and survey data measured participant outcomes, including changes in their attitudes and beliefs, as well as post-intervention recidivism.

The evaluation plan evolved somewhat during the project. Researchers originally intended to measure attitudes among a well-structured comparison group, but this was not feasible. The team updated the evaluation plan to accommodate this and other changes, in part by including additional participant interviews and observations to add deeper insight into program dynamics and elements. Changes to the mixed-methods study preserved the evaluation's ability to create a clear picture of the program.

The research team analyzed these data sources to examine the effects of BOGAP and identify outcomes associated with participants' successful program completion. Successful completion was defined as the Bronx DA's office clearing the charges facing a participant. For this to happen, participants were required to complete: 1) specialized program components, including basic and advanced "Alternatives to Violence Prevention," "Job Readiness Training," and "Dialectical Behavioral Therapy," 2) standard components, including "Interactive Journaling"/"Cognitive Behavioral Therapy" and "Motivational Interviewing," and 3) a 90-day post-programming follow-up period without any new arrests.

Research Questions

The JohnJayREC evaluation team designed the study to answer three research questions:

1. Is the successful completion of BOGAP associated with public safety via improvements in conflict resolution skills, mental health, resilience, social support, and community connection among participants?
 - a. The research team examined whether BOGAP participants showed changes in conflict resolution skills, mental health and resilience, social support, and community connections. These outcomes were measured using participant surveys collected throughout the evaluation.

2. Is the successful completion of BOGAP associated with successful disengagement from criminal behavior and decreased recidivism?
 - a. Researchers assessed whether BOGAP participants had fewer rearrests and reconvictions than similar individuals who did not participate in the program. The team analyzed criminal justice involvement (i.e., DCJS charge records) among BOGAP participants and a matched pool of non-participants.
3. Does successful completion of BOGAP appear to result in lasting and positive changes in attitudes?
 - a. Researchers drew upon iterative participant surveys to examine whether BOGAP participants demonstrated changes in attitudes related to mental health, social support, violence and guns, conflict resolution, and job skills and employment.

Research Methods

In addition to answering core research questions through quantitative analyses, the team contextualized the study findings with qualitative data collected through interviews with participants, program staff, participants' family and friends, and Bronx DA staff, as well as intermittent observations of program operations. Multiple data sources provided insight into participants' experiences with the BOGAP program and various other outcomes.

Qualitative Data

Researchers worked with the Osborne Association to invite eligible program staff to a series of three interview waves in Fall 2023, Fall 2024, and Summer 2025. Staff interviews focused on individuals who worked directly with participants, including credible messengers who delivered the program's daily curriculum and others involved in the program's routine operations. Before conducting interviews, the research team provided staff with an overview of the interview plan, including its voluntary nature. Three waves of interviews were conducted by an experienced qualitative researcher, focusing on the program's implementation and evolution over time, factors influencing participant engagement, and perceptions of the most helpful and most challenging program features.

Researchers conducted in-person interviews with BOGAP participants at the Bronx Osborne office in the Summer and Fall of 2025. Participants were recruited by program staff from the pool of individuals who were active in BOGAP at the time. Respondents were selected from the most advanced participant cohorts to ensure they had sufficient exposure to the program, could reflect on the multiple phases of operations, and could offer in-depth perspectives. Thirteen participants were interviewed over three days. Each interviewee was compensated for their time. A semi-structured interview protocol provided consistency, while allowing sufficient flexibility

for follow-up questions to capture each participant's experience in depth. The interviewer focused on each respondent's daily involvement in the program, relationships with staff and peers, changes in work-related activities, and personal commitments required to attend. The discussions explored BOGAP's strengths, challenges, and areas for improvement, as well as each participant's perceptions of the program's effect on their job readiness, future planning, and community experience.

Researchers also planned to conduct group interviews or focus groups with individuals closely connected to BOGAP participants, such as family members, partners, and close friends. However, due to a low response rate, the study conducted interviews with only two loved ones of BOGAP participants. Still, the information from those interviews provided helpful context. Conversations focused on their perceptions of BOGAP, its effects on participants and the surrounding community, and their recommendations for improving the program.

The research team conducted additional interviews with several staff members from the Bronx DA's Office. Researchers gained insight into the program's origins and early development, including participant recruitment and eligibility, case review processes, and the evolution of program operations. Interviewers explored staff perceptions of the program's role relative to other District Attorney initiatives. Discussions with staff allowed researchers to ascertain the District Attorney's plans to sustain the program in light of federal funding cuts following the 2024 U.S. national election.

Researchers attended several court sessions involving young men participating in the BOGAP program. Court hearings allowed program staff and participants to check in with the judges who heard the original firearm cases. Court appearances continued for participants during their time in the program, during the post-program "cooling off" period, and at the time of their graduation from BOGAP. Researchers' observations of court appearances informed the study's documentation of participant behavior, staff-participant interactions, overall courtroom dynamics, and the wide array of program practices.

Most interviews with representatives from the Bronx DA's Office, BOGAP staff, program participants, and their friends and family were audio-recorded with permission and subsequently transcribed using digital transcription software. Transcripts were reviewed and validated against the audio files before being analyzed. Handwritten notes were typed, cleaned, and prepared for analysis. The research team conducted thematic analyses of all qualitative data, organizing responses by topic and applying a structured coding framework to identify recurring patterns and differences across interviews. Codes were grouped into broader analytic categories and refined iteratively to maintain clarity and uniformity. Interview data provided greater context for quantitative findings and helped to surface perceptions and experiences that structured measures are often unable to reflect.

Interview findings are presented thematically in project reports using aggregated, de-identified responses, with illustrative quotations wherever helpful. To protect confidentiality, quotes are never attributed to individuals. Highlighted results are selected to reflect the views and perspectives of respondents rather than to support specific causal assertions or broadly generalizable conclusions. (For more information about the qualitative data methods and analyses, see [Appendix A](#). To review interview instruments, see [Appendix B](#).)

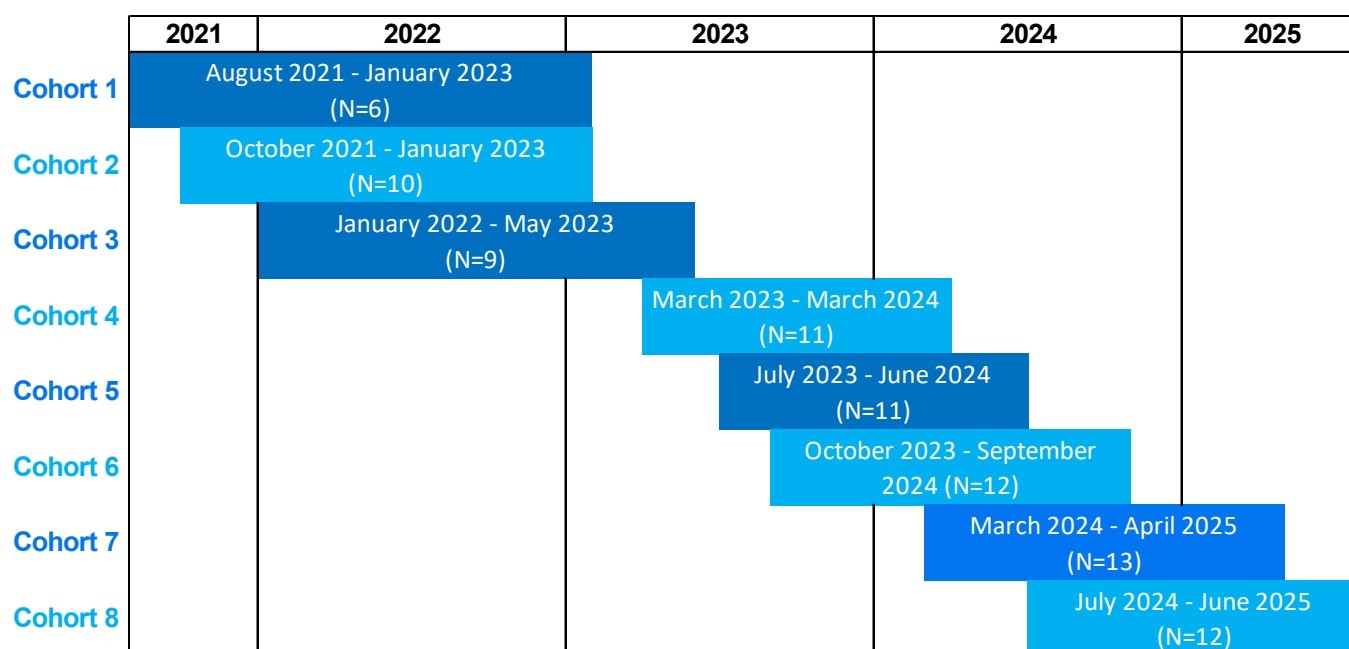
Survey Data

Researchers invited BOGAP participants to complete a series of online surveys, with compensation for each valid response. Surveys were administered at five points during BOGAP, each linked to a particular program phase identified by staff. This enabled the research team to capture participants' experiences at various stages, including the 90-day cooling-off period following programming. Staff announced the first three surveys during regular program hours. Researchers sent invitations directly to participants for surveys four and five, using contact information collected at the end of the first three surveys. Osborne staff assigned an anonymous identifier to each participant, enabling researchers to confirm enrollment in BOGAP, track individual responses across surveys, and link to program records. Researchers were able to analyze individual response patterns while maintaining confidentiality.

Participant surveys collected basic information, such as housing stability and age, along with questions regarding their attitudes toward health and well-being, violence, conflict resolution, employment readiness, perceptions of neighborhood safety, and social supports within and outside the Osborne Association. Participants responded to items on a five-point scale from "agree strongly" to "disagree strongly." The final Wave 5 survey included an additional section addressing participant experiences with BOGAP. Survey items were conceptualized as ten constructs or factors.

The study plan originally included survey data from cohorts five through ten (July 2023 to 2025), but changes in the evaluation timeline narrowed the effort to cohorts five through eight (Figure 1). The first four cohorts were already underway when the evaluation began, and the study was unable to follow their program involvement from entry to completion. Cohorts nine and ten were unable to complete all surveys due to the unexpected changes in BOGAP's funding and program scheduling, necessitating adjustments to the study timeline.

The first step in the survey analysis process was checking for missing and out-of-range values, dropping duplicate and invalid survey responses, and cross-validating demographic responses against program records. Confirmatory factor analyses assessed whether items within the original constructs were statistically coherent and measured the same underlying ideas. Items that did not load suitably on a common factor were dropped from the analysis to ensure each factor measured a single idea.

Figure 1: BOGAP Participant Cohorts with Approximate Begin and End Dates

Reliability was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient. Scores for each factor (the average of the individual survey item scores within each factor) indicated average participant beliefs for each construct. These were used in the data analysis to provide descriptive context about the program and as part of a series of bivariate and multivariate analyses measuring four program outcomes. To test whether each outcome changed over time, researchers estimated ordered logistic regression models including an interaction term for wave and cohort, adjusted for age, number of children, education, housing stability, and employment status. (For information about the survey construction, methods, and analyses, see [Appendix C](#) and [Appendix D](#). The survey instrument is available in [Appendix E](#).)

Administrative Data

Researchers collected an assortment of administrative data records with formally executed data-sharing agreements (DSAs) that were essential to the evaluation.

Records were obtained from three sources:

- 1. Osborne Association:** Data about individuals' program participation.
- 2. NYS Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS):** Recidivism (rearrest) data for the full BOGAP study sample, as well as a pool of anonymized records from which researchers statistically matched the best possible comparison group.
- 3. Bronx District Attorney's Office (Bronx DA):** Court processing records for all individuals meeting basic criteria for referral to BOGAP.

Factors Measured by BOGAP Participant Surveys

Mental Health Awareness	Awareness of mental health support, willingness to seek help.
Empathy	Ability to understand and share others' negative feelings.
Future Orientation	Outlook for the future and ability to meet goals.
Social Supports Within Osborne	Having someone who provides unconditional support.
Social Support Outside Osborne	Having someone who provides unconditional support.
Attitudes re. Violence	Endorsement of physical force and/or weapons for protection.
Conflict Resolution	Ability to solve conflicts without fighting or violence.
Neighborhood Safety	Perception of violence in the neighborhood.
Self-Regulation	Ability to self-regulate, take a balanced approach to situations.
Attitudes re. Employment	Awareness of how to obtain and keep a job.

Researchers cleaned, standardized, and merged all data from program records, DA case files, DCJS criminal history records, and combined them with participant surveys to create a participant-level dataset linking demographic, program, and criminal justice information. Analyses examined patterns of enrollment, program completion, and service engagement, and explored how participant characteristics related to outcomes, including changes in attitudes and beliefs, and eventual recidivism. Recidivism was assessed by comparing BOGAP participants who completed the program with a statistically matched group of non-participants selected to resemble the treated sample on key characteristics, including age, prior criminal history, and gun possession charges. The recidivism follow-up period varied by individual, depending on when they exited BOGAP or when their case was resolved. The median time period was at least 18 months. The strategy provided a high-level view of who participated in BOGAP, what factors may be associated with successful outcomes, and the extent to which program involvement related to other interactions with the justice system. (For additional information about administrative data methods and preparation, see [Appendix E](#).)

Development of BOGAP

Despite declining crime rates in New York City and many other communities, gun violence continues to be a significant issue for jurisdictions across the United States. Shooting incidents declined 50 percent between 2010 and the first quarter of 2026, according to data compiled by the New York City Police Department. New York State generally has strict laws governing the possession of firearms. In 2026, according to [Everytown for Gun Safety](#), New York had the fourth strongest gun laws of all states in the nation, with the fourth lowest rate of gun deaths per 100,000 population.

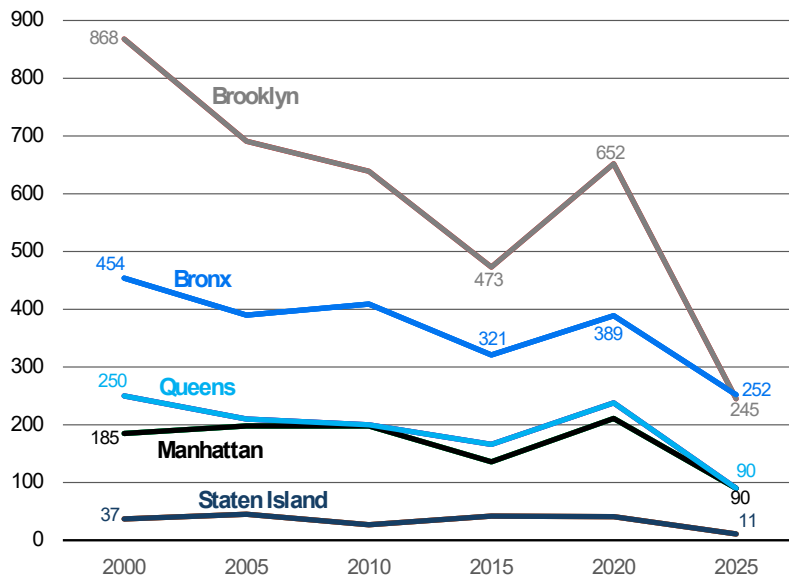
Gun crime fell in the Bronx in recent years, although it continues to account for a disproportionately high share of the New York City total. Between 2001 and 2025, the [number](#) of murders in the Bronx fell 47 percent from 190 to 101, resulting in a homicide rate of 7.2 murders per 100,000 population for 2025. The homicide rate in Brooklyn that year was 3.6 per 100,000, while the rate in Manhattan was 3.2, and Queens experienced a rate of 2.4 per 100,000. Similarly, the rate of shootings per 100,000 population in the Bronx fell by half, from 34.1 in the year 2000 to 17.0 per 100,000 in 2025 (Figure 2).

Standard sentences for gun-possession charges in the Bronx often involved two years in state prison followed by two years of post-release supervision. The Bronx DA wanted additional alternatives that would be more holistic, taking a person's circumstances into account while still focusing on deterrence and prevention. In examining the flow of simple possession cases (e.g., possession of a firearm without using the firearm), the DA noticed that many defendants in such cases were young, first-time felony offenders unlikely to receive custodial sentences. Yet, few interventions or treatment opportunities were available for individuals in these cases. Rather than continue prosecuting such cases and accepting standard sentences, the office sought to address the underlying causes of gun possession and address them with preventive services.

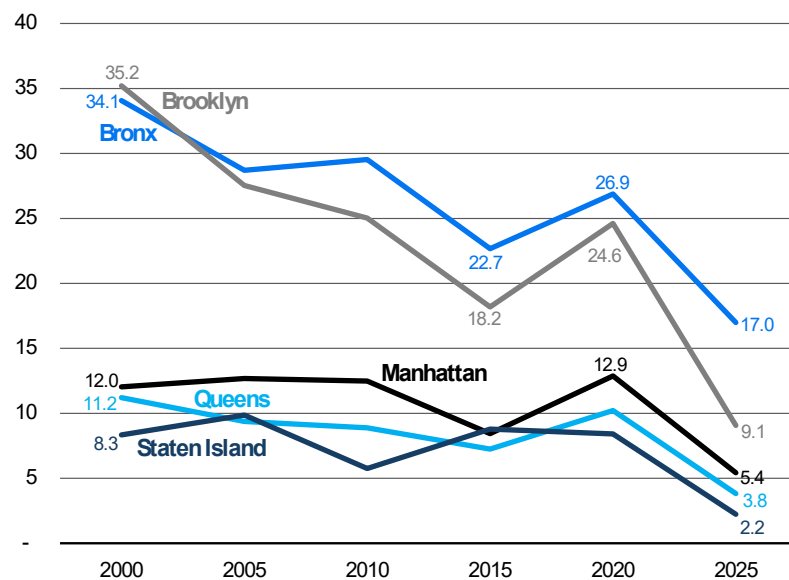
The Bronx DA wanted to improve the effectiveness of the process. Firearm possession cases typically reach the Bronx DA through two paths. The most common path begins with an arrest by law enforcement, typically resulting from a pedestrian stop, traffic encounter, a search related to another crime, or the recovery of weapons at a crime scene. Still other cases are initiated through DA investigations and indictment, including high-risk cases such as those tied to gang activity or illegal gun trafficking.

During the initial criminal court arraignment — sometimes referred to as the first appearance — defendants are informed of charges and asked to plead guilty or not guilty. Prosecutors have discretion to upgrade or downgrade arrest charges during initial screening, so the charges at arraignment may differ from those at arrest. If the defendant is in custody following arrest, an arraignment hearing must be held within 24 hours. Arrestees charged with other offenses may receive desk appearance tickets (DAT) from law enforcement and are instructed to return to court on a specific day, typically within three weeks of arrest.

Legal processing of firearm cases depends on the specific charge(s) involved. Under New York law, Criminal Possession of a Weapon in the Second Degree (PL 265.03) is a class C violent felony. Charges are reported by law enforcement, and the DA reviews the case for legal sufficiency and forwards the matter for arraignment and indictment, after which a defendant may accept a plea bargain (usually a D felony in gun cases) or proceed to trial.

Figure 2: Shooting Incidents in New York City, 2000-2025**Annual Number of Shootings**

	2000	2025	Difference
Bronx	454	252	-44%
Brooklyn	868	245	-72%
Manhattan	185	90	-51%
Queens	250	90	-64%
Staten Island	37	11	-70%

Annual Shootings per 100,000 Population

	2000	2025	Difference
Bronx	34.1	17.0	-50%
Brooklyn	35.2	9.1	-74%
Manhattan	12.0	5.4	-55%
Queens	11.2	3.8	-66%
Staten Island	8.3	2.2	-73%

Notes: Shooting data from the [Vital City Data Explorer](#). Shooting incidents are defined as firearm discharge resulting in a person being struck or injured. Population data are from the New York State [Office of Information Technology](#).

Firearm possession cases that are not dismissed or resolved through a plea are usually indicted and proceed to criminal court.¹ New York State law imposes mandatory minimum prison sentences for felony gun possession convictions. The DA Office's data dashboard notes that the number of arraigned cases over a specific period is not equal to the number of arrests referred to the Bronx DA, because some arrests are declined for prosecution, transferred to other courts before arraignment, or result in the defendant not appearing and being issued a bench warrant. In short, the Bronx DA's processing of gun possession cases flows from arrest or a DA-initiated investigation, through screening and review of charges, arraignment, bureau assignment based on charge severity and case type, and finally to plea negotiation or indictment.

Diversion Alternatives

The Bronx DA deploys diversion alternatives when they are warranted and consistent with public safety goals, including in many firearm possession cases (Clark 2023). The District Attorney partnered with the New York State Office of Court Administration to support nonprofit service providers in operating firearm diversion interventions, including the Osborne Association and BOGAP. The DA's goal was to make the community safer by changing attitudes and behaviors related to firearms, along with services and opportunities to improve a defendant's educational and employment prospects. Defendants plead guilty to gun charges, and those charges can be dismissed if they complete the program, which includes case management, conflict-resolution skills, cognitive-behavioral interventions, job-readiness training, and paid internships.

The Osborne Association partnered with the Bronx DA to develop BOGAP as a replacement for felony convictions and the potential of carceral sentences for a defined group of defendants. As the Bronx DA team reviewed the options for resolving cases after BOGAP completion, they noted that many first-time felony gun possession cases were already handled without prison sentences. This led to the initial BOGAP plea deal — a felony guilty plea at the start of BOGAP would be downgraded to a misdemeanor after the defendant completed all BOGAP services as well as a 90-day post-program period during which participants learned to put their new skills to use and experience no new arrests. The Osborne Association served the initial cohort of participants beginning in the summer of 2021.

¹ From 2021 to 2025, of the 4,644 cases arraigned on firearm possession (specifically Penal Law code 265.03), 75 percent or 3,486 cases made it to the grand jury, and 1,158 (25%) did not because they were either pleaded out, transferred to another court, dismissed beforehand, or still active. Of the cases that did make it to the grand jury, according to the BronxDA Office, 93 percent (n=3,235) were indicted and 251 were withdrawn or dismissed.

When law enforcement submitted an arrest to the DA, prosecutors would review the circumstances, interview witnesses and victims, and decide whether to file charges. The DA could instead determine that “declining” to prosecute was appropriate. District Attorney Clark [testified](#) before the New York City Council in 2025 that felony dismissal rates in the Bronx had grown from 26 percent in 2019 to 44 percent in 2024, a shift she believed was related to the 2019 discovery reform law. Clark also [pointed out](#) that her office was underfunded and understaffed. Under the new law, prosecutors were required to turn over all evidence to the defense and be ready for trial within 90 days of arraignment for misdemeanors and within six months for felony cases. Failure to file a certificate of compliance confirming evidence disclosure would result in dismissal of the case on speedy-trial grounds. In late 2025, she and her fellow prosecutors worked with [State officials](#) to enact needed changes to the 2019 law.

In 2023, the Bronx DA pursued prosecution in just 75 percent of violent felony arrests, compared with 95 percent in other New York City boroughs (Monaghan et al. 2024). When Bronx defendants faced felony firearm charges, however, prosecutors moved forward in 92 percent of cases ([Trends in Prosecutor Charging Decisions 2018-2022](#), see Table 2). Despite recent increases in charging declinations, the Bronx DA pursued intensive prosecutions in the most serious cases while using alternative approaches for less serious matters. In those cases, the DA Office developed several diversion tracks that served as intentional off-ramps.

The Bronx Osborne Gun Accountability and Prevention initiative allowed indicted first-time gun offenders under age 40 without a prior violent felony conviction to have firearm charges dismissed upon successful completion of the year-long program.² Participants who successfully complete the program would have their felony charges downgraded to misdemeanors rather than being dismissed. In 2025, after the program’s successful launch, the Bronx DA agreed to allow cases to be dismissed upon successful BOGAP completion. The DA team reported that many non-BOGAP cases were already resulting in dismissals. Thus, adding the potential for dismissal in BOGAP would increase fairness and serve as a just reward for individuals who invested the extra time and commitment required to complete the program.

Program Goals

BOGAP is a community-based diversion initiative designed to promote changes in attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors among participants and to support them in leading safer, more productive lives. The program aims to reduce the likelihood of future involvement in violence by offering a structured alternative to traditional prosecution and addressing the underlying causes of gun-related crime. If participants successfully “put down their guns,” the hope was that they would avoid the long-term consequences of incarceration that historically result from gun possession convictions. (See [Appendix G](#) for the Osborne Association’s BOGAP logic model.)

2. The program was originally designed for defendants under age 30, and it was called the *Bronx-Osborne Gun Avoidance Program*.

Support of the District Attorney

The BOGAP initiative was consistent with the Bronx District Attorney's "smart on crime" approach to protecting residents and neighborhoods in the Bronx. The DA's office declined formal prosecution and relied on alternatives for some minor and nonviolent offenses, especially when defendants were affected by substance use and/or mental health issues. District Attorney Clark acknowledged the limited power of prosecution as a violence-reduction strategy, [stating that](#) prosecution "should be the last resort, not the first resort" to preserve community safety.

Unlike some diversion programs that simply defer prosecution, BOGAP was designed as a structured, intensive program organized in three phases to introduce participants to new modes of thinking while emphasizing personal responsibility and accountability. Participants are referred to Osborne from the Bronx DA and thoroughly assessed during an intake process. Staff members continue to evaluate individual needs with ongoing case management throughout the program. The early phases of BOGAP include group workshops, individual mentoring, clinical sessions, and job readiness training to support behavioral change and skill development. Program completion requirements reinforce discipline, consistency, and follow-through. Later phases emphasize workforce engagement and employment-related activities, with continued opportunities for individual mentoring and clinical support as needed. Participants commit to 20 hours of programming per week for 12 months, followed by a 90-day "cooling off" period during which they must remain arrest-free.

BOGAP guides participants toward financial independence, paid employment, and positive community engagement. Core staff members include credible messengers (CMs), who rely on their lived experience to build trust and positive relationships with participants. The curriculum-based group work, including interactive journaling, role-play, and group discussions, encourages participant growth through reflection and skill development. The CMs tailor the curriculum to each cohort's background and experiences. However, individual participants' engagement varies, particularly among those who are less comfortable sharing their thoughts in the early phases of the program. An in-house clinician provides Dialectical Behavioral Therapy to address participants' mental health needs and support their growth and development. Participants also have access to hard skills certifications, paid internships, job placement, and post-program support through the Osborne Association. Program participants build community connections and a personal sense of purpose through involvement in community projects, such as serving food and distributing clothing to people experiencing homelessness, visiting local political offices, supporting community events (e.g., health fairs), and cleaning public parks.

Criteria for BOGAP Participation

- Age 16 – 39 (initial minimum age was lowered from 18 to 16, and maximum age was raised from 30 to 39 in 2025)
- No prior felony conviction
- Indicted on gun possession charge (PL265.03)

Staff members continually monitor participants' engagement and progress through the program stages. When changes are needed, staff members develop strategies to support each participant's ability to complete the curriculum and graduate from BOGAP (Table 1). Regular court appearances serve as structured check-ins to monitor progress, confirm compliance, and offer encouragement to participants. Participants have regular hearings (approximately one per month) before the judge who oversees ATI programs in the Bronx. Osborne staff deliver brief reports on each participant's progress at the start of the hearing, providing relevant context without overpraising or diminishing issues and challenges. The judge may offer advice and suggestions to participants as needed, keeping them focused on completing the program and moving their lives in positive directions. Together, the judge, the Bronx DA's Office, the defense attorneys, and the Osborne Association work to promote second chances and prioritize personal growth, accountability, and opportunity over punishment. All parties share a commitment to helping people move toward safe, stable futures.

BOGAP participants often benefit from additional services. Staff may provide wraparound support, including mental health referrals, legal assistance, housing assistance, food access, clothing for job interviews, and access to other necessities. Such efforts help participants meet basic needs while building bonds with staff. When their needs exceed what BOGAP can provide, such as permanent housing, legal identification, or transportation across boroughs, program staff may refer participants to additional programs at the Osborne Association or other agencies. The program offers other ways to support participants while they are on-site at Osborne, including a lounge area in the office that provides a comfortable and safe, home-like space where participants can decompress from external stressors.

The program supports BOGAP staff with comprehensive training in Alternatives to Violence Prevention, Interactive Journaling, Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT), Motivational Interviewing, and Job Readiness Training. Osborne clinicians receive additional training in Dialectical Behavioral Therapy. The training strengthens program delivery and takes multiple forms, including hands-on training, facilitation practice, and team debriefs. Ongoing professional development throughout the program maintains BOGAP's quality and encourages staff to respond to each participant's evolving needs.

Table 1: BOGAP Curriculum

Component	Curriculum and Content	Dosage & Schedule	Delivery
Credible Messenger (CM) Mentors	CMs build trusting relationships and community ties with participants. Sessions reinforce the curriculum and address individual circumstances. Participants establish personal goals and identify a “tool set.”	Meet weekly to start, can become less than once a week as needed. Throughout program engagement. Staff available 24/7 for counseling and crisis intervention.	Individual sessions
Case Management by CM Mentors	Work with participants to build stable lives by addressing clinical and practical needs (education, housing, health care, safety, etc.).	Throughout program engagement.	Individual sessions
Alternative to Violence Program (AVP)	Builds nonviolent conflict-resolution skills through an effective, transformative group-based curriculum. Topics include creative conflict resolution and managing fear, anger, and power.	Phase 1: Basic level – 15 hours total. Phase 2: Advanced level – 15 hours total.	Group sessions
Cognitive Behavioral Intervention	Interactive journaling, group classes, and homework assignments designed to change beliefs, attitudes, and behavior.	Phase 1 and 2: No hour or book requirement.	Group sessions
Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT)	Clinician-provided treatment addressing the trauma often underlying emotional volatility and impulsive behavior. Focus on emotional regulation, decision-making, accountability, and understanding consequences.	Phase 1 (approx. one month). Phase 2: 22 sessions (approx. one hour per session).	Group sessions
Job Readiness Training	“Works Plus” curriculum to build soft skills needed on the job – e.g., resume development, interview skills, and real job opportunities.	Phase 2: No specific time requirement. Must finish all modules. Typically 4-6 weeks.	Group sessions by NeON program
Hard Skills Training (optional)	Provides opportunities to build stackable credentials such as OSHA 10, 30, or 40, scaffolding, flagger, food handling, etc.	Phase 2 (if interested).	Group sessions
Employment Experiences	Internships, paid transitional employment, and permanent job placements to begin establishing stable, community-invested lives.	Phase 3	Individual services

Pathways to BOGAP

The Bronx District Attorney's Office must refer a person to participate in BOGAP. Once cases are determined to meet the program criteria (i.e., top charge PL 265.03, age 16 to 39, and no prior felony conviction in the Bronx), the office performs a background review that includes criminal history checks and social media searches. Individual work-ups are presented in roundtable sessions to discuss suitability for BOGAP. Clear disqualifiers include all cases involving discharge of firearms and probable incarceration sentences, prior gun-related incidents, additional pending violent-felony arrests, and involvement in unrelated upcoming cases.

Referrals to BOGAP are not possible for various other reasons as well, including mental health needs beyond what the program can provide, legal cases that appear weak and likely to be dismissed, concerning material found in social media background checks, obstacles presented by the defendant's primary language, if their residence is too far from the program site, or defendants who are working or attending school full-time. Upon referral to BOGAP, the Osborne Association screens potential participants before enrolling them in the program. Severe mental health challenges not previously identified by the Bronx DA, active substance use, or unresolved interpersonal conflicts that require intensive support are likely to deem a person ill-suited for BOGAP.

The Bronx DA considers alternate resolutions for individuals who do not meet the program's strict eligibility criteria. People who cannot attend BOGAP for valid reasons, but who would otherwise meet the program criteria, may be offered interim probation or other diversion programs. BOGAP is a voluntary program. Defendants referred to the program do not have to accept the offer. The Bronx DA works to ensure the consideration process is fair and thorough.

As BOGAP operations continued after 2021, the Bronx DA's office continued to balance the need for public safety with the desire to provide participants with an "off-ramp" from violent behavior and facilitate more positive futures. During the pilot phase, the Bronx DA team spent considerable time reviewing each case and asking questions to understand the defendant's total context. The staff saw that, no matter how carefully a case was reviewed, it was not always

"I describe it as a second chance. You got people here that just don't look at you basically like, as just a criminal. They see you as human. So that's always a good feeling. ... [Y]ou create family here, like me and my cohort just feel like family now... I look at them like older brothers, uncles."

– BOGAP Participant

(Quotations from interviews are lightly edited for concision and clarity.)

possible to identify the entire range of factors influencing a person's behavior. Over time, and with public safety in mind, the Bronx DA and Osborne expanded eligibility to include higher-risk, higher-need individuals. As the program evolved, being a participant in other crimes was no longer an immutable disqualifier. The Bronx DA continued to support the program even when participants were arrested for minor offenses while enrolled in BOGAP. The office believed that if the program had the potential to produce outcomes at least as good as, if not better than, those of felony convictions, BOGAP remained a viable option.

Study Comparison Group

In 2023, the Bronx DA Office introduced a new randomized method of identifying BOGAP participants. The Office first identified cases meeting basic eligibility criteria. That list was pre-screened by Assistant District Attorneys and the Crime Strategies Bureau (CSB) to remove cases inappropriate for BOGAP (e.g., cases likely headed for dismissal or individuals posing serious safety concerns). Once those cases were removed, all remaining cases were randomized into two groups: one group was selected for inclusion in BOGAP (2/3 of identified cases), and the other was processed using standard "business as usual" handling (1/3 of identified cases).

After random selection, all cases selected for BOGAP underwent additional CSB safety checks and a full case-conferencing process, which reviewed each person's circumstances and other relevant case details. The ultimate decision to refer a case to BOGAP was made during these conferences. Cases not referred to BOGAP due to various safety concerns could be routed to other ATI and/or probation alternatives. The system increased the safety and fairness of the process and ensured that a broad array of cases would be considered for BOGAP referral.

The research team investigated the randomization process as a check on the study findings, but the analysis did not rely solely on it because the research question focused on the effects of participation in BOGAP rather than on eligibility or consideration for the program. The fact that cases initially considered for BOGAP underwent additional screening and curation may have led to a treatment group that differed in ways not accounted for by the randomization and subsequent analyses.

(See [Appendix H](#) for additional details on the research team's supplemental analysis that used the Bronx DA's randomized case assignment process.)

Program Participants

The NIJ evaluation of BOGAP focused on 102 4program participants in the first 10 cohorts (Tables 2 and 3). All participants were male, with the largest proportion (44%) aged 21-23 years. Almost all participants were of either non-Hispanic Black (63%) or Hispanic (31%) ancestry. Nearly a quarter (24%) of participants had at least one child. More than half (58%) lived in a residence they rented or owned upon program entry. Almost two-thirds of participants answering the study's surveys reported they either sometimes (33%) or often (31%) worried about having a place to live. Employment status at intake was split between unemployed (43%) and employed in "some capacity" (40%). Of those employed in some capacity, half were employed full-time (51%). Most survey respondents (60%) were not satisfied with their current employment. Only 13 percent reported being very satisfied with their employment at the start of the program. Nearly half of all participants (40%) had completed high school or a GED. One-third (33%) reported less than a high school education or its equivalent.

Participants in the first ten program cohorts had similar case types, arrest charges, and indictments (Table 4). Nearly all (97%) pleaded guilty to criminal possession of a weapon. Many participants reported not feeling consistently safe in their own neighborhoods, and their neighborhood context could prompt aggressive responses. BOGAP programming was designed to help participants counter this environmental "push" and to provide a safe space where they could grow and change. One construct measured by the study's survey focused on how safe people felt in their neighborhoods (Table 5). Generally, during the program and the 90-day cooling-off period, participants reported feeling slightly unsafe in their neighborhoods. This was explored in surveys by asking participants about hearing gunshots, people in the neighborhood being worried about being the victim of a violent crime, and whether they would move out if they had the option to do so.

Program Components

BOGAP staff members work hard to engage participants in the program's routines and activities. Participants often begin the program with low trust and reluctance to accept support, sometimes questioning the staff's motives and struggling to believe their concerns are genuine. Others have outside influences that make participation difficult at times (e.g., employment conflicts, family responsibilities). When participants fail to engage sufficiently with the

"[O]nce I started being more open, talking to people, getting to know other people, conversations with different members and staff, it was actually keeping my head straight."

– BOGAP Participant

Table 2: Characteristics of BOGAP Participants, Cohorts 1-10 (N=102)

Gender	Number	Percent
Male	102	100%
Age at Intake		
18-20	24	24%
21-23	45	44%
24-28	33	32%
Race/Ethnicity		
Non-Hispanic Black	64	63%
Hispanic	32	31%
Other (*)	4	4%
Missing	2	2%
* Non-Hispanic Asian, Multi-Racial or Multi-Ethnic, Other		
Housing Status		
Residence you rent or own (*)	59	58%
Other type of residence (**)	21	21%
Missing data	22	22%
* Room, apartment or house you rent / Room, apartment or house you own		
** Couch surfing, Someone else's room, apartment or house, Transitional housing, Unhoused with shelter, Other		
Employment at Intake		
Unemployed, looking for work	44	43%
Not in labor force, not looking for work	2	2%
Employed in some capacity	41	40%
21 Employed full-time (51%)		
11 Employed part-time (27%)		
7 Self-employed (17%)		
2 Seasonal/Temporary/Gig work (5%)		
Missing data	15	15%
Highest Education Level		
Some high school or less	34	33%
High school diploma or GED	41	40%
Some college/no degree	11	11%
College degree	2	2%
Missing data	14	14%
Number of Children		
None	78	76%
One or more	24	24%

Table 3: BOGAP Survey Participants, Cohorts 5-10 (N=61)

Worry About a Place to Live	Number	Percent
Never	26	46%
Sometimes	19	33%
Often	12	21%
Employment Satisfaction		
Very satisfied	7	13%
Somewhat satisfied	14	27%
Not satisfied	31	60%

Table 4: Arrest Details for BOGAP Participants, Cohorts 1-10 (N=102)

Initial Disposition Status	Number	Percent
Disposed	102	100%
Initial Disposition Type		
Guilty by plea	101	99%
Case consolidated	1	1%
Arrest Charge		
Criminal possession of a weapon, Class C felony (PL 265.03 CF)	98	96%
Criminal mischief, Class E felony (PL 145.05 EF)	1	1%
Grand Larceny, Class E felony (PL 155.30 EF)	1	1%
Criminal possession of controlled substance, Class B felony (PL 220.16 BF)	1	1%
Disposal, manufacture, transport of dangerous weapon, Class E felony (PL 265.10 EF)	1	1%
Indictment Charge		
Criminal possession of a weapon, Class C felony (PL 265.03 CF)	101	99%
Murder, Class A felony (PL 125.25 AF)	1	1%

Table 5: Median Survey Responses to Core Constructs

Survey Waves	1	2	3	4	5
<i>Respondents</i>	37	41	27	26	28
Mental Health Awareness	4.0	4.0	4.3	4.0	4.0
Empathy	4.3	4.0	4.0	3.7	4.0
Future Orientation	4.8	4.8	4.8	4.5	4.8
Social Supports within Osborne	4.7	4.5	5.0	4.2	4.2
Social Supports Outside of Osborne	4.5	5.0	4.7	4.0	4.7
Violence Attitudes	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.6
Conflict Resolution	3.8	3.8	3.8	3.7	3.8
Neighborhood Safety	3.3	3.5	3.0	3.0	3.5
Self-Regulation	4.0	4.0	4.0	3.8	4.0
Employment Attitudes	4.8	4.8	4.8	4.3	4.8

Notes: All items 5-point Likert scales. For most scales, 1=disagree strongly and 5=agree strongly, and higher scores indicate more pro-social responses. The Violence Attitudes scale is reversed (1=strongly agree, and 5=strongly disagree), with lower scores indicating more pro-social responses.

curriculum, they risk violating the terms of their plea deal. To address such challenges, BOGAP's credible messenger staff emphasize patience, consistency, and relationship-building over time, creating a space where participants will feel respected and supported in all aspects of their lives. BOGAP is intended to be a safe, judgment-free environment that encourages openness, honesty, and meaningful engagement. All BOGAP staff draw on their experience and training to provide emotional support and demonstrate that transformation is possible. A balance of empathy and program structure helps to maintain clear professional boundaries between staff and participants while building strong mentor-mentee relationships.

Social Component

Staff members' authenticity, empathy, kindness, and goodwill resonate with many participants, and these qualities are often seen as essential components of the program. The staff's credibility, coupled with their consistency over time and across circumstances, helps participants build trust. Mutual respect between participants and staff helps keep participants engaged with the program. Beyond building relationships with participants and modeling the attitudes and behaviors they hope to instill in others, program staff provide flexibility and individualized support to address the many factors that can affect participants' ability to meet program expectations. If participants miss planned activities for excusable reasons (e.g., illness, family needs, employment conflict), staff can provide make-up sessions and communicate with employers to prevent negative consequences.

For barriers that Osborne does not have resources to address in full (e.g., homelessness, housing instability, unaddressed trauma, mental health challenges), staff work to mitigate the effects, including streamlining referrals to housing and mental health services and developing personalized plans for participants facing complex barriers. Participants reported in the study's surveys that BOGAP helped them with such needs. Staff helped connect participants to educational opportunities and provided additional support in accessing mental health care, general health care, and substance use treatment, as needed.

BOGAP fosters supportive relationships among program participants, as reciprocal relationships can facilitate productive program engagement. Group interactions and peer support help participants learn to hold each other accountable in positive ways, model effective conflict management, and build community cohesion. Participants often mirror staff behavior, reinforcing respectful engagement, discouraging conflict, and providing space for venting and reflection. Program staff described to researchers that when a BOGAP participant opens up, it often encourages others to do the same. Participants support each other and share program norms with incoming cohorts (Table 6). Participants described sharing their experiences adjusting to BOGAP with members of subsequent cohorts, helping new participants feel comfortable, and learning how the program works.

Table 6: Participant Perceptions of Help from BOGAP

Survey Item	Median	Responses
Learning skills to help get a job	1	24
Employment or internship placement opportunities	2	26
Access to educational opportunities	1.5	24
Learning conflict resolution skills	1	27
Access to health care	2	24
Access to mental health care	1	23
Access to substance use treatment	2	24

Note: 1 on the Likert scale indicated that a component helps “a lot,” while 3 indicated “not at all.”

During interviews, BOGAP participants shared their perceptions and experiences with the research team, often reporting positive changes in their thinking and attitudes. They attributed these changes to three primary mechanisms: (1) changes in their thinking (i.e., cognitive restructuring); (2) the desire to avoid future punishment (i.e., deterrence); and (3) a motivation to work toward positive change by relying on relationships with others. The program aims to alter how participants understand and approach situations that may have previously led to violence. Participants highlighted the role of BOGAP staff in teaching them new ways of thinking and reducing their likelihood of engaging in violence or carrying firearms. In their responses to the study’s surveys, participants indicated that the program also enhanced their conflict resolution skills. As participants internalize these changes, they begin to hold themselves responsible for their own success and for that of others in their BOGAP cohort.

Program staff work to provide participants with strategies that can slow their reactions to threats and confrontation, carefully evaluate each situation, and consider reasons to avoid violence rather than engage in it. Staff routinely help participants internalize what they hear in the program, using creative methods to help them visualize the messages and relate discussion topics to personal experiences. In one exercise, for example, staff ask participants to fill in two circles on opposite walls, one with positive things they care about and the other with negative things they want to put behind them. Participants learn communication strategies to de-escalate tensions with others and then practice those skills in group settings. Constant support from BOGAP staff motivates participants to stay engaged with the program and continue working towards positive life changes.

Woven into the BOGAP curriculum are reminders of what participants may face if they fail to change their behavior. Participants who fail to complete the program and satisfy the conditions of their plea deal face the risk of felony conviction and possible incarceration. Their desire to avoid punishment through the criminal justice system, especially after narrowly avoiding

Social Supports Reported by BOGAP Participants

The NIJ evaluation relied on surveys to measure participants' social supports within and outside of the Osborne Association. Participants consistently reported feeling supported during their engagement with the program. They valued having people they could count on in any circumstance, people who supported their efforts to make positive changes in their lives, and people they could confide in when facing challenges. The support appeared to be a critical motivator that helped participants stay engaged throughout the program.

felony prosecution, and to avoid future legal issues and the social costs of conviction and incarceration, helps participants see BOGAP as an opportunity rather than punishment. After becoming involved in BOGAP, participants tend to have more positive views of the future. When researchers asked about their life goals, opportunities, and future outlooks, participants generally reported greater optimism.

Changes in participants' thinking and behavior were bolstered by the support they found inside and outside the program. Some participants began to feel more supported by family members and loved ones, and many reported finding social support from the sense of community within BOGAP. As a group, participants entered the program with similar experiences of growing up "in the streets." During their time in the program, strong bonds formed among individuals who might otherwise have been likely to engage in conflict. Some BOGAP participants even described the community they joined in the program as more important than their peer community outside BOGAP.

Being in a community with other BOGAP participants serves as an external source of social control, helping participants hold one another accountable and sustain efforts to achieve BOGAP milestones. Simultaneously, they become sources of social support with a network of others willing to discuss topics that may not be suitable to share with staff. Participants learn from and educate one another, helping each other explore new ways of thinking and approaching challenges. The more they become invested in BOGAP, the more participants may not want to risk letting down their fellow cohort members or the BOGAP staff who trust and believe in them.

Empathy is important for helping individuals understand others' perspectives and manage emotions. Study surveys suggested that BOGAP participants may have come to see themselves as more empathetic and able to self-regulate. When asked about their responses to distress, sadness, and weakness in others, participants generally believed they were better able to recognize these needs and to be supportive. Many participants believed they were learning to

work through their own judgment and negative feelings toward others, while considering others' experiences and perspectives to avoid arguments. Believing themselves to be empathetic and able to work through negative feelings may help participants be more open to the material presented by BOGAP staff and better positioned to work through difficult topics with others in their program cohort.

Court Component

In addition to attending regular program hours, BOGAP participants have monthly court hearings before a judge who oversees the program. BOGAP staff play a central role in preparing participants for court, especially those navigating the legal system for the first time. They coach participants on professional presentation, punctuality, courtroom expectations, and communication with court officials. The BOGAP court liaison accompanies participants to each hearing and speaks with the court about each participant's progress in the previous month. Successes are highlighted, but failure to meet program standards may result in a corrective action plan. Over time, many participants become more confident and accountable during these hearings, evidenced by improved eye contact, independent communication, and appropriate courtroom demeanor. These changes are interpreted by staff as visible indicators of personal growth and the possible efficacy of BOGAP programming.

Participants receive support in court from other sources. The same judge who oversees a BOGAP case from initial plea through final disposition may ask personal questions, check on a participant's well-being, and emphasize the participant's ability to shape their own future. The judge builds personal connections with participants by offering constructive feedback and sharing personal experiences. The tone of the hearings is supportive and focused on investing in the future and well-being of participants and their community. The judge consistently reinforces key program milestones, emphasizing the importance of attending the program and completing the 90-day cooling-off period without a new arrest, and always framing the program as a temporary, achievable challenge.

Collectively, the judge, District Attorney staff, and Osborne staff are committed to helping participants experience and overcome challenges rather than simply failing them from the program. Participant accomplishments, such as earning a GED, securing employment, or completing the cooling-off period, are often acknowledged with applause in the courtroom. When a participant is struggling to meet goals, the judge and DA staff set specific, actionable goals to achieve by their next appearance, such as making up missed classes, returning with career goals, or providing the court with employment documentation. BOGAP staff collaborate with the judge and the DA's office to keep participants moving smoothly through the program towards successful completion.

Employment Component

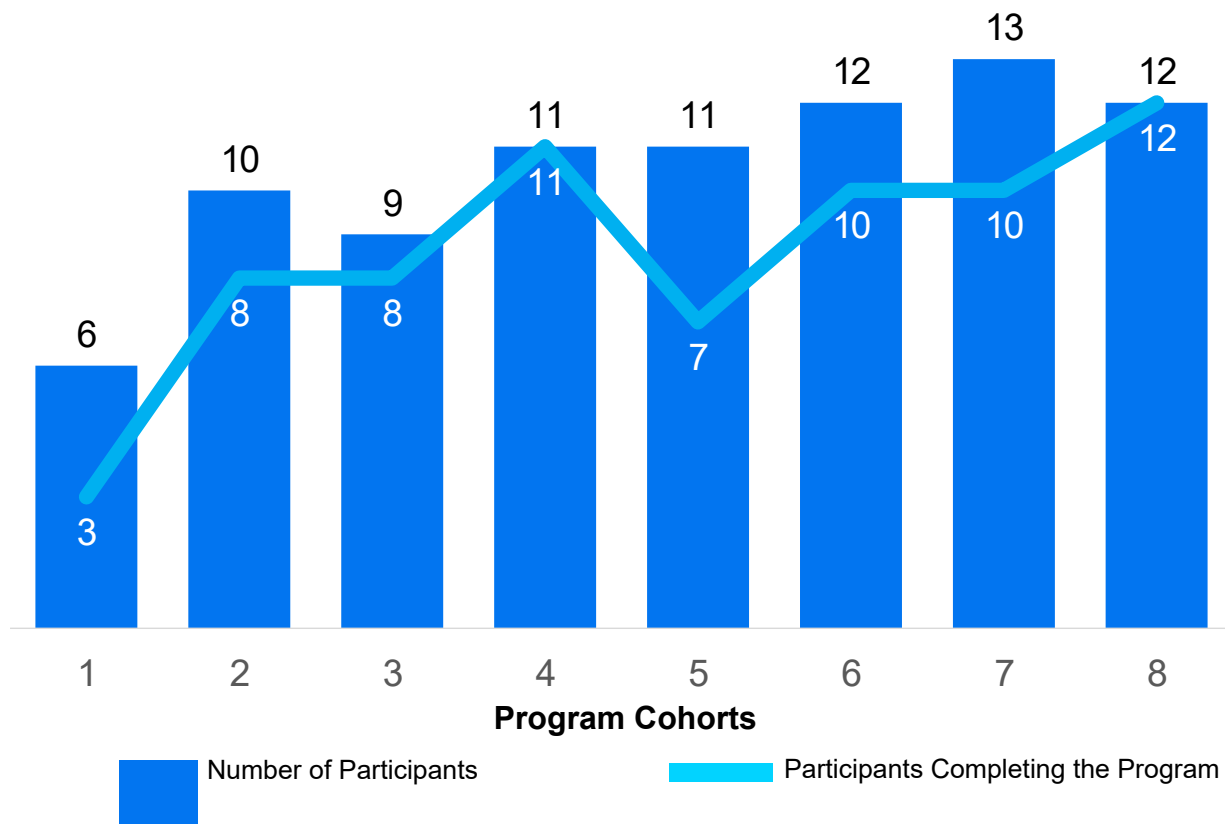
Another critical task of BOGAP is job readiness. Staff work closely with participants to connect them with employment opportunities. Some participants enter the program already employed and satisfied with their current job, but many are pleased to engage with Osborne's in-house employment specialists and resources. This can include connecting with career training, attending job fairs, pursuing licensing and certification, and taking paid internships. Program staff members provide hands-on support, helping participants through the process of entering the workforce. When the research team asked for examples, participants and staff described their collaborative efforts, including creating resumes, teaching participants how to dress for job interviews, and conducting mock interviews. The goal is to help participants secure a job that will enable them to be self-sufficient and stable beyond BOGAP.

Participants were referred to many other service providers during their time with BOGAP, but employment was a major component of their experience. Staff members made a total of 142 referrals for 74 participants, including education (16 referrals), healthcare, housing, and personal finances (24 referrals), and employment (102 referrals). Employment services included job-readiness, skills training, and vocational counseling. Education referrals included help with college, GED, and high school equivalency. Other services helped participants with Medicaid, SNAP, cash assistance, mental health assessment, bank accounts, financial literacy, temporary housing, and general case management.

In survey responses, participants expressed confidence in their job-seeking abilities and interviewing skills, as well as their commitment to maintaining employment. At the end of their engagement with BOGAP, participants indicated that the program helped them to learn essential skills for securing future employment. They also described how Osborne staff provided concrete assistance with actually obtaining employment and/or internship opportunities during their time in the program.

"I've had jobs since I was younger... But with this, it teaches you how to be more professional. Talk more professional, how to maneuver professionally, and, you know, build connections. ... They really plug you in. They do their part."

– BOGAP Participant

Figure 3: Program Completion by Participant Cohort

Staff and Participant Perceptions

The research team examined program engagement data for BOGAP participants in Cohorts 1 to 8. The program served 84 participants during the first eight cohorts (**Figure 3**). More than 80 percent of the participants (i.e., 69) completed all program components successfully. The remaining 15 left BOGAP for various administrative reasons (e.g., health issues or logistical problems), or they were termed “unsuccessful,” meaning they didn’t comply fully or became re-involved in the justice system.

During interviews with the research team, BOGAP staff and participants expressed generally positive views of the program, and they offered suggestions for improvement and expansion. Interviewees described the program’s supportive atmosphere and strong relationships as core strengths that set BOGAP apart and made it valuable. Staff and participants alike emphasized the value of the credible messenger staff, noting that their life experiences and obvious investment in the program strengthened trust and personal connections. They described the program as authentic and judgment-free, which helped participants to feel understood and supported. Responses to evaluation surveys reflected these views. Participants reported feeling they were treated with dignity and respect by Osborne staff, that staff genuinely cared about them, and that they felt connected and supported.

Interviewees described BOGAP's cohort model as another key strength of the program. Bringing together groups of participants facing similar charges encouraged social connections and mutual understanding. Daily group activities strengthened these bonds. When a participant would open up to the group, it encouraged others to do the same, creating shared accountability and peer support. In the final wave of the survey, completed after the 90-day cooling-off period ended, survey respondents reported feeling connected to other participants in their cohort and described meaningful bonds they expected would continue after BOGAP. Shared experiences made the program a place where people could form positive relationships and feel a sense of belonging (some even described it as resembling a family), which some participants said was otherwise missing from their lives. Survey respondents reported forming lasting connections with staff that they hoped would continue (Table 7).

Participants assured the research team that BOGAP's therapeutic focus, centered on cognitive and behavioral development, was especially meaningful. The sessions gave them practical tools to use in real-life situations, helping them to pause before reacting, think through consequences, and control the emotions that often drive behavior. Many explained that the group activities and

Table 7: Participant Experiences

Survey Item	Median	N
I am treated with dignity and respect by Osborne staff.	5	27
I believe Osborne staff care about me.	5	27
I feel like I am part of the decisions about what happens to me while I am at Osborne.	4	27
I would recommend Osborne to people dealing with similar issues and concerns as me.	5	27
I feel connected with the BOGAP staff.	5	27
I feel connected and supported by a specific mentor in the BOGAP program.	5	27
I have created lasting bonds with Osborne staff that will continue after BOGAP.	4	27
I have created lasting bonds with other participants that will continue after BOGAP.	5	27
I feel connected with other participants in my cohort.	5	26

Note: 5 on the Likert scale indicated "strongly agree," while 1 indicated "strongly disagree."

materials taught them to view situations from a different perspective and to approach conflict differently, with greater awareness of their own actions. Some viewed the program as providing a space for reflection, similar to counseling, while others emphasized its role in helping them develop new perspectives and decision-making skills.

Participants and staff alike contended that BOGAP's strength was in the support participants felt during and after their involvement. The program relies on consistent relationships between staff and participants, helping them to meet their needs, whatever they might be. From a comfortable space where participants can take a break from external stresses to the guidance and care provided by staff and partners, BOGAP offers a wraparound approach that helps participants build safer, more productive futures. Survey respondents appreciated the sense of inclusion in decisions about their experiences at Osborne. Many indicated that they would recommend Osborne to others facing similar issues and concerns. Participants and BOGAP team members described numerous examples of practical assistance provided through the program. Resources and supports, including housing assistance, food access, mental health referrals, legal services, identification assistance, and clothing for interviews, helped meet participants' basic needs and stabilize their lives beyond the program. Addressing these challenges helped participants focus on program activities. Access to basic help and resources kept them committed to the program and helped them to succeed.

In some cases, according to staff members, participants' beliefs around masculinity made emotional openness difficult, especially in the beginning, with some participants feeling pressure to act guarded or reserved. Even so, participants described BOGAP staff as engaging and approachable, commonly noting the program's interactive format and its focus on real-life situations and practical solutions. Several described the program as very relevant to their daily lives. While attendance required consistent effort, the program was not burdensome. At times, they even looked forward to attending.

Prosecution and Defense Attorney Reactions

In public statements, District Attorney Darcel Clark described the Bronx as a community dealing with persistent gun violence that often failed to draw national attention because victims and perpetrators were largely minorities. However, the trauma and devastation caused by gun violence were very serious. The DA [believed](#) that addressing the root causes of criminal behavior and providing early intervention were essential to preventing people from entering the criminal justice system. Programs like BOGAP were presented as part of a broader prevention strategy to promote accountability while providing participants with support and opportunities.

DA Clark proudly noted the program's early milestones, including the graduation of its first cohort. She pointed to declining shooting numbers in 2023 as valued progress, while recognizing that gun violence continued to take a toll on the community. The DA supported second

“Participants don’t care how much you know, until they know how much you care. When they see that you really are concerned about what happens with them—they know, they feel it, they see it. What I’ve seen is they’re more willing to be receptive, and by them opening up an ear to you, that gives you the opportunity, that space, to do some of the real work.”

– BOGAP Staff Member

chances and [suggested](#) that BOGAP become an enduring part of the community’s solution to gun violence. Judge Judith Lieb, who first oversaw BOGAP, praised the program for offering alternatives to traditional incarceration, noting that graduates did well in new jobs and in their personal lives. The [program helped](#) individuals and the community stay safe.

While the programmatic response to BOGAP was almost universally positive in interviews conducted by the evaluation team, legal officials reported that the initial reaction to BOGAP across the DA’s office was mixed. Some were initially skeptical about the idea of diversion for any gun-related case. The DA leadership team managed these challenges by emphasizing the office’s commitment to procedural justice and community safety. The DA herself worked to secure buy-in from senior leadership, some of whom had historically emphasized harsh sentencing as a form of accountability. The program gained support over time. Those working directly with defendants tended to embrace BOGAP more quickly. Key figures within the Bronx DA Office became more receptive to the program, supporting a shift toward diversion as the assumed pathway for eligible cases.

Even defense attorneys initially had mixed reactions to BOGAP. Some were enthusiastic; others were wary. Their primary obligation, of course, is to serve their client’s interests. It may not always be in a client’s best interest to accept a plea deal — even when there is a possibility of reduced legal consequences — as the initial BOGAP plea deal guaranteed a conviction, whereas declining to accept a plea left open the possibility of a dismissal. In the beginning phases of BOGAP, defense attorneys did not consistently advise clients to accept the BOGAP plea until other alternatives had been exhausted. The defense bar was more receptive after the 2025 change in DA protocols, which offered BOGAP as a path to dismissal rather than to misdemeanor pleas alone.

Public Reactions

In her 2023 “State of the State” speech, New York Governor Kathy Hochul highlighted continued investments in programs like BOGAP as a key to a broad public safety plan focused on supporting people and communities. The Governor believed safer communities depend on stable

housing, access to health care, treatment for substance use and mental health issues, good schools, affordable childcare, and ample opportunities for living-wage jobs. Everyone needs a legitimate chance to reach their fullest potential.

Despite the Governor's support and the program's positive outcomes for many participants, diversion initiatives such as BOGAP always face criticism. News media focus on small numbers of cases that go wrong, even single instances, when they involve diversion participants accused of new crimes. Diversion programs can generally be positive and effective alternatives for defendants who would otherwise face convictions and costly prison sentences. Still, a small number of highly **publicized** cases can provoke deep concerns about community safety.

It is always challenging to communicate the success of diversion strategies to the wider community. Residents are frequently exposed to the tragedy and harms of gun violence, whether in their personal lives or in the news media. Success stories are less widely publicized. All program stakeholders (e.g., providers, courts, and public officials) are needed to raise awareness of the potential benefits of a well-managed, effective system of diversion innovations that can protect community safety in cost-effective and sustainable ways.

Challenges and Adaptations

During the development of BOGAP, program staff, the Bronx DA, and other public officials identified challenges and suggested adaptations and improvements. Staff described the benefits of bringing guest speakers into the program and believed participants would benefit from having even more outside experts speak at program events. Staff also valued the program's vocational workshops, financial literacy training, GED preparation, employment-related certifications, internships, post-program job placement, and outings and field trips. Staff agreed that resources to incorporate more of these activities would be beneficial for participants. Adjusting some sections of the interactive journaling curriculum workbooks already in use could reduce topic repetition and make the material more relevant to BOGAP participants' lives. Staff members worked to keep participants engaged and sought to improve any aspect of the program that would enhance engagement.

"It's really great to see young people develop and blossom over time, using the new tools they've learned in their daily lives. To see them get something out of it, hold each other accountable, and support one another—it's a beautiful thing to see."

– BOGAP Staff Member

Staff also described ongoing needs for program flexibility. Meeting participant needs and responding to court demands would require availability beyond standard working hours and frequent scheduling adjustments. As BOGAP expanded to serve a wider age range (16 to 39, rather than 18 to 30), staff proposed tailoring services for different age groups. Adding resources for credible messenger staff and/or increasing clinical support would help the program manage workload demands and enhance support across a wide range of participant needs.

Participants echoed the need for flexibility in the program, particularly around scheduling. The most common difficulty involved balancing program hours with employment. The original program schedule (i.e., Monday through Friday, 10 am to 2 pm) could conflict with participants' work schedules, making it harder for them to maintain employment. A few participants described their efforts to reduce working hours, switch to evening shifts, pause employment, or seek different jobs to attend BOGAP consistently. Participants recommended that the program provide temporary income support to avoid financial challenges that could lead to temptation. Some participants struggled initially with the daily commute to the program site, but these challenges often subsided as they adjusted to the program's structure.

As BOGAP expanded, staff stressed the need to continue improving administrative practices. The use of the Exponent Case Management (ECM) system and support from data analysts helped to ensure consistent data entry practices and case recording, as well as a more streamlined referral and intake process. Staff members recommended other refinements to simplify data-related tasks and reduce administrative burdens, especially in light of the unexpected funding cuts. Their suggestions included streamlining attendance tracking, updating databases to make modifications easier, using mobile devices to allow real-time data entry, and providing more assistance from the program data analyst for staff who are less familiar with data systems. Staff members viewed such enhancements as critical not only for maintaining program records but also for increasing their consistency and accuracy, enabling staff to focus on participant progress and increase overall program efficiency.

Program Effects

Researchers used several methods to estimate the effects of BOGAP, including interviews, surveys, and arrest data obtained from law enforcement. The study found participants and program staff appreciated BOGAP and that their attitudes on key study outcomes generally remained stable over time. The study also found that individuals referred to the program rather than regular court processing experienced rearrest rates and risks similar to those in regular court processing, and, in some analyses, slightly lower. To more accurately account for differences in follow-up periods across participants, researchers examined not only whether rearrest occurred, but also the time participants remained rearrest-free after program exit.

Participant Attitudes

The research team measured participant attitudes and psychosocial outcomes across five survey waves, accounting for demographic characteristics and psychosocial factors. Bivariate (Kruskal-Wallis) and multivariate ordered logistic regression test results indicate that participant outcomes remained stable across survey waves, with no significant temporal changes.³ The team examined selected psychosocial characteristics theorized to be associated with participant attitudes and well-being. Higher levels of self-regulation and empathy among survey participants were associated with prosocial attitudes toward violence, conflict resolution, and employment. Generally, participants who entered the programming with higher levels of empathy and more ability to self-regulate their emotions tended to demonstrate a more negative attitude toward violence, a greater endorsement of constructive conflict resolution, and more positive employment attitudes. Social support within the program was associated with greater awareness of mental health resources among BOGAP participants.

The study measured ten survey constructs to assess attitudinal change following the completion of each phase of BOGAP. Of the ten survey constructs, the analysis focused on four outcomes: violence attitudes, conflict-resolution attitudes, employment attitudes, and mental health awareness. Bivariate tests assessed whether distributions of the various constructs differed across survey waves. None of the tests were statistically significant, indicating that levels of mental health awareness, empathy, future orientation, social support, violent attitudes, conflict resolution, neighborhood safety, self-regulation, and employment attitudes all remained in a prosocial direction over the study period.

Researchers investigated predictors of the four outcomes using a series of ordered logistic regression models. The models allowed the team to test whether attitudes changed over time and whether demographic or psychosocial characteristics predicted attitudes. Across all models, survey-wave indicators were not statistically significant, suggesting there were no meaningful changes between waves. The results were consistent with non-parametric tests, reinforcing the inference that attitudes remained relatively stable throughout the study period.

While time and cohort differences were largely absent, several psychosocial variables consistently predicted outcomes (Table 8). Participants reporting stronger self-regulation skills were more likely to endorse prosocial attitudes. Higher levels of self-regulation were associated with less support for violence, stronger support for conflict-resolution, and more positive

³ **Ordered logistic regression** is used when outcome variables are ordinal (e.g., Likert scale). Models in this study estimated the likelihood of respondents reporting higher versus lower levels of outcomes while accounting for the ordered nature of the response categories, making it appropriate for analyzing survey-based attitude measures. **Non-parametric tests** (Kruskal-Wallis) are used to compare distributions across groups when outcome variables are ordinal and do not meet assumptions of normality required for parametric tests. The tests assess whether the distribution of responses differs across groups based on ranked data.

Table 8: Survey Outcome Modeling

Predictor	Violence Attitudes	Conflict Resolution Attitudes	Employment Attitudes	Mental Health Awareness
Survey Wave (<i>reference: Wave 1</i>)				
Wave 2	1.20	−1.29	0.96	1.49
Wave 3	0.36	−0.91	0.80	1.92
Wave 4	−0.31	−0.03	0.59	0.57
Wave 5	0.29	−0.39	2.02	1.05
Individual Characteristics				
Age	0.05	−0.15	0.17	0.13
Children	0.00	0.41	0.68	0.23
Education	0.01	−0.13	0.16	−0.36
Housing instability	−0.28	0.07	0.12	−0.5
Employment dissatisfaction	0.58	−0.28	0	0.07
Psychosocial Measures				
Neighborhood safety		−0.18	0.37	0.16
Self-Regulation	−1.06*	1.64*	1.38**	0.68
Empathy	−0.18	0.98**	0.99**	0.16
Social support (Osborne)	−0.27	0.45	0.71	1.02*
Social support (Outside)			0.57	0.58
Model Statistics				
N	120	121	121	121
Wald χ^2	99.98	91.23	110.46	87.69
Pseudo R ²	0.105	0.158	0.242	0.18

(*) $p < 0.05$ (**) $p < 0.01$

employment attitudes. Participants reporting higher empathy were more likely to endorse prosocial behaviors and constructive problem-solving. Empathy was positively associated with conflict resolution and employment attitudes. Social support within the program network was associated with improved mental health awareness.

The explanatory power of the models ranged from 11 percent to 24 percent, as indicated by the Pseudo R² in each table. Participant attitudes generally remained stable over time, while individual psychosocial characteristics were the strongest predictors of outcomes. In particular, self-regulation, empathy, and social support appeared to play important roles in shaping attitudes related to violence, conflict resolution, employment, and mental health awareness. (For more details about each model, see [Appendix I](#).)

The original study design included a plan to collect survey data from a matched comparison group of similar people, but the research team had to adapt to changes in BOGAP operations and case-processing modifications implemented by the Bronx DA. Researchers were unable to survey a comparison group. Instead, the research team added a question to participant interviews asking what their lives would have been like had they not been involved in BOGAP.

Participants generally believed that without the program, they would have continued to carry firearms. The experience with BOGAP prompted changes in their behaviors and life trajectories by altering how they thought about and approached their daily lives. Several participants described BOGAP as having an impact on their futures, helping them take a more positive path than they had previously imagined. The program helped them to become more open to others and more willing to resolve conflicts without violence. Participants further reported that BOGAP was a source of renewed self-efficacy and that, because of BOGAP, they began to trust their ability to change their circumstances and shape their futures in ways they had not felt capable of before.

Recidivism

Researchers used criminal justice records from New York State's [Division of Criminal Justice Services](#) (DCJS) to measure post-program rearrests of BOGAP participants and compare them with arrests among a matched comparison pool of cases involving people with similar characteristics. The research team reviewed data for participants from the program's first

Table 9: Type and Outcome of Arrests for the 23 Individuals Ultimately Rearrested

Rearrest Charge Types	N=23
Violent	8
Property	9
Drug	1
Traffic	1
Public Order	2
Firearm-related*	2
Rearrest Charge Level	
Felony Level	13
Misdemeanor Level	10
Disposition Outcomes	N=23
No Final Disposition**	8
Prosecution Declined	6
Dismissed	7
Reconviction by plea	2

(*) In one case, an individual received a firearm-related charge as the top charge. In the other case, firearms were related to an underlying charge.

(**) Interim dispositions are not considered final dispositions.

Note: The recidivism window varied by individual, depending on when the participant exited BOGAP. The window ranged from two months to 44 months, with a median of 18 months.

4. Researchers considered multiple dates to determine the start of the tracking period for post-program justice involvement. While BOGAP's potential impact on recidivism could be measured in various ways, tracking rearrest from the time of program exit was the closest method of isolating the effects of intervention. One limitation was that the end of the study limited exposure time for a portion of the treated sample.

What Is Coarsened Exact Matching?

Coarsened Exact Matching (CEM) is a type of statistical matching that helps ensure that outcomes for individuals participating in an intervention are compared with similar non-participants. In CEM, records are grouped by pre-treatment characteristics. These groups are called “bins.” Bins are retained for analysis only if they contain both participants and non-participants with similar characteristics. Bins containing only comparison cases are removed. After matching, each comparison case is assigned a weight for subsequent analyses so that the comparison group reflects the distribution of key characteristics observed among participants. The matched sample is used to estimate differences in outcomes between program participants and non-participants. In this study, the CEM process helped ensure that BOGAP and comparison cases were similar on key characteristics known to influence recidivism, thereby reducing the likelihood that observed differences were attributable to pre-existing group differences.

eight cohorts. Cohorts nine and ten were excluded from the analysis, as participants in those cohorts had not formally or officially exited the program before the final date when the study team could obtain arrest data from DCJS (i.e., January 2026).

Researchers tracked arrests from the dates each participant exited the program (Table 9).⁴ Of 84 individuals in the first eight cohorts, 23 (27%) were arrested for some criminal charge after leaving BOGAP. Two of the 23 were arrested for firearm-related charges. More common rearrest charges were property crimes (9 participants) and various degrees of violent crime (8). Thirteen rearrests were felony-level charges, and seven were misdemeanors. More than half of the cases resulted in either dismissal (7) or a declined prosecution (6).⁵ By the time follow-up data were available, two cases had resulted in guilty pleas, while eight had not reached a final disposition. One of the two convicted participants was charged with a felony and sentenced to prison. The other was convicted of a violation, receiving a conditional discharge.

One of BOGAP’s long-term goals is to reduce or prevent future involvement in the criminal justice system. The research team used survival analysis to assess whether the program reduced the risk of rearrest and, if so, for how long. The large sample of anonymous cases from DCJS (none considered for BOGAP) was used to identify and create a matching comparison sample to estimate differences in rearrest. To identify the most appropriate comparison group, the final pool of potential comparison units included males ages 17–27 who had been arrested for firearm-related offenses.

5. Of 23 BOGAP participants rearrested, one was an administrative exit and four were unsuccessful exits. Eighteen successfully exited the program.

Researchers used Coarsened Exact Matching (CEM) to construct a comparison group similar to BOGAP participants on two key characteristics measured at the time of arrest: participant age and the class of arrest charge (severity type). The CEM matching process grouped treatment and comparison units by arrest and charge class into clusters, or strata in CEM terminology, and retained data bins that contained both treatment and comparison cases.

The matching model retained all 84 BOGAP participants and 4,987 comparison cases from the original pool of 5,428 comparison units. A total of 441 comparison cases were excluded because they did not fall within the region of common support, meaning they were not in the same bins as the treatment units. The procedure generated 18 strata, of which 8 contained both treatment and comparison cases and could be used in the analysis. Balance diagnostics indicated good covariate balance following matching, with a multivariate L1 imbalance statistic of 0.143 (lower values are preferred).⁶ Univariate imbalance measures were low for age at arrest (L1 = -0.0057), and arrest charge class was effectively balanced.

At face value, the rearrest rates for the treatment and comparison groups were 27 percent and 52 percent, respectively. These findings appeared favorable for BOGAP, but direct comparison of rearrest rates was inappropriate because participants had varying follow-up periods. For this reason, researchers conducted a survival analysis, which appropriately accounts for differences in follow-up time among individuals.

Using survival analysis, the study team estimated the timing of recidivism (Figure 4). Researchers used the Kaplan-Meier method to estimate the probability that a participant would remain arrest-free during the follow-up period. The study included multiple cohorts of participants with different entry and exit dates. Time zero was defined as the point when each individual exited the program, regardless of the calendar date. The results estimated the likelihood that participants remained arrest-free during specific periods following program exit (completion or graduation).

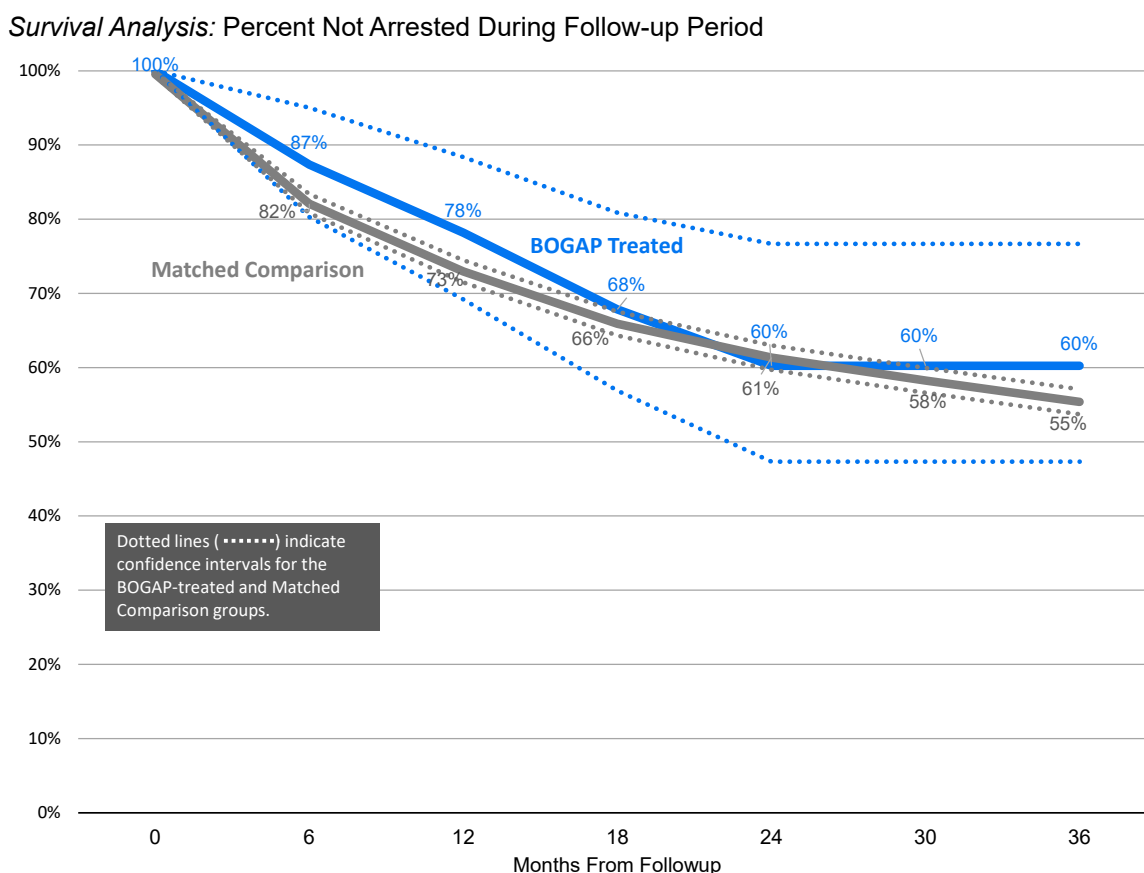
The survival analysis results suggest that BOGAP participants had a slightly lower risk of rearrest over time compared with a similar group of gun possession defendants not participating in BOGAP. The difference was small (about 6% lower) and not statistically significant. Based on the study's survival charts and analysis estimates, the likelihood of a BOGAP participant remaining arrest-free 12 months after program exit was 78 percent, versus 73 percent for the comparison group. To evaluate whether the difference was statistically significant, researchers used a rigorous statistical procedure.

6. Researchers tested other matching approaches, particularly Propensity Score Matching (PSM). PSM yielded a small research sample, which substantially reduced statistical power. Coarsened Exact Matching (CEM) retained more comparable cases and was therefore used for the final analysis.

The research team estimated group differences using a Cox Proportional Hazards (PH) model. The analysis of rearrests accounted for other known predictors, such as age, prior criminal history, and region. Prior criminal history was the strongest predictor of rearrest (+12%). Individuals with more prior misdemeanor arrests in the pre-BOGAP period were more likely to be rearrested. The model assessed time to rearrest as a function of program participation (BOGAP or comparison) and other predictors, while accounting for variation in follow-up time and the ultimate censoring of follow-up among individuals not rearrested before the end of the study (January 15th, 2026).⁷

The Cox PH model showed no statistically significant difference in time to rearrest between

Figure 4: Rearrests of BOGAP Participants and Matched Comparison



7. The Top Charge file received from DCJS was extracted using a name search index that was last updated on April 15th, 2025 (the index is updated annually). Thus, new arrests under NYSIDs that existed prior to April 15, 2025 would be captured, but if someone's NYSID (State ID) was sealed and they were rearrested under a new NYSID after April 15, 2025, the file would not reflect the new arrest.

Table 10: Cox Proportional Hazards Model (Time to Rearrest)

Variable	Hazard Ratio	Percent Change in Risk	p-value	Interpretation
BOGAP Participation (Treatment)	0.94	↓ 6%	0.757	Slightly lower risk of rearrest among the treated.
Prior Misdemeanor arrests	1.12	↑ 12%	<0.001*	Increased risk of rearrest for every misdemeanor arrest prior to BOGAP.
Age at Arrest	0.93	↓ 7%	0.003*	Older individuals less likely to be rearrested.
Rest of State (vs New York City)	0.96	↓ 4%	0.738	Lower risk of rearrest outside of New York City.

* Statistically significant predictor.

program participants and matched comparison cases. The results also suggested a modest reduction in risk among participants (-6%). Prior criminal history was the strongest predictor of rearrest (+12%), followed by age and region. Older individuals were somewhat less likely to be rearrested (-7%), and those who lived outside NYC were less likely to be rearrested (-4%) (Table 10).

The study included a large overall sample (both treatment and comparison cases), but only 84 participants were in the treated group. In survival analysis, statistical power depends largely on the size of the smaller group (Hosmer et al. 2008). With only 84 treated individuals and few rearrests among them (i.e., 23), the study lacked the statistical power to detect effects. In plain terms, when one group has few rearrest events, it limits the ability to compare outcomes across groups with great precision, even if the total sample is large.

Cox Proportional Hazards Model

Extending the analysis of recidivism outcomes, a Cox proportional hazards (PH) model is appropriate for statistically comparing the two survival curves – one of treated and one of matched comparisons (weighted). This type of modeling does not require that all subjects have equal follow-up time, nor that everyone experiences a rearrest event. A Cox PH model estimates how treatment affects the timing of rearrest in matched data.

The results of the evaluation suggest that referring gun possession defendants to BOGAP does not add public safety risks for the Bronx community and could produce reduced risks of rearrest for those participating in the program. (For more details about the recidivism analysis, see [Appendix J](#)).

Future of BOGAP

In early 2025, BOGAP lost a portion of its funding after the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) canceled more than [\\$158 million](#) in CVIPI (gun violence reduction) grants nationwide. The DOJ leadership was on record saying it intended to focus on prosecuting criminals, getting illegal drugs off the streets, and protecting Americans from violent crime, and that they reallocated discretionary funds for active awards that were “not aligned with the administration’s [priorities](#).”

With nearly 30 percent of Bronx residents living in poverty, and one in six school children experiencing homelessness in any given year, Bronx residents relied heavily on [investments](#) in community-based programming to address a wide range of needs. Osborne’s CVIPI federal funding ended abruptly and earlier than planned, significantly reducing the resources available to meet the needs of participants and their community. Although funding from other sources

Federal Funding

Midway through the evaluation in April 2025, when BOGAP was fully operational, the federal government ended the Osborne Association’s Bureau of Justice grant before the planned September 2025 end date. The loss was abrupt and unexpected as part of more than \$150 million in cuts to anti-violence prevention programming across the country. The cut forced Osborne to reorganize staff and existing resources. The program had to scale back one-on-one counseling and youth meals, lay off staff, and ask the remaining team members to take on expanded responsibilities. Some staff transitioned into managerial roles, overseeing program components, attending DA meetings, supporting credible messengers, and assisting with contracts and quality assurance. Staff increasingly relied on personal networks rather than program resources to connect participants with job opportunities.

The funding disruption threatened program continuity, participant engagement, and staff retention, despite broad agreement on the program’s effectiveness and impact. BOGAP staff felt that the cuts demonstrated a lack of concern for the communities they served. In many cases, of course, the action strengthened the resolve of BOGAP’s dedicated team to continue serving program participants, as they strongly believed in the program’s mission and goals. They remained focused on their jobs, continuing to support participants throughout the program despite the many challenges.

“[Y]oung people come into a program they’re mandated to attend, carrying past experiences that make them question whether they’ll be safe—not just physically, but psychologically and emotionally. At first, nobody knows each other, but as they engage in the program, they begin to relate to one another. They realize they have something important in common: they’re all trying to get through the program, succeed, and get their felony removed. We focus on that shared goal and on how they can empower each other moving forward.”

– BOGAP Staff Member

allowed the program to continue operating, the loss of federal funding disrupted service delivery in a high-risk and high-need neighborhood, slowing the momentum the program had been building. Disinvestment from the federal government likely caused distrust among staff and participants, particularly in communities experiencing high levels of violence.

Staff from the Bronx DA and Osborne continued to display pride in the BOGAP program. Local stakeholders, including Bronx DA staff, emphasized the importance of sustaining and expanding its impact. The therapeutic, community-based model was frequently described as effectively addressing the population’s needs through relationship-building and accountability, rather than relying solely on punitive approaches. Some suggested that, if resources were available, the BOGAP model could be applied more broadly and could potentially contribute to long-term community safety, despite the financial challenges posed by the current environment. The [funding cuts](#) interrupted a growing effort in which experienced practitioners, community stakeholders, and credible messengers had been expanding their reach, professionalizing their work, and building more formalized community-based infrastructures.

Despite these challenges, voices from the Bronx DA’s office indicate continued institutional support and a longer-term shift toward diversion programs such as BOGAP. Osborne is piloting the BOGAP model in the Bronx with a younger population (ages 13 to 17), for example, with funding from the New York State Unified Court System. While BOGAP is not the only program available, the District Attorney’s office anticipates an increase in the number of cases participating in BOGAP and comparable initiatives. The office adopted this approach as a long-term strategy in some cases, viewing the program’s successes and the potential for further improvement as worth the investment to support community safety while remaining fair to individuals. They will likely continue to support Osborne in operating BOGAP, although they may not be able to provide ample funding for the program.

Discussion

When examining programs like BOGAP, the bottom-line question for residents and public officials alike is: did the District Attorney's use of BOGAP present a risk to public safety? When the criminal justice system offers a diversion program to defendants rather than handling their cases more traditionally, does it put the public at risk? Findings from the BOGAP evaluation suggest the answer to the question is "no."

The study revealed many promising trends associated with the use of BOGAP – positive reports of engagement and individual change from participants and staff, consistent positive endorsement of prosocial attitudes and behaviors, and key indicators suggesting that BOGAP participants were no more, or even slightly less likely than non-participants to be re-arrested at any point during the available follow-up period. BOGAP staff and Bronx DA staff lauded the collaboration among program workers, court personnel, external providers, and participants, which increased the likelihood of successful program completion and led to positive changes in participants' life trajectories.

Using data from DCJS, the research team matched BOGAP participants with similar justice-involved individuals based on several relevant characteristics (e.g., gender, age, arrest charge severity, time of arrest, place of arrest, and availability of follow-up data). The study was unable to obtain detailed information on how the court handled individuals in the comparison data. Thus, the analysis could not account for all possible court decisions affecting comparison cases. Some defendants in the comparison pool may have received New York's standard gun possession sentence (two years' incarceration and two years' probation), and some may have participated in other programs. As such, the study's recidivism analysis was not a strict comparison of intervention versus no intervention. Instead, it compared BOGAP with the court system's usual approach for similar defendants.

The recidivism outcomes among BOGAP participants were similar to or slightly better than those of the comparison pool following the legal processing of their gun charges. In other words, BOGAP did not appear to compromise public safety in the Bronx. Findings from interviews with participants and staff suggest that BOGAP helped the Bronx DA achieve the goal of making the community safer while helping those at risk of perpetrating violence develop more positive lives with opportunities for education and employment. Investing in people and helping them disengage from lifestyles that encourage gun possession can make neighborhoods safer, help people be more successful in their lives, and avoid the fiscal and social costs of repeated involvement with the justice system.

Limitations and Challenges

Statistical Power

The project's takeaways are optimistic and suggest that, with sufficient follow-up time and a larger, more structured sample, research could demonstrate significant benefits of BOGAP. This study, however, encountered several challenges that limited the statistical power of the findings. Throughout the evaluation period, the project team faced several challenges affecting sample size, including the fact that BOGAP is a small, cohort-based model with intensive services that last approximately one year. Early in the project, the team learned that, at least for a time, the flow of referrals into BOGAP would be slower than anticipated. Moreover, midway through the study period, the federal funding supporting BOGAP was suddenly canceled by the U.S. Department of Justice. The District Attorney's office and Osborne worked with the research team to address these issues, and the analysis plan was expanded to include recidivism analyses for cases entering the program before the study launch. Still, the final sample included only 84 individuals for the recidivism analysis.

A related limitation is the small number of rearrests observed within the study period. While the comparison group is not affected by this limitation, the study could not ensure that all BOGAP-treated individuals from cohorts 1 to 8 were followed long enough for researchers to assess their recidivism outcomes reasonably. In survival analysis, the number of events—rather than the total sample size—is the primary determinant of statistical power. As such, the limited number of rearrests observable in the treated group effectively places a ceiling on the precision the study design can achieve. This constraint has important implications for the final modeling approach. With a small number of events relative to the number of predictors in the model, estimates may be unstable, imprecise, and sensitive to model specification, limiting the ability to detect statistically significant treatment effects. Accordingly, the absence of a statistically significant treatment effect should be interpreted with caution. Rather than indicating that the program has no impact, the findings may reflect limited statistical power due to the small number of observed rearrests.

Survey Response Rates

The survey results were also affected by sample size, uneven response rates between cohorts, and uneven individual response patterns over time. Response rates were moderate overall, but some individuals failed to complete all survey waves or did not engage enough for researchers to include them in the analysis of attitude changes. The research team tried several strategies to improve response rates. Some strategies worked reasonably well, contributing to the project's overall acceptable response rate.

For example, the BOGAP staff assumed responsibility for introducing surveys one through three to participants, rather than the research team reaching out directly. This helped to legitimize the survey and encouraged participants to complete it, but it also reduced the research team's ability to communicate directly with participants when response rates were low. The research began direct outreach for surveys four and five using contact information collected during surveys one through three. However, if respondents were unresponsive during the first three surveys or their contact information changed (which was not uncommon), the team was unable to invite some participants to complete the final surveys. Ultimately, the response sample was smaller than planned and limited to participants in cohorts that ran during the evaluation period.

Emerging Literature on Diversion and Alternatives

Numerous studies have examined the recidivism of participants in Alternative-to-Incarceration (ATI) programs. A study of the Pathways Gun Diversion Program in Minneapolis, Minnesota, reported that program completers, primarily young Black males, had substantially lower recidivism rates, with 26 percent of participants receiving new charges, particularly for violent or weapons-related offenses (in the two years following their weapons charge) (Epperson et al. 2024a). In that context, BOGAP's recidivism rate of 27 percent provides a relevant comparison and adds evidence that structured diversion programs may reduce rearrests and convictions.

A diversion program at Ryder Trauma Center, in collaboration with the Miami-Dade State Attorney's Office, delivered 100 hours of violence education, behavioral modification, and social mentoring to youth aged 13 to 17 charged with nonviolent firearm offenses. At 12 months, recidivism across all offenses was 34 percent among program completers, compared with 50 percent among non-completers (Soe-Lin et al. 2020). While less than definitive due to pre-treatment differences of those who do and do not complete a program, these studies suggest the need for further investigation.

A National Institute of Justice (NIJ) evaluation of five diversion programs for low-level, nonviolent offenses (though not only gun offenses) found that participants experienced fewer convictions, less jail time, and reduced rearrests over two years (Rempel et al. 2018). This suggests that diversion may serve as an effective alternative to traditional prosecution.

Finally, a qualitative study that included five prosecutor-led gun diversion programs in the Chicago area reported promising positive effects as perceived by participants, prosecutors, and service providers, and it recommended a trauma-centered focus to better address participants' environmental factors (Epperson et al. 2024b).

Survey Response Pattern

Responses to the survey questions were generally positive and did not change appreciably during a participant's time in the program. The lack of measurable change made it difficult to attribute attitude shifts to BOGAP itself. At the same time, participants may have appreciated their BOGAP experiences early on and not want to risk their plea deal, or they may have felt compelled to provide answers that aligned with BOGAP's goals and expectations. They may also have been predisposed to embrace prosocial attitudes, as evidenced by their enrollment in a voluntary diversion program such as BOGAP. In any case, the research team was unable to detect meaningful changes in participant attitudes and could not reliably attribute attitude changes to the BOGAP curriculum.

Comparison Sample

The original plan for the study included a rigorous quasi-experimental design to compare BOGAP outcomes with those of a comparison sample drawn from the expected overflow of BOGAP-eligible cases that could not enter the program due to limited resources. In discussions before the study launch, Osborne and the Bronx DA's office anticipated that the flow of potential referrals would be sufficient for both a treatment sample and a comparison sample of cases not referred solely because of program limitations. As the study began, it was clear that the pool of potential comparison cases would be inadequate. When otherwise eligible cases were not referred to BOGAP, there were usually documented reasons unrelated to program capacity (e.g., aggravating legal factors, prior referrals to diversion programs, etc.).

The research team submitted a request to modify the comparison group plan, and the National Institute of Justice approved it. Researchers created a recidivism comparison group from a matched set of de-identified DCJS files. Recidivism outcomes for BOGAP participants were compared with those of the matched cases, and the team added a series of participant interviews to supplement information collected from the original participant surveys. Interviews allowed the team to ask BOGAP participants to reflect on how their lives may have been different had they not enrolled in BOGAP. Neither of these modifications fully compensated for the loss of an organic comparison group of Bronx cases, but they helped fill gaps in the dataset.

Focus Groups with Loved Ones

The research team proposed convening a stakeholder group comprising credible messengers, staff directly involved in community violence reduction programs, Bronx residents, community leaders, and representatives of community-based organizations from the home neighborhoods of BOGAP clients. The research team hoped to discuss the goals and objectives of BOGAP as well as the purposes and design of the evaluation study to increase community transparency, accountability, and partnership. Early in the project, it became clear that convening such a group

would not be possible. The research team instead added a plan to gather input from people closely connected to BOGAP participants who would likely view the program's impact from an outside perspective ("Loved Ones of BOGAP Participants"). The goal was to use the data to understand which aspects of the program were working and how the program was perceived by those not directly involved but close to someone in the program.

The research team attempted to organize a focus group by approaching BOGAP participants in person and asking them to share the opportunity with friends or family. Participants accepted the information and flyers, but few reached out to participate in the focus group. The team eventually modified the group interview format to individual interviews. Despite further outreach, researchers were only able to interview a small number of volunteers. The information collected was helpful but insufficient to analyze on its own.

Future Directions

Despite these challenges, researchers successfully adapted the plan and kept the evaluation on track and on schedule. Given another opportunity to evaluate such a program, several changes would be warranted. Regarding survey administration, for instance, the team may have been more successful in maintaining consistent participant engagement if they had visited the Osborne offices each time a survey was announced and brought equipment for participants to use in completing the survey. If so, more participants would have had complete survey records, and the team may have been better able to measure changes in participant attitudes.

Future studies need to ensure sufficient sample sizes and follow-up periods for outcome measures, especially recidivism. Small sample sizes and short follow-up periods result in insufficient statistical power. A more compelling story of participant outcomes could be told with longer post-intervention follow-up and larger samples in both the treatment and comparison groups. Ready availability of reliable, de-identified, and publicly available data sources for studies of alternative justice interventions would strengthen this type of research. It is unduly burdensome for every group of researchers in every jurisdiction and for every study to negotiate access to the same sources of data. With high-quality and accessible comparison data, it would be quicker and cheaper to isolate the efficacy and impact of programs like BOGAP.

Conclusion

Researchers relied on interviews, surveys, law enforcement records, and direct observation to assess the operations and impact of BOGAP, a gun diversion program sponsored by the Bronx District Attorney's office and managed by the Osborne Association of New York City. Program participants received an array of services and supports designed to change their personal attitudes and behaviors related to conflict resolution and the use of firearms. The study found that BOGAP was well received by staff and clients, and that individuals referred to the program rather than regular court processing had rearrest rates similar to, or even slightly lower than, those in a matched pool of other criminal cases. Thus, BOGAP was able to provide positive and corrective interventions for firearm possession defendants without posing additional risks to public safety.

The study's limited statistical power prevented the analysis from detecting statistically significant differences between treatment and non-treatment groups, but the findings were promising. An additional study could be warranted, as the program continued to provide services to participants after the end of data collection for this study, despite the unexpected withdrawal of federal funding in 2025. The BOGAP strategy appears to be effective in getting participants to reject firearm possession and avoid the long-term negative impacts of prosecution, sentencing, and possible incarceration.

With gun violence continuing to be a problem in the Bronx, and justice-involved residents continuing to experience the collateral consequences of felony prosecutions and convictions, policymakers need to invest in alternatives that address both problems by directing resources into a range of activities that reduce the use of firearms and guard community safety. Addressing gun violence solely through felony convictions and sentencing produces financial burdens and myriad social harms for communities. Promising programs like BOGAP may offer a safe and cost-effective alternative that encourages participants to embrace prosocial, nonviolent, and self-sufficient lives.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Qualitative Data Methods and Analysis

The JohnJayREC team utilized a mixed-methods approach for this evaluation. The team drew upon a wide variety of sources to understand what BOGAP is and the outcomes of BOGAP participants. As part of this, the team conducted interviews with program participants, staff, participants' loved ones, and the Bronx District Attorney's Office. Only BOGAP participants and their loved ones received an incentive payment for taking part in an interview. Researchers also observed court and program proceedings.

Interviews with BOGAP Staff Members

The team attempted to interview current BOGAP staff at three points in the project – Fall 2023, Fall 2024, and Summer 2025. The first wave of interviews focused on describing the program, interactions with participants, and program facilitation. Staff described BOGAP's strengths, the program's challenges, and their recommendations. The second wave of interviews in Fall 2024 builds on themes from the first wave, with more in-depth discussions of recurring topics such as participant engagement. Staff also reflected on program changes since BOGAP's launch and shared additional insights from their evolving experiences. The third wave asked staff to reflect on BOGAP and the curricula they used. The faculty specialists conducted the interviews via Zoom video.

Osborne helped the research team identify the current roster of BOGAP staff for each interview wave. The research team extended the interview opportunity to all staff at each wave, emphasizing that participation was voluntary. Osborne did not require staff to take part in the 45-minute interviews.

Interviews with BOGAP Participants

The research team conducted a set of interviews with active BOGAP participants in the Summer and Fall of 2025. Participants were recruited as a convenience sample by BOGAP staff from the most advanced cohorts available at the time. These interviews focused on participants' experiences with BOGAP and complement the surveys offered to all participants. Participants had an opportunity to speak about their time in the program, the program's impact on the larger community, employment, and their recommendations for BOGAP.

The research team conducted these interviews in person at the Osborne offices during BOGAP program hours in a private area away from other participants and staff. Participants were paid \$35 to take part in approximately 30-minute interviews and were eligible to complete only one. Osborne did not require participants to take part in interviews.

Interviews with Loved Ones of BOGAP Participants

The research team hoped to speak with other individuals who were close to BOGAP participants and would likely be invested in their success. Interviewees could be parents or other family members, romantic partners, or anyone the participant felt met the interview criteria.

Researchers hoped to gain insight into how those around participants might perceive program effects, and to hear what they thought made BOGAP effective.

The research team shared information about the interview opportunity with BOGAP participants in person and through the evaluation survey. Participants were invited to share the opportunity with their loved ones. The team also intended to conduct focus groups with loved ones, but due to low interest, the study included only individual interviews. Ultimately, only two individuals scheduled interviews.

Interviews with Bronx District Attorney Staff

Researchers conducted a series of interviews with staff from the Bronx District Attorney's office, focusing on those most directly involved with BOGAP. The team sought to understand how BOGAP was conceptualized, the criteria for BOGAP referral, staff reactions to BOGAP, and the program's future direction. The team asked the Bronx DA research team to help identify potential interview participants, who were then invited directly. The research team conducted single and double interviews via Zoom, as preferred by the staff.

Court Observations

Researchers attended public court sessions to observe BOGAP participants in their monthly court hearings. In coordination with the BOGAP program coordinator and the court liaison, the team prioritized observing participants' final hearings when their charges could be dismissed. Other hearings were observed as feasible, including routine hearings while individuals were at various stages in the program. The team also attended one BOGAP program session during a site visit by staff from the federal Bureau of Justice Assistance, during which program staff facilitated a group discussion. The purpose of each observation was to see BOGAP in action and provide context for other data collection.

Analysis of Qualitative Data

The research team systematically reviewed all interview transcripts to identify key themes related to BOGAP's development and implementation, its strengths and challenges, and opportunities for improvement. Using a structured approach, researchers organized responses into categories aligned with each interview topic and noted any new ideas that emerged during the conversation. Multiple members of the research team confirmed the topics and summarized the findings at the aggregate and de-identified level to protect interviewee confidentiality.

Qualitative interviews provided rich insight into program operations, participant engagement, and implementation. Preliminary analysis and data collection occurred concurrently, allowing the team to share interim observations from staff interviews with Osborne and to inform future program decisions before the end of the evaluation.

Illustrative quotes were identified during analysis and included in the report to illustrate key points and provide additional insight into the program. Quotations were not attributed to individual speakers to reduce the risk of identification. Any quotations appearing in the final report were edited for clarity and brevity while preserving the individuals' original meaning. The results reflect the perspectives and experiences of individuals connected with BGOAP rather than supporting causal or generalizable claims about gun-diversion or other ATI programs.

Appendix B: Interview Guides

BOGAP Staff Semi-Structured Interviews

First Round of Interviews

1. Introduction

- a. Role, title, schedule
- b. Briefly describe your work.

2. Program Related Topics

- a. Describe the launch of the program.
- b. Describe some of the program's strengths.
- c. What challenges has BOGAP faced in its implementation?
- d. Have you had to make any adaptations or adjustments?
- e. What have you found to be most challenging as you adapt and adjust?
 - Are there any elements of the program you think should be added or enhanced?

3. Participant Related Topics

- a. How would you describe classroom participation?
- b. Is participation among clients balanced or equal?
- c. How do you know that you are reaching the participants during the program?
- d. How do you engage a participant who is not participating?
- e. Have absences been a problem?
- f. Do you have many drop outs?

4. Self-Evaluation & Administration Related Topics

- a. What qualities make up an effective facilitator (program administrator)?
- b. What makes you an effective facilitator (program administrator)?
- c. How would you describe the supervision or oversight of your facilitation (of the facilitators)?

- d. Is entering data producing any difficulties?
- e. Strengths and challenges about your program's administration?
- f. What adaptations have you had to make to overcome or correct these challenges?

Second Round of Interviews

1. Introduction

- a. Role, title
- b. Have there been any changes since your last interview in October 2023
 - Do you have any new responsibilities or things that you're not doing anymore? If so, why the change and what does this change look like?

2. Program Related Topics

- a. In thinking about the facilitation of BOGAP:
 - i. Is there any flexibility in the way the program is facilitated?
- b. Can you describe the kinds of things CMs do to engage the participants?
- c. In BOGAP, what do you think is most effective in helping participants:
 - Disengage from criminal behavior?
 - Increase positive community engagement?
 - Shift attitudes and beliefs about violence and conflict?
 - Getting mental health support?
 - Financial stability/legitimate employment?
- d. Are there any new challenges with the program?
- e. Are there any elements you think are missing from the program or should be enhanced?
- f. What are some new recommendations that you have for the program?

3. Participant Engagement Topics

- a. What, if any, are some outside influences that can impact a participant's engagement?
 - Court-mandated obligations
 - Family or familial obligations
 - Relationships outside BOGAP
 - Employment

- Financial stability
 - Housing
 - Food
 - Mental health
 - Program timing
 - Language barriers
- b. What, if any, are some differences in the engagement of the cohorts from the beginning to the end?
- c. What role does bonding play for participants in BOGAP?
- What are some factors that impact bonds forming?
 - How do bonds shape program engagement or success?

4. Participant Needs

- a. Thinking about resources and referrals:
- Are there any new resources available for participants?
 - Are there any resources that are no longer available for participants?
 - Are there any resources that would be helpful for participants?
- b. Tell us a bit about participant relationships with court staff - Osborne Court Liaison, Defense Attorneys, Judge, Prosecutor

5. Self-Evaluation & Administration Related Topics

- a. Staff resources
- Does Osborne provide training for BOGAP staff? If yes, what does that look like?
 - Are there any extra resources or sources that you draw on in your facilitation? If yes, what are they?
 - Are there any resources that you feel are missing and would help you in your work? If yes, what are they?
- b. Staff burnout
- How do you avoid burn out in this job?
 - Does Osborne provide any resources to help staff avoid burnout? If yes, what are they?
- c. Staff Changes
- What does turnover look like since your last interview?

- Have there been any additional staff? If yes, what kinds of positions?
- d. Any there any changes to tracking participants or data entry (e.g., devices, extra staff, etc.)? If yes, what are they?

Third Round of Interviews

1. Introduction

- a. Role, title, schedule
- b. Any changes since we last spoke - new responsibilities or things you're not doing anymore?

2. Reflecting on BOGAP

- a. Thinking back on your entire time with the program, what worked the best?
 - Did anything surprise you?
- b. Thinking back on your entire time with the program, what didn't work well?
 - How did you adapt?
 - What was missing?
- c. If you knew what you do now, what changes would you make to the BOGAP program?
 - Anything you would do differently (e.g., recruitment methods, workshop structure, workshop length, etc.)?
- d. Were there any participant needs that you all were not able to help with?

3. Thoughts on BOGAP curriculum

- a. Thinking about (AVP, DBT, CBI, job readiness) what works well? What would you change?
- b. Thinking about any other BOGAP components that you do, what are they? What works well? What would you change?
- c. Can you tell us about the training you received to facilitate BOGAP?

4. Last Thoughts

- a. This is our final interview for this project. Is there anything else you'd like to share with us about BOGAP that would be helpful to know?

Program Participant Semi-Structured Interview Guide**1. BOGAP Story:**

- a. How would you describe BOGAP to someone who has never heard of it?
- b. Can you walk us through what BOGAP's been like for you?
 - Relationships with Osborne staff
 - Relationships with other participants in BOGAP
 - Did you have to make any changes in your life to participate in BOGAP?
 - Was it hard to attend every day?
 - Any major changes or sacrifices to be able to attend?
- c. Do you think you will use anything from BOGAP in the future?
- d. Thinking about how you felt before you started BOGAP, do you think your life would be different today if you hadn't enrolled in the program?

2. Community Impact:

- a. We've heard that when a person is in BOGAP, they are part of some community projects. Can you tell us about any projects you were part of?
- b. We understand that BOGAP can change the way people interact with others in their lives, including their family, loved ones, friends, neighbors, and their larger neighborhood. Has BOGAP changed the way you interact with people outside the program?

3. Employment

- a. Can you tell us about the job readiness component of BOGAP?
 - Did you learn anything new?
 - Did you do any specific trainings (e.g., OSHA-30, food handlers, etc)?
- b. Are you currently employed?
 - If yes, did Osborne help you get a job?
 - If no, did you learn anything through BOGAP that will help you get a job?

4. BOGAP Feedback:

- a. What are the best parts of BOGAP?
- b. What are the hardest parts of BOGAP?
- c. Do people face any challenges to participating in the program (no names or identifiable stories)?

- d. Do you have any recommendations to make the BOGAP program better?
- Is there anything you wish Osborne could have helped you with?

Focus Group Guide

1. Getting to Know You

- a. Thank you for coming today. Please tell us who you are and your relationship with the participant (but not their name).

2. Perceptions of the Community

- a. Can you describe your community/neighborhood?
- Do you like where you live?
- b. Would you say the people in your community are close?
- Is gun violence “an issue” in your community/neighborhood?
 - Would you say your community is “safe”?

3. Perceptions and Impact of BOGAP

We want to get a full picture of the impact of BOGAP:

- a. We want to get a simple “read” on your thoughts on BOGAP, like just in a word: Are these types of programs helpful? Not helpful?
- b. What, if any, would you say are the major benefits of BOGAP for the participant?
- Have you seen major changes in the participant? If so, what?
 - Has the participant changed how they deal with conflicts or problems since participating in BOGAP?
- c. What, if any, would you say are the major benefits of BOGAP for you and others connected to the participant?
- d. What, if any, would you say are BOGAP’s major challenges?
- For the participant?
 - What about for you and others connected to the participant?
- e. Aside from these benefits and challenges, would you say the program has impacted the participant or you in other important ways?
- f. Has the program had any impacts on specific others, like other family members or people in the community?
- g. Have you had much interaction with the BOGAP staff? If so, how have you felt about these interactions?

4. Future Iterations of BOGAP

- a. What would you say is missing from BOGAP, if anything?
- b. If you could, how would you change BOGAP?

5. Closing

- a. If you could say anything to Osborne BOGAP program leaders, what would it be?
- b. If you could say anything to the DA about BOGAP, what would that be?
- c. Is there anything we didn't ask about that we should have?

Bronx District Attorney Office Semi-Structured Interview Guide**1. Understand the conception of BOGAP**

- a. What inspired it?
- b. Goals of this program from the DA's perspective
- c. Anything substantially different from the original concept to the initial inception?

2. Understand recruitment/case selection/review process

- a. Changes over time
- b. How were eligibility criteria chosen? Were any other requirements considered?
- c. What would preclude someone from BOGAP after they met the initial criteria?
 - What are other program options for this group?

3. What do they see as successes and challenges?

- a. What does "success" in BOGAP mean? How does the DA office definition differ from Osborne's?
- b. Are people happy with BOGAP?
- c. How do people think BOGAP compares to similar programs?

4. Future of BOGAP

- a. Will they get more funding?
- b. What will happen if there's no BOGAP?

Appendix C: Survey Methods

Purpose of the Survey

To measure changes in attitudes, researchers designed a five-wave survey series that participants completed throughout their engagement with BOGAP. The first survey was completed at the start of the program; the second at the start of phase two; the third at the start of phase three; the fourth at the end of the curriculum; and the fifth when participants entered their final plea at the end of their 90-day post-program “cooling off” period.

Survey Development

The team reviewed the research literature and past JohnJayREC surveys to identify existing instruments and tools that measure attitudes and perceptions related to guns, violence, conflict resolution, mental health, social support, empathy, self-regulation, future orientation, and community connections, as well as skills and respondents’ efforts to secure employment. Researchers consulted with the faculty specialist to create the survey instrument, drawing upon her expertise in trauma and violence exposure, as well as that of the BOGAP program staff. Once finalized, the survey was piloted with a group of BOGAP participants who were not included in the evaluation’s survey sample. Edits were made to clarify questions and refine language based on the pilot and subsequent reviews. The first four surveys in the series were identical. The fifth survey included an additional set of questions that measured participant attitudes about BOGAP.

Survey Administration

The BOGAP team supported JohnJayREC researchers in administering the first three waves of the survey. Credible Messenger (CM) facilitators announced each survey opportunity to participants and shared a link and QR code to locate the online survey. The CMs told participants that BOGAP did not require the survey and their participation was voluntary. Participants were paid \$25 each for completing surveys one through three (up to \$75 per participant). If response rates were low after one to two weeks of monitoring, the BOGAP team would remind the entire cohort of the opportunity to take the survey. The research team did not disclose exact response rates to Osborne. It did not identify who had or had not completed any given survey.

At the end of each survey, the research team asked participants to confirm contact information for future survey opportunities. The team used this information to contact participants to administer surveys 4 and 5 directly. Participants were emailed and/or texted the survey link (per their preference), and the team would send up to three reminders to individuals who had not yet taken the survey for that wave. Participants completing survey four would receive \$30, and participants completing survey five would receive \$35.

Data Preparation

Survey results data were inspected for duplicate responses, missing values, and out-of-range or outlier values. Once all data were collected and cleaned, each file was merged to create a participant-level file that tracked changes in attitudes and beliefs throughout BOGAP engagement. All responses were identified using alphanumeric identifiers comprising a person's first and last initial, followed by their birth month and birth day. This identifier was used to link records across program participation, survey iteration, and case processing data.

The study began with 288 survey responses, of which 97 were excluded due to invalid entries, resulting in a final analytic sample of 191 responses. These responses represented 61 unique participants and were used for the exploratory factor analysis. For the final analysis, 29 responses from cohorts 9 and 10 were excluded, leaving 162 responses across five waves. Due to missing data on key variables, the number of observations varied by model, with 120 responses included in Model 1 and 121 responses in Models 2 through 4.

Table C.1. Number of Valid Survey Responses Per Cohort Per Wave for Final Analysis

BOGAP Cohort	SURVEY WAVE					Total Responses
	1	2	3	4	5	
5	9	10	6	7	8	40
6	11	12	7	6	7	43
7	7	7	7	5	7	33
8	11	12	8	8	7	46
	38	41	28	26	29	162

Descriptives

The research team reviewed all available data to craft a picture of who enrolls in BOGAP, who completes the program, which participant characteristics correlate with completing the program, which correlate with positive changes in attitudes and beliefs, and which correlate with not recidivating after completing the program. Some of the factors derived from the survey data were used for descriptive purposes, and others were used in the survey model to test which outcomes changed over time.

Survey Modeling

A total of four ordered logistic regression models were estimated for each outcome: violence attitudes, conflict resolution, employment attitudes, and mental health awareness. Ordered logistic regression models are appropriate for ordinal dependent variables, in which response categories have a natural order, but the spacing between them is unknown. The model estimates the log-odds of being at or above a given outcome category. This approach is well-suited for Likert-scale survey measures, such as the attitude variables analyzed in this study. These models allowed the team to test whether attitudes changed over time and whether demographic or psychosocial characteristics predicted attitudes.

Appendix D: Survey Constructs

Construct	Survey Items	Response Scale	Alpha Score	Citations
Mental Health Awareness	- I know where to go to get mental health supports if I need them. - I can get mental health resources if I need them. - I would ask for help if I had mental or emotional troubles.	1) Disagree strongly 2) Disagree somewhat 3) Neutral 4) Agree somewhat 5) Agree strongly	0.80	CONNECT Summit Mental Health Attitudes & Access Survey (Connect 2021)
Empathy	- I can tell when people are upset, even if they don't say anything. - I like to be there for others in times of difficulty. - When others feel sadness, I try to comfort them.		0.79	The Compassion Scale (Pommier et al. 2020)
Future Orientation	- I know how to meet the goals that I set for myself. - I look forward to the future with hope and enthusiasm. - My future is filled with opportunities. - I can do anything I want in the future.		0.88	The Adult Hope Scale (Snyder et al. 1991) The Hopelessness Scale (Beck et al. 1974)
Social Supports Within Osborne	- There's at least one person I can count on to be there for me no matter what. - There's at least one person who supports my efforts to turn my life around. - There's at least one person I can talk to about anything.		0.81	The Community Assessment Inventory (Brown et al. 2004)
Social Support Outside Osborne	- There's at least one person I can count on to be there for me no matter what. - There's at least one person who supports my efforts to turn my life around. - There's at least one person I can talk to about anything.		0.87	The Community Assessment Inventory (Brown et al. 2004)

Construct	Survey Items	Response Scale	Alpha Score	Citations
Violence Attitudes	- It is sometimes important to use physical force to teach others to respect me. - Carrying a gun or knife makes me feel safer. - Sometimes it's okay to carry a gun or knife for self-protection. - Carrying a weapon is an effective way to avoid a fight. - If I was going to be in a fight, I'd feel safer if I had a handgun.	1) Agree strongly 2) Agree somewhat 3) Neutral 4) Disagree somewhat 5) Disagree strongly	0.89	CBVP Evaluation Survey (Tomberg & Butts 2016) NYC Youth Violence Survey (Dalhberg et al. 2005)
Conflict Resolution	- I can usually remain calm even when dealing with interpersonal conflicts. - When I find myself in a disagreement with someone, I can usually find a solution. - Walking away can be an effective way to avoid a fight. - Apologizing (saying you're sorry) is an effective way to avoid a fight. - I can always manage to solve conflicts with another person by talking with them. - If I am in a tough spot, I can usually get out of it without fighting.	1) Agree strongly 2) Agree somewhat 3) Neutral 4) Disagree somewhat 5) Disagree strongly	0.82	NYC Youth Violence Survey (Dalhberg et al. 2005) Generalized Self-Efficacy scale (Schwarzer & Jerusalem 1995)
Employment Attitudes	- I know how to apply for a job. - I feel confident in my interviewing skills. - It's important to me to be on time for work. - It's important to let my supervisor know if I am unable to work.	1) Disagree strongly 2) Disagree somewhat 3) Neutral 4) Agree somewhat 5) Agree strongly	0.91	Prepare Evaluation Survey (Tomberg et al. 2021)

Construct	Survey Items	Response Scale	Alpha Score	Citations
Self-Regulation	- I can usually see both sides in an argument. - I can work through unpleasant feelings. - I can ignore judgment from others.	1) Disagree strongly 2) Disagree somewhat 3) Neutral 4) Agree somewhat 5) Agree strongly	0.81	Mindfulness Scale (Bergomi et al. 2013)
Neighborhood Safety	- I often hear gunshots in my neighborhood. - People in my neighborhood worry about being the victim of a violent crime. - I would like to move out of my neighborhood if I could.		0.74	Chicago Youth Development Study (Tolan et al. 2001) NYC Cure Evaluation Survey (Delgado et al. 2015)

Appendix E: BOGAP Evaluation Survey

Tell Us About Yourself:

To get started, we are going to ask you about yourself.

- a. What is your age?
 - Drop Down Menu:
(Under 18, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, Over 30, or Prefer Not to Answer)
- b. What is your primary language?
 - English
 - Spanish
 - French
 - Mandarin/Cantonese
 - Other
 - Prefer Not to Answer
- c. Do you have children?
 - Yes
 - No
 - Prefer Not to Answer
- d. What is the highest level of education you completed?
 - Less than high school
 - High school or GED
 - Some college
 - 2-year college degree
 - 4-year college degree
 - Graduate school
 - Don't know
 - Prefer Not to Answer

- e. How often do you worry about having a place to live?
- Never
 - Sometimes
 - Often
 - Prefer Not to Answer
- f. How satisfied are you with your current employment situation?
- Very satisfied
 - Somewhat satisfied
 - Not satisfied
 - Not applicable

Health and Well-Being:

- a. Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements.
(Response Scale: Disagree Strongly, Disagree Somewhat, Neutral, Agree Somewhat, Agree Strongly, Prefer Not to Answer)
- I know where to go to get mental health supports if I need them.
 - I can get mental health resources if I need them.
 - I would ask for help if I had mental or emotional troubles.
 - In my community, it is difficult for people to talk about their mental health or emotional troubles.
 - I can tell when people are upset, even if they don't say anything.
 - I like to be there for others in times of difficulty.
 - It's important to recognize that all people have weaknesses and no one is perfect.
 - When other people feel sad, I try to comfort them.
 - I know how to meet the goals that I set for myself.
 - I look forward to the future with hope and enthusiasm.
 - My future is filled with opportunities.
 - I can do anything I want in the future.

Social Support:

- a. Thinking about the people in your life you are close to, including family, friends, mentors, etc. outside of the Osborne Association, please indicate if you agree or disagree with the following statements.

(Response Scale: Disagree Strongly, Disagree Somewhat, Neutral, Agree Somewhat, Agree Strongly, Prefer Not to Answer)

- There's at least one person I can count on to be there for me no matter what.
- There's at least one person who supports my efforts to turn my life around.
- There's at least one person I can talk to about anything.

- b. Thinking about the people ***you met through the Osborne Association***, including BOGAP participants, program staff, mentors, etc., please indicate if you agree or disagree with the following statements.

(Response Scale: Disagree Strongly, Disagree Somewhat, Neutral, Agree Somewhat, Agree Strongly, Prefer Not to Answer)

- There's at least one person I can count on to be there for me no matter what.
- There's at least one person who supports my efforts to turn my life around.
- There's at least one person I can talk to about anything.

Conflict and Neighborhood Safety:

- a. Please indicate if you agree or disagree with the following statements.

(Response Scale: Disagree Strongly, Disagree Somewhat, Neutral, Agree Somewhat, Agree Strongly, Prefer Not to Answer)

- I can usually remain calm even when dealing with interpersonal conflicts.
- When I find myself in a disagreement with someone, I can usually find a solution.
- It is important to show others that I cannot be intimidated.
- It is sometimes important to use physical force to teach others to respect me.

- People do not respect a person who is afraid to fight physically for their rights.
- Carrying a gun or knife makes me feel safer.
- Sometimes it's okay to carry a gun or knife for self-protection.
- Carrying a weapon is an effective way to avoid a fight.
- If I had to be in a fight, I'd feel safer if I had a handgun.
- Walking away can be an effective way to avoid a fight.
- Apologizing (saying you're sorry) is an effective way to avoid a fight.
- I can always manage to solve conflicts with another person by talking with them.
- If I am in a tough spot, I can usually get out of it without fighting.
- I often hear gun shots in my neighborhood.
- People in my neighborhood are worried about being the victim of a violent crime.
- I would like to move out of my neighborhood if I could.

More About You:

- a. Thinking about how you deal with your thoughts and feelings, please indicate if you agree or disagree with the following statements.
(Response Scale: Disagree Strongly, Disagree Somewhat, Neutral, Agree Somewhat, Agree Strongly, Prefer Not to Answer)
- I can usually see both sides in an argument.
 - I am likely to ignore unpleasant feelings and thoughts.
 - I can work through unpleasant feelings.
 - I can ignore judgment from others.
 - I can usually stay calm, even in painful situations.

Job Skills and Employment:

- a. Thinking about the process of looking for a job, please indicate if you agree or disagree with the following statements.
(Response Scale: Disagree Strongly, Disagree Somewhat, Neutral, Agree Somewhat, Agree Strongly, Prefer Not to Answer)
- I know where to find job openings.
 - I know how to apply for a job.
 - I feel confident in my interviewing skills.
 - It's important to be on time for work.
 - It's important to let my supervisor know if I were unable to work.

Your Experience with BOGAP:

- a. Thinking about your experience in the BOGAP program, please indicate if you agree or disagree with the following statements.
(Response Scale: Disagree Strongly, Disagree Somewhat, Neutral, Agree Somewhat, Agree Strongly, Prefer Not to Answer)
- I am treated with dignity and respect by Osborne staff.
 - I believe Osborne staff cares about me.
 - I feel like I am part of the decisions about what happens to me while I am at Osborne.
 - I would recommend Osborne to people who are dealing with similar issues and concerns as me.
 - I feel connected with the BOGAP staff.
 - I feel connected and supported by a specific mentor in the BOGAP program.
 - I have created lasting bonds with Osborne staff that will continue after BOGAP.
 - I have created lasting bonds with other participants that will continue after BOGAP.
 - I feel connected with other participants in my cohort.

b. How much has BOGAP helped you in the following areas?

(Response Scale: A Lot, Some, Not at All, Unsure, Not Applicable, Prefer Not to Answer)

- Learning skills to help get a job
- Employment or internship placement opportunities
- Access to educational opportunities
- Learning conflict resolution skills
- Access to health care
- Access to mental health care
- Access to substance use treatment

Appendix F: Administrative Data Methods and Processing

Data Sources

BOGAP Engagement Data

BOGAP participant engagement recorded by Osborne staff included participant characteristics (demographics) and other important information collected at intake, such as employment status, housing stability, and educational attainment. Osborne data also included the types and frequencies of group and individual services received, various referrals made for additional or follow-up services, and milestones achieved during a participant's engagement with the program. Data collection started with intake and continued until the end of the post-program oversight period (approximately 15 months).¹

Case Processing Data

The Bronx District Attorney's Office shared with the research team a file comprised of all first-time offender cases considered for BOGAP. The primary data extract included individuals with gun possession charges in the Bronx, some of whom were referred to BOGAP and the rest who were considered and/or screened by the Bronx DA's office but ultimately not referred (for reasons related to public safety, program fidelity, employment or education conflicts, etc.). Another data extract comprised the pre-evaluation study group, i.e., BOGAP participants from cohorts one to four (Note: two individuals from this pre-study group later joined Cohorts five and seven). This subset of individuals was not part of the evaluation study and was therefore not subject to Bronx DA's filtering and randomization process that cohorts five and beyond underwent.²

The Bronx DA data extract included the following elements for each person: case information, defendant demographics, details of the BOGAP screening/referral process, key dates (arrest, indictment, and disposition), case outcomes, and sentencing information. Data collection began prior to Osborne's involvement and continued through the end of someone's cooling-off period and the final disposition of their case. It is important to note that although all study cases were disposed of, some individuals were awaiting sentencing at the time data collection ended. Using Bronx DA case processing data, researchers tallied disposition outcomes, i.e., the final resolution or outcome of a participant's legal case (conviction, dismissal, etc.)

¹ According to program staff, data on individual services were not consistently entered across cohorts and, therefore, do not accurately reflect program engagement. Individual services include supportive counseling, case management sessions, assistance with tech devices, and obtaining formal documents such as driver's licenses.

² The Bronx DA Office provided data for a pool of 492 cases, including 293 assigned randomly to either "control" (N=100) or BOGAP (N=193). Of the 193 designated for BOGAP, 132 ultimately were not enrolled in the program, while 61 were enrolled in time to be included in the study's data collection efforts, comprising BOGAP cohorts 5-10. Before cohorts 5-10, the program had served 41 participants in cohorts 1-4. The study sometimes refers to the total number of BOGAP participants as 102 (i.e., 61+41).

Criminal History Data

DCJS Top Charge Criminal History Data consists of detailed information about individual contacts with the criminal justice system, including demographic, arrest, and disposition data. JohnJayREC inspected and standardized individual information (including name, sex, race, date of birth, Social Security number, and NYSID) from Bronx DA records before requesting a demographic and criminal history match for each name from DCJS. Through an existing data-sharing agreement with DCJS, researchers obtained de-identified, fingerprintable criminal history records (including sealed records) on BOGAP participants, individuals considered for BOGAP programming but were not referred to Osborne Association, as well as an additional pool of anonymized Top Charge criminal history records from which to create a matched comparison group similar to the BOGAP-treated group. Individuals considered for BOGAP but did not ultimately enroll were excluded from the pool of possible comparison units.

Researchers used DCJS data to identify possible recidivism (rearrest or reconviction) events following participants' graduation from the program. Researchers compared and contrasted recidivism outcomes with a matched sample (i.e., individuals who were never treated for or enrolled in BOGAP but were as similar to the BOGAP-treated group as possible). Researchers used program engagement and Top Charge criminal history data to examine whether BOGAP participants have fewer re-arrests and re-convictions than similar non-treated individuals.

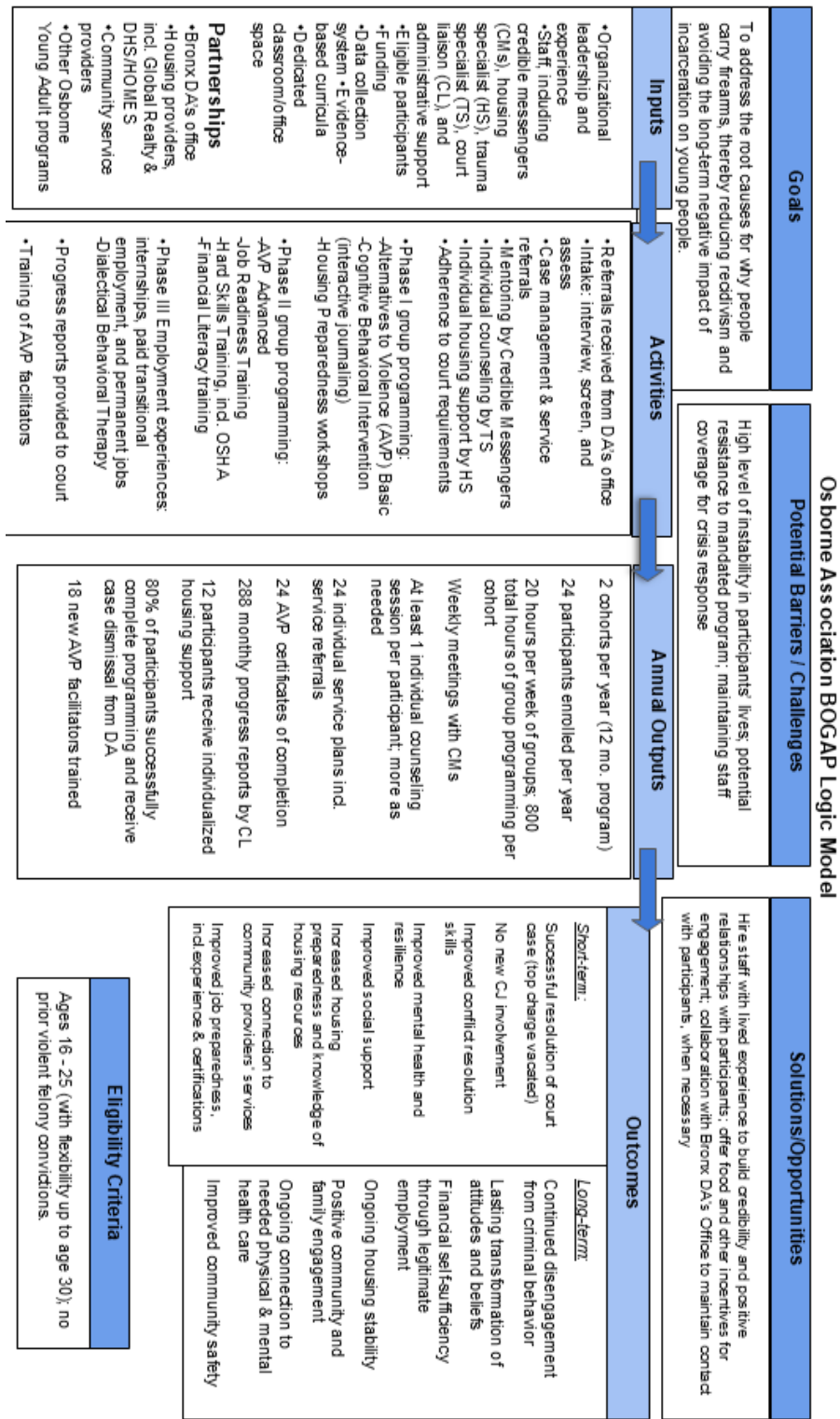
Data Preparation

Osborne program engagement data, participant survey data, and Bronx DA case processing data were inspected for duplicate responses, missing values, and out-of-range or outlier values. Once data was collected and cleaned, each file was merged to create a participant-level file to track changes in attitudes and beliefs at the beginning, end, and after the intervention, along with demographic, case management, job placement, and program participation data.

All data were identified using alphanumeric identifiers comprised of a person's first and last initial, followed by their birth month and birth day. This identifier was used to link records across program participation, survey, and case processing data. Questions about the administrative program engagement/participation data were resolved with assistance from the Osborne Association. To request DCJS data, the research team mapped these alphanumeric values into identifiers that are completely numeric (transforming letters into two-digit numbers according to their ordered values in the alphabet). DCJS criminal history data was similarly inspected for duplicate responses, missing values, and unusual values. Both data sets were identified by a numeric identifier created by the research team.

The research team reviewed all available data (administrative data, survey data, case processing/outcome data, and criminal history records) to develop a picture of who enrolls in BOGAP, who completes the program, and what happens to participants post-program.

Appendix G: The Osborne Association BOGAP Logic Model



Appendix H: BXDA Randomized Control Group

Starting in 2023, the Bronx DA's Office began tracking all individuals considered for BOGAP. Cases that met the program's eligibility criteria were flagged for potential referral and underwent an initial review by Assistant District Attorneys and the Crime Strategies Bureau (CSB). Cases removed during the review process were excluded from further consideration. The DA Office then used a randomization process to assign the remaining cases to one of two tracks:

- **Standard case processing** (approximately one-third of cases): Cases proceeded through traditional prosecution pathways and did not receive further BOGAP screening.
- **BOGAP screening** (approximately two-thirds of cases): Cases underwent a CSB safety review and a full case-conferencing process, during which prosecutors and program staff discussed the individual's circumstances and case details.

Of 100 individuals randomly assigned to standard case processing, 20 were enrolled in the Fortune Society's gun diversion program, which provided a less intensive intervention than BOGAP. These individuals were excluded from supplementary analyses. The remaining 80 individuals constituted an alternate control group to examine recidivism outcomes.

Most cases in the second track were referred for BOGAP, but a small number of those individuals were ultimately not referred. They were excluded due to public safety concerns or because they were subsequently involved in other alternatives-to-incarceration (ATI) programs and/or probation-based interventions.

The evaluation team conducted a supplementary recidivism analysis using data about gun possession cases exposed to this randomization process, but it was not the primary counterfactual for several reasons. First, the Bronx DA's Office did not begin systematically tracking and randomizing BOGAP-eligible cases until 2023, approximately two years after the program's implementation. As a result, the randomized group provided a shorter observation window than the study's primary comparison sample.

Second, while initial assignment to BOGAP screening was randomized, multiple stages of discretionary review occurred after assignment. Assistant District Attorneys and the Crime Strategies Bureau conducted eligibility and safety assessments, and final referral decisions were made through case conferencing. Consequently, assignment to the screening process did not guarantee program eligibility. Professional judgment played at least some role, as was entirely appropriate.

For these reasons, the research team relied on the larger coarsened exact matching (CEM) comparison group as the primary counterfactual, while the Bronx DA control group was used as a secondary test.

Importantly, findings from the supplementary analysis were consistent with the results obtained from the study's primary CEM comparison group. Before conducting outcome analyses, the research team assessed whether the Bronx DA control group was statistically comparable to the BOGAP treatment group on key baseline characteristics used in the primary matching procedure: age at arrest and arrest class. Researchers used an independent-samples t-test to compare age at arrest and Fisher's exact test to compare arrest class. The groups did not differ significantly on either measure, indicating that they were balanced on these characteristics. Fisher's exact test was selected in place of a conventional chi-square test because cell counts were fewer than five in most arrest-class categories.

Table H.1: Descriptives of Covariates

Age at Arrest (BOGAP arrest)	BXDA Control (N=80)		BOGAP-Treated (N=84)	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
17	2	3%	2	2%
18-20	35	44%	30	36%
21-23	22	28%	35	42%
24-27	21	26%	17	20%
Arrest Class (BOGAP arrest)				
C Felony	76	95%	77	92%
D Felony	4 (*)	3%	3	4%
E Felony	0	0%	3	4%
B felony	0	0%	1	1%

Source of data: DCJS Top Charge records.

(*) Includes two individuals with Class A Misdemeanor charges, according to records shared by the Bronx DA's Office (see arrest and case processing details in Table H.2. below). The inconsistency may be due to unique case characteristics and prosecutorial discretion in updating charges to align with BOGAP eligibility criteria.

Table H.2: Arrest and Case Processing Details

Initial Disposition Status	BXDA Control (N=80)		BOGAP-Treated (N=84)	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Guilty by Plea	71	89%	84	100%
Dismissed	9	11%		
Initial Disposition Type				
Guilty by Plea	44	55%	84	100%
Dismissed	26	33%		
Transferred to Another Court	1	1%		
Pending	9	11%		
Arrest Charge				
Criminal possession of a weapon, Class C Felony (PL 265.03 CF)	75	94%	80	95%
Criminal possession of a weapon, Class A Misd (PL 265.01 AM)	2	3%	0	0%
Criminal possession of a weapon, Class D Felony (PL 265.02 DF)	1	1%	0	0%
Assault on a judge, Class C Felony (PL 120.08 CF)	1	1%	0	0%
Reckless endangerment, Class D Felony (PL 120.25 DF)	1	1%	0	0%
Criminal mischief, Class E felony (PL 145.05 EF)	0	0%	1	1%
Grand larceny, Class E felony (PL 155.30 EF)	0	0%	1	1%
Criminal possession controlled substance, Class B Felony (PL 220.16 BF)	0	0%	1	1%
Disposal, manufacture, transport of dangerous weapon, Class E Felony (PL 265.10 EF)	0	0%	1	1%
Indictment Charge				
Criminal possession of a weapon, Class C Felony (PL 265.03 CF)	80	100%	83	99%
Murder, Class A Felony (PL 125.25 AF)			1	1%
Final Disposition				
Guilty by Plea	44	55%	63	75%
Dismissed	25	31%	21	25%
Transferred to Another Court	2	3%	0	0%
Pending	9	11%	0	0%

(continued)

Table H.2: continued

Sentence Type	BXDA Control (N=80)		BOGAP-Treated (N=84)	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Time Served	2	3%	24	29%
Conditional Discharge	6	8%	20	24%
Incarceration	5	6%	7	8%
Probation	28	35%	4	5%
Pending/Information Not Available	39	49%	29	35%

Sentence Charge				
Criminal possession of weapon, Class C Felony (PL 265.03 CF)	30	38%	15	18%
Criminal possession of weapon, Class A Misd (PL 265.01 AM)	11	14%	45	54%
Criminal possession of weapon, Class D Felony (PL 265.02 DF)	1	1%	0	0%
Criminal possession of firearm, Class E felony (PL 265.01-B (EF)	1	1%	2	2%
Attempted murder, Class A felony (PL 125.25 (AF) (Att)	1	1%	0	0%
Pending/Information Not Available	36	45%	22	26%

Source of data: Bronx DA records.

Note: "Pending/Information Not Available" for "Sentence Type" and "Sentence Charge" includes cases dismissed as well as cases pending/awaiting sentencing. There was a higher proportion of such cases in the BXDA control group because of a shorter observation window in terms of the study's timeframe.

Within the Bronx DA control group, a majority of the known charges at sentencing (30) were Class C Felonies. Among BOGAP participants (n=84), slightly over half (n=45) had their BOGAP charge eventually reduced to a Class A misdemeanor, while 15 received a Class C Felony charge at sentencing.

Table H.3: Rearrest Outcomes, Treatment and Control

Rearrest Outcomes	BXDA Control (N=80)		BOGAP-Treated (N=84)	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Rearrested	32	40%	23	27%
Rearrest Charge Type				
Public Order	9	11%	2	2%
Violent	7	9%	8	10%
Property	6	8%	9	11%
Firearm-related*	5	6%	2	2%
Drug	2	3%	1	1%
Other/Unknown	3	4%	1	1%
Rearrest Charge Level				
Felony	16	20%	13	15%
Misdemeanor	16	20%	10	12%
Disposition Outcomes				
Prosecution Declined	16	20%	6	7%
Dismissed	10	13%	7	8%
No Final Disposition**	4	5%	8	10%
Reconviction by plea	2	3%	2	2%
Reconviction Charge Class				
Felony	1	1%	1	1%
Violation	1	1%	1	1%
Reconviction Sentencing Outcomes				
Jail/Determinate Prison (***)	1	1%	1	1%
Conditional Discharge	1	1%	1	1%

(*) Firearm-related charge was the top or underlying charge.

(**) Interim dispositions are not considered final dispositions.

(***) A jail sentence was received by an individual in the BXDA control group, and Determinate Prison, a BOGAP participant.

Note: Percentages for each group are calculated using the group's entire sample size (N=84 for the BOGAP-treated and N=80 for the BXDA Control group).

A Note on Follow-up Time and Rearrest

The maximum window of opportunity for the Bronx DA control group was 36 months (i.e., no control group case had more than 36 months of follow-up). To ensure comparability, researchers truncated the follow-up window in the BOGAP-treated group and recalculated rearrest rates. Of the 84 BOGAP participants, 70 had up to 36 months of follow-up. Among this truncated sample, 17 of 70 (24%) were rearrested. Among the Bronx DA control group, 32 of 80 (40%) individuals were rearrested by the end of the study. The median follow-up time for the Bronx DA control group (20 months) was similar to that of the BOGAP-treated (18 months).

Figure H.1. Time-to-rearrest (Survival Curve)

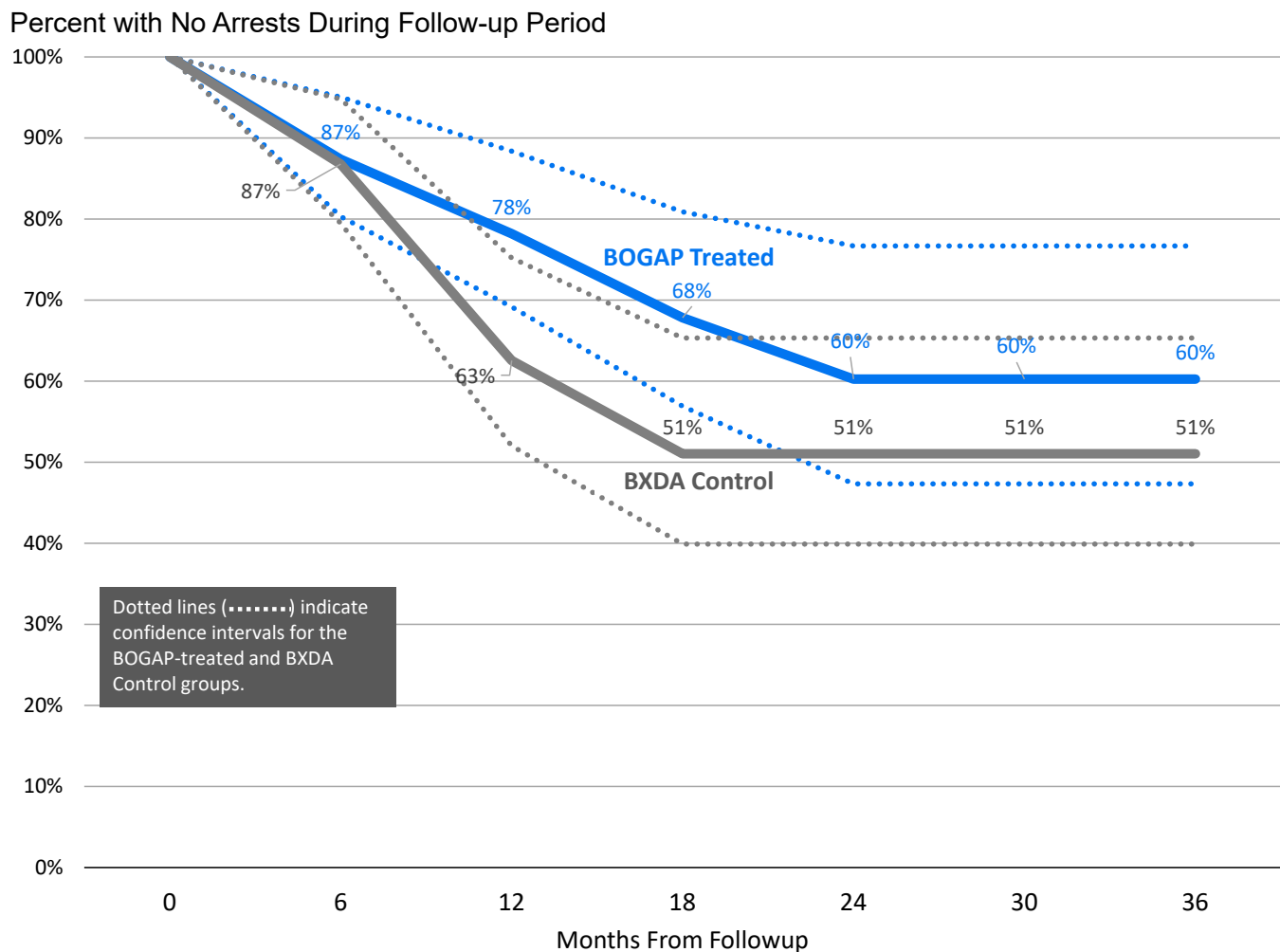


Table H.4: Cox Proportional Hazards Modeling

Variable	Hazard Ratio	Percent Change in Risk	p-value	Interpretation
BOGAP Participation (Treatment)	0.71	↓ 29%	0.232	Lower risk of rearrest among the treated.
Prior Misdemeanor Arrests	1.17	↑ 17%	0.053*	Increased risk of rearrest for every additional prior (pre-BOGAP) misdemeanor arrest.
Age at Arrest	0.92	↓ 8%	0.226	Older individuals less likely to be rearrested.

* Statistically significant predictor.

Note: Arrest region was not added to this ancillary model. Everyone member of the sample was arrested in the same region— i.e., New York City.

Appendix I: Survey Modeling

A total of four ordered logistic regression models were estimated for each outcome: violence attitudes, conflict resolution, employment attitudes, and mental health awareness. Below are tables with results for each model.

Model 1 – Changes in Violence Attitudes

Cohort membership is associated with differences in attitudes, with participants in cohort 7 reporting significantly higher levels of violence-supportive attitudes than those in the reference cohort. However, violence attitudes do not vary significantly across survey waves, nor do they change over time within cohorts. Among the psychosocial predictors, higher levels of self-regulation are associated with significantly lower violence attitudes. Other demographic and psychosocial variables are not statistically significant predictors. Model 1 explains about 10 percent of the variation.

Model 2 – Changes in Conflict Resolution

Psychosocial characteristics are the strongest predictors of attitudes toward conflict resolution. Higher levels of self-regulation and empathy are significantly associated with greater endorsement of constructive conflict resolution. No significant differences are observed across survey waves or cohorts, suggesting that conflict resolution attitudes remain relatively stable over time. Model 2 explains about 16 percent of the variation.

Model 3 – Changes in Employment Attitudes

Employment attitudes are strongly associated with psychosocial characteristics. Individuals reporting higher levels of self-regulation and empathy exhibit significantly more positive employment attitudes. No statistically significant differences were observed across survey waves or cohorts. Model 3 explains about 24 percent of the variation.

Model 4 – Changes in Mental Health Awareness

Mental health awareness is significantly associated with social support within the Osborne network. Participants reporting stronger internal social support exhibit higher levels of mental health. No statistically significant differences were observed across survey waves or cohorts. Model 4 explains about 18 percent of the variation.

Table I.1: Changes in Violence Attitudes Model**MODEL 1**

Predictor	Coefficient	SE	p-value
Cohort (ref = Cohort 5)			
Cohort 6	2.66	1.75	0.129
Cohort 7	3.66	1.82	0.044
Cohort 8	-0.64	1.89	0.736
Wave (ref = Wave 1)			
Wave 2	1.2	1.98	0.545
Wave 3	0.36	1.75	0.837
Wave 4	-0.31	1.93	0.874
Wave 5	0.29	1.98	0.884
Individual Characteristics			
Age	0.05	0.11	0.631
Children (have children or not)	0	0.55	1
Education	0.01	0.18	0.973
Housing Stability	-0.28	0.3	0.354
Employment Satisfaction	0.58	0.34	0.086
Psychosocial Measures (covariates)			
Neighborhood Safety	0.28	0.23	0.228
Self-regulation	-1.06	0.46	0.022
Empathy	-0.18	0.37	0.616
Social Support (Osborne)	-0.27	0.36	0.455
Model Statistics			
N	120		
Wald χ^2	99.98		
p-value	< 0.001		
Pseudo R ²	0.105		

Table I.2: Changes in Conflict Resolution Model**MODEL 2**

Predictor	Coefficient	SE	p-value
Cohort (ref = Cohort 5)			
Cohort 6	-1.03	1.32	0.436
Cohort 7	-2.45	1.38	0.075
Cohort 8	-1.26	1.01	0.211
Wave (ref = Wave 1)			
Wave 2	-1.29	1.02	0.206
Wave 3	-0.91	1.08	0.403
Wave 4	-0.03	0.9	0.971
Wave 5	-0.39	1.18	0.744
Individual Characteristics			
Age	-0.15	0.09	0.077
Children (have children or not)	0.41	0.48	0.387
Education	-0.13	0.21	0.533
Housing Stability	0.07	0.3	0.811
Employment Satisfaction	-0.28	0.31	0.375
Psychosocial Measures (covariates)			
Neighborhood Safety	-0.18	0.22	0.418
Self-regulation	1.64	0.42	<0.001
Empathy	0.98	0.37	0.008
Social Support (Osborne)	0.45	0.29	0.125
Model Statistics			
N	121		
Wald χ^2	91.23		
p-value	< 0.001		
Pseudo R ²	0.158		

Table I.3: Changes in Employment Attitudes Model**MODEL 3**

Predictor	Coefficient	SE	p-value
Cohort (ref = Cohort 5)			
Cohort 6	0.29	1.91	0.88
Cohort 7	0.68	1.43	0.633
Cohort 8	0.73	1.81	0.686
Wave (ref = Wave 1)			
Wave 2	0.96	1.83	0.6
Wave 3	0.8	1.77	0.652
Wave 4	0.59	1.79	0.743
Wave 5	2.02	2.28	0.376
Individual Characteristics			
Age	0.17	0.12	0.152
Children (have children or not)	0.68	0.58	0.242
Education	0.16	0.31	0.59
Housing Stability	0.12	0.39	0.76
Employment Satisfaction	0	0.35	0.989
Psychosocial Measures (covariates)			
Neighborhood Safety	0.37	0.22	0.097
Self-regulation	1.38	0.47	0.004
Empathy	0.99	0.41	0.016
Social Support (Osborne)	0.71	0.4	0.073
Social Support (Outside)	0.57	0.46	0.216
Model Statistics			
N	121		
Wald χ^2	110.46		
p-value	< 0.001		
Pseudo R ²	0.242		

Table I.4: Changes in Violence Attitudes Model**MODEL 4**

Predictor	Coefficient	SE	p-value
Cohort (ref = Cohort 5)			
Cohort 6	1.81	1.33	0.173
Cohort 7	1.97	1.18	0.095
Cohort 8	0.63	1.31	0.629
Wave (ref = Wave 1)			
Wave 2	1.49	1.28	0.245
Wave 3	1.92	1.36	0.157
Wave 4	0.57	1.33	0.671
Wave 5	1.05	1.47	0.474
Individual Characteristics			
Age	0.13	0.1	0.193
Children (have children or not)	0.23	0.57	0.682
Education	-0.36	0.28	0.202
Housing Stability	-0.5	0.3	0.093
Employment Satisfaction	0.07	0.33	0.819
Psychosocial Measures (covariates)			
Neighborhood Safety	0.16	0.25	0.525
Self-regulation	0.68	0.45	0.132
Empathy	0.16	0.4	0.678
Social Support (Osborne)	1.02	0.46	0.028
Social Support (Outside)	0.58	0.54	0.281
Model Statistics			
N	121		
Wald χ^2	87.69		
p-value	< 0.001		
Pseudo R ²	0.18		

Appendix J: Recidivism Analysis

In quasi-experimental research studies, a comparison group is often used to assess what would have happened had a treatment not been implemented. This is often done retrospectively in social program evaluations. Researchers at JohnJayREC identified a comparison group from New York State criminal history records involving individuals as similar as possible to the BOGAP treatment group. Differences in recidivism (rearrest) were estimated by drawing on a pool of anonymized “top charge” criminal history records maintained by the Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) for males born between 1992 and 2006 who were arrested in 2017 or later for any variation of Penal Law category 265 (criminal possession, use, and/or sale of a firearm and other dangerous weapons).¹ The file contained the universe of individuals with arrest events meeting the criteria, along with a complete set of their previous criminal history records. The initial file included 37,089 records organized by each individual’s New York State Identification Number (NYSID).²

Most records were removed after a data cleaning process found them to be inappropriate as possible comparison cases for various reasons. For example, from the outset of the study, the Bronx District Attorney’s Office (Bronx DA) tracked all persons considered for BOGAP. Using the Bronx DA data file, the research team identified 490 persons who had been considered for BOGAP but were not referred for treatment. Those records were excluded from the pool of possible comparison units. Other records were removed for similar reasons. Not all such factors are identifiable, of course. But, assembling a sufficiently large matched comparison group with no known compromising factors mitigates the problem to some extent.

After dropping all records with known factors making them inappropriate as comparison cases, the final comparison pool contained 5,428 units.

1 Participants in the BOGAP (treatment) sample were arrested between 2021 and 2024. Restricting comparison cases to arrests occurring between 2017 and 2024 ensures that comparison units are drawn from a time window similar to that of BOGAP participants.

2 NYSID is a unique number, based on fingerprints, assigned by the New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) to a person with justice involvement (criminal and/or civil) in New York State.

Table J.1: Additional Steps of the Data Cleaning Process

Beginning NYSID Pool: 37,089 records 25,230 persons		
Filtering Steps	Dropped	Remaining
NYSID associated with more than one ID value. If not possible to determine multiple NYSIDs belonged to the same person, records dropped from the analysis.	1,292	23,938
Record not related to Criminal Possession of a Weapon (CPW). DCJS data file provides binary flag for CPW. Non-CPW cases dropped.	217	23,721
Disposition date missing. Cases with missing or invalid disposition dates dropped from sample. Recidivism for comparison cases tracked from disposition.	232	23,489
Arrest level is misdemeanor.	7,133	16,356
Sex of individual is female. BOGAP sample all male.	20	16,336
Individual under age 17. BOGAP sample at least 17.	262	16,074
Record indicates indeterminate incarceration sentence. Release date required to track recidivism.	3,434	12,640
Arrest not between 2017 and 2020, most effective time period for comparison cases similar to those referred to BOGAP.	7,212	5,428
TOTAL UNITS DROPPED	19,802	

Matching Analysis

Coarsened exact matching was used to construct a comparison group similar to the treatment group based on age at arrest and prior arrests. CEM works by grouping important characteristics, such as age at arrest and number of prior arrests, into broader categories. The method then compares individuals only within those groups. If a group contains both program participants and non-participants with similar characteristics, those cases are retained. This is known as common support. Groups that contain only comparison cases are removed because they lack a comparable program participant.

The BOGAP study sample included 84 treated units, and the CEM analysis yielded 4,987 matched control units based on age at arrest and prior arrests. The unmatched units (441) were off support (i.e., these subjects fell outside the range of characteristics observed in the treated group). To illustrate, one stratum contained two treated units matched to 44 control units. And that stratum comprised treated and control subjects between 17 and 19 years of age at the time of arrest, who were charged with a level E felony offense.

Table J.2: CEM Strata, Descriptives

Strata	Arrest Age	Arrest Class	Size of Strata (Number of Persons)	
			Treated	Matched Comparison
1	17-20	E Felony	2	124
3	17-20	D Felony	2	794
4	17-20	C Felony	28	1,198
6	21-24	E Felony	1	90
7	21-24	B Felony	1	19
8	21-24	D Felony	1	933
9	21-24	C Felony	39	1,331
13	25-27	C Felony	10	498
		TOTAL	84	4,987

Each comparison case is assigned a weight to ensure the comparison group reflects the distribution of characteristics observed among program participants. The matched sample is then used to estimate differences in recidivism outcomes between program participants and the comparison group. Within each matched strata, treated and control units are then comparable on coarsened covariates – arrest class (severity of the arrest charge) and age at arrest. CEM weights controls so each stratum contributes proportionally to the treated group. CEM does not compare individuals directly. It compares treated versus weighted controls within strata, then aggregates across strata, so large control pools (N=4,987) do not dominate the analysis. Everything is scaled to match the treated distribution. Each stratum comprises a number of control units (persons) that together constitute a single comparable unit; hence, the need to statistically weight their contributions. CEM essentially creates a synthetic sample where treated and control units are comparable.

Before matching, the arrest age and arrest class of the treated group differed significantly from the average value in the pool of controls, and variances in the unmatched pool were less than half that of the treated group. After matching, the mean difference in arrest age and class was essentially eliminated. The bins created during CEM enable exact alignment of values. The L1 statistic is a global imbalance measure based on differences between treated and control distributions over the multivariate histogram of matching covariates (arrest age and arrest charge severity in this study). Lower L1 values mean better balance, and a reduction from pre- to post-matching indicates improved balance. Before matching, L1 was 0.413; after matching, it was reduced to 0.143, indicating that CEM substantially improved overall multivariate balance.

Table J.3: CEM Balance Measures

	BEFORE MATCHING		AFTER MATCHING	
	Imbalance	Variance Ratio	Imbalance	Variance Ratio
Arrest Age	-0.0674 (large imbalance)	0.7969	-0.0057 (excellent balance)	0.9718 (almost identical)
Arrest Class	0.8776 (large imbalance)	0.5193	-0.0000 (perfect balance)	1.0117 (perfect)

- Balance measures before CEM (matching) compare the treated group to the unmatched pool of comparison units, and, after CEM, compare the treated to the matched control pool.
- Imbalance indicates the mean difference of a given covariate. Values close to 0 are preferred.
- Variance Ratio values close to 1 are preferred after CEM and indicate a very similar distribution of values of a given covariate between the treated and matched control units.
- Overall Multivariate Imbalance Measure: L1=**0.413** (before matching)
- Overall Multivariate Imbalance Measure: L1=**0.143** (after matching)
- Percentage of local common support: LCS=**58.1%**

Even though CEM matching identified 4,987 control units, after weighting they behave like ~3,359 independent observations. Raw counts do not constitute the properly weighted post-CEM comparison group. For any post-matching estimation of an effect, controls should be weighted so they match the distribution of treated units across strata. The weights rebalance the contribution of control units in large strata. Without weights, controls would dominate large strata, thereby skewing results. Table J.4. describes characteristics of the CEM-derived matched comparison group. Optimal balance between BOGAP-treated and comparison groups was achieved by matching on arrest age and arrest class. Researchers subsequently controlled for region and criminal history (total prior misdemeanor-level arrests) in the Cox Proportional Hazard model, ensuring that variables not included in the matching process were accounted for in the recidivism analysis.

Table J.4: Sample Characteristics and Prior Criminal History

	Treated (N=84)		Matched Comparison (N=4987)	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Age at Arrest (BOGAP Arrest)				
17	2	2%	302	6%
18-20	30	36%	1598	32%
21-23	35	42%	1962	39%
24-27	17	20%	1125	23%
Arrest Class (BOGAP Arrest)				
C Felony	77	92%	4571	92%
D Felony	3	4%	178	4%
E Felony	3	4%	178	4%
B felony	1	1%	59	1%
Arrest Region (BOGAP Arrest)				
NYC	84	100%	4756	95%
Rest of State	0	0%	231	5%
Prior Misdemeanor Arrests				
0	49	58%	2435	49%
1-2	26	31%	1152	23%
3+	9	11%	1399	28%

Note: For the CEM comparison group, weighted counts are presented and may not always sum exactly to the total N of 4,987 due to rounding.

Multivariate Modeling

To examine factors associated with the likelihood of rearrest, researchers estimated a Cox proportional hazards model. This type of model is appropriate when the outcome of interest is the time until an event occurs, rather than simply whether the event occurs. The model included the following variables:

- Treatment - Indicates whether an individual participated in BOGAP
- Number of misdemeanor arrests - A measure of prior criminal history
- Age at arrest - Known predictor of recidivism
- Region indicator - Controls for geographic differences in arrest patterns. NYC vs. Rest of NY.

Results are presented as hazard ratios (exponentiated coefficients). Values greater than one indicate higher risk of rearrest. Values less than 1 indicate lower risk, and values equal to 1 indicate no effect. The findings indicate that participation in BOGAP was not associated with a statistically significant difference in rearrest risk compared with the comparison group. The strongest predictor of rearrest was prior criminal history (12% increase), followed by age at arrest (7% decrease). The research team attempted to improve overall statistical power by using more than one matched comparison unit per treated person and weighting the larger comparison pool in subsequent analyses. The main limitation is that the treated group experienced only 23 events during the observed period. The count of events (rearrests) in the treated group can be thought of as the ceiling on the precision the study design can realistically achieve.

Table J.5: Cox Proportional Hazards Model (Time to Rearrest)

Sample = 5,071 Number of Events= 2,870 arrests (23 treated, 2,847 matched comparison)

	Hazard Ratio	Risk	Lower 95% CI	Upper 95% CI	Standard Error (SE)	Robust SE	z statistic	p-value
Treatment (BOGAP)	0.94	-6%	0.62	1.41	0.210	0.209	-0.31	0.757
Prior Misdemeanor Arrests	1.12	12%	1.09	1.15	0.004	0.015	7.808	<0.001
Age at Arrest	0.93	-7%	0.88	0.98	0.019	0.026	-2.938	0.003
Rest of the State (vs. NYC)	0.96	-4%	0.76	1.21	0.100	0.119	-0.334	0.738

Model Diagnostics:

Concordance = 0.68 (se = 0.007) / Likelihood ratio test = 580.6 on 4 df, $p < 2e-16$ / Wald test = 63.55 on 4 df, $p = 5e-13$ / Score (logrank) test = 975.2 on 4 df, $p < 2e-16$, Robust = 446.6 $p < 2e-16$.

Notes: The likelihood ratio and score tests assume independence of observations within a cluster, the Wald and robust score tests do not. Hazard ratios are the exponentiated form of the coefficients estimated or generated by the model.

