

An outcome evaluation of a family drug court model aimed at improving child well-being and permanency outcomes for children and families affected by methamphetamine or other substance abuse

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Introduction

- U.S. Children's Bureau
Regional Partnership Grantee – 3 years
- Mission: To provide integrated substance abuse, mental health and community services in 2 Northern Colorado counties
- Families have been involved with child welfare system and substance abuse is an issue

Model

- Intensive in-home treatment
- Intensive Outpatient Substance Treatment
- Family Treatment Court (FTC) provides:
 - Weekly court appearances and case worker contact
 - Random drug screenings
 - Immediate response to behavior with appropriate sanctions or incentives
 - On-the-spot SA evaluation and treatment
 - Quick access to services and treatment
 - More frequent supervised visits with children
 - Other support such as mentor parents, financial support, and housing

Goals

Short-term

- Increase collaboration
- Providing intensive in-home services
- Developing Family Treatment Court
- Selection of shared indicators

Mid-term goals

- Integrated treatment plan
- More timely access to services
- Better compliance and retention in tx
- Identification of child needs across disciplines

Methods

- ◎ Data Collection
 - Data Dictionary
 - Data received from various agencies/2 counties
 - Identifier list
 - Receive data in PDF and Excel format
 - Collected twice a year
- ◎ Upload into federal database
 - Access database
 - Export data as XML file
 - Validation
 - Upload on the Regional Partnership Grantee (RPG) website
- ◎ Family Treatment Court Group (FTC) and Comparison group
 - FTC: $n=92$ families; comparison: $n=37$ families

Instruments/Data Systems

- Child Welfare
 - Statewide Automated Child Welfare Information System (SACWIS)
 - North Carolina Family Assessment Scale (NCFAS)
 - Services Checklist
- Substance Abuse Treatment Provider
 - Treatment Episode Data System (TEDS)
- Mental Health Provider
 - Colorado Client Assessment Record (CCAR)
- Collaboration
 - Collaborative Capacity Instrument (CCI) developed by Children and Family Futures
 - Online Survey: Perceptions of Family Treatment Court Program - Cost-efficiency and Collaboration

Demographics

FTC FAMILIES

- 92 families
- 167 children
- 149 adults

COMPARISON FAMILIES

- 37 families
- 63 children
- 64 adults

The two groups of children were similar on the demographics characteristics:

- Gender
- Race
- Prior abuse victim
- Age

Both groups of adults were similar on all demographic characteristics including:

- Gender
- Primary caregiver
- Relationship to child
- Ethnicity
- Was adult prior perpetrator
- Marital status
- Education Level
- Pregnancy status
- Living arrangements
- Income
- Meth contributing factor

Child Welfare Outcomes

- Children removed from home: no statistically significant difference
 - FTC: 20.4% of the children were removed from home ($n=34$)
 - Comparison: 17.5% of the children were removed from home ($n=11$)
- Occurrence of child maltreatment: no statistically significant difference
 - FTC: 52.1% of the children had a maltreatment report filed ($n=87$)
 - Comparison: 42.9% of the children had a maltreatment report filed ($n=27$)
- Length of stay in foster care: no statistically significant difference
 - FTC: 8.80 months ($n=24$)
 - Comparison: 11.49 months ($n=7$)

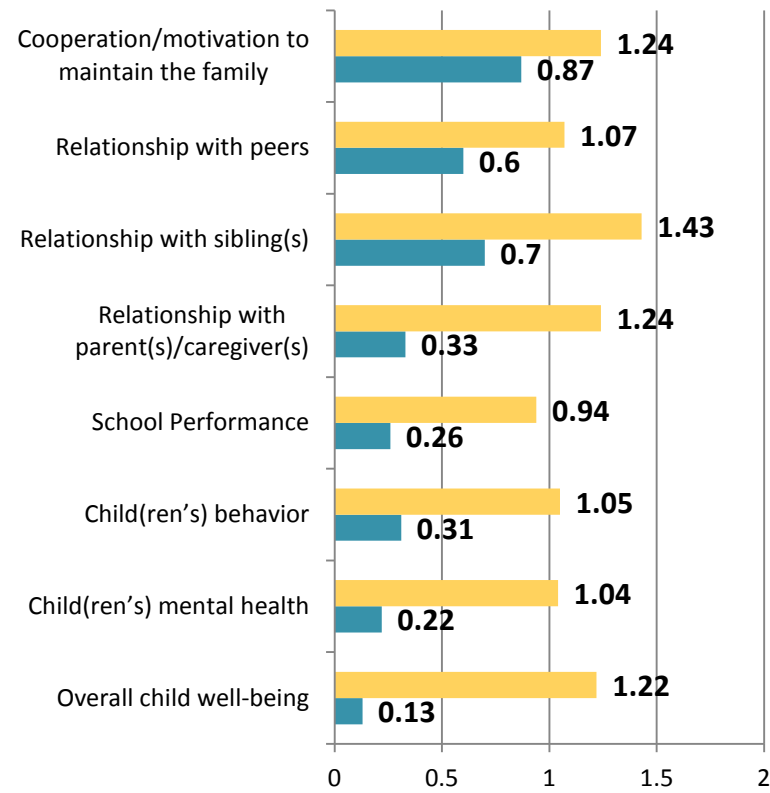
Child Welfare Outcomes

- Timeliness of reunification: no statistically significant difference
 - FTC: 75.0% stayed in foster care less than 12 months ($n=18$)
 - Comparison: 71.4% stayed in foster care less than 12 months ($n=5$)
- Discharge reason: unable to test due to small sample size
 - FTC: 70.8% reunified with parent(s) or primary caregiver(s) ($n=17$)
 - Comparison: 57.1% reunified with parent(s) or primary caregiver(s) ($n=4$)
- Supportive services: no statistically significant difference
 - On average, kids received 2 services
 - Primary and mental health care were received the most
 - Substance abuse prevention and treatment were received the least (may have not been appropriate for most kids, average age of the children was 5 years)

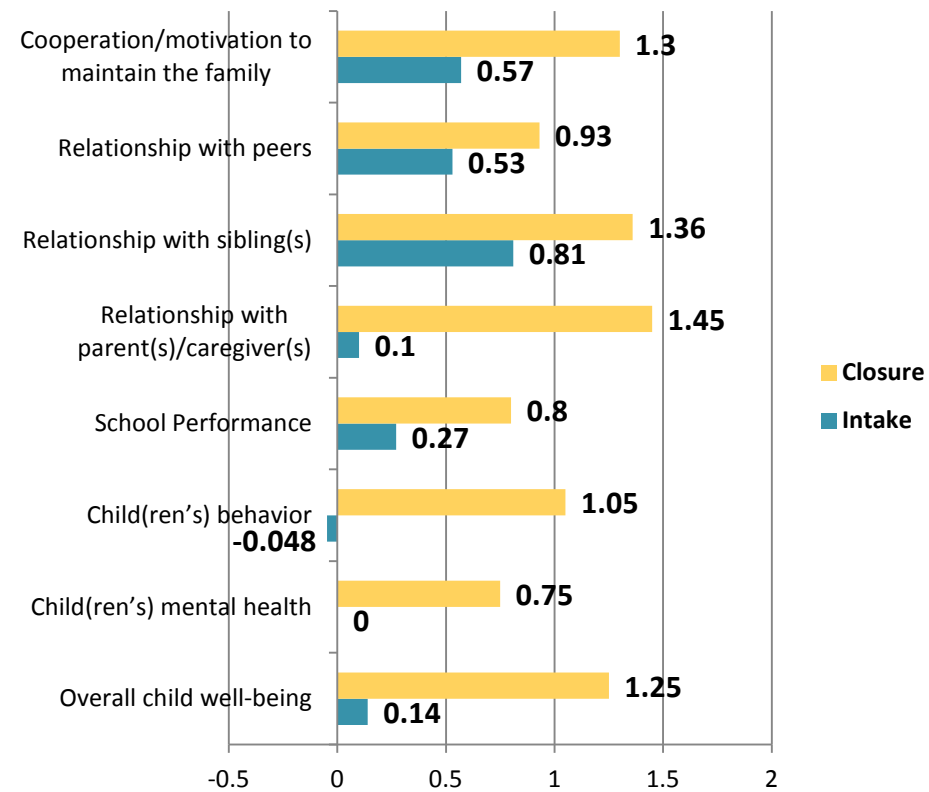
Child Well-Being Outcomes

t-test statistics showed improvements in 7 of the 8 areas of child well-being for the FTC families between intake and discharge, but in 6 of the 8 areas for the comparison families

55 FTC FAMILIES

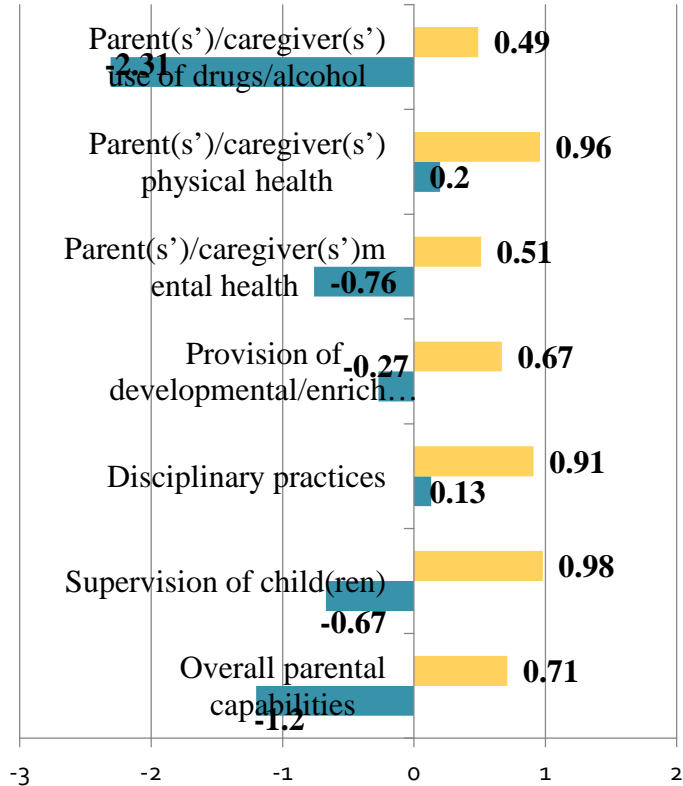


21 COMPARISON FAMILIES

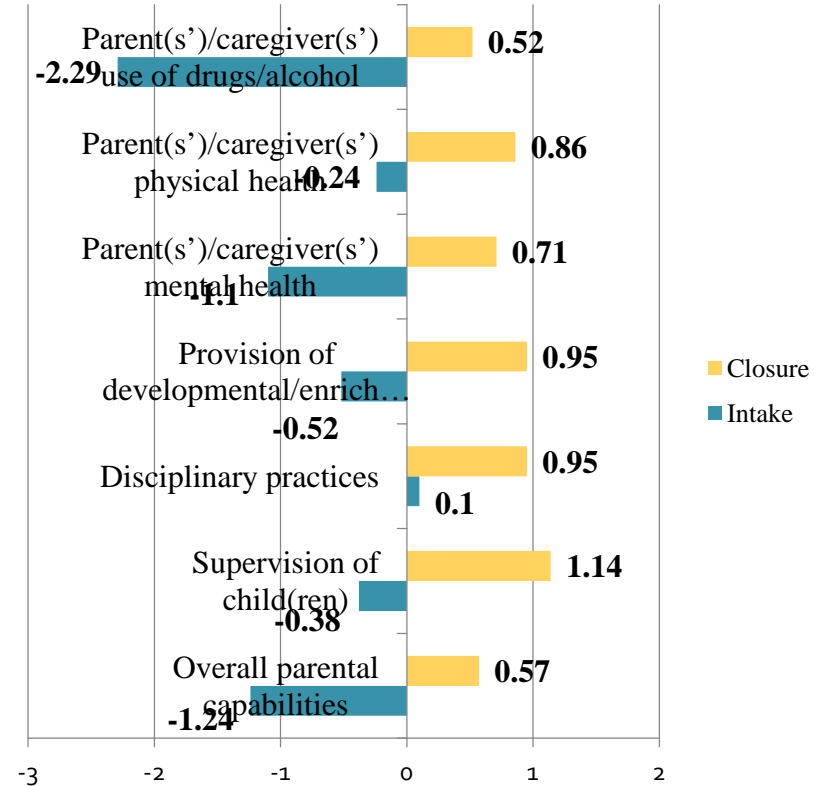


Parental Capabilities (NCFAS)

55 FTC FAMILIES

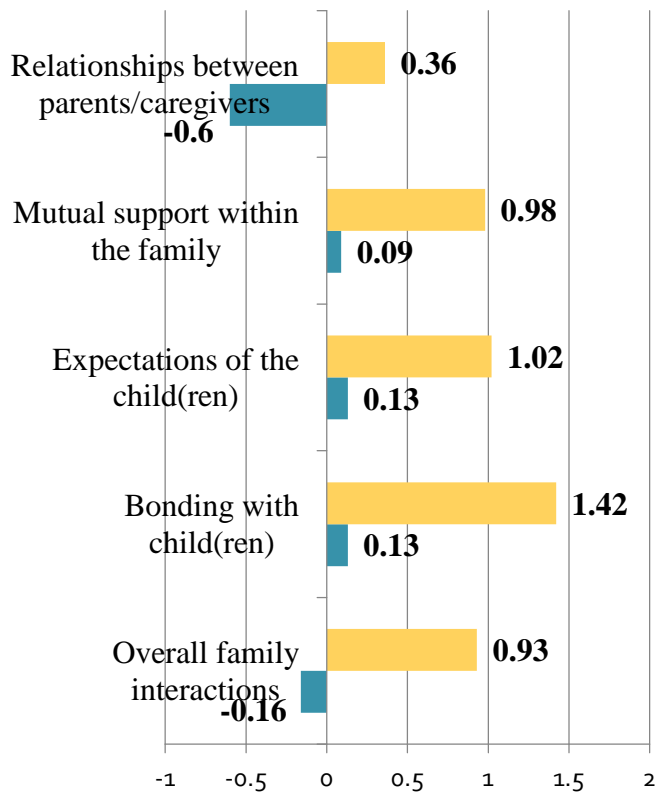


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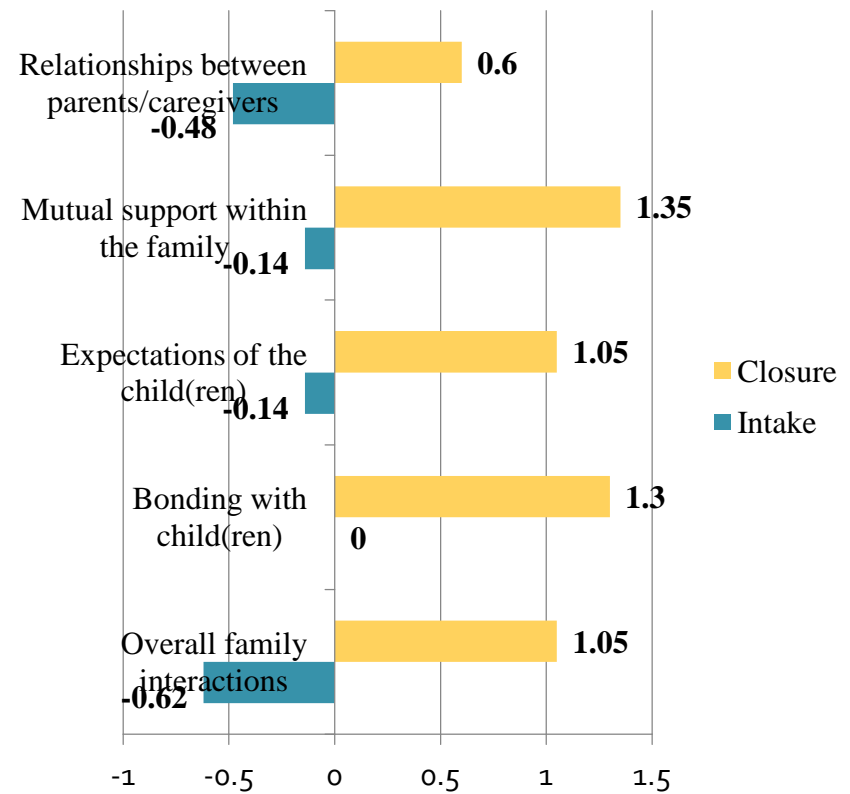


Family Interactions (NCFAS)

55 FTC FAMILIES



21 COMPARISON FAMILIES



Adult Treatment Outcomes

Significant differences between both groups

FTC GROUP

- Treatment participation:
 - 82.6% participated
- Level of care assessed for:
 - Outpatient txt: 39.5%
 - Intensive Outpatient: 44.2%
 - Residential/Inpatient: 16.3%
- Level of care received:
 - Outpatient txt: 56.6%
 - Intensive Outpatient: 31.0%
 - Residential/Inpatient: 12.4%

COMPARISON GROUP

- Treatment participation:
 - 70.3% participated
- Level of care assessed for:
 - Outpatient txt: 68.3%
 - Intensive Outpatient: 21.7%
 - Residential/Inpatient: 10.0%
- Level of care received:
 - Outpatient txt: 80.0%
 - Intensive Outpatient: 13.3%
 - Residential/Inpatient: 6.7%

Adult Treatment Outcomes

Significant differences between both groups

FTC GROUP

- Average length of stay in treatment:
 - 267 days
- Reduction in substance use:
 - Reduction in use: 58.0%
- Supportive services:
 - Number of services received: 5.25

COMPARISON GROUP

- Average length of stay in treatment:
 - 135 days
- Reduction in substance use:
 - Reduction in use: 40.7%
- Supportive services:
 - Number of services received: 4.46

Adult Treatment Outcomes

No differences for both groups on the following:

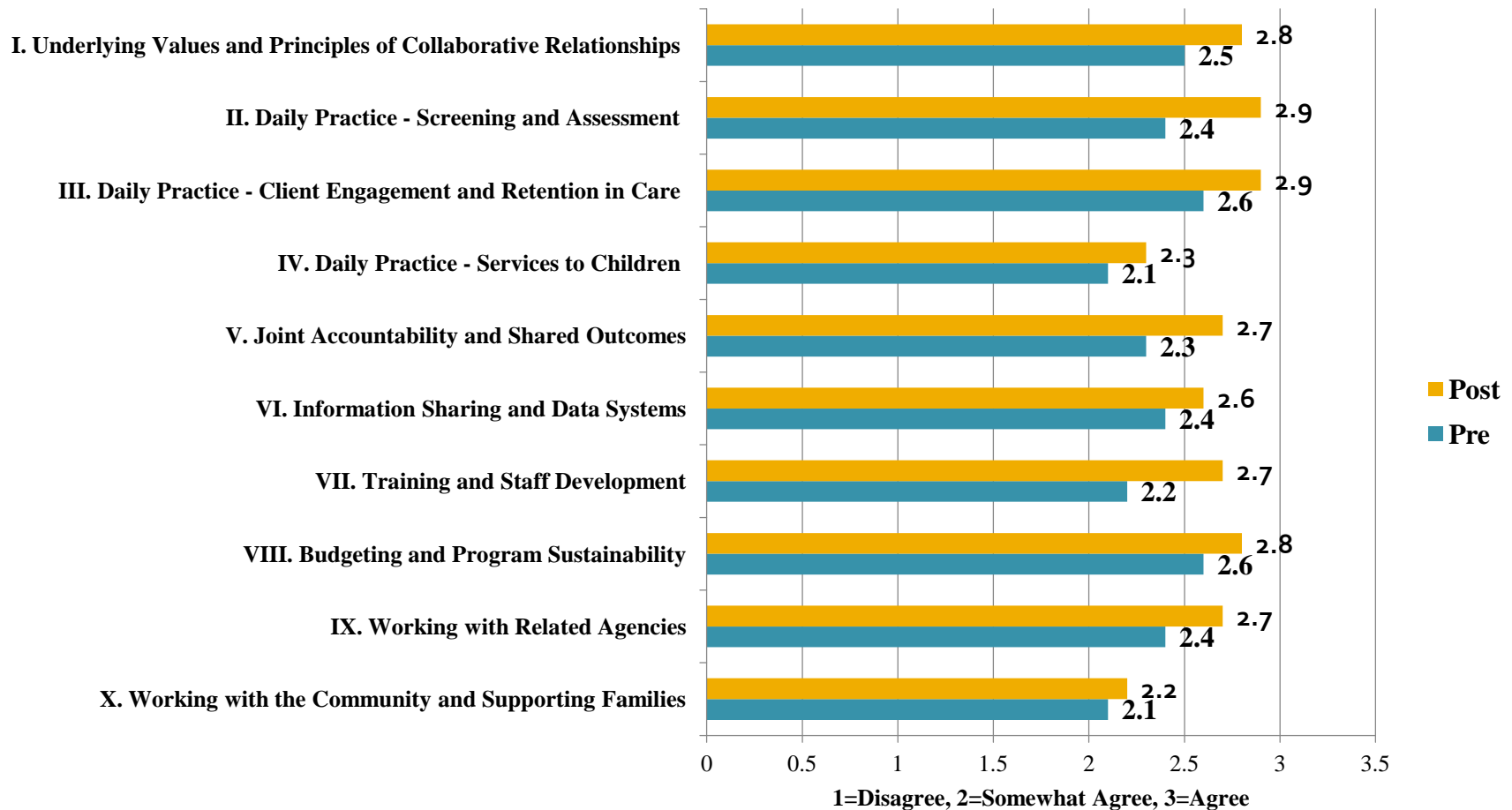
- Timing to treatment
 - Prior to project start date: FTC, 43.9%; Comp, 28.9%
 - Same day as program entry: FTC, 22.8%; Comp, 24.4%
 - After program entry: FTC, 33.3%; Comp, 46.7%
- Percentage who completed treatment
 - FTC: 53.6% completed treatment
 - Comparison: 49.2% completed treatment

Adult Treatment Outcomes

There were no differences between groups on the following:

- Employment rate intake
 - Employed at Intake: FTC, 33.3%; comparison, 28.3%
- Employment rate at discharge
 - Employed at Discharge: FTC, 44.6%, comparison, 35.6%
- Mental Health
 - Significant improvements for both groups in the following three areas:
 - Overall symptom severity, anxiety and depressive issues

Collaborative Capacity Instrument



Survey – Collaboration

- Increased collaboration and communication
 - “There are fewer gaps in services, less overlap in services”
 - Increased partner’s understanding of each other’s roles and services

Survey – Cost efficiency

- Service providers believed that the FTC program was an efficient way of helping families by
 - Providing immediate engagement in treatment
 - Evaluating families more frequently so that non-compliance could be addressed immediately
- Mentor parents were seen as a program element that was program and cost effective
- Housing and financial assistance were rated as being the least program and cost effective

Key Findings

- FTC adults had greater participation in substance abuse treatment including fewer treatment admissions
- FTC adults stayed in txt longer (FTC 267 days; Comp 135 days)
- FTC adults were more likely to show a reduction in substance use
- Adults in FTC received a larger variety of services

Discussion

- No differences between FTC adults and children and comparison adults and children in demographics
- Differences between FTC adults and comparison adults
 - FTC adults were more likely to receive a more intense level of care in a more intense setting
- No statistically significant differences on child welfare outcomes

Challenges

- Data Collection
 - Different definitions, acceptable categories and coding structure
- Lack of random assignment
- Insufficient time for long-term outcomes
- Data received only twice a year
- Program has changed
 - Staff turnover
 - Increased financial constraints

Recommendations

- ☑ Secure funding for continuation
- ☑ Continue the FTC model
- ? Continue to evaluate the FTC model
- ? Measure long-term outcomes

Thank you!

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