



CENTER FOR GUARANTEED
INCOME RESEARCH
Social Policy & Practice
UNIVERSITY of PENNSYLVANIA

The American Guaranteed Income Studies: Gainesville, Florida

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February 2025

GAINESVILLE CITY HALL

GAINESVILLE CITY HALL
RENOVATION APPROVED - 1992 COMPLETED - 1996
MAYOR - COMMISSIONER - RODNEY J. LONG
COMMISSIONERS
DAVID COPPEY THOMAS B. McKNEW
COURTLAND A. COLLIER JAMES P. PAINTER
CITY MANAGER PAUL D. WHITE
PROGRAM MANAGER COA FACILITIES SERVICES, INC.
ARCHITECT BRAME POOLE ARCHITECTS
GENERAL CONTRACTOR d. e. walton
CONSTRUCTION CORP.

GAINESVILLE
ERECTED A. D. 1965
MAYOR - COMMISSIONER
JAMES C. RICHARDS
COMMISSIONERS
EDWARD MCKINNEY
ALGER E. MURPHREE, M.D.
WILLIAM T. GREEN
JOHN R. KELLY
A. CLARENCE O'CONNOR
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GUY



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Couloute, L., Tandon, N., Patel, H., Blocker, S., West, S., & Castro, A. (2025, February). *The American Guaranteed Income Studies: Gainesville, Florida*. University of Pennsylvania, Center for Guaranteed Income Research.



The American Guaranteed Income Studies: Gainesville, Florida

Executive Summary

In the winter of 2021, Just Income, a guaranteed income (GI) program spearheaded by Community Spring located in Gainesville, FL began recruitment for an unconditional cash pilot to support local residents reentering the community after incarceration. In an op-ed published as the program launched, former Mayor Lauren Poe and Just Income Program Director Kevin Scott stated, “The impacts of imprisonment don’t end at the jail walls. After release, individuals face extraordinary rates of unemployment and homelessness. Additionally, physical and mental health outcomes are far worse for both individuals and their families.” To mitigate these impacts beyond incarceration, Just Income provided an initial unrestricted cash payment of \$1,000 in the first month, followed by \$600 in each of the following 11 months to a total of 115 individuals enrolled in the treatment group. 134 people made up the control group that did not receive the GI. Eligible Alachua County residents were 18 years of age or older, had a felony conviction, were released from any county jail in Florida or a Florida state or federal prison between August 9, 2021 and February 9, 2022, or began felony probation in Alachua County between August 9, 2021 and February 9, 2022.

Just Income partnered with the Center for Guaranteed Income Research (CGIR) at the University of Pennsylvania to determine causal and experiential program outcomes. The CGIR conducted a mixed methods randomized controlled trial (RCT) study to evaluate the impacts of GI on various indicators of well-being. The sample was majority men (77% in treatment and 89% in control), with just under 40% reporting having children at home. The average household size was three, with an average of one child in the home. Most program participants were non-Hispanic and African American or Black (70% treatment, 59% control), and approximately three-quarters were single. A majority of the sample reported having a high school diploma or less, were approximately 40 years old, and the mean household income prior to the program launch was approximately \$17,605 in the treatment group and \$13,839 in the control.

The evaluation of Just Income was guided by several primary research questions:

1. How does GI affect participants’ quality of life?
2. What is the relationship between GI receipt and sense of self?
3. How does GI affect income and through what mechanisms?
4. How does GI interact with the existing social safety net?

Throughout the study, CGIR administered compensated research activities consisting of four surveys that occurred at Baseline, midpoint, the end of GI payments, and 6 months after payments had

ceased. Semi-structured interviews were conducted after 6 months of GI payments (the mid-point of the program). A summary of the overall findings followed by more specific findings separated into research question subparts is below.

Summary of Findings

Over-policing in communities of color, compounded by the privatization of jails and prisons, has left generations of lower-income and Southern Black men squarely within the crosshairs of structural violence. The State of Florida has, over the past several decades, instituted numerous regulatory and legislative barriers that prevent individuals being released from incarceration with felony charges from living safely in their communities or contributing to their local economy through employment or carework within their families. In the first days and weeks after being released from incarceration, people commonly move in with family, friends, or an intimate partner. Typically, they are provided only \$50, transportation fare, and a change of clothes. Without family networks close by, a local emergency shelter can serve as a place to sleep for the night. These substantive barriers to securing housing and making a living mean that the loss of autonomy felt inside the prison walls is carried into the free world. And, because poverty is a key predictor of criminalized acts of survival, the risk for rearrest, incarceration, or a costly probation violation looms large.

With seemingly intractable odds stacked against them, including fines and fees that followed them after incarceration, Just Income recipients made marked improvements in navigating material hardship. Notably, the treatment group reported:

- » improved financial health, evidenced by greater resilience to financial shocks and increased household incomes;
- » increased food security;
- » reduced mental stress, improved household environments, and elevated sense of hope and mattering;
- » reduced rejection sensitivity during the GI phase; and
- » lower recidivism than the control group.

Acknowledgments

Community Spring and the CGIR at the University of Pennsylvania wish to express our deepest gratitude to all who have supported and contributed to the Just Income Guaranteed Income program. This initiative would not have been possible without the dedication and collaboration of our community partners, funders, and participants. We thank former Gainesville Mayor Lauren Poe for his bold commitment to supporting some of our most marginalized neighbors through innovative solutions. We would also like to thank the Community Spring Fellowship Class of 2020–21 for inspiring and designing this program: Latashia Mayze-Brimm, Hope Johnson, Tequila McKnight, and Kevin Scott.

Finally, we acknowledge the resilience and courage of our participants, whose experiences and stories have been central to this work. Your voices have shaped our community’s understanding of the impact of guaranteed income.

Community Partners

The Community Spring and CGIR teams would also like to acknowledge the following partners for their assistance and support:

Mayors for a Guaranteed Income	Cheryl Kauffman (Circuit Administrator, Florida Department of Corrections)
Spring Point Partners	
Guaranteed Income Community of Practice	Jennifer Altenburger (Data Systems Administrator, Alachua County Sheriff’s Office)
Economic Security Project	
Results for America	Tequila McKnight (Research Fellow, University of Pennsylvania)
Steady	
Southern Legal Counsel	
City of Gainesville	The Wagmore Foundation
Former Mayor Lauren Poe	
Mayor Harvey Ward	

Contributing Researchers

Nina Cross, MSSP; Joana Halder, MA; Ben Cochran, MSSP



Founded by Michael D. Tubbs, MGI is a coalition of mayors advocating for a guaranteed income to lift all of our communities and build a more resilient, just America. Since launching in 2020, MGI has grown its ranks from 11 to over 125 mayors, supported the launch of 50-plus guaranteed income pilots across the country, and delivered more than \$250 million in direct, unconditional relief to everyday Americans. MGI has also launched two affiliates, Counties for a Guaranteed Income and United for a Guaranteed Income Action Fund. MGI’s work has ensured that guaranteed income spreads from a single moment in Stockton, CA to a national movement—pushing the conversation forward in cities, state capitals, and Congress.



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Background

Viewed today as a magical place of endless summer, beaches, citrus groves, and tourist attractions, Florida has drawn outside visitors and residents for over 500 years. With sprawling coastlines in the Gulf of Mexico, Caribbean Sea, and Atlantic Ocean, as well as a verdant interior, Florida has offered strategic and economic advantages to the many people who have claimed it over the centuries. As a result, and like the rest of the US, the state's history has been defined by violent efforts to control its landscape and original inhabitants in the pursuit of individual wealth. Florida itself may seem younger and less embedded in the roots of the nation, since it was not part of the original 13 colonies settled by the English and did not become a state until 1845. However, Florida's history holds within itself larger narratives around land, racial identity, and greed that characterize American history and modern American political and economic culture.

In the 19th century, Florida represented a fresh start for White European settlers, Indigenous tribes, and freed Black people alike after wars ravaged the American South; however, racism and greed created an inequitable social structure that persists today. The desire for profit drove policy decisions that forced poor people, especially poor people of color, to perform unpaid labor, continuing the state's dependence on it. While slavery and Jim Crow seem like ancient history, a look back at Florida's history uncovers how its legacy is perpetuated by present-day criminal justice practices.

The Colonization of Florida and Alachua County

The land known today as Florida was originally inhabited by over a dozen Indigenous nations, each with their own languages, customs, beliefs, and identities. Totalling over 300,000 people, these nations included the Pensacola, Apalachee, Guale, Timucua, Potano, Ocale, Tocobaga, Mayaimi, Ais, Calusa,

Jeaga, Tequesta, and Matecumbe (Orange County Library Systems, 2024; Tomalin, n.d.). The warm, nearly tropical climate offered abundance and prosperity to its original inhabitants, but also drew the attention of European settlers. Spanish colonizers began arriving in the region in 1513 and called it Florida due to its lush vegetation (Fuson & Norrell, 2019). Competition between colonial powers for land in the Americas brought war and disease, which ravaged Indigenous populations and drove them from their ancestral homes over the next 250 years (Fuson & Norrell, 2019).

Alachua County, located in the more temperate climate of north-central Florida, was initially settled by Spanish colonists in 1539, but Gainesville was not formally established until nearly 300 years later, after Florida was ceded to the US in 1824 (Encyclopædia Britannica, 2024). In the early 19th Century, Florida was still largely considered wilderness. While the southern states, especially Georgia and South Carolina, reaped enormous profits off of cotton and tobacco plantations worked by enslaved people, the dense vegetation and relatively large Indigenous population of Florida made similar settlement in this region challenging (Taylor, 1935). However, frequent warfare in the newly independent US wreaked havoc on these industries in the former colonies. Frontier farming practices focused on quantity quickly depleted the once nutrient-rich soil, and insatiable greed for land and profitable crops compelled many American plantation owners to migrate West and South in search of affordable, allegedly unoccupied land on which to establish themselves (Caudle, 1989).

The same conflicts that compelled this migration also forced the dislocation and resettlement of many Indigenous peoples in the Southern states. The tribe known today as the Seminoles are descendants from the Creek, who originally inhabited modern-day Georgia and northern Florida but migrated south to create distance between themselves and European settlers in the French and English colonies (Sturtevant & Cattelino, 2004; Weisman, 2014). In the continued clashes over land, the Seminole resisted both the local settlers as well as the U.S. government, which launched a systematic removal and resettlement campaign under President Andrew Jackson in the 1830s (Caudle, 1989; Sturtevant & Cattelino, 2004). Perhaps the most well-known examples of their defense of their ancestral homes are the Seminole Wars (Sturtevant & Cattelino, 2004). This opposition, combined with the ever-present greed for more arable land, led the U.S. government to pass the Armed Occupation Act of 1842, which made 200,000 acres of land near Alachua County for available settlement, and “provided 160 acres of land to any single man over eighteen or the head of a family who could bear arms and would live on the parcel for five consecutive years and cultivate at least five acres” (Caudle, 1989, p. 434).

Forced Labor: From Slavery to Work Houses

The colonization of Alachua County in the mid-1800s is inextricably tied to the American reliance on the forced labor of enslaved people. Hand-in-hand with the removal of Indigenous people from Florida came the importation of enslaved Africans to work the newly occupied land. During the Revolutionary War, many enslaved people fled the southern colonies to Florida, seeking freedom in land outside of British control, and lived alongside Indigenous tribes (Riordan, 1996). However, as plantation owners migrated to Florida in the first half of the 19th century, they brought the institution of slavery with them. These settlers found that the climate of north-central Florida, including Alachua County, was suitable for growing vast amounts of sea island cotton, which soon became the staple crop of the

region (Sowell, 1985). Advancements in transportation also propelled settlement of the region. Notably, the establishment of the Florida Railroad connected central Florida to shipping and trading ports on the Gulf and Atlantic, where new steamships could carry cash crops such as cotton to other ports along the coasts (Caudle, 1989; Sowell, 1985). This in turn created a higher demand for an enslaved work force in Florida. Census records show that from 1850 to 1860, the free population of Alachua County doubled, while the enslaved population increased four-fold (Caudle, 1989). In Gainesville, White plantation owners who used enslaved people to work the land experienced exponential growth in wealth. Records show that “slave owners reported eighty-one per cent of the declared wealth of the community. The average net worth of a slave owner was \$21,411; that of a non-slave owner, \$1,817” (Sowell, 1985, p. 435).

The exorbitant profits and power of these wealthy White men were severely threatened by the abolition of slavery following the Emancipation Proclamation in 1863 and the Thirteenth Amendment in 1868 (Encyclopædia Britannica, 2019). In response to these reforms, former Confederate States throughout the South, including Florida, began to enact new laws to criminalize and thereby impose servitude and forced labor upon free Black people. One such set of laws was Florida’s Black Codes. Drafted by a legislature composed of former slave-owners and Confederate officials, the Black Codes essentially made it a crime to be Black and poor or unemployed (Joseph-Marc, 2022; Mechanic, 2023; U.S. History Scene, n.d.). Free Black people charged under these codes often faced fines of up to \$1,000 (about \$29,000 in today’s money), which was completely unaffordable for the many free Black people who had been forced to perform unpaid labor for much of their lives (Joseph-Marc, 2022). Florida’s Black Codes also made it a crime for free Black people and other people of color to marry a White woman; enter a church, railroad car, or establishment inhabited by White people; vote and hold political office; and possess a firearm (U.S. History Scene, n.d.). Violence against free Black people became horrifically common in the South. Between 1865 and 1950, Alachua County was marred by at least 27 documented lynchings, reflecting a broader pattern of racial terror aimed at enforcing White supremacy (Equal Justice Initiative, 2017). These brutal acts went largely unpunished, as state and federal officials often failed to hold perpetrators accountable.

The cultural and legal legacies of slavery, racism, and violence against Black people in Florida (and throughout the US) directly shaped the modern criminal justice system and contributed to the rise of mass incarceration. Florida’s present prison system has deep roots in the state’s history of using forced labor as punishment. Florida’s Black Codes also contained “vagrancy laws,” which said that any free Black man who was unable to find gainful employment could be imprisoned and forced to work in a labor camp for up to 1 year (Mechanic, 2023; U.S. History Scene, n.d.). While the Thirteenth Amendment abolished slavery nationwide, the law had an exemption which allowed forced labor as punishment for a crime (Mechanic, 2023). In this way, “Florida’s lawmakers crafted the perfect formula to exploit Black bodies, protect their dominating economic interests, and keep the legacy of slavery alive” (Joseph-Marc, 2022, para. 5). In 1877, Governor George Franklin Drew signed a law codifying the inhumane practice of convict leasing, under which imprisoned people could be lent to private companies and made to labor for a rate much lower than that of a free person (The Florida Timeline, n.d.). These laws were disproportionately applied to poor Black men who were often arrested for minor, nonviolent infractions like petty theft, traffic tickets, and loitering.

Criminal Justice in Context

While these horrific practices may seem like a thing of the past, Florida's prison system continues to operate as a free labor generator for the state well into the 21st century. In any given year, across the state of Florida, as many as 3,000 people experiencing incarceration are forced to work long hours in dangerous conditions performing tasks that are essential for the functioning of the city and state (Conarck, 2019). One person recalled having to wade into alligator- and snake-infested waters with minimal protection; others report having to operate heavy machinery and dangerous equipment without adequate training, posing a risk to their own safety as well as others' (Conarck, 2019). Further, Florida is one of seven U.S. states that does not require incarcerated people to be paid for labor (Sainato, 2024).

The value reaped by the state off of incarcerated people's unpaid labor is enormous:

Some 2,500 prisoners are assigned to community work squads, and another 1,000 to Florida Department of Transportation road squads. Prisoners worked about 17.7 million hours in the last five fiscal years on the community work squads alone. The Department of Corrections estimates the value of this labor at around \$147.5 million over the time period, but the real value is likely double or triple that estimate—factoring in actual wages and benefits. The FDOT said it has used about \$67 million of inmate labor since July 2015 (Conarck, 2019, para. 17).

The ACLU found that in 2022, the labor of incarcerated people across the US produced over 11 billion dollars in goods and services each year (Sainato, 2024). Warren Yeager, the former commissioner of Gulf County, Florida admitted:

There's no way we can take care of our facilities, our roads, our ditches, if we didn't have inmate labor.... We could not tax our citizens enough to replace the value that the inmate labor contributes to our community (Conarck, 2019, para. 32).

This illustrates how mass incarceration has continued the state's dependency on forced labor, thereby incentivizing the continuation of criminal justice policies that arrest and imprison people to save money for the state.

Despite all that incarcerated people's work provides to the community, they continue to be criminalized and excluded from that same community after their release. Formerly incarcerated people in Florida and elsewhere in the US experience myriad collateral consequences, repercussions outside of the court-ordered sentence for a criminal conviction that significantly hinder a person's ability to survive

and stay out of jail or prison in the future. Far from being unintended, many of these collateral consequences are codified into Florida's laws, either directly or indirectly. In this way, the echoes of Florida's Black Codes ring well outside the walls of prisons. For example, in Florida, a felony conviction can strip someone of basic civil rights, including the right to vote, serve on a jury, own a firearm, hold public office, and hold certain occupational licenses (ACLU-Florida, n.d.). A felony conviction is also seen as a justifiable reason to deny someone employment, housing, and medical care for themselves or family members (Florida Rights Restoration Coalition, n.d.; Restoration of Rights Project, n.d.).

These current practices mirror the exploitation and violence of the Black Codes, vagrancy laws, and convict leasing laws of the Reconstruction and Jim Crow eras, targeting poor Black people in particular in an effort to maintain a racial order and generate revenue for the White-majority state and private enterprise. Awareness of the trauma wrought by mass incarceration has grown in recent years and sparked a new generation of social movements aimed at criminal justice reform. However, many states remain hesitant to change, seeing political gain in a tough-on-crime platform. For instance, in 2024, the Florida legislature recognized the failure of the criminal justice system to prevent recidivism and promote public safety, and, with bipartisan support, passed three bills aimed at reducing barriers to financial and educational opportunities for formerly incarcerated people (Schweers, 2024). However, these bills were all vetoed by Governor Ron DeSantis, who felt they would "reward criminal activity" (Schweers, 2024, para. 9).

Florida's continued tough-on-crime orientation is evident in its massive criminal justice system. With over 85,000 people incarcerated in state prisons, Florida operates the second largest state prison system, behind only California (a state with nearly double Florida's population). About 60,000 people are incarcerated in jails on any given day, while another 180,000 are under supervision (Prison Policy Initiative, n.d.). Accounting for population size, Florida's total incarceration rate (including prisons and jails) stands at roughly 705 per 100,000, surpassing the U.S. average of 614 per 100,000 and far outpacing most other countries around the world. Racial disparities within Florida's criminal justice system are also severe. Whereas Black people make up only 15% of Florida's overall population, Floridian prisons are almost 50% Black. The incarceration rate for Black residents of Florida stands at 1,187 per 100,000; for Whites, this number drops to 282 per 100,000 (Prison Policy Initiative, n.d.). In Alachua County specifically, the disparities are even higher. A study by the University of Florida's Bureau of Economic and Business Research (BEBR) found Black residents of Alachua County were 3.9 times more likely to be arrested and 8.8 times more likely to be incarcerated than White residents (BEBR, 2018). As a result, "2.4 percent of the total Black population in Alachua County are incarcerated, and they represent around 70.8 percent of the total inmate population in the county" (BEBR, 2018, pp. 14–15).

Why Guaranteed Income?

American Capitalism has always placed a premium on work and financial success, resulting in a national culture of tying human worth to economic productivity. Mass incarceration embodies this in the most violent way. Modern criminal justice practices are rooted in the prioritization of profit over people, which results in a systematic campaign to force poor people, especially poor people of color, into hard labor to generate profits for businesses.

The racist, avaricious practices of Florida's early plantation-centric economy and the race-based social hierarchy solidified by the Black Codes manifest themselves outside of the prison system in the form of poverty and economic injustice. BEBR (2018) found that poverty, including child poverty, was high in Alachua County for all racial and ethnic groups, but was especially high for Black residents. The poverty rate for non-Hispanic White residents was 19.7%, compared to 35.7% for Black residents and 31.2% for Hispanic residents, and "Black children are 3.3 times more likely to be in poverty than non-Hispanic White children" (BEBR, 2018, p. 12).

People experiencing poverty are disproportionately likely to be arrested and incarcerated, especially young men of color (Alexander, 2010; Ghandnoosh et al., 2023; Rabuy & Kopf, 2015). A 2014 study found that people experiencing incarceration have incomes 41% lower than non-incarcerated people, with 57% of incarcerated men and 72% of incarcerated women earning less than \$22,500 per year (Rabuy & Kopf, 2015). The American justice system not only criminalizes activities associated with poverty, but then also makes it harder to access legal resources that keep one out of jail unless one has access to wealth (Ghandnoosh et al. 2023; Reiman & Leighton, 1995). Even after one is released from incarceration, meeting probation requirements and staying out of jail require time and resources that people living in poverty do not have. Formerly incarcerated people under state and/or county supervision have to secure transportation for meetings with probation officers, submit themselves to drug testing, pay supervision and court fees, and more (Alachua County, 2024). The money and other material resources needed to meet these requirements can be hard to secure for formerly incarcerated people who have not had income throughout their incarceration and face unique challenges in gaining employment upon release (Halushka, 2019).

Given the significant role that money plays in one's risk of arrest and incarceration, GI offers an opportunity to give formerly incarcerated people access to capital that can help them meet the requirements of their release and avoid recidivism.





Context and Demographics

Alachua County, encompassing the City of Gainesville, presents a diverse demographic and economic profile. The county's population is 285,994, with Gainesville accounting for 145,214 residents. In Alachua County, 69.8% of residents are White, 20.4% Black or African American, and 11.4% Hispanic or Latino, while in Gainesville, these figures are 61.4%, 21.9%, and 12.1%, respectively. Gender distribution is balanced, with women accounting for 51.7% in Alachua County and 52.3% in Gainesville. Median household incomes are \$57,566 for the county and \$43,783 for Gainesville, with poverty rates of 19.1% and 29.0% respectively. Housing costs reflect median rents of \$1,191 in Alachua County and \$1,151 in Gainesville. Educational attainment is high, with almost half the residents holding at least a Bachelor's degree or higher, sustaining the local economy.

The study sample consisted of 249 individuals with a felony charge, released from incarceration within the past 6 months in Alachua County. The mean age of participants was 39 years in the control group and 40 years in treatment. Participants were predominantly male, 89% in the control and 77% in the treatment group. Both groups were primarily non-Hispanic (control: 96%; treatment: 93%), with African Americans comprising the majority (control: 59%; treatment: 70%). Household characteristics were similar across groups, with an average of three members and one child per household. Most participants were single (control: 77%; treatment: 72%) and spoke English. Educational attainment

was predominantly at or below high school level (control: 86%; treatment: 83%). Mean household incomes were below the federal poverty threshold for a family of three¹ (control: M=\$13,839, Median=\$7,668; treatment: M=\$17,605, Median=\$8,676) (Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, 2021). Only half of the respondents in both groups received Supplemental Nutrition Assistant Program (SNAP) or other benefits. Overall, while minor variations were observed in the baseline demographic characteristics between the groups, the joint multivariate test did not reveal any statistical significance.

Table 1: Demographic Profile of Participants

GAINESVILLE, FLORIDA		TREATMENT	CONTROL
SAMPLE SIZE		115	134
AVG. AGE OF RESPONDENT (YEARS)		40	39
GENDER (%)	Male	77	89
	Female	23	11
	Other	0	0
CHILDREN IN HOUSEHOLDS (%)	Yes	38	38
AVG. NUMBER OF CHILDREN IN HH		1	1
AVG. HH SIZE		3	3
ETHNICITY (%)	Non-Hispanic	93	96
	White	24	37
	African American	70	59
	American Indian/Alaska Native	0	1
	Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0	0
	Asian	2	0
RACE (%)	Other/Mixed	4	3
MARITAL STATUS (%)	Single	72	77
	Married	10	8
	Partnered/In-relationship	18	15
PRIMARY LANGUAGE AT HOME (%)	English	99	99
	Spanish	1	1
EDUCATION (%)	High School or less	83	86
	Associate's degree (Two-year college)	10	4
	Bachelor's degree (Four-year college)	3	5
	Trade or technical school	3	4
	Other	1	1
ANNUAL HH INCOME (IN \$)	Median	8,676	7,668
	Mean	17,605	13,839

¹ According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the 2022 federal poverty guideline for a family of three in the 48 contiguous states and the District of Columbia is \$23,030.

Research Methods and Theory

QUANTITATIVE METHODS

An RCT was conducted to evaluate the impact of the GI program on the overall health and well-being of participants. The study sample was comprised of 249 participants recruited over two time periods. Eligibility criteria included: individuals aged 18 and above and who had either been released from any county jail in Florida or from state or Federal prison with a felony conviction between August 9, 2021 and February 9, 2022, or began felony probation in Alachua County in that same time period. Of these participants, 115 were assigned to the treatment group, and received unconditional cash for 12 months, with \$1,000 received in the first month and \$600 per month for 11 months, while 134 were assigned to the control group and did not receive any monthly payments. Data collection occurred at four intervals: Baseline (January 2022 for the first cohort and March 2022 for the second cohort), 6 months (June 2022 and August 2022), 12 months (December 2022 and February 2023), and 18 months (June 2023 and August 2023), which was 6 months after the cessation of cash disbursement. Participants were compensated for their time completing the surveys as explained below. Detailed response and attrition rates are provided in the Appendix.

A standardized framework for outlier detection and management was employed, using the Winsorization method to minimize the influence of extreme values. Missing data were addressed using Multiple Imputation by Chained Equations (MICE), following Azur et al. (2011). This iterative imputation method is well-suited for complex data structures and patterns, providing accurate imputations in cases of missing data. The process involved multiple iterations ensuring a diverse range of imputed results. Imputations were performed on specified outcome variables and selected demographics. Post-imputation, the accuracy and reliability of the imputed data were validated through distribution analyses, plausibility checks, convergence diagnostics, sensitivity analyses, and model fits. Cross-validation compared models trained on original versus imputed datasets, validating the effectiveness of imputation strategies. These steps resulted in a comprehensive set of imputed datasets, forming the foundation for subsequent analyses.

Following imputation, a comprehensive analytical approach assessed the GI intervention's impact using both generalized estimating equations models and regression-adjusted means analysis. Linear mixed models were used for sensitivity analysis. This allowed for a rigorous examination of data collected at several time points. Data were structured in a long format, with each observation representing a participant's outcome at a specific time period. The model included fixed effects for treatment, time, and their interactions, along with a random intercept for each participant to account for within-subject correlations in repeated measures data.

Recidivism was defined as the occurrence of a criminal offense at either the county or state level during the period of interest. To measure incidents of recidivism, individuals in the treatment and control groups in both cohorts were matched to both Alachua County and Florida State incarceration records. Recidivism at the state level was assessed using a publicly available search tool and noting any offense dates that occurred during the GI period or within the 6 months following the end of GI. Recidivism at

the county level was determined using records matched by the administrative bureau of the County Sheriff's Office for this same time period. No records were found in the Federal Bureau of Prisons database. Several individuals were not found in records even though they passed eligibility criteria. This data set did not include exact offense dates, so the date on which an individual was booked was used in lieu of an offense date. When found, records that overlapped with state-level recidivism were removed to avoid duplication. In both the state and county data, there were many instances of charge stacking, in which multiple charges would be issued related to one event. Regardless of how many charges were stacked upon a single booking or offense date, the new booking or offense was only counted as one incident.

QUALITATIVE METHODS

At the 6-month mark, 35 participants (20 treatment and 15 control) were recruited to participate in one-on-one semi-structured interviews. Each participant was offered a \$40 gift card for their participation. Of the participants recruited, 17 from the treatment group and 3 from the control group agreed and were available, yielding a final sample of 20. Interviews were conducted in participants' homes, public parks, homeless shelters, or in other public spaces such as coffee shops. Interviews lasted between 45–120 minutes, were recorded on a digital audio recorder, and professionally transcribed. Interview questions were derived from a theoretical framework designed to explore issues of economic insecurity, structural disadvantage, and individual subjectivity.

Data was uploaded to and analyzed with Dedoose qualitative analysis software. Analysis involved a combination of deductive and inductive coding strategies. Deductive coding incorporated a set of theoretically informed questions and prior analysis to help make sense of the interview data. Inductive coding was based on themes that emerged directly from participant responses (Gerson & Damaske, 2020). The analytic process was also guided by principles from narrative criminology, which highlights the role of stories as tools for meaning-making, illustrating how storytellers perceive and interpret the world around them (Presser & Sandberg, 2019; Stone, 2015).



Findings

1. What Second Chance?

You get back out, right? Some people say, well, you know, you, you living above your means. That's not so ... It's not that you living above your means, that's, that's not the issue. Yes, I went and got work clothes and things of that nature, right? But, but, but, so it's not that. It's not that you're living above your needs. It, it's that the money for society, trying to readjust back to that, with no skill sets, because you got manual work and you got skilled work ... so you, you're thrown back to a rat race that you are in and you're trying to, not compete, but just trying to stay alive. You're just trying to stay afloat. So if you don't have the education that you need just to be a, you know, a helper on, on, on a roofing job or be a decent, uh, helper doing plumbing or what have you. A job that pays decent money to, to, to be able to reinvent yourself while you're in society, there's no chance for you.

Anthony, a Black man in his 40s who spent over a decade in federal prison for drug convictions, makes an important point. Rarely does release equal reintegration. In fact, those who have been convicted of felony offenses, spent time behind bars, and have experienced release into society typically have little footing on which to stand. Prison programming rarely equates to marketable skills, and the mark of a criminal record radiates a pernicious stigma. Anthony continued:

That's why it makes it a joke, talking about recidivism. It, it's a joke because it's no way that you can come out and be successful from leaving prison after doing 10 years, 12 years. I came out, bro... I didn't know how to even work an iPhone when I came home, you feel me? So I had failed to do that. So now I'm used to paper applications, right? I come home now, everything online, just do it online.

Anthony was cognizant of society's overwhelming focus upon recidivism—largely distilled into efforts to control and manage this population of criminalized individuals—absent the requisite resources for success. How could someone come out of prison, unprepared for life, and succeed?

I filled out an application, right? Online. I thought I had submitted the application, right? [laughs] So I had a youngster... he say, he said, "Brother, let me see what you did." I showed it to him, right? I never submitted the application. I, I filled it out, but I thought I submitted it, but I, I, I, I didn't. So he said, "Big bruh, let me show you something." [laughs] He said, "You never submitted it." So I said, "Oh, that's why they never called me?" He said, "Yeah." ... So, certain things, it's, it's not that you're living above your means. It's basic things of that nature that you need to know how to do. You see what I'm saying? It's not that they want to do wrong when they come home. It's like, this chance

of me coming home, it's overbearing. Because now rent is calling. Bills are calling. Yada yada yada. Things are calling your attention and now it's like, man, listen, it, it, it wears you down. And that's the part, the mental part as well ... that was beating me down ... Because these bills coming in every month. The [electric utility company] is not playing about their money. You see what I'm saying?

The transition from prison to society presents numerous challenges. Almost immediately, the economic pressures of everyday survival—not to mention criminal justice debt—begin taking their toll. How will you find a job without a decent work history or in-demand credentials, equipped instead with a criminal record? Have you developed the technological skills and diligence to navigate bureaucracies? Where will you live and how will you pay for all of life's expenses? What will be the thing that beats you down mentally? Anthony recognized the importance of these questions amid the constant expectation that formally criminalized people find a way to lift themselves up by their bootstraps and achieve the (near) impossible. What he and others also recognized are the profound transformations in status that individuals with criminal records must contend with.

These individuals, fashioned into carceral citizens by the felony label, as Miller and colleagues put it (Miller & Alexander, 2016; Miller & Stuart, 2017), become subject to new restrictions (e.g. they are prohibited from certain occupational licenses, face felony disenfranchisement, etc.), while also being required to fulfill new responsibilities (e.g. take and pass regular drug tests, complete anger management classes, and demonstrate productivity), or risk reincarceration. Additionally, carceral citizens face an opportunity structure constructed almost entirely to exclude them from the resources necessary to live in a capitalist society. No longer behind bars, yet still confined to life on the margins. Bruce put it succinctly:

You do your time and get out and still have to do your time for the rest of your life. You know, as long as you got this on your record, [you're] an outcast. Nobody wants you. Because I did my time, I served my time for this crime I committed. That should be it. You know what I mean? That should be no more. Now, everywhere I go, for the rest of my life, you do a [background] check or something. Here it is. I'm a criminal.

Another participant, Hank, gave a parallel response:

They say once you pay your debt to society, all's good, and all that. Bullshit, man. You know, you don't ever get your debt to society paid because it stays on your record. Now, if that shit was paid, y'all, y'all would, y'all would wipe that shit out and be done with it.

The theme of perpetual punishment saturated participant narratives of life after prison, providing a glimpse into their experiences and subjective sense-making. In what follows, we utilize both quantitative and qualitative analysis to illuminate the structural disadvantages facing this population, while also exploring GI's potential for addressing those disadvantages.

2. Financial Well-Being

Annual Household Income

Florida's court system spans several tiers and jurisdictions. Yet, the system also presides over a landscape filled with obstacles for those with prior criminal records. Individuals attempting to reintegrate into society after incarceration here face a trifecta of challenges: they often return to communities lacking sufficient employment opportunities; lack access to vital services such as substance abuse treatment and mental health counseling; and find themselves at a disadvantage due to systemic disparities linked to race, socioeconomic status, or geography. Justice-involved individuals must also tackle substantial financial demands in the form of fines, fees, and restitution tied to their convictions. For reference, a recent analysis found that over \$315 million in fines and fees was assessed in Florida-based criminal courts during fiscal year 2017–18 (Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability [OPPAGA], 2019).² The legislature has also mandated probation fees of at least \$40 per month, while eliminating exemptions from prosecution and public defense fees for indigent defendants (Diller, 2010; Mai & Rafael, 2020). Compounded by added interest and surcharges, the debts can escalate into insurmountable liabilities; left unsettled, they can lead to additional penalties, ultimately pushing the formerly incarcerated to the margins of society.³

Additionally, historical biases and ongoing discrimination not only contribute to disproportionate rates of incarceration and harsher sentencing for individuals of color, creating a cyclic disadvantage, they also extend outward beyond the courtroom, as individuals face greater scrutiny and fewer opportunities for social reintegration upon their return. Hence, reentry is fraught with barriers that are both direct products of and indirectly influenced by the legal environment that surrounds them (Harris, 2016). One such example is the 1996 Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA). Purportedly designed to reduce government aid dependency, the policy instead exacerbates poverty and increases criminal recidivism by excluding this population from welfare programs like SNAP and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) (Tuttle, 2019). While some states lifted these bans, Florida continues to enforce them, worsening financial hardships and hindering reintegration efforts (McCalmont, 2013).

2 While only 21–69% of this debt was collected in 2018, failing to pay debt within certain time periods often results in the addition of surcharges.

3 People released from jail or prison under these conditions begin their reentry experiences already behind: indebted to the courts and on probation while dealing with a range of other barriers to full participation in society that put them at a disadvantage compared to those without criminal justice contact. Jake, for example, struggled with a suspended driver's license due his inability to pay \$2,000 in court fees for convictions unrelated to driving. Tyler owed over \$1,500 in court-related costs and jail processing fees (the latter due to a recent probation violation). Lenny and other interviewees identified exorbitant probation fees of \$50 to \$60 each month. Many participants also identified the extra expenses they incurred due to their status as carceral citizens. For example, Willie noted the wastefulness of apartment application fees for those like him who were more than likely to get denied housing opportunities anyway, while Bill criticized the transportation-related costs necessary to get back and forth to appointments with his probation officer.

Against this backdrop, financial strain was evident from the outset for both groups. At Baseline, the average annual income for the treatment group (\$17,605) was higher than that of the control group (\$13,839), a difference that was statistically significant ($B=4,737, p<=0.02$). This trend continued at every subsequent time point: at 6 months, the treatment group reported an average annual income of \$19,158 compared to \$16,462 for the control; at 12 months, \$20,711 vs. \$18,886; and at 18 months, \$22,264 vs. \$21,410. Income volatility remained high for both groups; however, it was 2 percentage points lower for the treatment group relative to the control at both 6 and 12 months, reaching parity by the end of the pilot (47% for both groups).

Participant narratives, such as the following excerpt from Patricia, provide texture to these quantitative trends around income volatility. Patricia had been struggling to keep up with bills after her husband was hospitalized for 4 months due to kidney failure, and relied upon a mix of GI, wages as a dog breeder, and loans to get by:

This money has helped me so much to where it has gotten me out of debt somehow ... I took some of the burden off of [my husband]. I paid a, uh, truck note. And I paid the [appliance store] with that \$600 ... and [my friend] is gonna take me so I can pay the mortgage so I can get them off my back.

Patricia also described relying upon exploitive payday loan services to survive:

We've been borrowing from a cash, cash, uh, cash thing. You borrow \$500, you gotta pay \$55 extra. And that's what I've been doing. And we had got away from that. But when he got sick and went back in the hospital, I had to pick it up again.

Patricia later emphasized the near impossibility of surviving without the help of Just Income:

It would've been hard as hell. Because like I said, this \$600 has helped me get by. This helped me catch up on a lot of things. And especially with him being in the hospital and me trying to take care of business from that end. And I ain't got no help. You understand? I ain't got no help, period.

The feeling of isolation was pervasive among interviewees. Although some relied upon family support to get by, the lack of transitional services capable of smoothing the abrupt move back into the community was perceived as a defining feature of life after incarceration. The GI helped to pick up the slack, though rarely was it enough to totally eliminate all of the economic pressures faced by participants. In any case, the many individual-level demands placed upon participants—e.g. pay your court and probation fees, figure out where to live, how to secure an income, submit to random check-ins from your probation officer, etc.—left many feeling as though they were alone in an ongoing struggle to climb out of an endlessly deep hole.

In line with findings from a Prison Policy Initiative report on income disparities (Rabuy & Kopf, 2015), more than one in eight participants in both groups had incomes below the federal poverty level, implying a severe and persistent poverty trap. Despite modest increases in income, participants'

financial precarity remained severe due to the substantial demands of court and probation-related fees, along with the need to address immediate financial obligations, leaving little room for meaningful improvements in overall financial stability and savings.

Covering Emergency Expenses and Building Savings

Navigating economic pressures is an important concern for those exiting carceral institutions. Locked out of good jobs and funneled into temporary or insecure work arrangements, one emergency expense can be the difference between eating and hunger, having a place to call home and living on the streets, or freedom versus reincarceration. Moreover, developing an ability to deal with unexpected expenses can contribute to a sense of financial independence and security amid otherwise tenuous relationships with institutions like the labor market and criminal justice system.

Fortunately, survey results demonstrate that resilience to a financial shock improved over time for the treatment group. At Baseline, fewer than 10% of participants in both the treatment and control groups reported the ability to cover a \$400 emergency expense. Six months after the first disbursement, a statistically significant difference emerged ($B=0.81$, $p=0.032$), with 19% of the treatment group indicating they could manage this expense compared to only 10% in the control group. This significant trend continued, with 15% of the treatment group reporting the ability to cover the expense at 12 months, compared to merely 4% in the control group ($B=1.32$, $p=0.007$). By 18 months, 16% of the treatment group could cover the expense, compared to 7% of the control group ($B=0.85$, $p=0.042$). As Cliff explained about the GI:

It helped me out a lot, you know, and like, due to my circumstances and situations ... it does a lot for me because when I don't have, I forget about that and be like, "Oh, yeah, oh shit. I forgot I got [the guaranteed income]," you know? So it'd be some shit coming right on time where I need it and I could pay this and I'd be like, "Oh boy, good thing."

When asked about the best part of receiving a GI, another participant, Jake, identified his enhanced ability to cover unpredictable expenses in the short term:

The stability of knowing that I have that rock there. That financial security that I know that's gonna be there. So if all shit goes to hell. At least I got that. That's just a rock, a nice little security blanket.

Although Jake noted that he still could not afford to pay down his court fees of \$2,000, he did feel confident in his ability to cover an expense of a few hundred dollars, if necessary.

Others, like Hank, identified concrete examples of how the GI helped them manage unexpected costs:

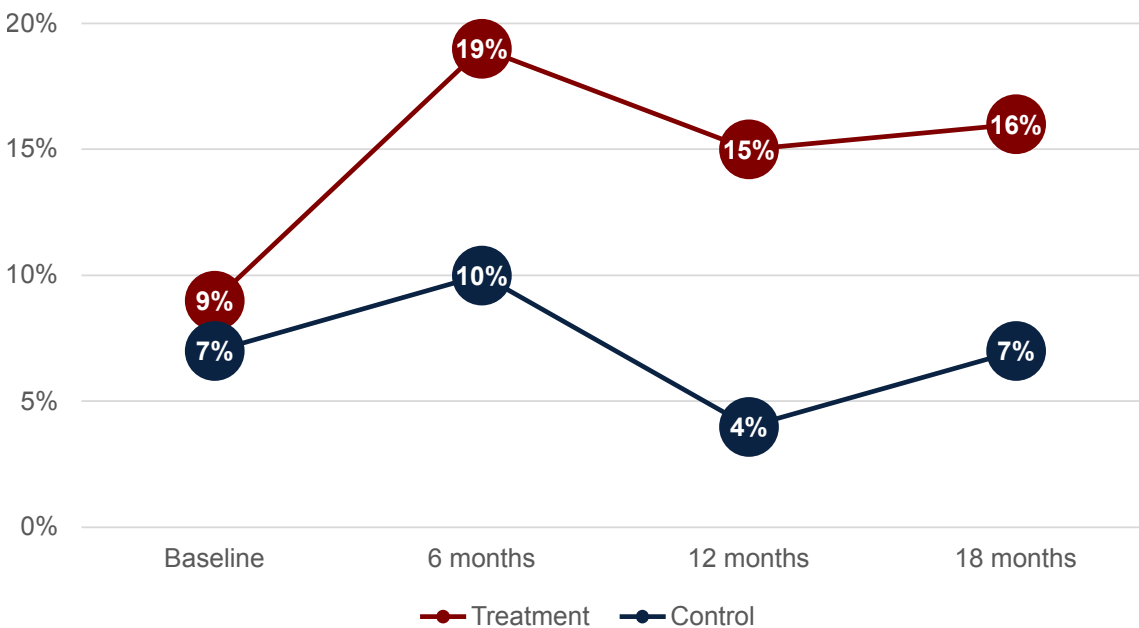
It is definitely a Godsend and it's helping us. We'd be struggling a whole lot worse than we are right now. You know, we're struggling right now. I mean, \$600 doesn't go a whole

long way. But it's \$600, bro. You know, it, it, it helps with groceries. It helps with, uh, uh, it helped when our water heater took a shit on us about a month ago. And we got a new water heater thanks to that \$600 ... We probably wouldn't have any hot water right now, without that. We had to save \$25 here and \$50 there, and \$10 here and \$5 there, until we got that money saved up. You know?

Hank struggled to put large sums of money away, but the GI did provide a means of saving small amounts regularly. Others, like Bruce, James, and Bill, were better able to save for larger ticket items (such as used cars) with the help of multiple resources such as a job, veteran disability benefits, and Social Security Income.

Figure 1. Ability to Cover a \$400 Emergency Expense (Yes Responses as %)

After payment began, **the treatment group** was more likely than **the control group** to be able to cover a \$400 emergency expense. This trend continued after payments ended. Notably, however, under 20% of treatment group participants were able to cover these expenses, compared to 10% or less of the control group.



Quantitative findings centered more squarely on savings, however, revealed pervasive financial vulnerabilities. At Baseline, an overwhelming majority teetered on the brink of economic catastrophe, with over 90% in both groups reporting savings of less than \$200—a cushion so thin it could be wiped out by a single unexpected bill. Six months after the first disbursement, the treatment group (10%) showed a statistically significant increase ($B=1.18, p=0.019$) in savings above \$500 compared to the control group (4%). While savings in this category declined marginally in subsequent waves to 7% for the treatment group, the control group saw only a marginal increase over Baseline. Overall, while the GI triggered a short-term boost in savings for a few, the subsequent attenuation underlines the obstacles participants encountered in sustaining it.

Table 2. Trends in Savings (in %)

TIME PERIOD	<\$200		\$200-\$500		>\$500	
	TREATMENT	CONTROL	TREATMENT	CONTROL	TREATMENT	CONTROL
Baseline	95	93	2	4	3	3
6 months	80	90	10	6	10	4
12 months	78	88	15	6	7	7
18 months	83	89	10	6	7	5

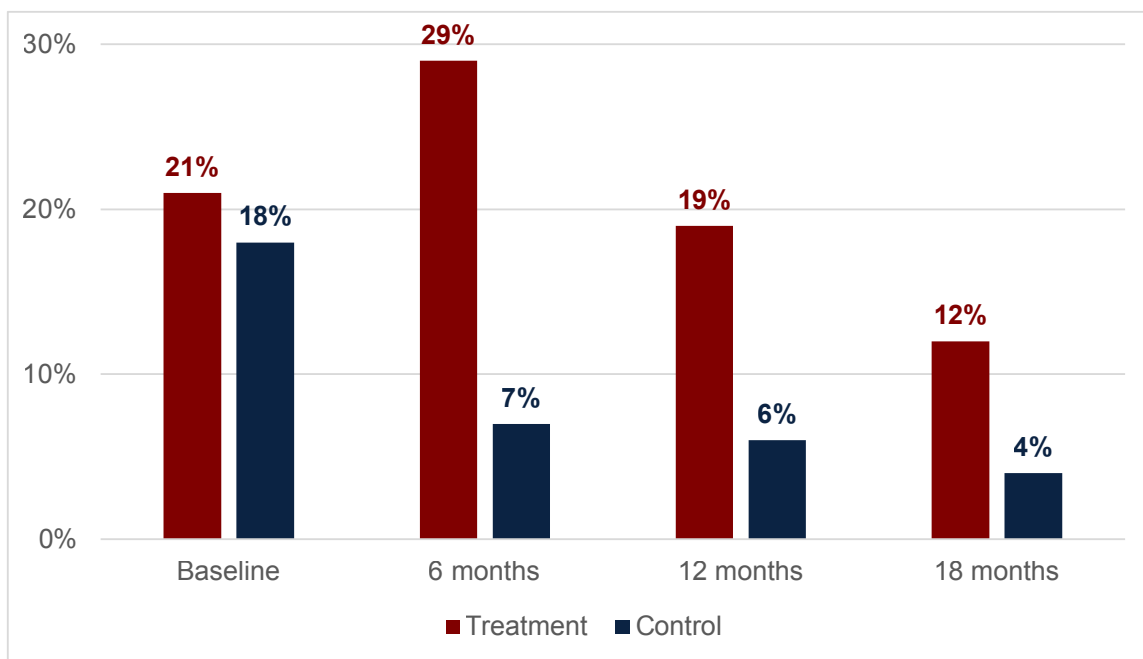
Table 3. Transition in Savings: Baseline to Endline (in %)

TIME PERIOD	IMPROVED		STABLE		DECLINED	
	TREATMENT	CONTROL	TREATMENT	CONTROL	TREATMENT	CONTROL
Baseline to 6 months	8	4	82	91	10	5
6 to 12 months	6	7	82	89	12	4
12 to 18 months	6	2	92	95	2	3

Contributing to Families

Approximately 20% of the treatment group participants were able to provide financial assistance to family or friends, a capability that the control group largely lacked. However, these differences were not statistically significant. The primary types of support offered included covering monthly bills (such as phone and utilities), housing expenses (including rent), and costs related to medical care, transportation, and childcare.

Figure 2. Ability to Extend Help to Family (% Yes Responses)



For example, when asked if the money impacted others, James described helping his daughters and grandchildren:

James: *Oh yes it does impact other people. My daughters. Uh, one got six kids. Yeah. It impacts her. She says thank you all the time, because if she's in need, I send her a little something. Yeah, it impacts other people. Or my sister, yeah. It impacts her. Great impact on others.*

Interviewer: *So you might sometimes send them some money?*

James: *Yeah, just like my grandkids needed phones. I was able to get them phones. The phone bill, I'm able to pay the phone bill \$15 a month. You know?*

Importantly, many participants conceptualized the GI as a resource to pay off a debt of care. That is, participants were cognizant of the previous support they received from family members, who paid their bail, sent them care packages and put money on their books, paid for phone calls and postage so that they could communicate with the outside world, received them into their homes upon release, and fed them when they were hungry. Having little ability to repay this symbolic debt prior to receiving cash assistance, the Just Income program provided a new means of positively contributing to the lives of family members rather than acting as a drain on their finite resources. Bruce spoke to this point directly:

My brother would send me something, my sister would send me something. So they would provide for me while I was in prison ... I hated for them to be spending their money in there because they always, they did my time with me. They done did my time with me. And so when I go over there, I might spend a little bit of money, have a little party, do a cookout or something like that. Or I take my sister to the movies 'cause she's handicapped, go watch a movie or something. And it's just the small things that mean a lot. That money does things like that for me.

Willie expressed a similar point, but further emphasizing his ability to contribute where he had previously been absent:

[My family] would send a package for me, people could send you shoes and stuff. And now my sister would do that for me, like for Christmas, stuff like that... and my big thing [is] I'm building my relationship back with my daughters. Because you know, I did those 16 years ... They were young and then they were grown. And you go right back to prison, you know you're still losing time ... We've started, you know, building a relationship ... And you know, really, to be honest, it was a blessing because all the years that I wasn't there for them, and now I'm getting the opportunity, you know, to help them out when they need something. And you know, what I couldn't do for them and didn't do for them while I was in prison, I'm doing it for my grandkids now.

Willie went on to describe a situation where he was able to come through for one of his daughters (and his grandchildren) when she struggled to pay a bill:

Last month, uh, I went out to the house and her lights [are] off. Okay. So I didn't have the money at the time, and she needed \$250 to get the lights cut on, and I went and borrowed the money. Okay. And sometimes, you know, when you borrow money, you have to pay interest. So I went and borrowed \$250 to get the lights cut back on ... my grandkids, I can't see them being in the dark. And when the [guaranteed income] money came, I paid the people back, you know? And that's why I said, you know, this, for me, it's a blessing because I could help my daughters out when they need something, you know?

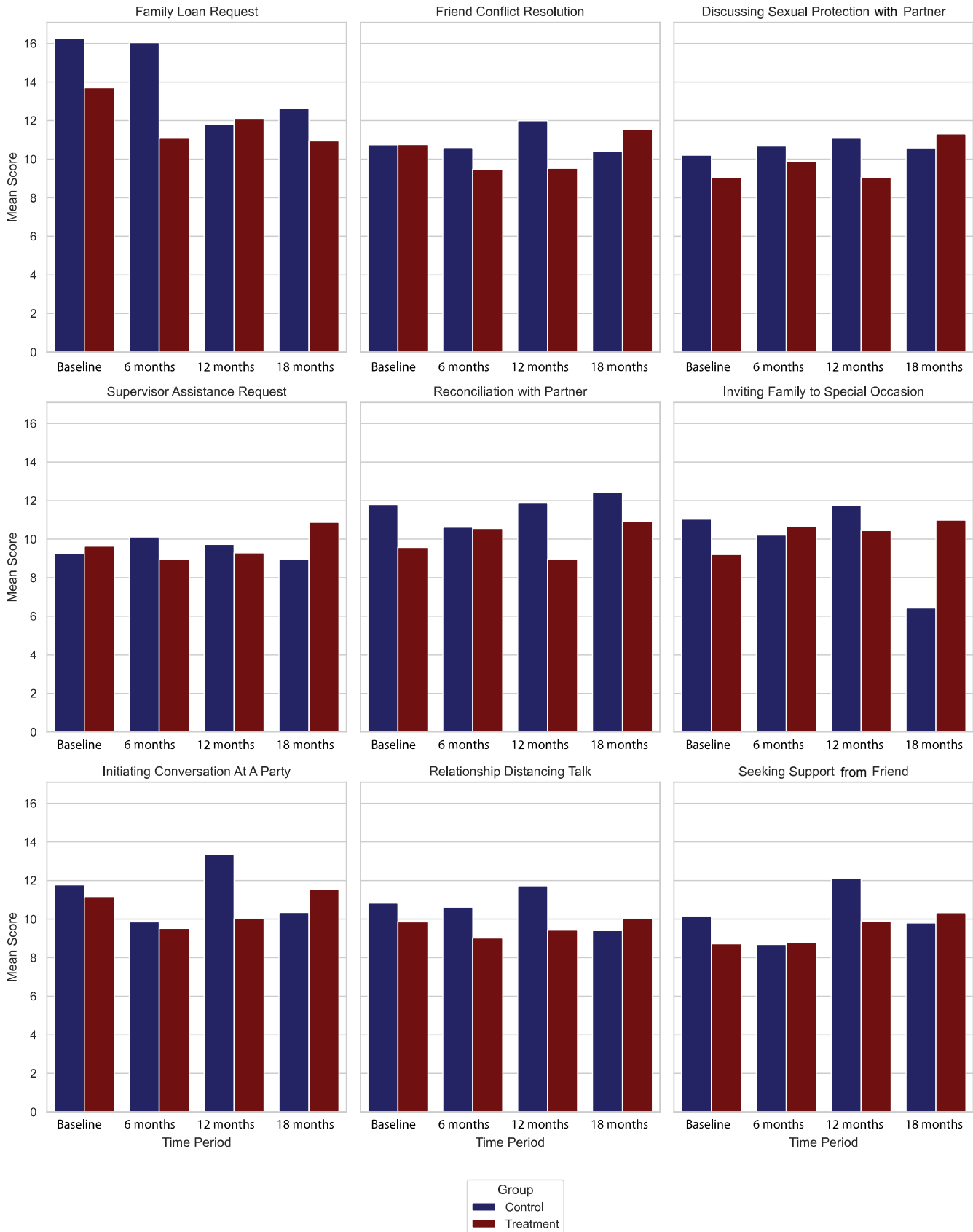
As such, the GI allowed participants to make a positive impact on others in ways that would have been difficult otherwise. In doing so, participants reported feeling like net contributors within their family units, and some even reported an improved ability to strengthen social bonds—benefits that extend upon the undoubtedly important material benefits of cash assistance.

Rejection Sensitivity

Rejection sensitivity refers to the propensity to anxiously expect, readily perceive, and intensely react to rejection. The Sensitivity to Status-Based Rejection Questionnaire (RSQ) is designed to measure individuals' expectations and reactions to social rejection based on their social status. The Rejection Sensitivity scores (Mendoza-Denton et al., 2002) varied across different scenarios and time points between the two groups. Scores for the control group trended higher or fluctuated less consistently compared to the treatment group for most scenarios. For instance, in the scenario of reconciling an argument with a partner, the control group's scores increased over time while those for the treatment group generally trended lower. By contrast, in the family loan request scenario, both groups showed a decrease over time, with the treatment group exhibiting a smaller reduction. Overall, total scores for rejection sensitivity attenuated over time for treatment, as evidenced by lower scores across multiple scenarios, but by 6 months post-intervention, the control group reported comparatively better scores ($B=2.28$, $p<0.001$).⁴ The reductions observed during the GI phase suggest a general improvement in interpersonal relationships and emotional well-being as this cohort reintegrated into society. As mentioned elsewhere, participants receiving GI were able to show up for those around them in ways that would have been challenging absent the unrestricted cash. Furthermore, to the extent that economic stability facilitates a sense of confidence and calmness, treatment participants were likely better able to engage meaningfully with those around them.

⁴ Cronbach's α is used to assess the internal consistency and reliability of the Rejection Sensitivity Questionnaire, indicating how well the items in the scale measure the same underlying construct. Values for the scenarios ranged from 0.65 to 0.78, confirming the reliability of the scale within the sample population.

Figure 3: Rejection sensitivity (Mean scores)





3. GI and Quality of Life: Housing, Food Access, and Employment

Housing

Homeownership is a key driver of wealth accumulation, and disparities in housing tenure in Alachua County reveal a persistent intergenerational wealth gap, with non-Hispanic White households enjoying a homeownership rate almost 1.5 times that of Black and Hispanic households. From 2019 to 2023, eviction filings surged to 2,255 in 2023, and the eviction rate per 1,000 renter households rose from 31.72 to 45.68, further destabilizing communities of color who are disproportionately funneled into rental markets rather than homeownership. Meanwhile, median rents remained volatile, experiencing a 21% spike from 2021 to 2022, before stabilizing. High poverty rates and restrictive zoning policies further deepen economic and racial segregation. Single-family zoning laws which mandate low-density housing in Gainesville inflate living costs and perpetuate disparities. Although the Fair Housing Act of 1968 prohibited racial discrimination in housing, the zoning practices have historically limited access to affluent neighborhoods in a racialized manner. Consequently, a geographic divide has emerged, with low-income African Americans predominantly residing in East Gainesville and the affluent White populations concentrated downtown and to the west. The recent Gainesville/Alachua County Joint Assessment of Fair Housing (AFH) emphasized that African Americans are the most segregated group, with limited access to transit, jobs, and housing (Florida Housing Coalition, 2020). Current median gross

rents stand at \$1,151, against a backdrop of median household incomes of \$43,783 and a 29% poverty rate. The city’s ongoing review and update of zoning codes aim to extend property rights, lower costs, and improve access for economically disadvantaged residents, particularly in pricier neighborhoods.

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) data corroborate these significant housing affordability challenges: 21% of rental households are moderately cost-burdened, spending 30% to 50% of their income on rent, while 35% are severely cost-burdened, allocating over 50% of their income to housing. Higher burdens primarily affect areas near the University of Florida, densely populated by students, and extend south and east of downtown. The racial and geographic disparity in affordability is even more pronounced among homeowners, with East Gainesville residents spending a significantly larger share of their income on housing compared to those in the western part of the city and some downtown areas.

The housing situation among study participants was precarious. They faced the formidable challenge of finding lodging with a criminal record, which made securing housing nearly impossible, further exacerbated by a system that criminalizes homelessness (Florida’s Council on Homelessness, 2023; Florida House of Representatives, 2024).

At Baseline, the treatment group reported lower median housing cost ratio (40%) compared to the control group (59%). The cost burden fluctuated over time and by the conclusion of the study, the cost ratio for the treatment group increased to 46%, compared to the control group’s 43%. At no time points were the differences statistically significant. Moreover, at Baseline, 45% of the households in the treatment group compared to 54% in the control group spent 30% or more of their income on housing, with a substantial proportion of them severely cost-burdened. Although there was a slight reduction in burden at the 6-month mark for both groups, this was not maintained, and by 12 and 18 months, almost 45% of treatment group households were paying over 30% of their income on housing, with around 20% spending more than half.

Table 4. Trends in Housing Cost Burden over Time (in %)

TRANSITION IN HOUSING COST BURDEN	BASELINE		6 MONTHS		12 MONTHS		18 MONTHS	
	TREATMENT	CONTROL	TREATMENT	CONTROL	TREATMENT	CONTROL	TREATMENT	CONTROL
Median housing cost ratio	40	59	38	52	40	38	46	43
Cost burdened (cost ratio >30%)	45	54	24	28	45	37	45	33
Severely cost burdened (cost ratio >50%)	35	40	10	12	20	20	21	17

**The cost ratio is the percentage of household income spent on rent or mortgage (minus utilities)*

Utility costs also significantly strained household budgets, with expenses fluctuating from Baseline to 18 months for both groups. At the outset, 23% of treatment participants and 21% of control participants were paying between \$200–\$400 for utilities. By 18 months, these figures increased to

34% for treatment and 28% for control. Those paying more than \$400 also increased over time, while those paying less than \$200 remained relatively stable. Only a small proportion of participants in both groups had utilities included in their rent, and less than 5% of participants reported receiving any form of rental assistance.

Table 5. Utility Costs over Time (in %)

UTILITY AMOUNTS	BASELINE		6 MONTHS		12 MONTHS		18 MONTHS	
	TREATMENT	CONTROL	TREATMENT	CONTROL	TREATMENT	CONTROL	TREATMENT	CONTROL
<\$200	23	11	26	21	23	23	25	23
\$200-\$400	23	21	27	22	30	25	34	28
More than \$400	5	2	12	9	20	11	9	8
Included in rent	18	21	20	15	17	19	11	14
Someone else pays	30	46	15	32	11	22	21	27

Housing Status

The housing status among participants was analyzed through surveys over two distinct time frames—“in the past month” and “current.” This provided a more comprehensive understanding of the challenges and variability in housing stability faced by the participants. While there were signs of improvement, particularly in the treatment group, homelessness remained a persistent problem.

The precarious nature of participants’ housing was evident in their frequent changes in living arrangements. At Baseline, 24% of the treatment group and 34% of the control group reported staying in two or more different places during the previous month, indicating substantial housing instability which persisted throughout. However, from the initiation of the study to post-intervention, both groups experienced modest improvements in housing stability. The proportion of participants residing in their own apartment or house increased from 25% to 35% in the treatment group and from 21% to 29% in the control. Concurrently, reliance on family members’ or significant others’ homes decreased from 48% to 44% in the treatment group but increased from 47% to 50% in the control. Despite these trends, homelessness remained a persistent challenge. While rates showed a decline at 6 and 12 months, they returned to Baseline levels by the study’s conclusion (10% in the treatment group and 13% in the control group). Regression analyses revealed no significant differences in homelessness rates between the treatment and control groups.

Table 6. Housing Status for Past Month (in %)

IN %	BASELINE		6 MONTHS		12 MONTHS		18 MONTHS	
	TREATMENT	CONTROL	TREATMENT	CONTROL	TREATMENT	CONTROL	TREATMENT	CONTROL
Homeless/On the street	10	14	3	3	4	2	10	13
Own Apartment or house	25	21	37	29	49	49	35	29
Family member's house	31	31	40	41	19	15	18	16
Boyfriend's/ Girlfriend's house	10	9	5	11	10	12	19	18
Friend's house	2	1	3	4	1	3	0	0
Other non-relative's house	5	6	2	2	0	0	7	16
Residential treatment facility/Rehab	1	4	0	0	1	2	3	2
Transitional housing or halfway house	3	1	1	1	0	1	0	0
Shelter or rooming house	5	6	0	0	1	2	0	0
Hotel/Motel	2	1	3	3	6	4	1	1
No set place/ Moved around a lot	2	2	4	4	6	3	0	0
Shared time between two places	4	4	2	2	3	7	7	5

Quantitative findings likewise revealed significant disparities in current housing and living conditions over the study period. Homelessness rates doubled for both groups from Baseline (6% for both treatment and control) to post-intervention (12% for treatment vs. 14% for control), though the difference between groups was not statistically significant. These findings square with Remster's (2017) findings based on a cohort of 12,338 men released from Pennsylvania prisons. She discovered that although the risk of homelessness was highest in the first month post-release, half of the individuals in her sample did not experience homelessness until 2 years later. Housing insecurity among formerly incarcerated individuals, therefore, appears to persist well beyond the immediate post-release period.

Table 7. Current Housing Status (in %)

IN %	BASELINE		6 MONTHS		12 MONTHS		18 MONTHS	
	TREATMENT	CONTROL	TREATMENT	CONTROL	TREATMENT	CONTROL	TREATMENT	CONTROL
Homeless/On the street	6	6	3	5	4	2	12	14
Own Apartment or house	25	22	36	29	42	40	26	18
Family member's house	35	37	42	38	24	20	27	25
Boyfriend's/ Girlfriend's house	12	7	6	8	9	10	18	15
Friend's house	3	3	2	4	9	16	0	4
Other non-relative's house	5	5	1	1	4	6	0	0
Residential treatment facility/Rehab	0	1	0	0	0	0	14	17
Transitional housing or halfway house	3	3	1	0	0	0	3	7
Shelter or rooming house	8	10	6	13	4	4	0	0
Hotel/Motel	2	3	0	1	3	1	0	0

Rental and homeownership status showed modest variability, with the treatment group maintaining slightly more stable housing outcomes (25% at Baseline to 26% post-intervention) compared to the control group (22% at Baseline to 25% post-intervention). Support from friends and family remained consistent, with approximately half of the participants in both groups receiving such support at Baseline (55% for treatment vs. 52% for control) and similar proportions post-intervention (45% in treatment vs. 44% in control), indicating no differences between groups.

Amid difficult housing circumstances, a number of interviewees in the treatment group noted that they pooled resources with family members in order to make ends meet. Lenny, for instance, discussed the relief he felt when his sister offered to provide him with housing, “didn’t know how I was going to make it, you know? But thank God for my sister. She’s been a tremendous blessing to me. She provides me with a place to live. Um, she’s very supportive of me.” When asked if he supported his sister as well, Lenny responded:

Oh, yeah. Yeah. I pay, I pay the cable bill, that's \$170 a month. And I buy groceries. That's another \$200, \$300 a month. I buy all the household paper towels, toilet paper, paper plates, bleach, comet, Lysol, I buy all that ... I help around a lot.

Importantly, co-housing with family members helped participants navigate both the costs associated with applying for and maintaining housing and the severe exclusions they faced from private landlords:

Interviewer: *So, what is life like having a felony record?*

Bruce: *Oh, it's just really different. It's just like, you just can't, especially when it comes to jobs, uh, places to stay... It's like for the rest of your life, you know, you are, you are a extra minority. You know what I mean?... now your life is truly messed up. You know, every time I go somewhere and this [landlord] here saved me because, uh, she said she didn't need no [record] check on me. And everywhere I was going, I was spending money for applications so I could live in a decent place, you know? And they charge you \$85, \$50, \$85 for application fees. And I'm doing this two or three times a week. I said, I just can't do this anymore.*

Interviewer: *I mean that's, that's a lot of money to spending and then just to keep getting denied.*

Bruce: *Yeah. Denied. Yeah.*

Bruce later mentioned that he alternated between his GI and veteran's disability cards to pay the exorbitant application fees:

When I was doing my applications, I was balancing from my VA benefits and my other cards. And I'd do an application with this one here, and do an application with this one, do an application with this card here [gesturing at different cards], you know what I mean? So I wouldn't have to just eat all the way at one card, you know?

Here we see the explicit and immediate costs of discrimination: Bruce estimated that he spent hundreds of dollars on application fees only to get denied time and again. Bruce tried to manage the financial toll of such discrimination by spreading it across his various income streams, but he felt like the search for a place to live was unsustainable and would eventually inhibit his ability to afford a home. Luckily, he came across a landlord willing to rent a unit without running a background check, highlighting the game of chance people with records are subject to within a context of widespread private discrimination.

Participant responses also underscored the fact that the criminal label often superseded one's ability to pay for housing. As Willie noted,

The money is, is good, sometimes it'll help you. But sometimes it's like... if I save \$2,000 to move in a place and I go around trying to find one, and they're holding my criminal record over my head. So what the hell am I saving this \$2,000 for? Can't get nowhere to stay.

Willie was staying with one of his daughters at the time of the interview and he felt as though navigating the housing market was a losing proposition: "Then when you try to get a place ... you got to pay them \$45 or \$35 for background check. And then if they don't accept you, you lose that anyhow!" Willie and other interviewees spoke to the limited options available to people with criminal records, forcing them to either play an expensive numbers game, hope that someone would mercifully take a chance and ignore their record, or rely upon family members to provide housing.

By the pilot's conclusion, a greater proportion of the treatment group had transitioned into higher-quality homes (57% vs. 41% in control). Conversely, a larger proportion of the control group reported moves to more desirable neighborhoods (44% vs. 31% in treatment). Despite these trends, evictions were common. Overall, these findings highlight a non-linear trajectory of housing stability and chronic housing insecurity among participants, a challenge compounded by the post-pandemic rise in rents, the expiration of the eviction moratorium, and the termination of emergency rental assistance programs. The GI seemed to have temporarily offset only some of the adverse effects of these policies for the treatment participants.

CHAOS

Housing instability and mental health challenges often lead to immediate consequences that permeate multiple aspects of daily life, such as disturbances in regular schedules, difficulties in maintaining order, and elevated levels of ambient noise within the living environment. These outcomes were quantitatively captured by the CHAOS scale (Matheny et al., 1995), which assesses the extent of environmental instability and disorganization on household dynamics. Initially, the treatment group reported significantly lower scores on the CHAOS scale relative to the control (M=29.51 vs. M=31.58; 95% CI: -3.78 to -0.36, $p<0.02$). Six months after the first disbursement, a further attenuation in household chaos was observed in the treatment group (M=29.46) compared to the control group (M=31.46), maintaining statistical significance (95% CI: -3.45 to -0.55, $p<0.01$). This trend of lower household chaos was sustained at 12 months (mean difference=-1.94; 95% CI: -3.40 to -0.47, $p<0.01$). The average scores attenuated further for the treatment group 6 months post-intervention (M=29.36) relative to the control group (M=31.23; 95% CI: -3.61 to -0.13, $p<0.04$). Additionally, the proportion of participants reporting low levels of household chaos decreased by 5 percent points for the control group between Baseline and post-intervention, compared to a 2 percent point increase for the treatment group. Collectively, these findings demonstrate the effectiveness of the GI in sustaining or improving household stability and reducing environmental chaos.

Case Study 1: Grace Marketplace and the Need for Robust Supports

Field Note: *It's a hot, humid day and I'm touring the local shelter—Grace Marketplace—with a colleague from Just Income. We had just finished a car tour of the city, and he wanted me to see one of the primary supports for people exiting prisons with nowhere to go. I had written a report a few years back, using some national Bureau of Justice Statistics data, and found that formerly incarcerated people are about 10 times more likely to be homeless than the general public. Part of the reason is that the criminal justice system often fails to provide people with the transitional support they need to truly reintegrate. The homeless response system tries to pick up the slack.*



As we approached Grace, a few people were sitting under the trees in front of the main entrance, maybe they were waiting for a ride or for an extra bed to open inside. As we walked through, I remember marveling at the size of the compound. Multiple dormitory-style buildings peppered the grounds, encased by a chain-linked fence running the entire perimeter. Turns out, Grace used to be a prison. Now, it functions as a low-barrier respite for adults, people with criminal records, those without identification, individuals dealing with addiction, and so on. Most live in large dorm spaces, with bunks lined in rows and large ceiling fans above that attempt to move warm air around the open rooms. As

we walk around, my colleague points out designated spaces for people who prefer to live on their own in tents propped on raised wooden structures. He also points out laundry facilities, a dining area, and a building designated entirely for veterans who sleep two to a room and have access to a small kitchen and lounge area. The staff looks busy. They stop and greet us here and there as they walk to and from buildings, carrying documents and speaking with residents along the way (End field note).

There is much to do at Grace. According to the latest point-in-time surveys, roughly 500–700 people are homeless on any given night in Alachua County (Keys to Home, 2023). A significant proportion of them deal with mental health conditions, substance use disorders, and/or histories of domestic abuse (Keys to Home, 2023). The shelter provides street outreach to identify unsheltered individuals, emergency shelter services, and permanent housing programs designed to facilitate long-term stability among individuals and families. A number of Just Income participants praised the shelter for providing a place to stay and a bite to eat when they needed it most, and multiple participants found permanent housing as a direct result of the shelter’s assistance.

Andrew, for example, explained that he was released from prison with only \$50 in gate money, so Grace became his primary source of support:

I was camping, but I was using their facilities. ‘Cause you can still go in there, take a shower, wash your clothes, eat. Okay. They have social services, housing, people that help you with things, all that kind of stuff.

After prison Andrew had a difficult time trying to find work, “most places didn’t want to hire me. ‘Cause of my background.” Eventually, he found a part-time job working evenings in the back of a local restaurant, while also picking up hours as a



day laborer for a temp agency. Still, his criminal record meant that landlords were averse to giving him a housing opportunity:

When I got out of prison, it, it was hard. Okay. Nowhere wanted to rent to me. I had to go to Grace and then go through their, um, housing people as a, as a middleman to these apartment places that could explain my situation and that I'm working two jobs and I'm trying to change my life and things like that. Yep.

In the end, although Andrew had enough money to afford an apartment due to the combination of employment and GI, he attributed his ability to actually attain housing—e.g. get over the hurdle of his criminal record—to the support of Grace Marketplace:

Andrew: I think that Grace is a godsend. There's nothing, I've never seen anything like that anywhere else in the country. Um, it's amazing. And it helps a lot of people and I don't think it gets the credit that it deserves from people in town, you know? They just see it from the outside. Um, so that's a big thing for me. I can't stress enough how much they helped me. I would still be on the street without them. 'Cause they were the people that talked to the people that convinced them this guy is trustworthy enough to rent a room to, you know? Just, nowhere would.

Interviewer: Wow. Yeah. I guess I didn't realize that they provided that kind of assistance as well.

Andrew: Yeah. They, they get people off the street for real, man, and they'll furnish your apartment, they'll give you food every week, every day, whatever. As long as you have a relationship with them and you're talking to 'em and letting 'em know what you need, they will completely help you. Everything. So it's huge. Yeah, it's great. It's, it's amazing.

Andrew's story demonstrates the importance of meeting the immediate needs of people coming out of prisons. Released with only \$50 and a criminal record, Andrew experienced significant barriers in his attempt to secure safe and decent housing. Furthermore, while the GI payments helped him demonstrate an ability to pay for housing, they alone could not overcome the obstacle of an electronically verifiable criminal record. Andrew also needed someone or some entity to vouch for his character and competence. Undoubtedly, it is the combination of supports that, over and over again, appears to have significantly improved the lives of participants, of which GI is but one piece of a larger net necessary for post-incarceration success.

Case Study 2: Criminalized, Exploited, and Stuck

The issue of limited options—and thus power—among criminalized people became particularly clear during an exchange with Branden (a participant in the control group), whose landlord was also his boss at a local motel. After getting into an argument with a family member at home, who threatened to call his probation officer, Branden asked his boss for permission to move into a room within the motel. His boss eventually agreed but was only willing to provide a room in an older, run-down and abandoned wing of the motel. There, the conditions were barely livable:



Currently I kind of feel like I'm stuck here. Uh, so, pretty much the only pro is that I don't have utilities to pay, but everything else is pretty bad from there. Like, I, uh, haven't had hot water in my unit since the day I moved in, about 7, 8 months ago. Uh, my toilet hasn't worked once. Um, and I have a, a, a water leak on my roof. Now, I went into the unit knowing that it was a fixer upper, uh, it's disconnected from any of the actual guest rooms that they sell per night. It's, uh, on the side of rooms that they haven't sold in a very long time. Uh, so the room needed drywall, floor, stuff like that... Oh, and the front door wasn't secure. I told my boss when I moved in, fix the front door, fix the toilet, and fix the leak from the roof, and I'll take care of everything else.

Branden was eager to move in since, with a violent criminal record, he had difficulty finding a place he could afford and qualify for elsewhere. Here, he would only have to pay \$750 a month and wouldn't have any transportation costs. Unfortunately, 7 months later, Branden's room had barely changed. Branden attempted to fix the unit on his own, purchasing drywall materials from Home Depot, but the ongoing leak and plumbing issues persisted: "I tried to fix the roof, but I, I have no experience doing that. I have no plumbing experience either." Branden later continued:

I actually just had to rip all of that out about 2, 3 weeks ago now. 'Cause it was getting super, super moldy. And it was actually mold resistant drywall too, by the way. Um, it was really bad. You're not gonna believe this when I show you.

Branden proceeded to pull up pictures on his phone of black mold covering much of the wall space in his room. He was currently living there with the walls removed and only the studs surrounding his unit.

What I've had to do is, uh, as far as taking showers, I, I can't do cold showers. So, uh, I go to a regular motel room here to take a hot shower and then to use the bathroom, I either go over there [points to a restroom in the lobby] or I use the toilet that I have and I use a five gallon bucket to flush it.

When asked about his boss's response, Branden quickly replied: "He's just been really dismissive." Branden aspired to get a better job so that he could one day move out of the motel but was threatened by his boss with an ultimatum: "He said, 'If you think about quitting, you can get out of here too.' So basically saying, I have to work here in order to live here." This story makes legible the exploitative conditions created by the twin forces of mass criminalization and capitalism. Unfortunately, Branden could not fall back on a GI to at least provide an economic resource for making a claim on other housing opportunities. Regardless, Branden's exploitability as a carceral citizen points to the need for broader structural changes to our contemporary system of status-based inequality.

Food (In)Security

Along with shelter, food is the most basic and necessary prerequisite for human survival, and an important concern among those exiting carceral spaces. Unfortunately, rising prices and explicit exclusions from nutritional supports create added barriers to food access among those with felony criminal records. In particular, PRWORA imposed lifetime bans on SNAP benefits, colloquially known as food stamps, for anyone convicted of drug crimes. The act did allow for states to opt out or modify the ban, however a recent survey of state policies demonstrates that 21 states continue to ensure that at least some individuals with felony drug convictions are restricted from receiving SNAP. In Florida, roughly 19,000 individuals with drug trafficking⁵ convictions are banned for life from receiving nutritional assistance (Tuttle, 2019). For this group, even if they were convicted of a drug-related trafficking offense that occurred years or even decades ago, and even if they have not had another offense since then, they still cannot access SNAP benefits. Consequently, in combination with being locked out of employment opportunities, many formerly incarcerated people experience a high rate of food insecurity as food becomes unaffordable.

Overall, the quantitative findings point to an increased ability to attain food among those receiving the GI. Specifically, households in the treatment group experienced significant improvements in food security over time. Initially, a high percentage of households in both groups worried about having enough food (59% in the treatment group vs. 62% in the control group) and struggled with food preferences due to a lack of resources (63% treatment vs. 65% control). Over time, however, the treatment group consistently reported lower levels of food insecurity compared to the control group. Six months after the first disbursement, the treatment group was significantly less likely ($B=-0.55$, $p<0.035$) to indicate an inability to eat preferred foods due to unaffordability compared to the control group (53% vs. 66%). Moreover, by the end of the pilot, very low food security that manifests as hunger, that is, households reducing food intake due to insufficient resources, was significantly lower in the treatment group relative to the control group (41% vs. 55%, $B=-0.58$, $p<0.025$).

An important theme arising from the qualitative data centered around bureaucratic and structural barriers to nutritional assistance. As Jake lamented, “You shouldn’t have to go through so many fucking hula hoops to get a food stamp card.” The experience of being released from prison and qualified for, but unable to immediately secure, food assistance signaled to Jake that ‘making it’ was going to be a constant struggle: “I’m getting by, dude. I don’t know how I do it, but I do.”

Kim, a single mother of four, expounded upon the bureaucratic mazes that inhibited her ability to gain access to nutritional support:

Kim: *I guess I’m not eligible because of child support enforcement. And I’m like, please help me put him on child support. I’ve been asking y’all to help me.*

⁵ It is important to note that Florida has some of the most punitive drug policies in the United States (Florida Legislature, 2024). Defendants may be charged with drug trafficking in the state of Florida even if there is no explicit evidence of an intent to sell. For example, simply possessing certain quantities of illicit substances (e.g. 4 grams of heroin) is enough to trigger trafficking charges.

Interviewer: So you're ineligible because you're not receiving child support?

Kim: Yeah.

Interviewer: How does that make sense?

Kim: Because I'm not, uh, something about, I'm not in accordance with the child support enforcement, and I'm like, I haven't received anything from child support ... I sent them everything they asked for. And I never heard anything again... Um, but I don't know. [Later] they said that, uh, my food stamps, I was eligible and they said I had, uh, \$939 on my card, and I call my card, and it says, you got a, your balance is 0.01 cents. And I'm like, that can't be right... So I go up to the, uh, Department of Children and Families, and they tell me that it was put on a different card. And I'm like, okay, why was it put on a different card? First off. Second off, can you give that card number so I can go on my phone and order some food?... And [they said] "Nope." And I'm like, really? Okay, well can you transfer it from that card to my actual active card? "Nope." I'm like, "So I gotta wait a whole nother week is what you're telling me, before I can get food, when I've already been waiting for 2 months trying to get this right?" And they were like, "Yep." And I'm like, "Absurd. It's absurd." It makes no sense.

At the time of her interview, Kim was waiting for her food assistance to come through but was able to rely upon the GI to get by in the meantime:

Not having food stamps, it's mostly [going] to food and necessities for my children. And I, um, food is so expensive these days. It's crazy. Yeah. And I go through a gallon, sometimes 2 gallons [of milk] a day, especially on the weekends.

Others, like Cliff, similarly commented on the high costs of food: "You can go in the grocery store and spend two fucking hundred dollars there easy. I'm talking about easy."⁶

Unfortunately, some participants were excluded from ever receiving nutritional assistance to combat the costs of food. Bill, a 74-year-old man with lung cancer, put it succinctly:

They said, "Well, you got a trafficking charge." I says, "That's 15 years ago, why can you nail me now for something I did 15 years ago?" But that's the way the system is... Anybody with a traffic charge can't get food stamps.

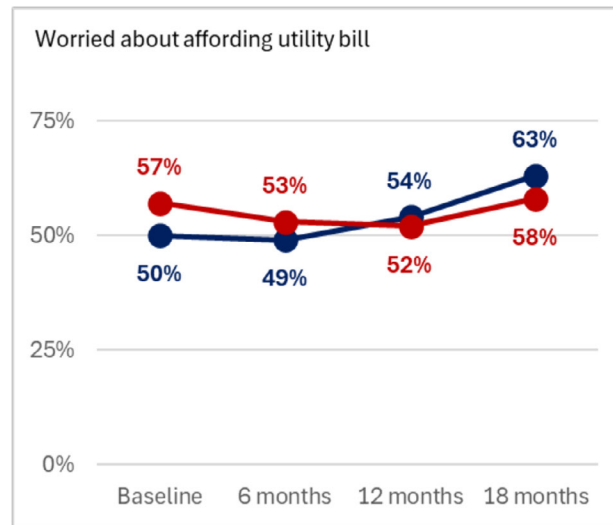
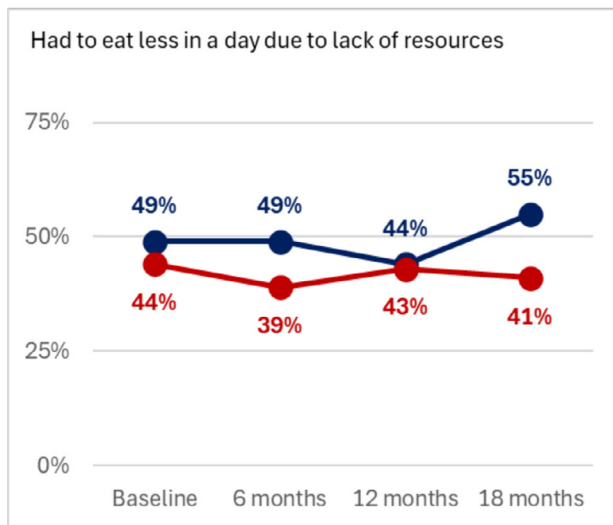
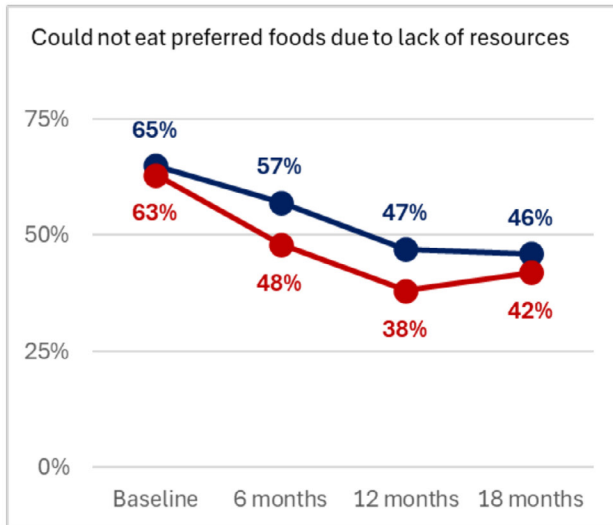
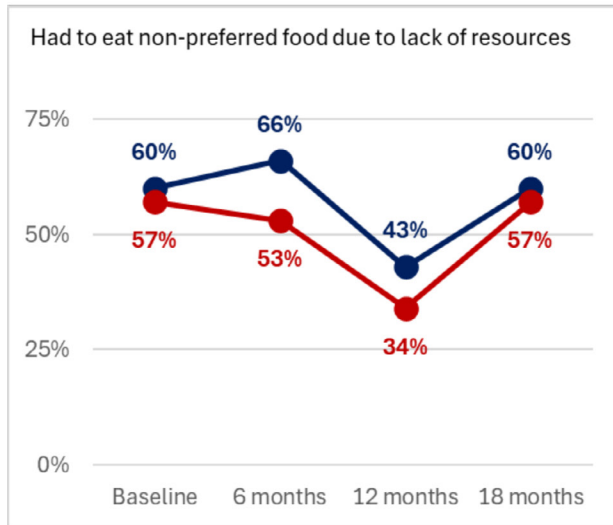
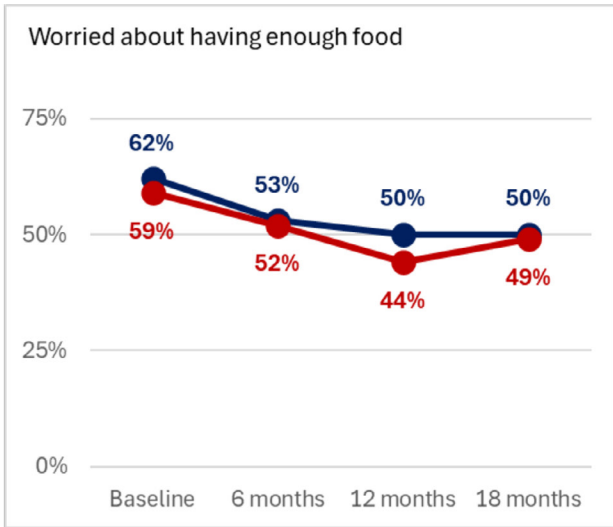
Bill valued his newfound ability to purchase groceries regularly with the support from Just Income, and even the occasional burger from McDonalds; a small act of agency afforded him dignity in the everyday.

⁶ Concerns about other expenses were also prevalent among both the treatment and control groups in the data, with the majority of participants across all time periods expressing worry about paying utility bills.

Figure 4. Trends in Household Food Insecurity: Treatment vs. Control (% Yes Responses)

The treatment group reported lower levels of food security than the control group throughout the pilot. While the treatment group worried about affording utilities more than the control group at Baseline, but worried about this less than the control group 6 months after the GI ended. Very low food security, defined as eating less food due to lack of resources or food affordability, remained lower for the treatment group than the control group 6 months after GI ended.

CONTROL **TREATMENT**

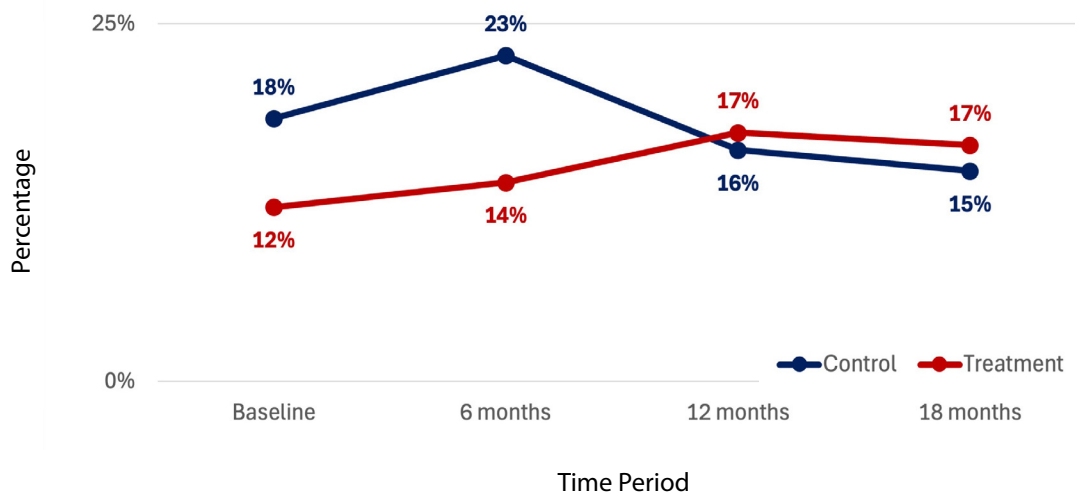


Overall, and particularly for those facing SNAP exclusions, the GI took on an important role as one of the few resources capable of providing for immediate needs. Participants reported purchasing food for themselves and for entire households, demonstrating the networked nutritional value of direct cash assistance. These findings highlight the positive impact of the GI on reducing some aspects of food insecurity, specifically in mitigating very low food security leading to reduced food intake for the treatment group households. Combined with recent research linking SNAP bans to increased recidivism within the state of Florida (Tuttle, 2019), these results further suggest the need for greater attention to the nutritional needs of justice involved individuals.

Employment

Recent decades have seen a dramatic shift in public spending priorities across the United States, and Florida is no exception. From 1979–80 to 2012–13, Florida’s corrections expenditures surged by 292%, dwarfing the mere 58% increase in K–12 education spending. This disparity is further highlighted by the 173% rise in per capita corrections spending compared to only a 58% growth in per-pupil K–12 funding. Higher education fared even worse, with appropriations per full-time equivalent student plummeting by 40% between 1989–90 and 2012–13, while corrections spending per capita increased by 12% (Stullich et al., 2016). Today, corrections continue to consume a significant 2.5% of Florida’s state budget (Sigritz, 2023). This reallocation of resources away from education and towards the criminal justice system has disproportionately impacted disadvantaged communities, potentially perpetuating cycles of poverty and limiting access to economic opportunities despite the presence of job openings in the labor market.

Figure 5. Trends in Full-Time Employment Over Time: Treatment vs. Control



In theory, Gainesville's employment landscape, anchored by the University of Florida and its affiliated healthcare system, presents opportunities for entry-level positions that could facilitate the successful reintegration of formerly incarcerated individuals. Despite the availability of jobs, however, the convergence of stigma, discrimination, and limited qualifications⁷ often funnels these individuals towards precarious low-wage positions within the secondary labor market. Participants were cognizant of this process and spoke at length about criminal record discrimination. Cheryl, who recently had a heart attack force her out of the labor market, recounted previous attempts at trying to find jobs:

Once we tell you we've been convicted of a felony, you know what that does? We are not getting that job. We might as well get up. I don't even fill 'em out when they do that. For years and years I went past that because I'm a convicted felon. I got passed by jobs that I'm qualified to do ... And that's not fair to us... You get passed by and you qualified to get these jobs ... "Have you ever been convicted of a felony?" If you lie, you going to get fired. If you tell the truth, you might not get hired. So how we gonna win? It's a win-lose situation. And guess who losing at the end of the day? The people that's trying to live, small people, the people getting out of prison.

Cheryl's words describe the double bind that people with criminal records must navigate—do you attempt to hide your criminal record and get a foot in the door, but risk getting fired down the road when the employer eventually completes a background check? Or do you tell the truth, knowing that your chances at getting hired are slim at best? Indeed, ample research demonstrates the negative impact of a criminal record on employment outcomes, even within the low-wage, entry-level job market (Agan & Starr, 2017; Pager, 2003; Pager et al., 2009).

Study participants grappled with the dual challenges of navigating the post-pandemic job market and the stigma of a record, initially resulting in underwhelming employment rates⁸ across all categories. At Baseline, less than a fifth (18% control vs. 12% treatment) of both groups were employed full-time. As the study progressed, both groups experienced a modest increase in full-time employment, but by 18 months, only 17% of the treatment group vs. 15% of the control group were employed. The generalized linear model estimates confirmed that these changes in full-time employment were not statistically significant over time between groups.

Participants reported a range of strategies to navigate potential discrimination, including mentioning their records upfront, attempting to secure previously held positions, and, in the case of Bruce, offering to work for free to demonstrate his ability:

The restaurant I went to a couple times and talked to the manager. I even offered to show him for free. I said, "Let me work a few hours for free man, get my hands dirty." He wouldn't do it.

7 Many individuals with felonies and certain misdemeanors are explicitly prohibited from attaining occupational licenses.

This practice is particularly harmful in the state of Florida, where almost 30% of jobs require a license (Florida Campaign for Criminal Justice Reform, 2019), including barbers, cosmetologists, plumbers, and electricians (Restoration of Rights Project, n.d.).

8 Approximately one-third of participants in both groups reported employment with private or for-profit companies.

Unfortunately, our data suggests that participants were largely excluded from decently paying full-time positions.

Compounded by numerous financial obligations and reoccurring exposure to disadvantaging community contexts, the barriers to economic integration for this population were daunting. Furthermore, research consistently emphasizes employment's pivotal role in recidivism reduction (Muhlhausen, 2018), yet prevailing approaches prioritize rapid job placement over sustainable career development and tend to overlook some vital factors: e.g. that achieving job satisfaction through ideal job matches is rarely feasible for this population (Council of Economic Advisors, 2022). Some participants, such as Randy, even commented on the absence of up-to-date job programming available for incarcerated and formerly incarcerated people:

Prison doesn't help you find a place to live, doesn't have no programs to get you ready to go. They got these reentry camps. The reentry camps are full of shit. All it is, is a money thing for the state of Florida. That's all it is. There's no, there's no reentry, no, no life skills where you can get your electrician license and all this. It's crock of shit. They tell you that, but they don't have it. Culinary, nope.

As such, there is a pressing need to reassess how to prepare and integrate formerly incarcerated people into an increasingly technology-driven economy. Moreover, there is also a need to reconsider the efficacy of contemporary workforce programs as a potential component of desistance (Duwe, 2018; U.S. Department of Justice, 2023).

Locked out of good jobs, many participants sought under-the-table or gig work. Conversely, those with official jobs reported inconsistent and unreliable hours, ever-changing shifts, low pay, and poor conditions. Jada's story helps to illustrate this point, while also indicating the role of GI in mitigating labor market disadvantages. Jada had been working as a housekeeper while also receiving GI payments, and she described a situation where her boss attempted to leverage her status as a carceral citizen as a means of exploitation:

People, like, use stuff against you. Like, oh, say for instance... I had a job, I was working on and off there for almost like 3 years. Nice job at a hotel. Um, just because the dude knew I was on probation and stuff, he used to book me for holidays, Christmas. I ain't have no time off. And I took people's shifts because I was on house arrest. You know what I'm talking about?... And I'm like, damn, that's crazy. So when I called in to him, he was like, "I'll just call your probation officer and tell him that you're calling out." And when I called him back, I said, "You can just call him back and tell him to kiss my ass and you can too. And I quit."

Referencing the experience, Jada mentioned that "Just Income really helps out a lot." With a newfound sense of economic security, Jada was able to make the decision to quit her exploitive job. Having previously been powerless to stand up against her boss, Jada's story helps to illustrate how unconditional cash assistance provides individuals with a greater ability to make economic choices that best serve their own interests. Put another way, income detached from any one particular job

provides economic power. Therefore, the lack of significant improvement in employment among the treatment group may be partially due to an increased ability to avoid exploitative jobs.

The proportion of stay-at-home parents or caregivers fluctuated, starting at 3% for both groups at Baseline and settling at 7% 6 months post intervention, reflecting the pressures of caregiving responsibilities influencing decisions around participating in the labor market. Kim, for example, was forced to quit her job at a nearby florist's shop after being unable to enroll her four children into daycare due to prohibitive costs and a lack of transportation: "So I had to take off from work, which summertime we're slow at the shop anyway. So the, the income has been very helpful, um, with me not working." Here again, we see how a GI is capable of providing agency amid otherwise limited labor market options.

Table 8. Trends in Employment (in %)

CATEGORIES	BASELINE		6 MONTHS		12 MONTHS		18 MONTHS	
	TREATMENT	CONTROL	TREATMENT	CONTROL	TREATMENT	CONTROL	TREATMENT	CONTROL
Employed FT	12	18	14	23	17	16	17	15
Employed PT or seasonal	10	14	9	8	11	11	10	6
Stay-at-home parent or caregiver	3	3	6	11	4	13	7	7
Business owner/ Self-employed	5	4	10	13	13	10	10	14
Gig worker	1	1	7	7	8	15	9	7
Retired/Disabled	16	14	16	10	19	12	14	12
Student	1	0	8	8	7	5	10	13
Unemployed looking for work	49	41	24	13	15	10	13	15
Unemployed not looking for work	3	4	7	8	5	8	10	12

Quantitative trends show that part-time or seasonal employment, initially at 14% in the control group and 10% in treatment, attenuated to 6% and 10% respectively by 18 months, suggesting a transition towards other categories. Business owners and the self-employed, for instance, increased from 4% in the control group and 5% in the treatment group initially to 14% and 10%, respectively,

at 18 months. In contrast, gig work remained relatively low but showed an increase as the pilot progressed, while retirement and disability status remained comparatively stable.

The percentage of students also increased over time, as individuals sought further education to improve their job prospects. Here, although significant differences between treatment and control groups did not emerge, qualitative insights suggest that the GI payments may provide pathways to better, more desired employment opportunities. Participants such as Anthony praised the extra income for its ability to both unlock and help accomplish new goals. Prior to his release, Anthony wanted to become a truck driver to secure a decent income. After release, however, he found himself saddled with bills and the pressures of paying child support. Anthony attempted to find a job after being released from federal prison on drug convictions, but without a work history and equipped with the negative credential of a criminal record, he was forced to take a restaurant position that offered inconsistent hours and little pay.

Anthony struggled to make ends meet: “When I came home, my plan couldn’t start working, because I came home to a poverty state.” Anthony mentioned that he considered going back to selling drugs to provide for himself and his family. Fortunately, he was eventually selected to participate in Just Income, which provided both a sense of economic relief and a new ability to pay for CDL classes:

So the money did stabilize me to keep my eyes on my vision and not on my poverty... There are some people who don't have something to stabilize them to stay focused on their plan, so they start focusing on their poverty—[they'll say] “So I know I can get money this way”... But the program allowed me to be free from my burdens. Like, I was free from prison but [the money] made me free from my burdens.

If poverty inhibits one’s ability to look to the future, GI may provide individuals with the economic stability necessary to develop plans and achieve future oriented goals. Treatment participants made note of both the aspirational and logistical benefits of GI. Regarding the latter, it allowed multiple participants to purchase and/or fix a used car to get back and forth to work. James, who worked as a handyman, had the following response when asked what he would be doing differently without the money:

You wouldn't have gas money. Wouldn't have the car. You would catch the bus. You wouldn't have the job. Couldn't do the jobs catching a bus. Couldn't make any money... There was no means of making a living without money, because the money provided means for transportation to get to back forth to jobs. You would have less time in your life for anything.

Interviewees often commented on their increased ability to pay for transportation-related expenses; some directing their cash toward used cars, while others found ways to get around using ride-sharing apps and relying upon family members for rides. Jake, for example, explained that his driver’s license was suspended due to convictions unrelated to driving. Unfortunately, Jake could not afford to pay the \$2,000 owed in court fees necessary to lift the suspension (an issue plaguing over 700,000 Floridians

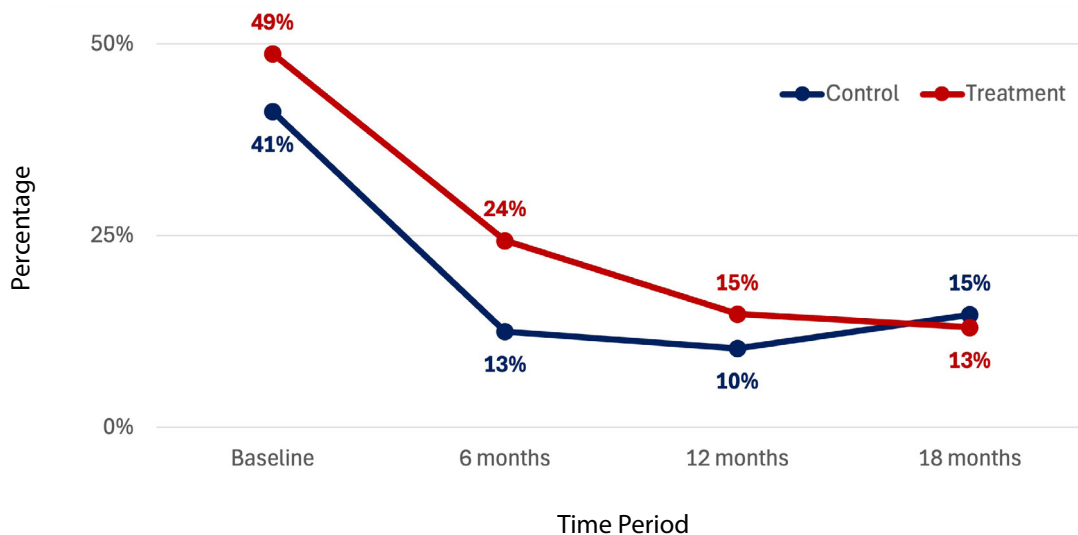
[Fines & Fees Justice Center, 2023]), but the GI did help him compensate friends and family members who brought him to work each day.

It is also important to note that roughly one-third of participants were disengaged workers who did not expect to find a job or were unable to work due to sickness or incapacity. Hank, for example, had previously found work through a friend as a painter’s assistant. Unfortunately, Hank was forced to quit after being unable to climb ladders due to significant hip and back issues:

I enjoyed doing the work, but it was just killing me, man. And, and, you know, I hurt my, my back. My nerves started messing me up, man. I couldn’t even walk, if you’d have come over 2 weeks ago... I couldn’t hardly get outta bed. The \$600 a month, man, has really been a blessing.

During his interview, Hank noted that he now relied upon donating plasma as his only way to earn cash, aside from his GI payments.

Figure 6. Participants Who Were Unemployed and Looking for Work: Treatment vs. Control



Over time, unemployment declined significantly in both groups. Initially, 41% of the control group and 49% of treatment were unemployed and looking for work. By 18 months, these figures decreased to 15% for control and 13% for treatment, reflective of the post-pandemic labor market recovery.

Overall, though, findings suggest that participants faced immense challenges as they attempted to reintegrate into society. Confronted with the dual burden of navigating the stigma of a criminal record and practical barriers such as lack of transportation, problematic health, mental illness, and limited access to necessary resources (such as credentials), participants were severely hindered in their ability to secure stable, full-time employment and rebuild their lives.



4. GI and Health and Well-Being

Physical Health

A large body of research demonstrates how mass incarceration harms public health. Those who are funneled into jails and prisons exhibit disproportionately high rates of physical and mental health issues upon admission (Wang, 2022), and spending time behind bars is associated with a number of worsening health outcomes (Massoglia & Pridemore, 2015). One study out of New York State found that for each year behind bars, an individual can expect to lose roughly 2 years off their total life expectancy—a trend that appears to hold at the broader national level (Widra, 2017).

As such, this study utilized the SF-36 General Health measure to assess the overall health and well-being of study participants (RAND, n.d.). Initially, the treatment group reported higher general health scores ($M=67.70$) relative to the control group ($M=65.15$). These scores improved over time, though did not reach statistical significance: the mean difference was 2.94 at 6 months, 2.31 at 12 months, and 2.65 at 18 months.

The impact of the GI on participant's role limitations due to physical health was varied. The treatment group ($M=67.99$) reported lower physical health scores at baseline compared to the control group ($M=68.20$). Scores for the treatment group varied subsequently, with mean differences of -4.54 at 6 months, -4.04 at 12 months, and -4.07 at 18 months. No significant impact was evident on role limitations between groups. However, the extent to which health limits an individual's physical

activities yielded worse outcomes for the treatment group relative to the control, though it did not reach statistical significance at any time point. The treatment group ($M=75.39$) reported lower physical functioning scores at Baseline compared to the control ($M=77.74$). At 6 months, the mean difference between the groups diverged further (mean difference= -8.35) and remained constant at 12 months (-8.37) but attenuated marginally at 18 months (-7.15).

The treatment group's improvement in general health and decline in health limits may be due to decreased food insecurity facilitated by the GI, as detailed above, or other related factors such as an enhanced ability to make purchases and decisions that broaden their physical capabilities. For example, one of Lenny's first purchases with his GI was a mobility scooter that would help him get around when his hip and back pain became unbearable. Cheryl, who reported debilitating stomach problems during her incarceration—which she attributed to rotten prison food—noted that the money helped to improve her nutritional intake, while also covering prescription co-pays. Bill, who dealt with an array of health issues including lung cancer and a broken foot, felt better able to attend doctor's appointments (and meetings with his probation officer), since he did not have to worry about having enough cash to pay for rides or food when he was out traveling. Overall, results suggest potential pathways to better navigating health issues, though moderate financial support alone may not be enough to truly address their root causes.

Mental Health

Interviewer: *How would you say your mental health is these days?*

Bruce: *Shit, I don't know. [laughs] Some days, man, some days I cry for no reason. I mean, some days I cry, being thankful. I mean, and some days it's, it's like I, I got everything in my head, got everything put together. Then it's like, other days that I can't get shit put together no matter what I do. You know what I mean? And then I say, uh, I gotta get myself together.*

Financial struggles and mental health challenges are inextricably linked, especially among justice-involved individuals who often face systemic issues. These individuals frequently deal with a plethora of urgent needs, including housing, employment, and social reintegration, which can overshadow healthcare priorities. Bruce, for example, noted that he wanted to get into therapy, but felt like he could not find the time due to working an unpredictably scheduled (and low-paying) fast-food job and trying to search for a new one.

Access to and continuity of care during reentry is imperative, as this population encounters numerous health-related challenges, chief among them being a paucity of quality mental health supports. The implication of this are cycles of untreated mental health issues, potentially increasing the risk of criminalized behavior and recidivism. Recent data from the Bureau of Justice Statistics highlight the scope of this problem, indicating that approximately 43% of state prisoners and 23% of federal prisoners report a history of serious mental health issues (Maruschak et al., 2021). Moreover, these

individuals also exhibit higher rates of serious psychological distress, substance abuse, and mortality due to suicide or homicide (Mental Health America, 2019).

The 2020 Community Health Assessment for Alachua County (Well Florida Council, 2020) offers a microcosmic view of these broader issues, revealing racial disparities in health outcomes and significant challenges in addressing public health equity. The report delineates disproportionately higher mortality rates from chronic conditions such as diabetes, kidney disease, hypertension, and HIV among Black residents compared to other racial groups. On the other hand, White residents exhibit higher mortality rates from chronic lower respiratory diseases, suicide, and liver disease. Especially striking is the infant mortality rate among Black residents, which is nearly four times higher than that of White and Hispanic residents. Moreover, from January 2015 to September 2018, Alachua County's hospitalization rate for mental health issues consistently surpassed the state average. Alongside this, the prevalence of Substance and Opioid Use Disorder remains a critical issue, as evidenced by a rise in opioid overdose deaths in recent years.

Stress and Distress

Given this backdrop, to assess the mental health challenges of participants, the study employed the Kessler Psychological Distress scale (Kessler et al., 2003), contextualizing results within the post-release environment of poverty, stigma, and healthcare discrimination—factors that often compromise long-term health outcomes and impede economic mobility. While no statistically significant differences in psychological distress, depression, or anxiety levels were observed between the two groups over the study duration, the treatment group consistently exhibited lower mean scores compared to the control group. At Baseline, both groups reported elevated levels of mental distress, with the treatment group showing marginally lower distress ($M=22.17$) than the control group ($M=24.57$). Six months after the first disbursement, the treatment group exhibited a small but improved effect of the GI on mental health (mean difference= -1.51), anxiety (mean difference= -0.96), and depression (mean difference= -0.55) relative to the control group. Psychological distress in the treatment group ($M=22.73$) increased marginally at the conclusion of the GI at 12 months but remained lower than that of the control group ($M=23.64$). Six months post-intervention, both groups reported lower scores; however, the mean score for the treatment group slightly exceeded that of the control group (mean difference= 0.39).

Despite these trends, mental well-being scores for both groups consistently remained above the global cut-off for moderate levels of psychological distress throughout the study period and did not yield clinically meaningful improvements in mental well-being. Part of the story may be the immense disadvantages facing formally criminalized people within every social and economic domain. Survival, in this context, becomes a constant struggle for answers: Where will you find housing? Food? A job? Relatedly, one's status as a carceral citizen opens new vulnerabilities: congregating with the wrong people; forgetting an appointment with your PO; relapsing; failing to pay a fine; even a speeding ticket may land you behind bars (as it did in the case of Tyler, who received a probation violation for having contact with the police). As Anthony lamented about the amalgamation of rules and conditions related to supervision:

It starts playing, um, on your mental state, man... Why I'm even trying, why I'm even doing, you know, X, Y, and Z to stay out and be free, but y'all don't notice the things that I'm doing that are good?... You gotta go to work in the morning. You just getting home for work. They call your house phone, you [don't] answer the phone, you violate. So you got to have a phone in the bed with you. So all that plays mentally with you. Like, like, you don't know I just came from work? I, I just came, I just called you an hour ago. Right?... so like mentally you wanna snap.

To be criminalized, then, is to be in a constant state of fear and insecurity; a forced state of anxiety that, in order to fully overcome it, likely requires a change of status in addition to the financial support of a GI.

While psychological distress remained high throughout the study period, the GI was able to reduce stress levels in the treatment group compared to the control. At Baseline, the treatment group reported lower stress levels (M=7.47) relative to the control (M=8.41), a difference that was statistically significant [95% CI: -1.65 to -0.24, $p<0.01$]. This trend of reduced stress in the treatment group persisted throughout the study, albeit with a gradual decrease in magnitude. At 6 months, the mean difference between groups was -0.85 points (95% CI: -1.37 to -0.34, $p<0.01$), decreasing slightly to -0.76 points (95% CI: -1.25 to -0.27, $p<0.01$) at 12 months. By the 18-month follow-up, the significant effect was still sustained, with an estimated impact of -0.67 points (95% CI: -1.31 to -0.02, $p=0.04$). Moreover, while the proportion of participants experiencing high stress remained substantial in both groups throughout the study, the treatment group showed a trend towards lower percentages of high-stress individuals compared to the control group: 73.04% vs. 82.35% at 6 months and 65.22% vs. 85.29% at 12 months. The proportion of participants reporting lower stress levels was also higher in the treatment group relative to the control: 26.29% vs. 17.65% at 6 months, 34.78% vs. 14.71% at 12 months, and 29.57% vs. 21.32% at 18 months. This pattern suggests that while the intervention did not eliminate high stress levels, it did help a portion of participants manage their stress more effectively.

Qualitative insights further speak to GI as a mechanism for stress reduction. Take an interaction between Jake and his girlfriend, Jazz, for example, which helps to clarify the relationship between economic precarity, mental health, and substance use:

Interviewer: *So how would you rate your mental health these days?*

Jake: *My mental health these days? Stable, I think.*

Jazz: *But see, he's talking probably about stable as far as in his house with his family.*

Interviewer: *Right, right, right.*

Jazz: *And, and me, who wouldn't love me? [laughs] You know. Yeah. But that's why it depends, right?*

Jake: *Yeah. You know, it does. It varies. When I'm at home, I'm good. I'm at work, I'm*

good. But—

Jazz: *When money is low, he gets upset.*

Jake: *Yeah.*

Jazz: *When he can't drive, and we gotta call his mother.*

Jake: *It's depressing.*

Jake noted that he felt like “less of a man” when their household struggled financially, a sentiment that was exacerbated by his driver’s license suspension. When later asked about how he tends to deal with economic pressures, he described an alcohol addiction that had persisted for years. Jazz also chimed in, “He likes to drink too much when things ain’t going right.” Fortunately, both Jake and Jazz recognized a more recent reduction in his reliance upon alcohol, facilitated by an improved sense of economic security. As Jazz commented, “He’s been doing good ever since he’s come home.” When Jake was asked about how the money has impacted his life, he distilled the impacts of GI on his mental health clearly:

I think it's, um, I think it's eased some of the stress and I think the ease of stress has allowed my mind and things to open up to, to more positive, you know, thoughts about coming up a little bit. You know, what I'm trying to say is when you have that security blanket there, it changes your mood. And when you have a better mood and you have a more stable mood, you think about more positive things. And better things manifest out of that positivity that you got, which leads to different types of goals, which leads to being eager to complete your goals... Whereas [if] you're sitting there broke on your ass, you're like, "Fuck this, fuck that." Now you know, you got that \$600, now rent's not so bad. Now you're thinking more positive and you're elevated, you're manifesting and it brings a whole different aura to your thoughts and dreams and goals. So, a little bit of guaranteed income, dude, is powerful.

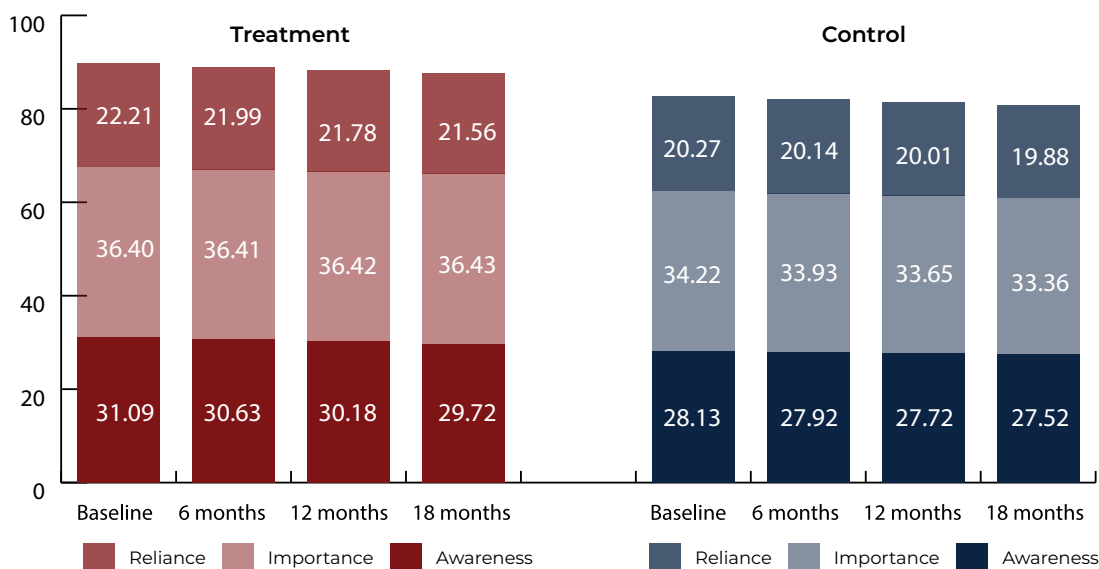
Jake saw a direct connection between GI and his mental health, which also meant an interruption in the downward spiral of poverty, stress, substance use, and recidivism (a theme discussed in greater detail below). Overall, numerous interviewees in the treatment group credited the stability provided by the Just Income program for improving their mental well-being: “Just knowing it’s coming. Like you’ll be straight... You’re good,” said Jada. Others valued an ability to finally take a breath and think clearly: “It’s given me a chance to pause and think about my life more,” Lenny stated. Similarly, Bruce explained, “As long as I know I got an income that helps me with my vehicle... helps me with my food. That gives me peace of mind.”

Mattering

Having experienced the dehumanizing effects of incarceration, where personal agency and identity are minimized, along with the ostracizing processes of attempting to secure a foothold in labor and housing markets, many of the formerly incarcerated people in this study struggled with feelings of marginalization. The lack of state-sponsored transitional support communicated a message of disregard, the hyper-surveillance of probation and parole sent messages of distrust and suspicion, and exclusions from opportunities facilitated a sense of disgrace. Cumulatively, participants were told in one way or another that they were a disposable population.

Our quantitative analysis, however, suggests that direct financial support may play a role in counteracting these negative messages and improving self-conceptions. Specifically, the data reveals meaningful differences across all three dimensions of mattering—Awareness, Importance, and Reliance (Elliott et al., 2004). The average awareness scores showed significant differences between groups at Baseline (mean difference=2.96; 95% CI: 1.54 to 4.39, $p<0.00$). Afterward, a statistically significant positive trend for the treatment group persisted at 6 months (mean difference=2.71; 95% CI: 1.60 to 3.82, $p<0.00$), 12 months (mean difference=2.46; 95% CI: 1.38 to 3.53, $p<0.00$), and 18 months (mean difference=2.20; 95% CI: 0.85 to 3.54, $p<0.00$). Similar trends were observed for importance and reliance, too. At Baseline, the mean difference for Importance was 2.18 (95% CI: 0.45 to 3.91, $p<0.00$), and it increased over time, reaching 3.07 (95% CI: 1.29 to 4.84, $p<0.00$) at 18 months. Reliance scores also increased in the treatment group throughout the study period. At Baseline, the mean difference was 1.94 (95% CI: 0.76 to 3.11, $p<0.00$). Although the difference slightly decreased over time, it remained significant at 18 months with a mean difference of 1.68 (95% CI: 0.48 to 2.88, $p<0.01$). The persistence of these differences over time suggests a sustained positive impact of the GI on participants' sense of mattering across all three domains.

Figure 7. Perceptions of Mattering Over Time, Treatment vs. Control



In fact, a novel sense of mattering became a dominant theme throughout the qualitative interviews as well. As Bruce noted about the cash assistance: “That money that Just Income gave me. Yeah, it made my life more positive. Because now I know I got somebody here that’s willing to take a chance on a convict, you know?” Randy also felt valued and supported, “it actually makes me think there’s people out there who do care, want to help.” Hank articulated a similar sentiment:

This program has changed my life, it’s helped me and my family and our situation. It definitely makes a difference in the way a person thinks. Not only does the income help, but it changes a person’s mental aspect of “Well there is somebody out there that cares. There is somebody out there that is on my side. They are willing to help out.” You know? And it makes a person want to do what’s right when there is someone on their side trying to push them forward. And if you aren’t being pushed forward, well you’re falling back in the hole.

Multiple participants referred to their reentry journey using the metaphor of a hole or a trap, pointing toward the ubiquity of social forces that seem hell-bent on ensuring cycles of poverty and despair. For many, Just Income represented the first post-incarceration intervention that had ever made a truly significant, positive impact in their lives. Against the tentacles of a criminal justice system, where one is always one tug away from being pulled back into that hole (prison), the GI felt like one of the few reliable forces that could push participants forward. As such, participants felt seen and supported, and some—like Hank—even described a fresh sense of motivation and responsibility because of the unconditional support.

Hope

“When I get out, I’m done. I just don’t know how I’m gonna make it. I don’t know what I’m gonna do to make it, but I’m done,” Lenny recalled saying to himself during his last period of incarceration. Lenny described himself as a “career criminal” who relied upon shoplifting to help him get by; however, he felt a deep sense of exhaustion as he approached his most recent release from prison: “I was just tired. I was tired. I’m 55 years old. I’ve been doing this all my life. I’m just really tired. I just need a, I need a refuge.” Prior to receiving the GI, Lenny felt stuck in a cycle of incarceration, release, and reincarceration, and struggled to see a way out. Numerous health and mobility issues further clouded his prospects for success, and as such he had hoped to secure disability benefits to ease his economic hardship. While living at his sister’s house post-release, Lenny received a letter in the mail about a separate form of potential support—the Just Income program:

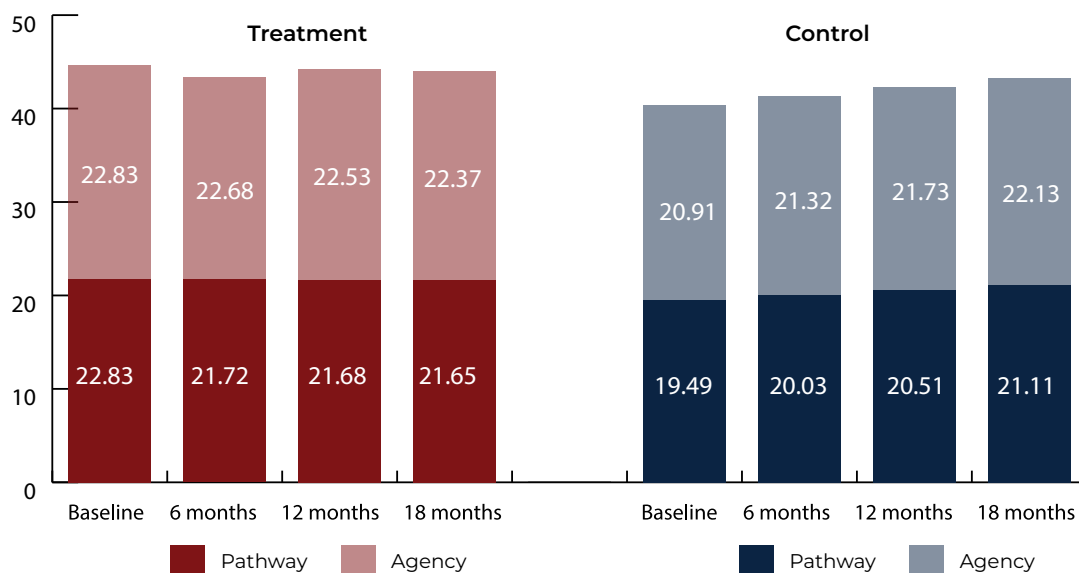
I said, “No, this don’t sound like nothing but a gimmick.” And I kept reading and stuff, and I seen a local number on there. That’s what really kind of puzzled me. And at this particular time, like I said, I ain’t have no income... So I called, said, “I’m gonna try to call this number and see what these people talking about.” Sure enough, I talk to this lady ... she does this little questionnaire and everything went pretty good... And then all of a sudden I get this phone call, it was 2 weeks later... She said, “You got it.” And I just

rose man [laughs], like, and, and it was like a confirmation that God was answering my prayer, you know, I'm not such a bad person after all, you know?... I was like, Lord, thank you. So I started going to church more. I started paying off my, uh, court fines and court fees. The first thing I paid off, my cost of supervision for probation. I was just so excited. I started, um, buying stuff I needed like a mobility scooter. You know, things I know I needed to help me out along the way. Um, I just, I just was excited. And like every day since then, it's been exciting. I've been able to help my family members here and there. And, uh, I've been able to save money. Um, it's just everything going so perfect. And I'm thinking to myself, you know, Lord, what am I gonna do when this all ends? Well, lo and behold, I got approved for my disability [laughs].

Lenny, like other participants in this study, referred to the financial support he received from Just Income as a “blessing.” He was now able to climb out of the criminal justice debt he found himself in (here again we see the “hole”), while contributing to his sister’s household by helping with rent and groceries. As a transitional support, the GI also acted as a bridge to his disability benefits. As Lenny continued, “So I’m just so excited, you know, like, my life is finally going the way that it should have been going all the while.”

Lenny’s story is emblematic of an important theme that came up time and again: a sense of agency over one’s life and greater hope for the future. In fact, our quantitative results further demonstrate the power of unrestricted cash assistance in improving hope, with improvements observed across all sub-domains (Snyder et al., 1991). At Baseline, the treatment group reported higher scores in Total Hope (M=44.58) relative to the control group (M=44.40), a difference that was statistically significant [95% CI: 1.48 to 6.88, $p < 0.00$]. This trend of higher scores in the treatment group compared to the control continued at all subsequent time points: 44.38 vs. 41.35 [95% CI: 0.78 to 5.32, $p < 0.01$] at 6 months; 44.21 vs. 42.30 at 12 months; and 44.04 vs. 43.24 at 18 months. Both the Pathway and Agency sub-scores followed a similar trend.

Figure 8. Hope Sub-Scores Over Time, Treatment vs. Control



Findings also suggest a significant and sustained increase in the percentage of treatment participants reporting High levels of hope. This indicates a potential shift towards deeper levels of hopefulness among treated participants over time, a key finding given that research links increased hope to lower recidivism and improved social outcomes (Dekhytar et al., 2012). At Baseline, both groups reported comparable levels of High Hope (23% treatment vs. 24% control). The dynamics shifted by 6 months, with a slightly higher proportion of the treatment group transitioning into the High Hope category (18%) compared to the control (16%). This higher proportion for the treatment group was sustained at both 12 months (15% vs. 10% control), and 18 months (26% vs. 21% control).

As participants transitioned out of correctional facilities and began navigating their lives, they faced a range of economic, health, and social disadvantages that made achieving post-incarceration success difficult, if not impossible. And while direct cash assistance does not eliminate these disadvantages, Lenny and others in the treatment group did benefit from being better able to navigate them. Some paid off material and symbolic debts, others found ways to get off the streets and find a semblance of stability, and a few were able to quickly set a foundation for a better future via investments in employment-related training. In sum, financial support appears to offer important material, mental, and socio-emotional benefits.



5. GI and Recidivism

Recidivism

The post-incarceration landscape is fraught with obstacles, including court-imposed fines, fees, and surveillance measures. Collectively, these create a punitive environment that impedes successful reintegration. Florida's court system, in particular, imposes fines and fees without considering individual economic circumstances, often leading to devastating consequences for those unable to pay. For instance, individuals pleading guilty or found guilty of a felony are mandated to pay a fine of \$225. More severe felonies, such as first or second-degree, incur fines and surcharges totaling \$4,200, in addition to numerous court-related costs. Left unpaid for over 90 days, additional collection charges are applied. Most fees are obligatory, with limited avenues for waivers or reductions. During the Fiscal Year 2017–18 alone, Alachua County assessed \$688,939 in County Criminal Cases and \$2.04 million in Circuit Criminal Cases (OPPAGA, 2019). The implications of non-payment in Florida are severe. They include driver's license suspension, additional penalties, loss of child custody, and repeated incarceration, perpetuating a cycle of material hardship and legal entanglement. A recent report by the American Bar Association advocated for critical reforms. These include enhancing judicial discretion to waive fines, eliminating certain fees, and ceasing punitive measures such as license revocations, all aiming to promote a more equitable justice system (American Bar Association Standing Committee on Legal Aid and Indigent Defense & Arnold Ventures, 2024).

Financial precarity among study participants remained severe due to extensive legal financial obligations. Self-reported data from participants suggested substantial monthly court- and probation-related fees. Coupled with the need to address immediate expenses, this left scant room for meaningful improvements in overall financial stability. Beyond the monthly fee, participants struggled with accumulated debt burden averaging over \$4,000. Against this backdrop, we assessed the potential of GI for mitigating the severe financial and criminal-legal pressures of life after incarceration.

Recidivism, though, encompasses a broad range of behaviors and processes, from technical probation violations to imprisonment for new offenses, each carrying distinct implications. Understanding these differences is essential for developing more effective strategies to combat crime. For instance, technical probation violations, often resulting from rigid supervision requirements, do not necessarily equate to new criminal behavior but can still lead to reincarceration. Our findings show that the short-term impact of GI on recidivism was significant. However, due to data limitations, these findings should be interpreted cautiously.

Participants receiving GI provided important accounts of the potential processes at play. Take Cliff, for instance, who was using his GI payments in part to pay for CDL classes. When asked if he might have gone back to selling drugs if he had not been randomly chosen for the Just Income program, the following exchange occurred:

Cliff: [I] would have! Because the first thing I'm finna do now is say, "Fuck it. Okay, let me..." [Gestures with his hands as if he were selling and distributing small drug packages.]

Interviewer: Mm-Hmm. [affirmative]

Cliff: You, you understand what I'm saying?

Interviewer: Yeah.

Cliff: So I know that's easy for me. I know that. I know what I'm dealing with. Oh, I'm just doing—I ain't trying to get caught. So if I didn't have it, you know what I'm saying, it'd be much more easier for me to fall back. You understand what I'm saying? And go the wrong way. Because as hard as it is, it'll make you do that. Especially when, I'm gonna just say, there's not a lot of opportunity. Fuck what you saying. There is not enough opportunity... Now it feel like the whole world coming down on you. So now, guess what you're doing? You reverting back. You can only just revert back.

Largely locked out of decent labor market opportunities, a number of interviewees suggested that without the GI they might have turned to criminalized activities in order to get by under significant economic pressures. Anthony put it succinctly:

I was on the verge of like, "Man, something got to shake. Boy, this ain't, this shit ain't..." And not wanting to do anything wrong, but like, the pressure on me just like, man, it, it's crazy. You know what I mean? And then when the program hit through, it was like, "Wow, okay. It's real." Like, like the pressure ain't there no more.

Without the GI or an ability to make claims on jobs that provide living wages, many participants feared that they would have otherwise turned to crimes of survival:

Interviewer: What do you think would be different if you weren't receiving that money? If you hadn't been getting it since March?

Patricia: Honestly, you want the truth? With no lies?

Interviewer: I want the truth

Patricia: I may not be here, I might be in jail. I might have sticky fingered trying to help make it. I ain't gonna lie to ya, I'm telling the truth.

Patricia went on to describe how the last time she attempted "return fraud" on a hot water heater after her old one failed, she broke out in cold sweats. "I tried to pull a wing-wam. I couldn't do it... I broke

out in a cold sweat.” Patricia valued the Just Income program because she no longer felt pressured to consider theft as a means of filling the income gap created after her husband fell ill. Contemplating further about what life would have been without the GI, Patricia half-jokingly quipped, “I wouldn’t have made it. I would’ve been stuck like Chuck, trying to figure this out. Trying to pay Peter from Paul.”

Those who could not participate in the labor market, such as Cheryl, made a particularly compelling case for direct financial support:

I can't work. I wanna work so bad and I can't work. And it's taking me a very long time to get my [SSI] check. And I want to thank the program because without that [guaranteed income] check, I don't know where I'd be. I'd probably be back out selling drugs. I sold drugs, mad drugs. And I thank the Lord. I didn't want to do that. That was one of the things. So y'all stepped right in... That money really came in handy by me being disabled and really can't work, and now I done had this heart attack. This money is really a blessing... I wish it could go and exist for more people. Because a lot of people get out of prison, they don't have people there... And a program like that... They don't have to go back out and start doing what they're doing. Because most people, that's what they do. Right at the last minute, when it's time for them to get out, they have these high hopes to get out and do this. And then all of a sudden, reality set in and some people ain't got nobody to go out there to. So now they scared because they gotta go back out there into that life. That's the only life they know.

She later continued:

You have to do what you gotta do sometimes. Just to eat and sleep. You used to could call it back in the days. You can't call it now. You don't even know when your next dollar going to come, your next meal. If you're not working, you don't know.

Interviewees like Cheryl spoke to the inherently precarious nature of life for those who are disconnected from the labor market. They also highlight an important fact: opportunity structures for criminalized people are limited at best. And as research demonstrates, even where resources and opportunities do exist for this population, it becomes a demanding job in and of itself to identify and secure them (Halushka, 2019). Within this context, the GI proved potent in mitigating immediate pressures that might otherwise lead to crimes of survival: it provided a crucial safety net, enabled recipients to meet their basic needs without resorting to illegal activities, and reduced the incidence of economically driven crimes. Fundamentally, then, GI operates as an economic stabilizer during the critical post-release period.

GI Effects on Recidivism

To evaluate the GI's impact on recidivism, the study conducted a longitudinal analysis using a Linear Mixed Effects (LME) model. The analysis compared two time periods: the initial assessment at Baseline,

when all participants met the selection criterion of the study of prior incarceration, and the follow-up period, encompassing the pilot period and subsequent 6 months. Recidivism was operationalized as any criminal act resulting in rearrest, reconviction, or return to incarceration during the follow-up period, excluding technical probation violations that did not result in new criminal charges. Data were missing for six participants' post-intervention probation status or incarceration records (three each from treatment and control groups), and expanded searches of criminal justice databases in adjacent counties yielded no additional information for these cases.

The analysis employed a General Linear Model with a logit link function and incorporated random intercepts for participants to account for within-subject correlation in the repeated measures design. Fixed effects included treatment, time point, and their interaction term. The interaction between group and time was our key focus, as it showed whether the treatment group and control group differed in their recidivism rates from Baseline to Endline. To address potential bias from missing data, the study implemented two complementary analytical approaches:

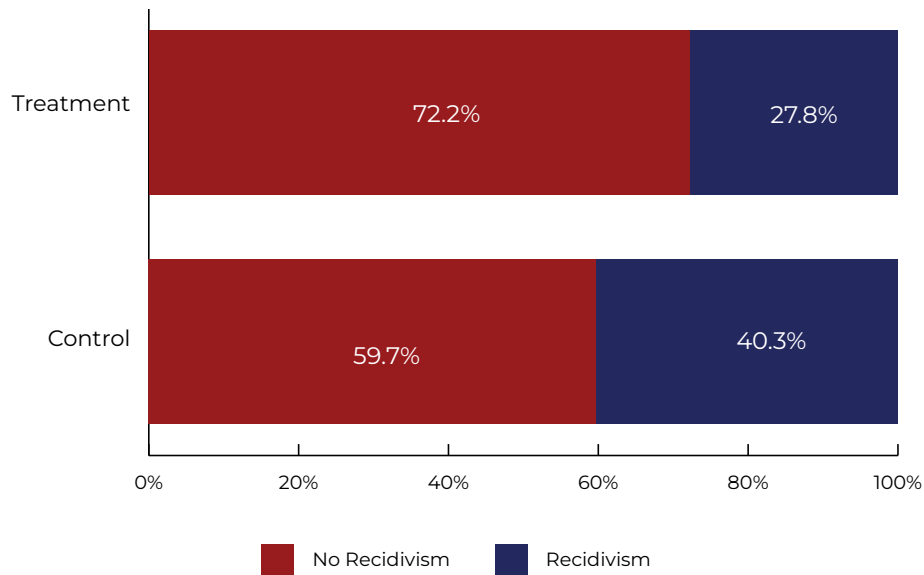
- » Complete case analysis, utilizing only participants with full data across both time points
- » MICE to account for uncertainty in missing values

Table 9. Comparative Analysis of Results Using Complete Case and MICE

TERM	ODDS RATIO (COMPLETE CASE)	ODDS RATIO (IMPUTED DATA)	CONFIDENCE INTERVAL (COMPLETE CASE)	CONFIDENCE INTERVAL (IMPUTED DATA)
Intercept	2.718	2.718	[2.566, 2.888]	[2.569, 2.877]
Group [T.T]	1.000	1.000	[0.919, 1.089]	[0.92, 1.087]
Time	0.555	0.550	[0.512, 0.603]	[0.508, 0.596]
Group: Time	0.881	0.883	[0.782, 0.994]	[0.785, 0.993]

The treatment-by-time interaction revealed a small yet statistically significant intervention effect. The odds ratio for the interaction was consistent across both complete case analysis (OR=0.881, CI [0.782, 0.994]) and MICE imputation (OR=0.883, CI [0.785, 0.993]), indicating a 12% additional reduction in recidivism odds for the treatment group compared to the control. While both groups experienced some recidivism during the post-intervention period, the lower recidivism rate in the treatment group suggests that the GI had benefits beyond the general trend over time.

Figure 9: Recidivism Rates 6 Months After GI, Treatment vs. Control



Overall, while the GI provided immediate financial relief and may have mitigated short-term recidivism, it could not entirely nullify the enduring impacts of felony conviction histories, nor could it dismantle the systemic barriers fueling recidivism cycles. The efficacy of GI intervention must be weighed against the structural issues, including the burden of court fines and fees, and systems of community supervision. While the study's limited duration precludes observations on the long-term impacts of the GI on reducing crimes, it challenges the capitalist notion that hard work alone guarantees success. Sustainable reductions in recidivism rates require comprehensive policy reforms that provide long-term support and tackle the underlying issues that contribute to recidivism; namely, one's status as a carceral citizen.

Limitations

While this study provides valuable insights into the impacts of GI on participants' health and overall well-being, several limitations must be acknowledged to appropriately interpret and generalize the findings.

First, the study's participant pool comprised 249 individuals, selected from approximately 300 applicants, all with prior felony charges and released from the Alachua County Jail, or state or federal prison in Florida within the past 6 months. The specific demographic focus of this study inherently limits the generalizability of the findings to other populations or regions, particularly those with diverse socio-economic backgrounds. Moreover, the inclusion criterion requiring recent incarceration with a felony record introduces a unique variable. Although this provides valuable insights into this demographic, it may not be generalizable to individuals who were convicted but whose charges did not result in a carceral sentence.

Further, the study utilized the MICE technique to address missing data. Although MICE is recognized for its robust approach in managing missing data, it is crucial to acknowledge that all imputation methods, including MICE, introduce some level of uncertainty. Despite validation checks, the imputed data might not flawlessly reflect the true underlying distributions and patterns, and the inherent limitation of data imputation should be considered in the interpretation of the results.

In addition, the administrative data used to assess recidivism was imperfect. The range of involvement with the courts during and after the pilot varied widely, and it is challenging to account for such myriad circumstances with a binary code. At times, the resolution of a new charge was unclear, and some participants could not be found in the database.

Other systems or police involvement that did not result in booking could not be included. The ways in which this study could assess recidivism was dependent upon the data that was available. Recidivism, as a concept, is also incredibly nuanced and may have different meaning across people and contexts. Future analyses to more fully understand the impact of GI on systems involvement would ideally include the exact offense date, clear outcome data, and be reflective of the community's conceptualization of recidivism.

Finally, it is important to note that this study was conducted as the country was emerging from the COVID-19 pandemic. The residual impacts of the pandemic, such as pervasive uncertainty, grief from loss, and the withdrawal of social safety net policies, likely influenced participants' mental health and stress levels. Moreover, the economic recovery phase post-pandemic introduced additional stressors, including changes in employment and income levels, which could have affected participants' responses and perceptions. These factors were not directly controlled for in the study design and could significantly influence the applicability and relevance of the findings to different times or settings, limiting their generalizability.

Discussion

To be released from prison is to be locked into a state of severe structural disadvantage. Though physically free from the confines of steel bars and concrete walls, formerly incarcerated people are locked into status positions that shape their every interaction with the world around them. These carceral citizens face a range of formalized restrictions on the kinds of jobs they may have, the places in which they may live, and the social benefits accessible to them. At the same time, this population must navigate an opportunity structure of pervasive informal discrimination by empowered actors, such as employers and landlords. What this amounts to is a vicious cycle of prison and poverty.

As such, this report provides an analysis of a groundbreaking experiment with unconditional, unrestricted, direct cash transfers in the lives of formerly incarcerated individuals. The pilot program, Just Income, aimed to address the unique challenges facing this population by providing cash assistance and facilitating economic security.

Employing a longitudinal, mixed-methods, quasi-experimental design, we assessed these goals and explored a range of outcomes. Our findings suggest that the GI had a significantly positive impact

in a range of domains, including the ability to cover everyday expenses, savings, contributing to the lives of others, and housing stability and food security. Put simply, the cash assistance smoothed the economic volatility inherent in navigating life with a criminal record, for both individuals and entire family units. In fact, many participants emphasized their improved ability to provide support to family members and solidify important social bonds, rather than drain the emotional and financial resources of loved ones.

We also observed significant improvements in mental health, with reductions in stress being most pronounced. Qualitative insights helped to underscore the importance of economic security for mental well-being. GI similarly appears to improve one's sense of self; unconditional financial support stands in stark contrast to the marginalizing and isolating impacts of mass criminalization, and for the first time in many of their lives, participants felt valued and supported during their reentry journey.

Our analysis further demonstrated that the GI gave participants hope for the future. For some, the money offered a rare resource of breathing space amid a constant struggle to survive, akin to receiving a life preserver after swimming through rough waters. For others, GI provided the practical means to invest in themselves through education.

The recidivism-related results also demonstrate potential. We found that those receiving the GI exhibited a lower rate of recidivism than the control group, suggesting a promising avenue for enhancing public safety and reducing criminal justice systems costs. It also has the potential to profoundly improve the lives of individuals transitioning out of prison by providing essential financial stability.

Overall, the data demonstrate the profound potential of GI to improve the lives of formerly incarcerated people, which is to say that it holds potential for us all. Ensuring the well-being of our most vulnerable neighbors promotes public safety, reduces healthcare and criminal justice costs, and directly contributes to a more equitable society.

As Jake eloquently implored about those coming out of prisons:

They're still being punished every day... That Just Income there for them can give them that, that, that room to breathe and to heal and to more comfortably find their place back into society... Let these men and women breathe. Give them something to fight for. It's America. I mean, they're our neighbors. These people are in our community. You don't want people punished every day in your community. Once their sentence is up, give them that little head start that everybody needs in life.

Center for Guaranteed Income Research

The Center for Guaranteed Income Research (CGIR) was established in 2020 at the University of Pennsylvania School of Social Policy & Practice with the aim of developing a shared body of knowledge on unconditional cash transfers.

At CGIR, distinguished academics and professionals in this field lead pilot guaranteed income programs and oversee the planning and implementation of research initiatives. CGIR is led by two Founding Directors: Dr. Amy Castro, Associate Professor of Social Policy & Practice at the University of Pennsylvania, and Dr. Stacia West, who holds a faculty fellowship at the University of Pennsylvania in addition to her primary role as an Associate Professor at the College of Social Work at the University of Tennessee-Knoxville.

CGIR conducts applied cash transfer studies and pilot designs that contribute to the empirical scholarship on cash, economic mobility, poverty, and narrative change. Our investigations build upon existing literature on cash transfers and incorporate evaluation practices and lessons learned from our previous research on guaranteed income and the gender and racial wealth gap.

All of our research is grounded in Durr's (1993) fundamental question: "What influences policy sentiment?" With this in mind, we are committed to conducting public science that challenges prevailing narratives surrounding poverty, deservedness, and economic mobility, utilizing diverse approaches such as multi-site ethnography, politically-driven sampling, and data visualization.

Our dashboards, created in partnership with Stanford Basic Income Lab, feature filters at the pilot level, allowing individuals to access and compare information while obtaining detailed insight into our investigations.

**Please direct all inquiries
about this study to:**

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**CENTER FOR GUARANTEED
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UNIVERSITY of PENNSYLVANIA

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Appendix A

Table 10. Comparative Analysis of Select Outcome Measures: Treatment vs. Control Groups

OUTCOME	CONTROL GROUP	TREATMENT GROUP	ESTIMATED IMPACT	95% LOWER CI	95% UPPER CI	STANDARD ERROR
PERCEIVED STRESS LEVELS						
Baseline	8.41	7.47	-0.94	-1.65	-0.24	0.36
6 month	8.15	7.30	-0.85	-1.37	-0.34	0.26
12 month	7.89	7.13	-0.76	-1.25	-0.27	0.25
18 month	7.63	6.96	-0.67	-1.31	-0.02	0.33
KESSLER PSYCHOLOGICAL DISTRESS						
Baseline	24.57	22.17	-2.40	-4.89	0.08	1.27
6 month	23.24	21.73	-1.51	-1.64	3.45	1.30
12 month	23.64	22.73	-0.91	-0.96	3.96	1.25
18 month	22.15	22.54	0.39	-0.15	5.76	1.51
CHAOS						
Baseline	31.58	29.51	-2.07	-3.78	-0.36	0.87
6 month	31.46	29.46	-2.00	-3.45	-0.55	0.73
12 month	31.35	29.41	-1.94	-3.4	-0.47	0.75
18 month	31.23	29.36	-1.87	-3.61	-0.13	0.89
AVERAGE GENERAL HEALTH						
Baseline	65.15	67.70	2.55	-3.74	8.84	3.21
6 month	65.48	70.43	4.95	-3.34	8.16	2.94
12 month	65.22	66.74	1.52	-5.56	3.50	2.31
18 month	67.10	67.43	0.33	-7.41	2.99	2.65
SF-36 PHYSICAL LIMITATIONS						
Baseline	68.20	67.99	-0.21	-10.26	9.84	5.13
6 month	59.97	64.51	4.54	-5.52	15.01	5.24
12 month	65.07	61.03	-4.04	-14.12	6.46	5.25
18 month	59.83	55.76	-4.07	-12.37	6.64	5.36
SF-36 HEALTH LIMITS						
Baseline	77.74	75.39	-2.35	-9.60	4.90	3.70
6 month	78.33	69.98	-8.35	-13.16	1.16	3.66
12 month	77.15	68.78	-8.37	-12.37	0.33	3.24
18 month	75.11	67.96	-7.15	-11.47	1.86	3.40

OUTCOME	CONTROL GROUP	TREATMENT GROUP	ESTIMATED IMPACT	95% LOWER CI	95% UPPER CI	STANDARD ERROR
ADULT HOPE-AGENCY						
Baseline	19.49	21.75	[2.26]***	0.79	3.73	0.75
6 month	20.03	21.72	[1.69]**	0.46	2.91	0.62
12 month	20.57	21.68	1.11	-0.08	2.30	0.61
18 month	21.11	21.65	0.54	-0.85	1.93	0.71
ADULT HOPE-PATHWAY						
Baseline	20.91	22.83	[1.92]**	0.48	3.37	0.74
6 month	21.32	22.68	[1.36]*	0.17	2.55	0.61
12 month	21.73	22.53	0.80	-0.3	1.91	0.56
18 month	22.13	22.37	0.24	-0.99	1.47	0.63
ADULT HOPE-TOTAL						
Baseline	40.40	44.58	[4.18]***	1.48	6.88	1.38
6 month	41.35	44.38	[3.03]**	0.78	5.32	1.16
12 month	42.30	44.21	1.91	-0.24	4.07	1.10
18 month	43.24	44.05	0.81	-1.61	3.17	1.22
ADULT MATTERING-AWARENESS						
Baseline	28.13	31.09	2.96	1.54	4.39	0.73
6 month	27.92	30.63	[2.71]***	1.60	3.82	0.57
12 month	27.72	30.18	[2.46]***	1.38	3.53	0.55
18 month	27.52	29.72	[2.2]****	0.85	3.54	0.69
ADULT MATTERING-IMPORTANCE						
Baseline	34.22	36.40	[2.18]**	3.91	0.01	0.88
6 month	33.93	36.41	[2.48]***	3.91	0.00	0.73
12 month	33.65	36.42	[2.77]***	4.22	0.00	0.74
18 month	33.36	36.43	[3.07]***	4.84	0.00	0.91
ADULT MATTERING-RELIANCE						
Baseline	20.27	22.21	[1.94]***	0.76	3.11	0.60
6 month	20.14	21.99	[1.85]***	0.82	2.89	0.53
12 month	20.01	21.78	[1.77]***	0.73	2.81	0.53
18 month	19.88	21.56	[1.68]**	0.48	2.88	0.61

Footnotes:

Baseline Mean: Adjusted average score prior to any intervention

6/12/18 month Mean: Adjusted average score at the respective time mark

Estimated Impact: The Mean difference between the treatment and control groups

Standard Error: Indicates the precision of the impact estimates

95% CI Lower/Upper: Bounds of the 95% confidence interval for the impact estimate

* Indicates statistical significance: * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Appendix B

Table 11. Rejection Sensitivity (Mean Scores)

SCENARIOS	TIME PERIOD GROUP	BASELINE	MEAN		
			6 MONTH	12 MONTH	18 MONTH
Reconciling argument (partner)	Control	11.82	11.07	11.69	12.51
	Treatment	9.59	10.19	8.47	10.95
Relationship distancing talk	Control	10.74	10.46	11.63	8.23
	Treatment	10.03	8.72	8.93	10.91
Family loan request	Control	16.10	13.93	13.96	10.38
	Treatment	13.51	11.90	13.67	11.74
Friend conflict resolution	Control	11.07	10.82	12.79	10.45
	Treatment	10.60	8.86	8.88	11.10
Seeking support from a friend	Control	10.16	9.29	10.35	9.62
	Treatment	8.74	8.17	8.97	9.41
Inviting family to special occasion	Control	10.88	10.07	11.13	6.99
	Treatment	9.32	10.19	9.94	10.95
Initiating conversation at a party	Control	11.64	11.51	13.85	9.88
	Treatment	10.70	9.98	9.90	10.99
Discussing sexual protection (partner)	Control	10.20	9.72	11.11	8.96
	Treatment	9.20	10.49	9.09	9.59
Supervisor assistance request	Control	9.14	10.26	8.13	8.24
	Treatment	9.50	8.49	8.50	9.56

Appendix C

Table 12. Sample Attrition

TIME PERIOD	TREATMENT	CONTROL	OVERALL ATTRITION (%)	DIFFERENTIAL ATTRITION (%)
Baseline	115	134		
6 months	68	39	57.03	30.03
12 months	54	28	67.07	26.06
18 months	56	27	66.67	28.55