

PERSPECTIVES

the journal of the American Probation and Parole Association

Volume 34

Number 1

Winter 2010



QUALITY
★ ★ ★
GUARANTEE
★ ★ ★
QUALITY

E N S U R I N G
QUALITY
JUVENILE
OFFENDER PROGRAMS

A Force for Positive  CHANGE.

President's Message

by Barbara Broderick

People with mental illnesses are significantly overrepresented in probation and parole populations and throughout the criminal justice system. It is estimated that five percent of people in the general population have a serious mental illness, while the estimates of people on probation or parole with serious mental illnesses have ranged from 11 to 19 percent. Furthermore, research suggests that over half of the individuals under community corrections supervision with a mental illness have a co-occurring substance use disorder. As the overall community corrections population has increased, so have the number of persons with a mental illness under community corrections supervision. Sadly, studies indicate that people with mental illnesses, including those with co-occurring substance use disorders, have had less favorable outcomes under community corrections supervision than people without these conditions, i.e. they are more likely to return to jail or prison and twice as likely to have their community supervision revoked. Improving outcomes for persons with a mental illness under community corrections supervision is an important topic and a realistic goal.

At an APPA Training Institute in 2008, I attended an excellent workshop presented by Jennifer Skeem, Ph.D. on the subject of what works with probationers and parolees with mental illness. I have thought about her presentation and talked about it many times since that day. Dr. Skeem's work has been incorporated into a new report entitled "Improving Outcomes for People with Mental Illnesses under Community Corrections Supervision: A Guide to Research-informed Policy and Practice," authored by Seth Jacob Prins and Laura Draper, Council of State Governments Justice Center (http://consensusproject.org/jc_publications/outcomes-mental-illness-community-corrections). The report is of great significance to our field and I want to introduce you to its contents.

A number of factors reveal the complexities of community corrections supervision of persons with a mental illness and what's behind the higher revocation rate of this population. Probationers and parolees with a mental illness have many needs. In addition to the clinical needs associated with mental illness, probationers with mental illnesses are more likely than other probationers to report prior physical and sexual abuse, homelessness and unemployment. They are also more likely to have had a prior criminal history. Faced with high caseloads and limited resources, many community corrections agencies have been unable to meet the complex array of treatment, service and supervision needs of those offenders with a mental illness. Often, officers do not have the time and training to supervise offenders with a mental illness differently than other offenders. The perceptions and supervision styles of community corrections officers impact the outcomes for persons with a mental illness under community corrections supervision. Research suggests that the threshold for revoking individuals for technical violations is lower for individuals with a mental illness than for individuals without one. Also, traditional officer strategies of threats of incarceration and other negative pressures are predictive of re-arrests and revocation for probationers with a mental illness.

The best predictors of probation and parole revocation are the same for persons with and without mental illness. However, mentally ill persons may have *more* of these risk factors. The following eight risk factors are considered the strongest predictors of recidivism: history of criminal behavior, anti-social personality pattern, pro-criminal attitudes, anti-social associates, poor use of leisure/recreational time, substance use, problematic circumstances at home and problematic circumstances at school or work. Typically, mental illness is not the cause of criminal behavior and mental health services alone often do not prevent recidivism.

Importantly, improving outcomes for people with mental illness under community corrections supervision is an achievable goal that has broad implications for public safety, public health and public spending. Empirically supported



principles and practices have been identified through research in community corrections and research in mental health treatment. Some research has explored integrated mental health treatment-community corrections supervision models. While the existing research doesn't answer every important question, there is sufficient knowledge of "what works" to guide community corrections agencies and improve the outcomes of mentally ill persons under community corrections supervision.

Community corrections officers use evidence-based risk, need and responsivity principles to guide standard supervision practices. However, adaptations to standard supervision practices are required to achieve positive outcomes with mentally ill offenders. Mental health practitioners rely on a biopsychosocial model, but adaptations to the standard approaches are needed for persons under community corrections supervision. Independently and in partnership, community corrections and mental health practitioners have been developing new approaches for this population.

A hybrid supervision and treatment model is recommended based on assessment of criminogenic risk and assessment of functional impairment. Supervision and treatment options are matched to the varying degrees of criminogenic risk and functional impairment, both of which range from low (or minor) to high (or severe). The level of response intensity and the degree of coordination/integration increase as the criminogenic risk and functional impairment increase. A premise of the model is the use of evidence-based practices specific to community corrections and specific to mental health treatment. The use of this model helps reserve the most intensive resources for those with the highest risk of recidivism.

Research supports the following evidence-based principles that have been shown to reduce recidivism for the general population under community corrections supervision. However, their effectiveness has not been examined with persons with a mental illness under community corrections supervision:

- Adherence to Risk-Needs-Responsivity principles
- Cognitive-behavioral treatment interventions
- Drug treatment in the community

Research suggests that certain community corrections officer strategies and techniques can reduce recidivism for people with a mental illness under community corrections supervision or increase linkages to services. These include:

- "Firm but fair" relationships
- Compliance strategies that favor problem solving over threats of

incarceration or other negative pressures

- Boundary spanning (i.e. officers develop knowledge about mental health and community resources, establish relationships with clinicians and advocate for services)

Research supports six evidence-based practices that have been shown to improve the functioning of persons with mental illnesses. However, their effectiveness with people with a mental illness under community corrections supervision has not been thoroughly examined:

- Assertive community treatment
- Illness self-management and recovery
- Integrated mental health and substance use services
- Supported employment
- Psychopharmacology
- Family psychoeducation

Some empirical evidence supports the belief that the following two practices improve clinical functioning for persons with mental illnesses and there is some research that suggests a positive impact on criminal justice outcomes:

- Supported housing
- Trauma interventions

Some empirical evidence supports the belief that coordinated, integrated interventions improve outcomes for people with mental illnesses under community corrections supervision and for the first program model below, the evidence is strong:

- Specialized probation caseloads
- Forensic Assertive Community Treatment
- Forensic Intensive Case Management
- Parole outpatient clinics for people with mental illnesses
- Partnership for Active Community Engagement

A number of related issues need to be addressed by policy makers in order to achieve the positive outcomes demonstrated by existing research. These include screening and assessment, cross-agency collaboration, proper program implementation, performance-based contracting and funding, and organizational culture and leadership.

I would like to encourage you to access the full report for further information and to join me in working toward improved outcomes for persons with a mental illness under community corrections supervision. ■■■



Welcome to the Winter 2010 edition of Perspectives. As I write this, the field of corrections continues to be in the news. From the critical review of parole supervision provided in California to accused sex offender/kidnapper Phillip Garrido, to early releases of inmates and changes in laws to relieve prison and jail crowding, to the Supreme Court's consideration of the constitutionality of sentencing juveniles to life without parole, there is no shortage of attention being paid to how we handle punishment and supervision of offenders. In this issue, we feature a trio of articles that focus on key elements of improving the effectiveness of our work.

In our lead article, Anderson, Vivian and Brandner describe work being done in Arizona juvenile corrections and probation to examine the quality of treatment programs for juvenile offenders. This is a critical, if under-addressed component of evidence-based practices. Success with instituting effective programs requires two components: an effective program design and effective implementation. Even the best program model will not succeed if it is not implemented well. The Arizona experience involves two agencies and two assessment models, but a joint commitment to ensuring that quality services, consistent with what we know works in treating offenders, are provided to the juveniles.

One of the most common questions raised by probation and parole officers when their agencies are implementing new programs and practices is: "Where will I get the time? Caseloads are too large and officers don't have the time to perform all the tasks for which they are responsible. Part of the answer to this very real problem lies in how we deal with low risk offenders. Too much of our valuable and limited resources are taken up by low risk offenders. In their article, Ahlman, Kurtz and Malvestuto describe research in the Philadelphia Adult Probation and Parole Department that has shown how one strategy can help us with this problem. Using the "gold standard" of research designs, the randomized controlled trial, they evaluated how low risk offenders would perform if placed in large (400) caseloads with reduced supervision. The results showed that the low risk offenders did no worse than those assigned to the regular supervision caseloads. These results are a significant addition to our knowledge base and clear evidence that we can reduce supervision to low risk offenders without undue risks to public safety.

In their article about the Ohio parole sanctioning grid, Makarios, Steiner and Travis explore another aspect of program implementation that can have a significant impact on success. Any program change will have some degree of effect on the work of line officers. It is essential that those officers fully understand what is being implemented and why. The resistance offered by the parole officers suggested a serious gap in training around actuarial assessments and structured decision-making, two critical elements of best practices in probation and parole. It is essential that staff have sufficient training, including the opportunity to ask questions and discuss all aspects of the proposed change. It is interesting to read this description of parole officers' perceptions along side of the article that describes the positive impact of the sanctioning grid (see Martin, B., S. Van Dine, and D. Fialkoff. "Ohio's Progressive Sanctions Grid: Promising Findings on the Benefits of Structured Responses." Perspectives, Spring 2009).

In our Research Update and the President's Message, we engage in a bit of myth busting. Karp and Hara describe research that shows a popular myth that illegal immigrants are more



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crime prone is simply wrong. Barb Broderick describes some cutting edge research that busts another myth by revealing that the risk factors of the mentally ill on probation or parole are remarkably similar to other offenders. That research has great significance for how we supervise the mentally ill in our caseloads.

Technology continues to be a hot topic. In the California Inspector General's report on the Garrido case noted above, a great deal of criticism was directed to the use of GPS. Such technologies are simply tools that we have to learn how to use effectively. In the Technology Update, Joe Russo describes some of the advances in integration of multiple functions in one application. He wisely notes that we should be careful to not fall prey to the latest "bells and whistles" version, and be sure that we are buying, and using appropriately, the technology we need.

The Safety Update focuses on a tactic for field work with a team of two officers. Bob Thornton notes that officers sometime fail to see the role and the value of the second member of the team. This reflects the needs for all of us to be vigilant whenever we are in the field, to stay alert and engaged, for we never know when a potentially risky situation can turn truly dangerous.

I want to close with a comment about the acceptance speech given by this year's Line Officer of the Year, Crystal DeAngelo of Okla-

homa. She eloquently describes the challenge of supervising an offender who succumbed to the crystal meth addiction and then was involved in an incident that resulted in the death of a police officer. From such a tragedy, she was able to draw a positive result, forging strong relationships with law enforcement to share information about offenders under supervision. Such relationships work to enhance ability of both law enforcement and probation and parole, and as she notes, are a fitting way to honor the memory of the fallen police officer.

We hope you enjoy reading, reflecting on and discussing this issue with your colleagues. As always, we welcome your feedback on *Perspectives*, your professional journal. ■ ■ ■

Bill Durrell

OOPS!

Perspectives would like to acknowledge the error made on the Corporate Member listing for G4S Justice Services, Inc. The correct contact information is now listed on the Corporate Member page (page 8). The *Perspectives* staff apologizes for any confusion that may have been caused.

Probation, Parole and Community Corrections...

A Force for Positive CHANGE.

The American Probation and Parole Association (APPA) is proud to support a new identity program that we believe will set the stage for greater awareness of the role of probation, parole and community corrections in community safety. The program is a new national initiative — being rolled out in states, cities and towns across the country — aimed at better communicating the important work probation and parole and supporting professionals play in keeping our communities safe.

To assist you in implementing this brand identity in your agency and community, APPA has worked with marketing firm, Fleishman-Hillard International Communications, to produce a kit of materials and ideas. The kit contains sample news releases, tips to engage staff, sound bites for interviews, points to consider when dealing with the media and statistics that you can customize to your own needs to emphasize the importance of your community corrections agency and system. The kit can be downloaded on the APPA website at http://www.appa-net.org/eweb/DynamicPage.aspx?WebCode=VG_NationalBranding.

This project also introduces a logo and tag line that we are asking you to use in a number of ways. "A Force for Positive Change" contains connotations to the importance of keeping those under supervision accountable as well as many of the skills used by today's probation and parole officer such as motivational interviewing and cognitive behavioral change. The tagline typography shows forward motion, but also some of the stops and starts experienced by many individuals under supervision.

Today's probation, parole and community corrections system has an exciting story to tell and one that we hope you will consider now as this campaign is launched. As officers, supervisors, administrators and staff working to supervise and intervene with offenders in our communities, you are indeed, A Force for Positive Change.

For more information about this campaign, please contact Diane Kincaid, Information Specialist for APPA at (859) 244-8196 or dkincaid@csg.org.



A Force for Positive CHANGE.

FEATURES



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Instructions to Authors

PERSPECTIVES disseminates information to the American Probation and Parole Association's members on relevant policy and program issues and provides updates on activities of the Association. The membership represents adult and juvenile probation, parole and community corrections agencies throughout the United States and Canada. Articles submitted for publication are screened by an editorial committee and, on occasion, selected reviewers, to determine acceptability based on relevance to the field of criminal justice, clarity of presentation or research methodology. *PERSPECTIVES* does not reflect unsupported personal opinions. Submissions are encouraged following these procedures:

Articles should be submitted in MS Word format on an IBM-compatible computer disk, along with a hard copy, to Production Coordinator, *PERSPECTIVES* Magazine, P.O. Box 11910, Lexington, KY, 40578-1910, or can be emailed to kmucci@csg.org in accordance with the following deadlines:

Summer 2010 Issue – February 17, 2010 • Fall 2010 Issue – May 20, 2010 • Winter 2011 Issue – August 21, 2010 • Spring 2011 Issue – November 11, 2010

Unless previously discussed with the editors, submissions should not exceed 10 typed pages, numbered consecutively and double-spaced. All charts, graphs, tables and photographs must be of reproduction quality. Optional titles may be submitted and selected after review with the editors.

All submissions must be in English. Authors should provide a one paragraph biography, along with contact information. Notes should be used only for clarification or substantive comments, and should appear at the end of the text. References to source documents should appear in the body of the text with the author's surname and the year of publication in parentheses, e.g., (Jackson, 1985: 162-165). Alphabetize each reference at the end of the text using the following format:

Anderson, Paul J. "Salary Survey of Juvenile Probation Officers." Criminal Justice Center, University of Michigan (1982).

Jackson, D.J. "Electronic Monitoring Devices." *Probation Quarterly* (Spring, 1985): 86-101.

While the editors of *PERSPECTIVES* reserve the right to suggest modifications to any contribution, all authors will be responsible for, and given credit for, final versions of articles selected for publication. Submissions will not be returned to contributors.

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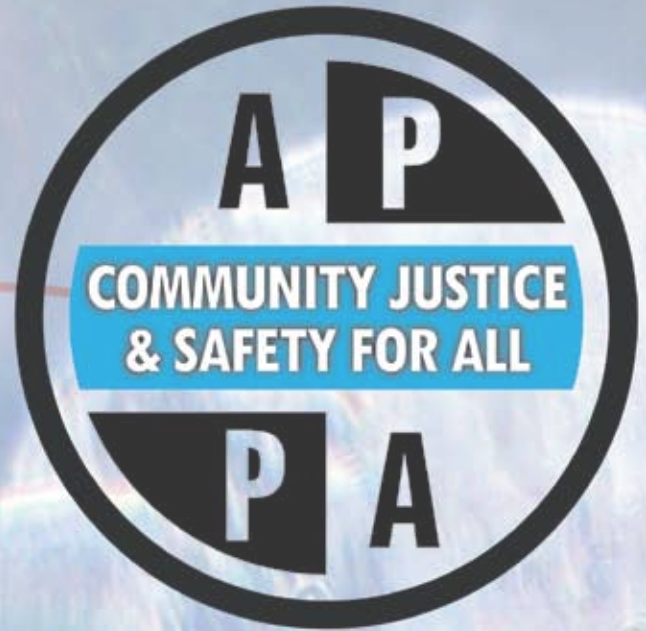
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Corporations with an interest in the field of probation, parole and community corrections are invited to become APPA corporate members. Corporate members receive benefits such as enhanced visibility among APPA's nationwide network of community corrections professionals, as well as shared information on the latest trends and issues that specifically affect community corrections.

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Perspectives is published four times annually by the American Probation and Parole Association through its secretariat office in Lexington, Kentucky. ISSN 0821-1507

Reprints and back issues. To order back issues, single copies of articles or reprints of articles in quantities of 100 or more, please call Lynda Wilkerson at (859) 244-8203.

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APPA *We see a fair, just and safe society*

vision

where community partnerships are

restoring hope by embracing a

balance of prevention, intervention

and advocacy.

We seek to create a system of Community Justice where:

A full range of sanctions and services provides public safety by insuring humane, effective and individualized sentences for offenders and support and protection for victims;

Primary prevention initiatives are cultivated through our leadership and guidance;

Our communities are empowered to own and participate in solutions;

Results are measured and direct our service delivery;

Dignity and respect describe how each person is treated;

Staff are empowered and supported in an environment of honesty, inclusion and respect for differences; and

Partnerships with stakeholders lead to shared ownership of our vision.



The American Probation and Parole Association is an affiliate of and receives its secretariat services from the Council of State Governments (CSG). CSG, the multibranch association of the states and U.S. territories, works with state leaders across the nation and through its regions to put the best ideas and solutions into practice.

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	VA Probation and Parole Association
	Western Correctional Association
	WV Association of Probation Officers

Spotlight on Safety

Contact & Cover-Revisited

by Robert Thornton

September 14, 2009, marked the 25-year anniversary of the deaths of two San Diego police officers who were shot and killed in the same incident. This event solidified the concept of contact and cover and made it a basic tactic for any officers dealing with potentially violent individuals.

The tenets of contact and cover call for the second officer (cover officer) to maintain surveillance of the subject(s) while the contact officer talks with the individual(s) and takes care of related business such as reviewing documents, questioning or conducting a pat down. In the San Diego incident, Officer Tim Ruopp encountered two adults who had given alcohol to two female minors. Ruopp began writing misdemeanor citations to each of the men when Officer Kim Tonahill arrived to provide cover.

While Ruopp cited the first subject, Tonahill decided to conduct a pat-down search of the second man. When she put her hands on him he knocked her down, pulled a 9mm pistol from a shoulder holster under his jacket and shot her to death. He then moved toward Ruopp and shot and killed him. While the agency had taught the concept of contact and cover, as the number of calls and demands on officers increased, officers became lax in its use.

Community corrections has adopted the concept of contact and cover and applied it to home contacts and any other contacts where resistance or aggression might be anticipated. Statistically, we know that our chances of attack are greatly decreased when we have a partner. But it is not just having someone else with you; it is having a partner that is participating in the contact in a tactical manner.

The main premise is that while the contact officer conducts business, the cover officer maintains a triangulated position, watching not only the subject but the surrounding area and maintains control over the exit route. The goal of the cover officer is to be close enough to assist their partner but far enough away to observe surroundings and alert the contact officer if a potential threat is observed.

Training in contact and cover should also discuss how that communication will occur. Code words and hand signals should be taught so that communication can occur without necessarily alerting the subject. Contact and cover is a tactical skill that has to be



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practiced to become part of our routine behavior.

The tactics of contact and cover start when we get out of the car and continue as we approach and enter the house or business. The cover officer resists any attempt to distract their attention from the task at hand or separate them from the contact officer. As Iceman told Maverick in the movie *Top Gun*, "You never leave your wingman." If a home inspection is to be made, the officers move through the house together in a tactical manner.

As more community corrections agencies support, and in some cases require, contacts to be made with a minimum of two officers, officers

have sometimes voiced concern that they (the cover officer) have nothing to do and it's a waste of time. Such statements tell me that these officers have not learned the real reason for two person contacts—*officer safety!* They have also not been taught, or embraced, the important and specific tasks on which the cover officer must focus.

Chances are your contacts will go without a problem. Even law enforcement officers that make arrests only have to use force in approximately two percent of the arrests. But the reality is that while you personally may have never experienced a hazardous situation, especially one in which there was an actual physical attack, nationally your co-workers have; some have lost their lives and those officers were usually alone.

If you have the opportunity to work with a partner, you are fortunate. Take advantage of it and use the concepts of contact and cover to make sure you always go home at the end of the day. ■ ■ ■

References

Albrecht, Steven, *Contact and Cover: The Supervisor's Critical Role in Officer Survival*. Law Officer, Law Officer, Volume 5 Issue 10, 10/2009.

Schweer, Ronald G. and Thornton, Robert L., *Strategies for Officer Safety Program*, 2007

Robert Thornton is the Director of Community Corrections Institute in Springdale, WA and the Chair of the APPA Health and Safety Committee.

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Discover what APPA can do for you. APPA staff and board members will be onsite to answer your questions and help you get the most out of your membership and Institute participation. Visit the APPA booth in the Resource Expo to get immediate assistance **APPA members save \$60 in registration fees!** It is not too late to take advantage of the savings. You can become a member of APPA when you register for the Institute. Just complete the membership section on the registration form, and your savings start immediately!

APPA Committee Meetings

Did you know that APPA has over 20 committees seeking your participation? Most committees will meet on Saturday, January 30 or Sunday, January 31 and are open to all members. Plan to arrive early to get involved in your association. Visit the APPA website at www.appa-net.org for committee dates and times.

APPA Accredited Training Contact Hours

All APPA Institute workshops have been approved by the APPA Training Accreditation Committee for 1.5 contact hours. Workshops have also been accredited by the National Association of Alcohol and Drug Addiction Counselors.

If you need verification of your attendance at Institute workshops, check the contact hour section on the Institute Registration Form on page 27. You will receive an attendance verification form and specific instructions at registration. Please note only paid Institute registrants are eligible to receive the Certificate of Verification. A \$10 processing fee will apply.

Why are contact hours valuable?

- Ensures workshop training/learning objectives
- Provides official verification of attendance at Institute workshops
- Meets professional licensing requirements

APPA Membership Meeting

Tuesday, February 2; 5:30 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.

Become more involved in your association. Vote on proposed position statements, learn about committee opportunities and more! All Institute attendees are encouraged to attend this meeting.

Institute Orientation

Sunday, January 31; 10:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.



First time attendees, our friends who travel from outside the United States and all new members or others just interested in learning more about APPA and the Institute are invited to attend an Institute Orientation where you will:

Learn about the Institute's

- Educational workshops and sessions
- Logistics
- Networking and social activities
- Resource exhibit area

Meet

- APPA President and Executive Committee members
- APPA staff
- Other VIP's and have an opportunity to network

Discover

- Things to do
- Places to visit

ACTIVITIES AT A GLANCE

Agenda is subject to change.

Saturday, January 30

9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

12:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Leadership Institute
Institute Registration

Sunday, January 31

8:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m.

9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

6:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.

7:30 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.

Institute Registration
Leadership Institute
APPA Board of Directors Meeting
Sponsored by ProTech Monitoring

Opening Session
Opening Reception in the Resource Expo

Monday, February 1

7:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

8:30 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.

10:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

11:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

12:30 p.m. - 1:45 p.m.

1:45 p.m. - 3:15 p.m.

3:30 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

4:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.

5:00 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.

Institute Registration
Plenary Session
Resource Expo Viewing
Workshops
Lunch in the Resource Expo
Workshops
Workshops
Resource Expo Viewing
Reception in Resource Expo

Tuesday, February 2

8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

8:30 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.

9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

11:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

1:45 p.m. - 3:15 p.m.

3:30 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

5:30 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.

Institute Registration
Workshops
Resource Expo Viewing
Workshops
Workshops
Workshops
APPA Membership Meeting

Wednesday, February 3

9:00 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.

Closing Session

RESOURCE EXPO

EXPO HOURS

Sunday, January 31

9:00 a.m. - 6:30 p.m. Exhibit Installation
7:30 p.m. - 9:30 p.m. Opening Reception in the Resource Expo

Monday, February 1

10:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. Expo Viewing
12:30 p.m. - 1:45 p.m. Lunch in the Resource Expo
4:00 p.m. - 6:30 p.m. Expo Viewing
5:00 p.m. - 6:30 p.m. Reception in the Resource Expo

Tuesday, February 2

9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. Expo Viewing
11:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. Exhibit Dismantling

APPA's Resource Expo is the only exposition dedicated solely to the needs of community corrections. At the Resource Expo, you will discover the latest products, innovative services and state of the art technologies to meet the challenges of keeping our communities safe. You can see, test and compare products and services while discussing your agency's specific needs with experts in areas such as correction software applications, drug testing technologies, offender monitoring systems, training and curriculum development, substance abuse and behavioral health programs and many more valuable products and services. Nothing rivals this resource of product and service information!

Plan Ahead

Preview the expo floor and exhibitor websites by visiting APPA's website at www.appa-net.org to check-out the virtual resource expo.

Receptions in the Resource Expo

Sunday, January 31 - 7:30 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.

Monday, February 1 - 5:00 p.m. - 6:30 p.m., sponsored by Protocol Global Solutions

Relax after your workshop-filled day at these casual receptions. Visit with friends and meet other participants as you explore the many exhibits in the Resource Expo.

Working Lunch

Monday, February 1 - 12:30 p.m. - 1:45 p.m.

Join us for lunch! Take a break to enjoy an informal working lunch with the exhibitors. Savor a light luncheon while you experience each product hands on.



FEATURED SESSIONS

OPENING

OPENING SESSION

Sunday, January 31

6:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.

Judge John Creuzot

Presiding Judge, Dallas County
Criminal District Court No. 4



JUDGE JOHN CREUZOT serves on the Texas Board of Criminal Justice Judicial Advisory Council, a committee that advises the board of the Texas Department of Criminal Justice on matters related to probation. He has recently been appointed to the American Bar Association's Commission on Effective Criminal Sanctions and also serves as an Advisor to the American Law Institute's Model Penal Code Sentencing Project. Judge Creuzot is currently the Presiding Judge of the 15 felony courts in Dallas County. He was named as a 'pioneer judge' by the National Association of Drug Court Professionals in June, 2000, for his contributions to the drug treatment court field and is in the Drug Court Hall of Fame. In June 2006, he was elected to the Board of Directors of the National Association of Drug Court Professionals. He was appointed by Mayor Ron Kirk to serve on the City of Dallas Task Force on Ethics and is a member of the City of Dallas Homeless Task Force.

PLENARY

PLENARY SESSION

Monday, February 1

8:30 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.

Tony Fabelo

Director of Research of Justice
Center, Council of State
Governments, Austin Texas



TONY FABELO is the Austin-based director of research of the Justice Center of the Council of State Governments. Fabelo was the executive director of the Texas Criminal Justice Policy Council from 1991-2003. Before that, he served in other capacities assisting, since 1984, five Texas governors and 13 regular biennial Texas legislatures. In recent years he has worked on correctional system reforms in Texas, Kansas, Pennsylvania, Michigan, Wisconsin and soon in North Carolina, Ohio and New Hampshire as part of the Justice Reinvestment initiative of the center and leads the probation performance project for the center. Fabelo holds a doctorate in government from the University of Texas at Austin.

CLOSING

CLOSING SESSION

Wednesday, February 3

9:00 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.

Jake Greene

Author

Sponsored by the Correctional Management Institute
of Texas, Sam Houston State University



JAKE GREENE is the author of the critically acclaimed *Whoa, My Boss Is Naked! A Career Book for People Who Would Never Be Caught Dead Reading a Career Book* (Doubleday). As a keynote speaker, Jake covers the intersections of social networking and professional networking, managing young professionals, and he offers insights for Gen X and Baby Boomer bosses looking to adapt to the needs of their changing workforce. He uses anecdotes, humor, and an encyclopedic knowledge of pop culture to entertain and educate his audiences.

REGISTRATION

Three Ways to Register!

By Mail – Registration for the APPA Institute can easily be done by mail. Just send your check, government purchase order or credit card information with your completed APPA registration form to the address shown on the form. All registrations postmarked by December 31, 2009 will be confirmed by email.

By Fax – When payment is by credit card, you may fill out the APPA registration form and fax it to: (859) 244-8001, Attention — APPA Institute. All registrations faxed by December 31, 2009 will be confirmed by email.

Online – Register for the APPA Institute on-line at www.appa-net.org with your credit card information. All registrations received by December 31, 2009 will be confirmed by email.

Agency Members – How to Register for Your Membership Discount

If your agency is a current APPA agency member, you can attend the Institute at the member rate. Your agency's membership must be valid through January 2010. Registration forms must be completed for each individual, mailed to APPA as a group with your agency's name clearly marked on the registration forms. Agency memberships will be verified. You are required to pay the regular registration fee if your agency is not a current APPA agency member. For additional information, contact Kris Chappell at (859) 244-8204.

Family Institute Registration

A special low registration fee is available to immediate family members of Institute registrants. Only immediate family members not employed in the corrections field qualify for this special rate. The fee is only \$75 and allows the family member to attend workshops, general sessions and the resource expo.

Payment

Payment in full for all Institute activities must accompany your registration form. Check, money order, VISA, Master Card or American Express are accepted as payment for the Institute's registration fees. Checks must be made payable to the American Probation and Parole Association and payable in U.S. dollars. Payments received in Canadian dollars will be invoiced for the conversion difference plus a \$10 service fee. **Registrations postmarked on December 31, 2009 or later are not eligible for the early registration fee and must include the regular registration fee.** Agencies required to use a purchase order should submit the registration form with the purchase order in lieu of a check. Invoicing will be processed immediately upon receipt of the purchase order and, in all cases, payment will be due immediately.

Cancellation/Refund Policy

A full refund, less a \$50 processing fee, is available until December 31, 2009. No refunds are available after December 31, 2009. In order to receive a refund, written requests must be sent to the APPA Institute, c/o The Council of State Governments, P.O. Box 11910, Lexington, KY 40578-1910 or faxed to (859) 244-8001. All requests for refunds must be postmarked or faxed by December 31, 2009. Registrations are not transferable.

Institute Dress

All activities of the Institute are casual dress. A sweater or light jacket is recommended since meeting room temperatures tend to vary.

REGISTER BY DECEMBER 31, 2009 TO RECEIVE DISCOUNTED REGISTRATION RATES!

Important Dates To Remember

December 31	Deadline to make lodging reservations at special Institute rates.
December 31	Last day to take advantage of early bird registration rates.
December 31	Deadline for registration fee refund.
January 31	Institute activities begin.

Directory

Institute Registration	(859) 244-8204 www.appa-net.org
Resource Expo	(859) 244-8205 www.appa-net.org
Hilton Austin	(512) 482-8000 www.appa-net.org
Enterprise Car Rental	(877) 275-4771 www.enterprise.com
APPA Website	www.appa-net.org

ICAOS Annual Business Meeting 2009 Recap

by Sam Razor

The Interstate Commission for Adult Offender Supervision (ICAOS) held its 2009 Annual Business Meeting on November 3 & 4, 2009 at the Grand Sierra Resort in Reno, Nevada.

On November 3rd, Commissioners, Compact Administrators and Deputy Compact Administrators (DCA) participated in two in-service training sessions, a Commissioner Training and a DCA Conference. In spite of these difficult economic times, the trainings boasted great attendance.

The Violation Process and Probable Cause Hearings training promoted an understanding of how significant violations are identified/reported and the Probable Cause Hearing requirements of Rule 5.108. The ICOTS Reports training demonstrated the reporting capabilities within the ICOTS system as well as new external reporting features available to compact office staff via the ICAOS website (<http://interstatecompact.org>).

The Commissioner Training provided the opportunity for educating Commissioners on the structure and authority of the Interstate Commission as well as the importance of the Commissioner's role within the Commission and their state. The DCA Conference provided a networking and training opportunity for Deputy Compact Administrators to discuss the day-to-day operations and challenges of Interstate Compact business. The focus of this year's DCA Conference was to extensively review a survey conducted by the DCA Liaison Committee and to examine three Rule areas which included Reporting Instructions, Victim Notification and the Grievance Process. The survey identified major obstacles compact offices faced in the past year and provided critical feedback for the DCA Liaison and the Training Committees as they move to set their objectives for 2010.

Following a full and productive day of trainings, the ICAOS Annual Business Meeting called to order on November 4, 2009. In accordance with the ICAOS Rules, 2009 is a rule-voting year

and the Commission considered twelve amendments and adopted ten. A full listing of the adopted changes is available on the ICAOS website (<http://interstatecompact.org>).

Following the adoption of the new rule amendments, the Commission recognized a number of individuals for their outstanding service to the ICAOS during 2009.

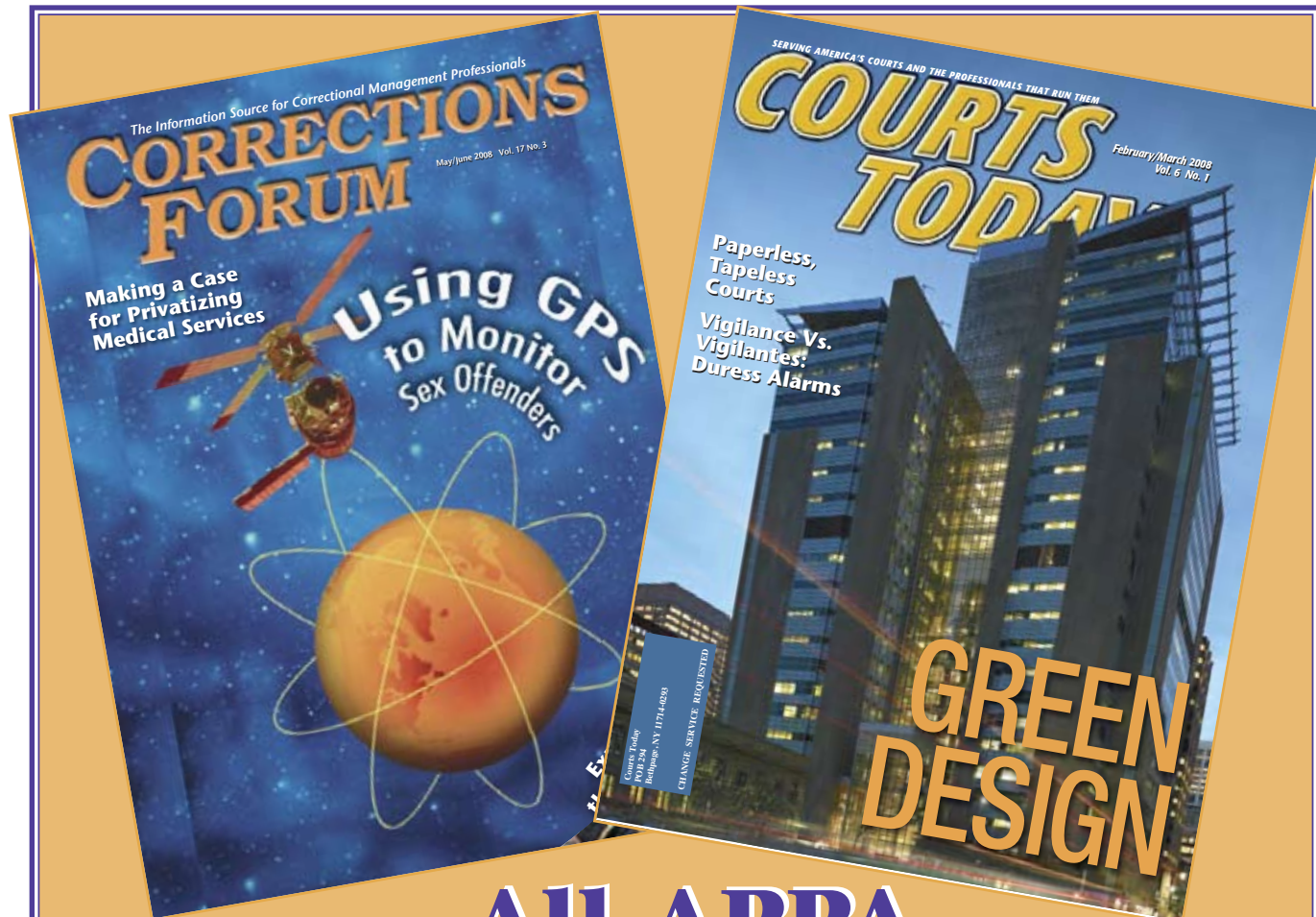
- Executive Chair Award – Presented to Commissioner Kathie Winckler (TX) for her work as the Chair of the Technology Committee.
- Executive Director Award – Presented to Deputy Compact Administrator Rose Ann Bisch (MN) for her work as the Deputy Compact Administrator for the state of Minnesota.
- Peyton Tuthill Award – Presented to Victim Representative Jennifer Marsh (KS) for her outstanding work with victims and promoting victims' rights in the state of Kansas.

The Commission recognized the region chairs for their contributions to the Commission: Commissioner Edward Gonzales (West Region), Commissioner Wayne Theriault (East Region), Commissioner Gary Tullock (South Region) and Commissioner Linda Janes (Midwest Region).

The Commission recognized a number of individuals through the *Spirit Sightings* program. This program allows officers in the field to submit a colleague for recognition for embodying the spirit of the compact in their efforts serving the mission of the compact.

The individuals recognized this year were: Dennis Sherman (CO), Kelly Goodard (CO), Regina Grimes (TX), Karen Tucker (FL), Charles Lauterbach (IA), Richard Goines (IL), Roberta Cohen (NM), Wanda LaCour (TX), Debbie Schmidt (CO), Patricia McCracken (CO), Gary Grable (NE), John Gusz (NJ), Kathryn Luth (AK), James Sisk (VA) and Joyce Reed (TN). ■■■

Sam Razor is the Assistant Director for the Interstate Commission for Adult Offender Supervision in Lexington, KY.



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Marriage of Technologies: Electronic Monitoring and Alcohol Detection Technology

by Joe Russo

Combining technologies into a system is not a new concept in criminal justice. For example, current offender tracking systems can employ a multitude of individual components including the global positioning system, radio frequency technology, cellular communications and tamper prevention/detection technology. What seems to be a growing trend is the combination of separate and distinct offender supervision tools with different purposes into a single product. At the heart of this trend is the nexus between electronic monitoring technology and alcohol detection technology. Up until recently, agencies had to use two different products or strategies to monitor an offender's location and his/her alcohol use. Now, a number of providers have merged the two applications into one device. Actsoft, Inc. was the first to market with its House Arrest Solution (HAS). HAS combines GPS tracking with alcohol sensors which monitor ethanol levels. Very recently two new products have been launched. The first, SCRAMx from Alcohol Monitoring Systems, Inc. (AMS), combines house arrest technology with continuous alcohol monitoring technology which measures the concentration of alcohol present in the insensible perspiration that is constantly produced and given off by the skin. The second, BI TAD from BI Incorporated, is very similar in nature to the SCRAMx product in that it also combines

house arrest technology with alcohol detection through the analysis of insensible perspiration. It is interesting to note that while AMS and BI have arrived at similar solutions they come from opposite directions. AMS is the pioneer of continuous alcohol monitoring technology with no experience in offender electronic monitoring and BI is a long standing electronic monitoring provider just entering the continuous alcohol monitoring arena.

Combining two or more electronic supervision tools into one product would seem to have a number of advantages. Such tools can reduce the amount of resources required by the supervising agency to manage devices and the information that they generate; can increase the accountability of those offenders that require more attention without adding additional physical burden of wearing two devices; and should reduce the daily operating costs when compared to two distinct tools.

Of course with advantages come concerns. For example, agencies should be conscious of any tendency to employ technology simply because it is available. An offender who was previously being effectively supervised with house arrest only should not necessarily be "upgraded" to a combination house arrest plus alcohol detection system. On the other hand, this level of accountability might

be exactly the option that a judge is looking to employ for some offenders who would otherwise be in jail while awaiting adjudication.

Agencies should be encouraged to explore these exciting new tools. They should also expect that there will be growing pains and glitches as providers deal with the challenges inherent to this type of endeavor. Work with the providers and articulate your requirements and concerns. Challenge them to demonstrate their understanding of the underlying science and technology, especially with respect to the areas outside of their traditional core competency. Understand the capabilities and limitations of each tool. For example, while on the surface all three products discussed perform alcohol detection

you will find substantial differences in exactly what they do and how they do it. Finally, as this combination approach is in its infancy explore and test how the distinct dual functions impact the overall reliability of the tool.

For further information on the APPA Technology Committee please feel free to contact Joe Russo at 800-416-8086 or jrusso@du.edu. ■ ■ ■

Joe Russo is Assistant Director for the National Law Enforcement and Corrections Technology Center in Denver, Colorado and is chair of the APPA Technology Committee.



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Recent Research on Immigrants and Crime

by David R. Karp and Nicholas Hara

“Are Deportable Aliens a Unique Threat to Public Safety? Comparing the Recidivism of Deportable and Nondeportable Aliens.”

Laura J. Hickman and Marika J. Suttorp
Criminology & Public Policy 2008. 7:59-82.

Recently, the Obama Administration has committed \$195 million dollars to a program to identify and deport individuals in jails that have been found to be illegal immigrants. The program is projected to cost \$1 billion annually by 2012. Most Americans, particularly in the post 9/11 era, express distrust of foreigners. In fact, in a recent poll (the General Social Survey), nearly 75 percent agreed with the statement that “more immigrants create higher crime rates.” Congress has enacted a series of laws in recent decades that increasingly limit immigration. But do immigrants actually increase crime rates? Hickman and Suttorp take up this question by looking at recidivism rates among both legal and illegal immigrants.

Americans have always had a love/hate relationship with immigrants, but public policy has traditionally emphasized family unity. For example, officials have tried to avoid deportation if this causes hardship to a family member who is a legal resident. Since the 1980's, laws have shifted away from this policy. In 1986, Congress passed the Immigration Reform and Control Act, which increased funding for border patrols and penalties for employers of illegal aliens. In 1996, the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act expanded the categories of noncitizens subject to detention and deportation (especially increasing expedited removals). This law also limited the options for legal entry and

residency. In the same year, Congress passed the Anti-Terrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act, which effectively eliminated judicial review for all immigrants eligible for deportation. Such a review was made available only when “exceptional or extremely unusual hardship” would be imposed on a U.S. family member. Finally, in 2001, the PATRIOT Act further expanded administrative discretion to remove immigrants.

The result of these changes marked a new era in deportation of illegal immigrants—those who entered the country illegally and those who had stayed beyond the terms of their visas. Between 1900 and 1990, the pace of deportations was relatively stable, hovering at approximately 20,000 per year. After these policy changes, annual deportations rose to about 180,000 per year; in 2005, the number was over 200,000. The vast majority (85 percent) of these deportations were Hispanics from Mexico and Central America. Thus today, we are deporting 10 times the number of illegal immigrants than in the past.

Several studies have shown that immigrants are not, in fact, more likely to commit crime than native-born Americans. Sociologists have shown that immigrants are typically conformists,

willing to work hard to achieve the American dream. In fact, a dispiriting finding of these studies is that criminality rises among immigrants only as they become socialized into American culture. They are more crime prone the more they are Americanized. The children of immigrants are more likely than their parents to commit crime, but still less than their native counterparts. These studies focused on immigrants in general and provide evidence that immigrants do not “create higher crime rates.” But what about illegal immigrants? Are they a greater public safety risk than legal immigrants?

To study this question, the researchers analyzed a sample of inmates who served time in the Los Angeles County Jail. This is an ideal research site because the jail often incarcerates both legal and illegal aliens. Foreign-born inmates make up approximately 20 percent of the jail population. They selected a group of male, foreign-born inmates who were released over a one month period in 2002. The sample included 1,297 individuals (40 percent illegal aliens; 60 percent legal). Most of the inmates were Hispanic (80 percent).

Hickman and Suttrop looked at recidivism rates of these inmates one year after release. They compared the two groups—legal and illegal immigrants—in terms of the number rearrested, how soon they were rearrested after release, and how many times they were rearrested in the follow up period. Using logistic regression, they tested a number of factors that might predict rearrest:

- Was the inmate a legal or illegal alien?
- Was the inmate Hispanic?
- What was the country of birth?
- How old was the inmate?
- Did the inmate have at least one prior conviction?
- How many times had the inmate been arrested in the past?
- Did the inmate commit a felony?
- Did the inmate commit a crime against a person?
- Did the inmate commit a property crime?
- Did the inmate commit a drug crime?
- How much time did the inmate serve in jail?
- What was the inmate’s release status?

Of this list of hypothesized predictors, only the following were statistically significant and had a predictive value on recidivism: Age (younger inmates were more likely to be rearrested), prior record, drug charges and property charges. Notably, whether the inmate was a legal or illegal alien was not found to be predictive of recidivism. Illegal aliens were no more likely to be rearrested than legal aliens.

It appears that immigrants suffer from misconceptions and stereotypes about their risk to public safety. Of course, this study says nothing about members of Al Qaeda or other terrorist groups. But they are clearly in a different category than a Mexican migrant worker. Pundits that lump all immigrants into one dangerous category and the majority of Americans who believe them need to pay attention to studies like these that can help ease unnecessary public anxiety and offer an empirical basis for future immigration policy decisions. ■ ■ ■

David R. Karp is Associate Professor of Sociology and Interim Associate Dean of Student Affairs at Skidmore College in Saratoga Springs, New York. **Nicholas Hara**, class of 2011, is a government major at Skidmore College.



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2009 Scotia Knouff Line Officer of the Year — Crystal Angelo

The Scotia Knouff Line Officer of the Year was presented at the Opening Session of the APPA 34th Annual Training Institute held in Anaheim, California on Sunday, August 23, 2009.



At the risk of making this sound like an Oscars acceptance speech, I'd like to thank Oklahoma Department of Corrections' Probation and Parole Administrator, Kenny Holloway, and my supervisors back home for their encouragement and support.

We all try to look for the positive in any situation. I'm no different than anyone else in that regard. I want to share something with you that happened almost three years ago. Something that left me struggling for a good end until recently.

One of my very first probationers was a young man named Drew. Drew seemed to be trying so hard to be responsible and he was doing great. He kept doing great until one day, he didn't come in. His missed appointment was the beginning of a two year cycle of arrests, revocation hearings, more arrests, revocation hearings being put off, new charges and report after report. It seemed like this guy had an endless supply of money to bond himself out and pay his attorneys. We have all probably known young men like Drew. He liked fast motorcycles and meth. I tried and tried to get this kid revoked, but we all know that the justice system can be slow.



Late on the night of October 20, 2006 I was sleeping when I heard a screaming engine in the distance. As I slowly woke up, I realized it was a motorcycle speeding down a nearby street. Then, the sound of a siren. I listened, half asleep for several seconds. The bike kept coming closer, the siren kept getting louder. The two vehicles raced down the street, past my house. I thought to myself: "What if that is Drew?" Then I forgot about it until I got a call a few days later from an Oklahoma City Police Department Investigator, Phil Williams. The suspect on the motorcycle was working for a man on probation and they thought I might be able to help find them. The probationer was Drew. I already had a mountain of paperwork on Drew, so I went through it trying to help with Phil's investigation. I worked with Phil and his team, helping put the puzzle pieces together for several months. In the end over one hundred fifty suspects were identified in an organized crime ring covering much of Oklahoma City. The group was involved in stolen vehicles, and farm equipment, bank and cell phone fraud, identity theft and many other white-collar crimes. Seventeen were charged with Racketeering; eight were convicted of that offense. Four were convicted on an amended charge, and one was charged in Federal Court. Drew is now serving 27 years in the federal system. And a motorcycle chase started it all. During this pursuit, the officer, Sgt. Jonathan Dragus lost control of his cruiser and later died from injuries sustained in the resulting crash.



My supervisor nominated me in part because of my role in this case. It was an honor, but I didn't expect to be recognized at the district level. I was even more surprised to receive the state level award. I never dreamed of receiving the Scotia Knouff Line Officer of the Year award.



I briefly thought, this award can't be the "good thing" that was supposed to happen out of a horrible tragedy. I called the investigator, Phil Williams, and we had lunch. We talked about the case, and I explained that I have struggled to find anything positive about Sgt. Dragus' sacrifice.



Surely just putting those people in prison wasn't enough. We had never discussed the far-reaching results of that chance meeting at the beginning of the case. I began to realize that not only did some bad people go to jail, but property was returned to victims, giving some of them a sense of closure. Yes, the bad guys didn't have the opportunity to keep stealing property and selling drugs, but more importantly lives were saved and changed. People were helped who might have gone down those paths as well. I've gotten more information on my probationers through my contacts at the Oklahoma City Police Department. Information that has helped me help my clients before their problems outgrew them. I have been able to share information with other probation officers who in turn helped their clients. I came to realize that is what it was about. Sgt. Dragus couldn't be here to see the result of his work. I, like others involved in this case felt a duty to continue what he started. He was the beginning of the end of a criminal enterprise. He was the end of lives gone wrong and the beginning of fresh starts. I finally found my reason for the "bad thing" happening. For that enormous sacrifice made by Sgt. Dragus and his family, many lives were changed, including my own. I would like to accept this award today in honor of the memory of Sgt. Jonathan Dragus.



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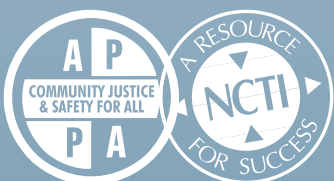
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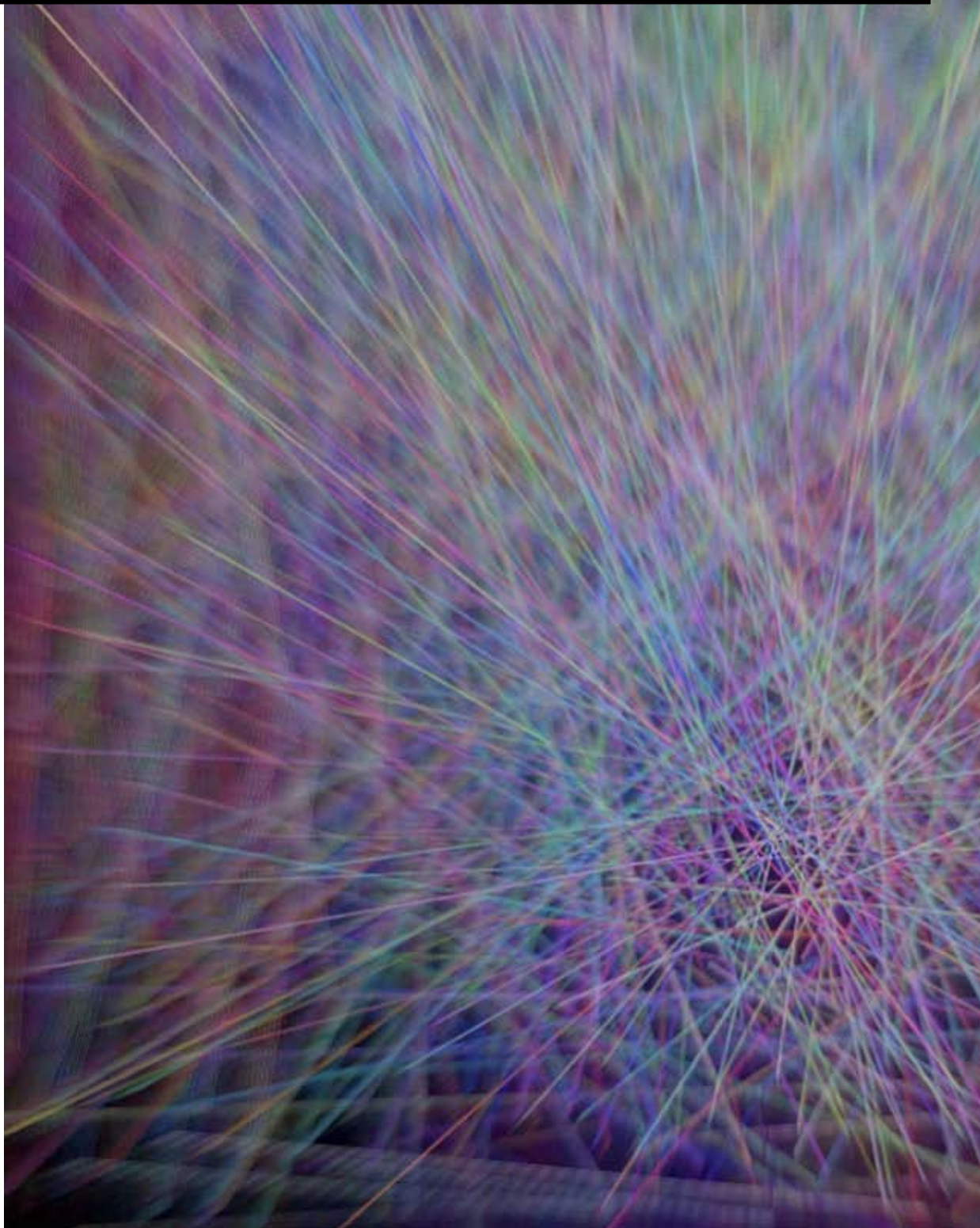
The Philadelphia Randomized Controlled Trial in Low Risk Supervision:


The Effect of Low Risk Supervision on Rearrest

by Lindsay C. Ahlman, M.S., Ellen M. Kurtz, Ph.D. and Robert Malvestuto

In Philadelphia, a small number of offenders under county court supervision will be charged with a serious offense within two years of the start of their probation/parole sentence (Berk et al,

2009). Conversely, a majority of Philadelphia county probationers/parolees will not commit any new offenses during the two years following the start of their sentence. Identifying these subpopulations enables a community corrections agency to target intensive supervision and support at those probationers/parolees who pose the greatest threat to public safety (Sherman, 2007). In an environment of unlimited resources, a community corrections agency might hire additional staff to supervise these high risk offenders in reduced caseloads. More realistically, probation/parole administrators must reallocate existing resources, adding staff to one unit at the expense of another. In today's budget climate, an agency ultimately cannot deliver intensive surveillance and/or treatment to the few who are at statistical risk of serious violence without concurrently creating large caseloads to supervise a bulk of likewise identified low risk offenders.





The Philadelphia Adult Probation and Parole Department (APPD) operates with a fixed number of probation/parole officers, each of whom is under increasing pressure to respond to and manage a full range of offender risk and needs. New tools in risk assessment constructed with and validated on local data (Berk et al, 2009; Berk et al, forthcoming) have enabled APPD to identify not only the highest risk individuals, but also the majority of offenders under APPD supervision who pose minimal to no threat to public safety. Emphasizing the function of low risk supervision within the broader goal of public safety and evidence-based resource allocation, we describe the implementation and outcomes of an experimental evaluation of large caseloads of low risk offenders under supervision of APPD.

The Low Risk Tool

Berk et al. (2009) provide a comprehensive account of the method used to develop the low risk tool employed in the present experiment, as well as a description of APPD's preliminary application of a complementary high risk assessment. The low risk tool predicts the collective risk of a group of offenders at the start of the probation/parole sentence *not* being charged with any serious offense — murder or attempted murder, aggravated assault, robbery, rape and other sex offenses — within two years of the start of supervision. The tool makes a prediction for each active probation case; in order for an offender to be classified as low risk, all active cases for that offender must be classified as low risk.

Unlike most risk assessment tools used in the criminal justice system that aim to classify risk of *any* new arrest or conviction, the low risk tool used here predicts the absence of a *group of charges for serious offenses*. The distinction here cannot be overlooked, as the dependent variable will directly control the proportion of individuals identified - certainly more offenders on probation will be arrested for any crime than for one of five serious offenses. Furthermore, if the primary goal of a community corrections agency is public safety, risk assessment must focus on the prediction of offenses that pose the greatest threat to that goal, targeting offenders with the greatest risk of committing, for example, aggravated assault as opposed to retail theft.

Cost ratios are built into the present model such that *false positive* outcomes (i.e. an offender is predicted low risk but actually goes on to be charged with a serious offense) are made explicit at the outset and can be adjusted to reflect the agency's own judgment of what is an acceptable error rate. This allows for an unprecedented transparency and increased logic and legitimacy in criminal justice decision-making. To achieve desired caseload sizes for high risk offenders, APPD officials determined that more than half of its population would have to be supervised in large caseloads. The low risk model employed here classified 61 percent of the entire APPD population as low risk of being charged with a serious offense within two years, with one false positive for every 17 true low risk predictions.

APPD administrators understood from the outset of its application that predictions for some offenders would be wrong in the most critical way (i.e., that a small percentage of offenders classified as low risk will in fact be charged with a new serious offense), and were comfortable with the fact that about one in twenty offenders classified as low risk would be charged with a very serious offense within two years of their supervision start date. Most importantly, administrators were confident in the model's utility due to the fact that the rate of these errors was a clear improvement from current practice.

The variables used by the low risk tool include all data that are systematically available to APPD staff. Because the ultimate goal in constructing the risk tool was to have risk assessments done at Intake, it was critical that variables available to researchers for the model's construction also be accessible programmatically by officers and intake staff. Data used to build the model therefore drew on data from the Philadelphia court system and the APPD's case management system. The results of the analysis indicated well-known

criminological risk factors, such as age and prior criminal history, as most powerful in the identification of offenders as low risk.

The top five most predictive variables in the low risk model are shown in figure 1. 'Age' refers to the offender's age at the start of his or her probation/parole sentence - older offenders are generally lower risk; 'Age First Contact' refers to the offender's age at the date of his or her first appearance in adult criminal court - offenders with later criminal onsets are generally lower risk; 'Violent Priors' and 'Total Priors' represent the number of violent and total charges in the offender's criminal history - less charges generally indicate lower risk; and 'Prior Jail Terms' refers to the number of times an offender previously served a sentence of incarceration in a Philadelphia County facility - fewer prior jail terms generally indicate lower risk.

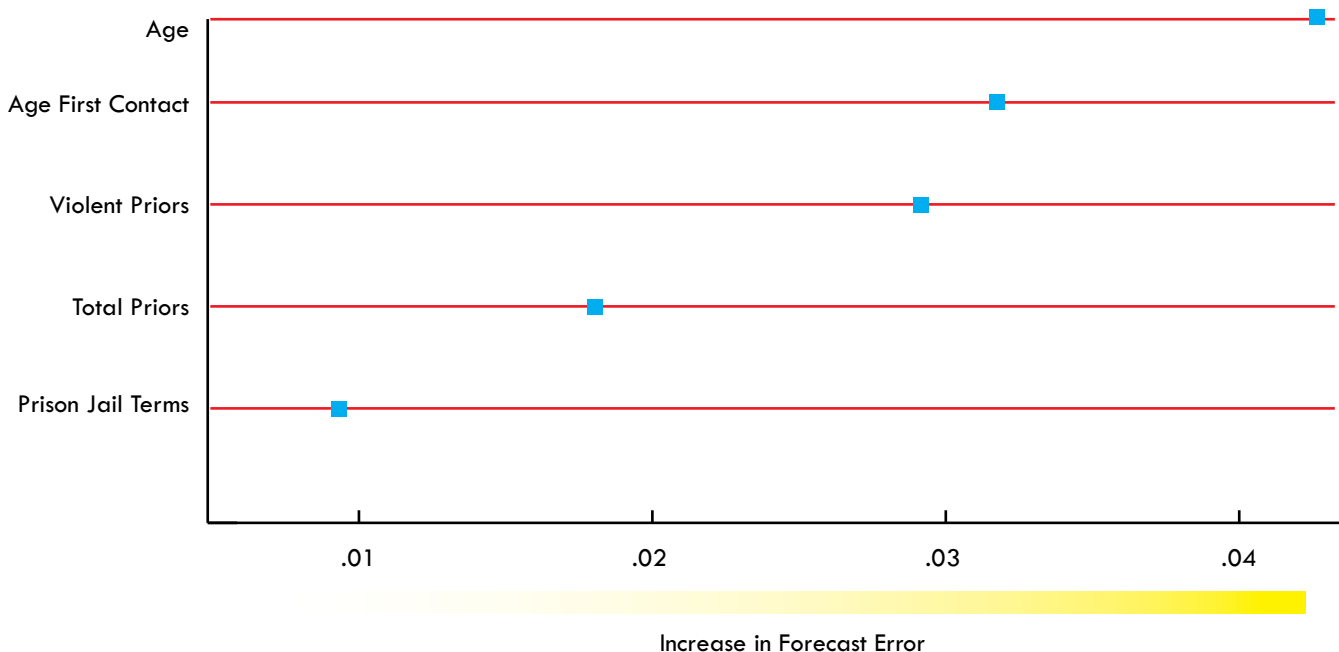
The Low Risk Experiment

Low risk caseloads are not a new concept for APPD and other community corrections agencies; APPD has been supervising some offenders in very large caseloads and with decreased supervision for decades. What is new is the method of classification and the agency's ability and willingness to empirically evaluate new policies before they are put in place on a full scale. The purpose of the low risk experiment was therefore to test the effectiveness of supervising offenders identified as low risk in large caseloads (400 cases/officer) compared to standard size caseloads (150 cases/officer). Given the cost ratios used to build the predictive model, offenders in both the experimental and control groups were expected to incur new charges. However, if low risk offenders in large caseloads are rearrested at the same rate as low risk offenders in standard caseloads, then APPD could feel confident about implementing low risk caseloads department-wide. The key research question is: Can low risk offenders be supervised in large caseloads without increasing the risk to public safety?

A randomized controlled trial was employed to determine if supervising low risk offenders in large caseloads has any effect on local arrests and or absconding from supervision, by tracking the arrests and warrant issuances of 1559 offenders identified as low risk and randomly assigned to standard or low risk supervision for one year (October 1, 2007 - October 1, 2008). The experiment included low risk probation or parole cases active on July 27, 2007 and supervised at that time in a regional caseload in either the West or Northeast part of the city.

Offenders initially assigned to the West or Northeast regional divisions that were identified as low risk were randomly assigned to either a low risk caseload or standard regional supervision. The experiment was initially to include only cases in West units because administrators

Figure 1. Forecasting Importance in Each Predictor



Furthermore, if the primary goal of a community corrections agency is public safety, risk assessment must focus on the prediction of offenses that pose the greatest threat to that goal, targeting offenders with the greatest risk of committing, for example, aggravated assault as opposed to retail theft.

were looking to create additional high risk caseloads there; Northeast units were soon included at the request of APPD officials due to their enthusiasm for the project. Offenders supervised in specialized caseloads (e.g. domestic violence, sex offenders) were excluded from the study. Two officers (one in each region) supervised caseloads of 400 low risk offenders randomly assigned to the experimental group. Low risk offenders randomly assigned to the control group remained in standard supervision caseloads and their low risk assessment was not shared with the supervising officer.

During the study period, cases in both the experimental group, one of two low risk caseloads and the control group (standard supervision) dropped out for a variety of reasons (e.g. expiration of case, new arrest). New low risk cases were added to the two low risk caseloads on an as needed basis to maintain caseloads of approximately 400.

Low Risk Supervision

The “treatment” for those randomly assigned to the experimental group consisted of being placed in a caseload of roughly 400 other statistically identified low risk offenders. Offenders remained in the low risk caseload until the termination of their case(s), unless the offender was re-arrested, in which case the offender was transferred back to standard supervision or put on wanted cards if they absconded from supervision.

The following supervision protocols applied to offenders in the experimental low risk caseloads:

- Office Reporting: Scheduled office visit once every six months, during which the officer reviews residence, employment, payments on fines/costs and restitution and compliance with other conditions.
- Phone Reporting: Scheduled phone report every six months, occurring roughly midway between the office visits.
- Drug Testing: Drug testing during the scheduled office visit is administered only if such action is required by court order. The low risk officer will order a drug treatment evaluation after no more than three positive urines screenings and is free to refer a low risk offender to drug treatment at the offender’s request.
- Absconder Warrants: Arrest warrants will be issued if there has been no case contact for six months. If the offender surrenders positively, the warrant may be removed with no criminal sanction.

While the two low risk officers were not responsible for a case once a new arrest occurred (e.g. they did not write violation summaries and/or appear in court for Violation of Probation hearings), they were responsible for handling the disposition of technical violations.

These protocols differ substantially from standard regional supervision at APPD. On average, offenders in regional supervision report to the central APPD office once a month, and are subject to random urinalysis regardless of whether it is a specific condition of their sentence. Officers in standard supervision exercise considerable discretion in deciding reporting schedules for the offenders under their supervision; offenders in regional supervision are seen by their officers anywhere from twice a month to once every three months, depending on the officer’s assessment of the offender’s risk. Absconding warrants are issued on offenders in regional supervision after no more than three months without any contact. Finally, officers in regional supervision are responsible for handling all court matters and violation proceedings

both technical and new criminal charges pertaining to offenders under their supervision.

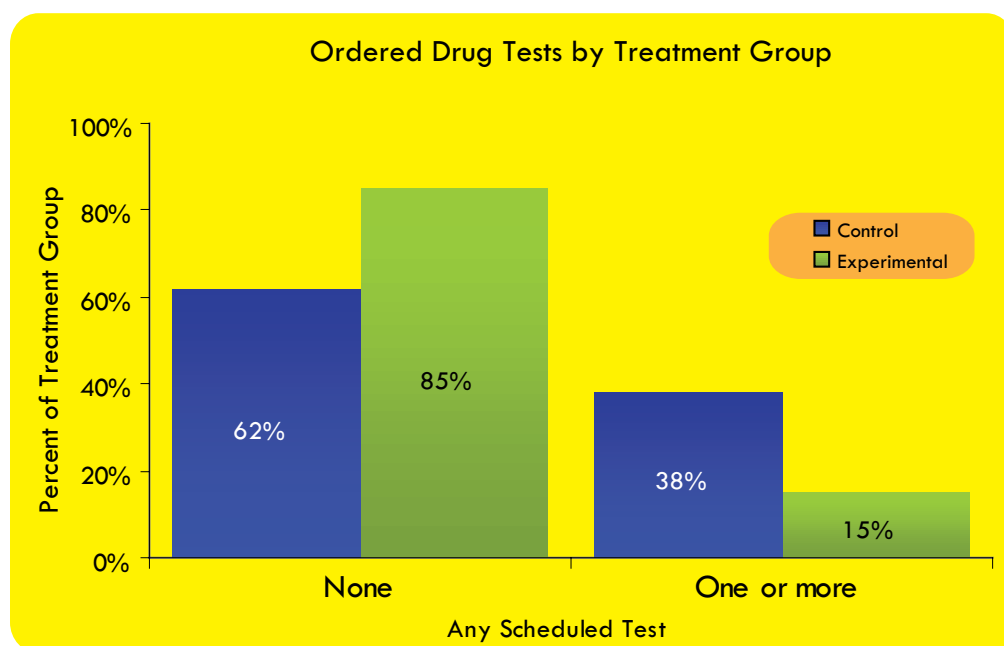
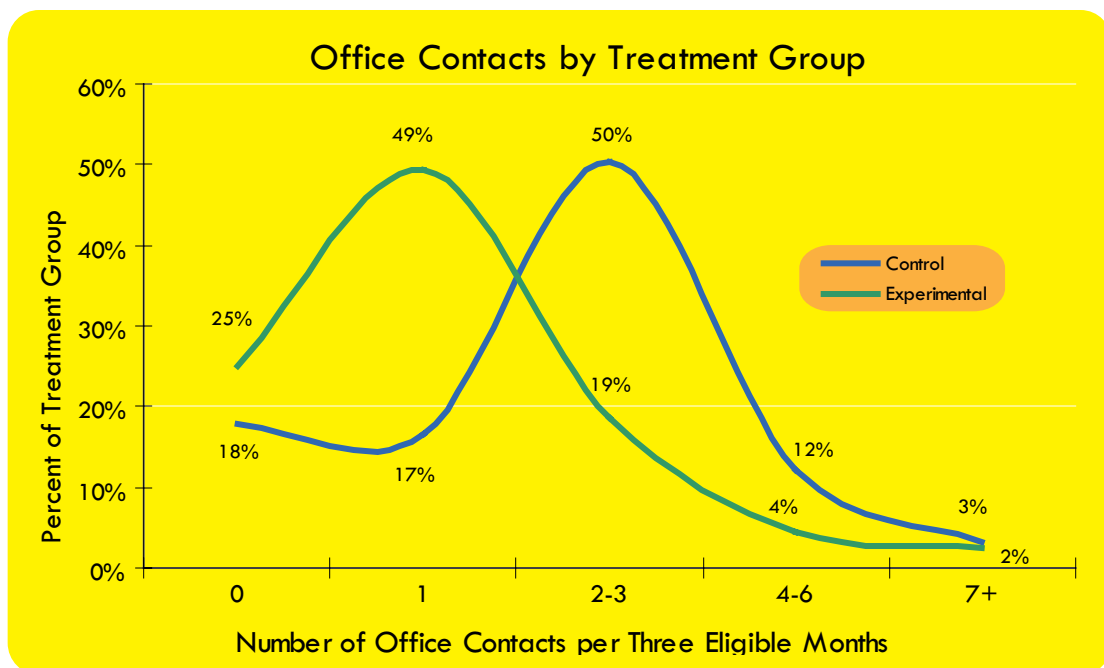
Implementation Measures

The first, and perhaps most important question to ask during an experimental evaluation concerns fidelity – did people in the experiment actually receive the treatment or services intended? If, for example, low risk offenders in the large caseloads were seen by their officer at the same rate as those in general supervision, the goal of

reduced supervision was not accomplished and therefore it would be meaningless to ask whether offenders in the large caseloads were arrested more or less often than the others.

Office Contacts

For the purposes of this analysis, the number of contacts for each low risk offender as standardized by dividing the total number of office visit entries with a “contact” result by the number of months the offender remained arrest free and under active APPD supervision during the trial period (10/1/07 to 10/1/08). For offenders whose case(s) expired naturally prior to the trial end date, the probation end date defined the limit (or maximum) of eligible months. In other words, offenders were no longer eligible for contact as soon as all the expired naturally or when a new arrest occurred, whichever came first. Using this method to count office contacts accounts for the varying lengths of time the low risk offenders remained active and arrest-free during the trial period.

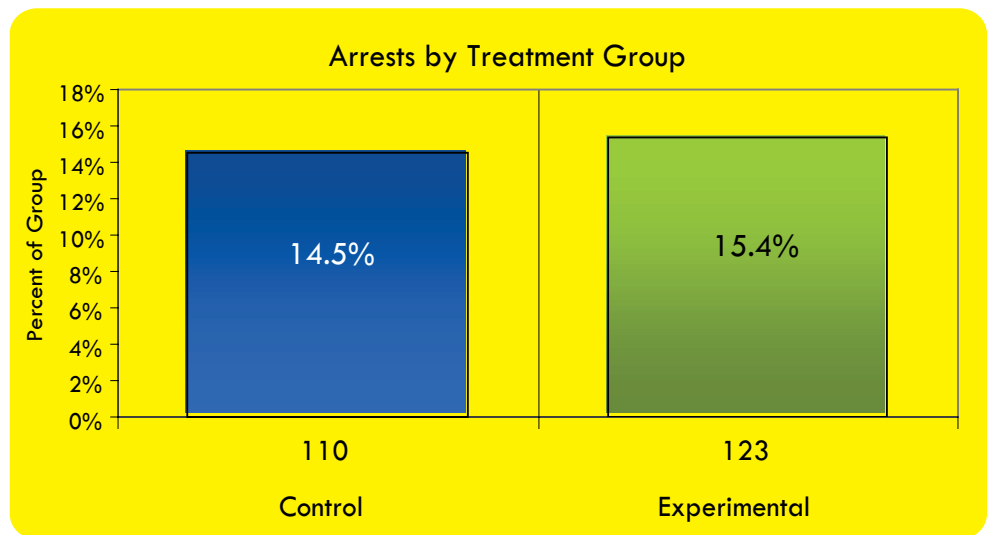


Low risk offenders in the control group had an average of 2.4 office contacts every three months they were eligible for contact, with a range from zero to 18, while those in the experimental low risk caseloads had an average of one office contact every three months, with a range from zero to nine. The difference between the number of office contacts in the control and experimental groups was statistically significant ($p > .05$); confirming that there were real differences between the two groups. The three month contact rates are summarized in Figure 2.

Drug Testing

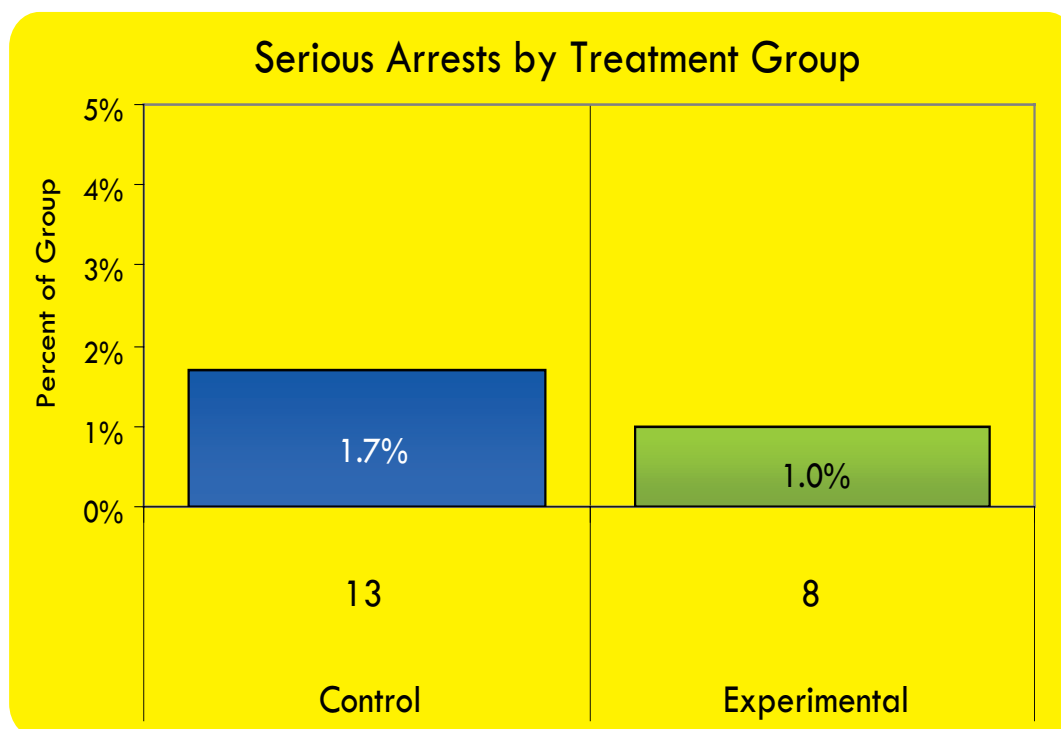
Drug testing is one of the most common supervision tools, but it also comes with a significant cost burden. In some cases, offenders are court-ordered to be drug tested, but more often officers use their own discretion when ordering drug tests. Consistent with focusing agency resources on the highest risk offenders, the low risk supervision protocol precludes drug testing of low risk offenders unless it is required by the specific sentence of probation or parole. The drug testing data presented in figure 3 confirm that fewer urinalyses were ordered for low risk offenders.

Fewer than half as many offenders in the low risk caseload (experimental group, in green at right) than the control group were sent for a drug test during the study period. Fifteen percent (118) of those in the experimental group and 38 percent (288) of the control group were scheduled for at least one drug test during the course of the study. The difference between treatment groups was statistically significant ($p < .05$). When ordered to undergo drug screening, low risk offenders in the experimental low risk caseloads were no more or less likely to test positive for any illegal substance ($p = .523$).



Outcome Measures

The two primary measures of "success" are new arrests and absconding warrants. That is, if the low risk experiment shows that supervising low risk offenders in large caseloads does not cause them to offend more often or more seriously, or to be more likely to abscond from supervision, low risk caseloads would be expanded throughout the department.



New Arrests

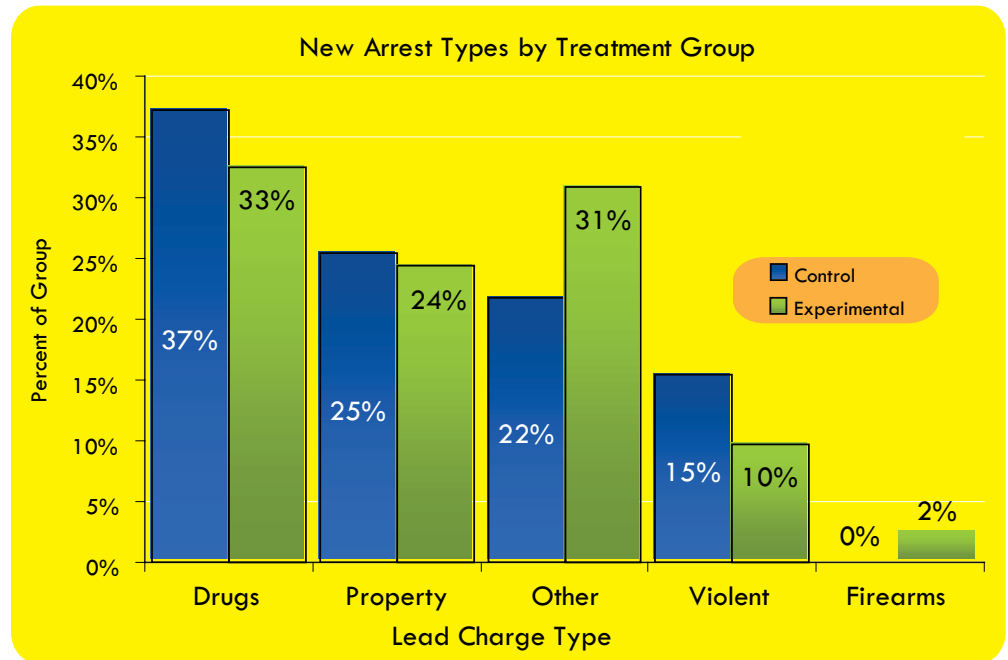
From Oct. 1, 2007 to Oct. 1, 2008, 15 percent (233) of all low risk offenders (experimental and control) incurred a new arrest of any kind. See figure 4. There was no statistically significant ($p = .676$) difference in the arrest rate of the low risk offenders supervised in the low risk caseloads (the experimental group, 15.4 percent) and the low risk offenders who remained in regional supervision (the control group, 14.5 percent).

New Serious Arrests

A total of 21 low risk offenders (1.3 percent of all 1559) were arrested for a serious offense (murder or attempted murder, robbery or attempted robbery, aggravated assault, rape or other sex offenses). While there were five more serious arrests in the control group, this difference was not statistically significant ($p=.157$). See figure 5.

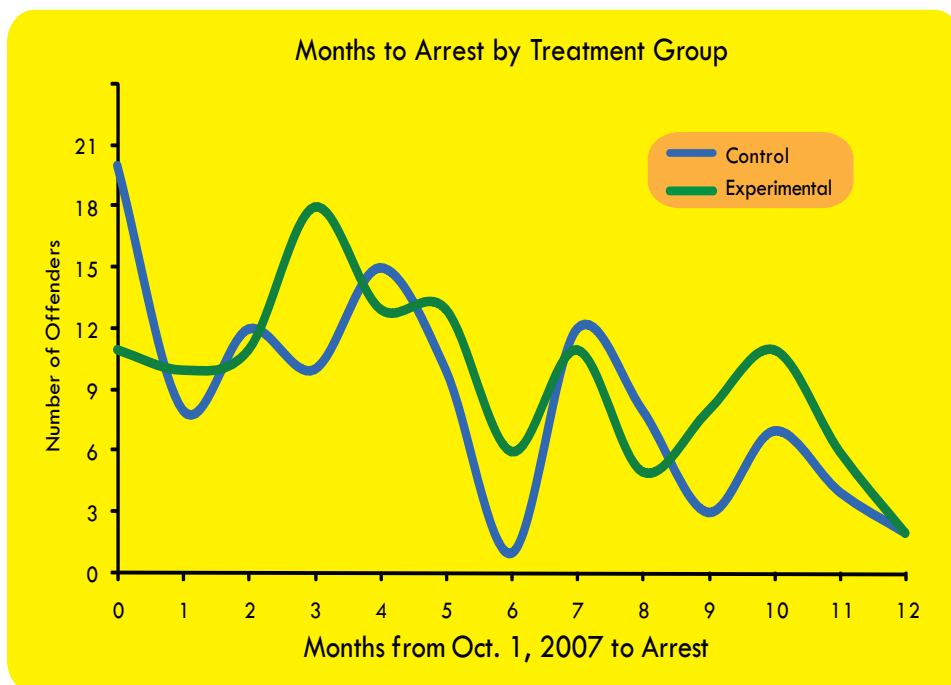
New Arrest Types

Among those arrested, there were no statistically significant differences ($p=.171$) in the type of new arrest between the control and experimental groups. The vast majority of new arrests incurred by low risk offenders in the study were drug, property and other public disorder offenses. The most common new lead charge among low risk offenders with any new arrest was drug-related (Violation of the Controlled Substances Act, or CSA). Public disorder offenses (CSA, Retail Theft, Prostitution, DUI) comprised 70 percent of the top ten most common lead charges.



Months to Arrest

There was no statistically significant ($p=.290$) difference in the time to arrest between offenders in the control and experimental groups. Thirteen percent of low risk offenders were arrested within the first month of the study. More than half of offenders incurring any new arrest were arrested within four months of the study. See figure 7.



Absconder Warrants

Low risk offenders in general supervision were 50 percent more likely than low risk offenders in the two large (experimental) caseloads to abscond from supervision during the study. See figure 8. This difference was statistically significant ($p<.05$), indicating a meaningful reduction in the number of absconder warrants issued against low risk offenders supervised in large caseloads.

Conclusion

The goal of the low risk experiment was to test whether or not low risk offenders could be supervised in large caseloads without increased risk to the

public. The results of the experiment clearly indicate that large caseloads do not increase the risk of arrest for low risk offenders. There was no difference in either the rate of any arrest or an arrest for a serious offense between low risk offenders supervised in large caseloads and low risk offenders supervised in standard caseloads. The experiment also showed a significant reduction in the number of absconding warrants issued against low risk offenders.

In addition to its having no effect on arrest outcomes, low risk supervision also resulted in significantly less resources being used: low risk offenders in the large caseloads were seen less often in the office, and were sent by their officer to take less drug tests than those in the control group (general supervision). The significantly reduced rate of resource delivery within the low risk caseloads enables APPD to direct services at high risk offenders who pose the greatest risk and therefore stand to benefit the most from those services. And because those reduced services did not result in any increase in arrests (particularly arrests for serious crimes) or absconding, APPD can be confident that reduced supervision of low risk offenders poses no significant threat to public safety.

Expanding the low risk supervision program across the department will allow APPD to free up both officers and resources to supervise high risk offenders in smaller caseloads. Risk-based stratification of the entire APPD caseload, along with the reallocation of the agency's resources such as drug tests, serves to maximize our impact on public safety while still maintaining the ability to confidently carry out orders of the court in a manner that is both efficient and effective. ■■■

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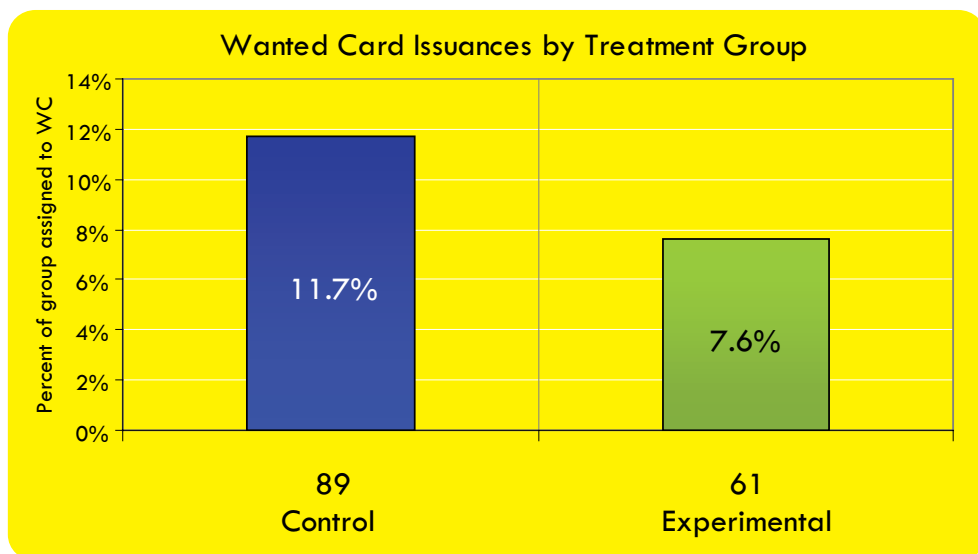
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The authors wish to thank their colleagues Richard Berk, Professor of Criminology and Statistics, Geoffrey Barnes, member, Research Faculty and Lawrence Sherman, Director of Jerry Lee Center for Criminology at the University of Pennsylvania.

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E N S U R I N G
QUALITY
JUVENILE
OFFENDER PROGRAMS

by Michelle Anderson, M.A., John Vivian, Ph.D. and Jeanne K. Bradner



Over the past several decades there has been considerable debate regarding the effectiveness of correctional and community supervision programs aimed at reducing juvenile delinquency. The consensus among researchers is that to effectively reduce recidivism, programs must possess key characteristics. Those characteristics have since been identified in the now large body of research on what is effective – the “what works” literature. Meta-analyses of research on program effectiveness confirms that programs applying the principles of effective intervention and addressing program integrity are achieving on average recidivism reductions of 30 percent to 50 percent (Andrews, Zinger, et al., 1990). Unfortunately, such analyses indicate that relatively few programs are providing services and treatment consistent with the principles of effective intervention. In recent years, evaluation tools have been developed to assess the abilities of therapeutic programs to effectively reduce recidivism. The Arizona Department of Juvenile Corrections (ADJC) and the Juvenile Justice Services Division (JJSD) of the Arizona Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) have begun utilizing evaluation tools on juvenile delinquency programs. Specifically, ADJC adopted and employs the Correctional Program Checklist (CPC) to evaluate institutional and community-based programs, while JJSD implemented the Standardized Program Evaluation Protocol (SPEP) to assess programs serving probationers under AOC contract. This article further discusses the application of these evaluation tools.

CORRECTIONAL PROGRAM CHECKLIST (CPC)

The CPC is an assessment tool developed to gauge adherence to program characteristics that are highly correlated with reducing recidivism. The CPC has been utilized by ADJC for institutional and community-based program evaluations since 2006. Not only is the instrument based on empirically derived principles that are applicable to a wide range of correctional programs, but the CPC also provides a measure of program quality and integrity. The CPC, a derivative of the Correctional Program Assessment Inventory (CPAI) (Gendreau and Andrews 1994), resulted from studies of over 450 institutional and community based correctional programs that served over 40,000 offenders, both adult and juvenile. Dr. Edward Latessa and colleagues at the University of Cincinnati developed the CPC which includes only those CPAI items that were consistently found to be positively correlated with successful outcomes in addition to newly added items that also correlate with reductions in recidivism (Holsinger, 1999; Lowenkamp and Latessa, 2003; Lowenkamp, 2004; Lowenkamp & Latessa, 2005a; Lowenkamp and Latessa, 2005b).

The CPC is divided into two areas: *capacity* and *content*. The *capacity* area is designed to measure whether a correctional program has the capability to deliver evidence based interventions and services for offenders. There are three domains within *capacity*: *leadership and development*, *staff* and *quality assurance*. The *content* area focuses on the substantive domains of *offender assessment* and *treatment* (therapeutic service/approach). Overall, there are five primary domains for a total of 77 indicators, worth up to 83 total points. Not all of the indicators are given equal weight and some may be considered “not applicable,” in which case they are not included in the scoring. Each domain, as well as the overall program, is scored as either “*highly effective*” (65 percent or higher); “*effective*” (55 percent to 64 percent); “*needs improvement*” (46 percent to 54 percent); or “*ineffective*” (45 percent or less).

Programs are evaluated through structured staff and youth interviews, a review of policy and procedure manuals, treatment curricula, a sample of open and closed case files and the observation of therapeutic groups. Once the information is gathered and reviewed, the program is scored and a report is generated which identifies the program’s strengths and weaknesses. Recommendations for improvement are given and program scores are compared to national averages. Depending on how the program

is rated and whether the program has undergone significant change, the program will be re-evaluated between six months and three years from the initial evaluation. This follow-up review process provides a comprehensive picture of program integrity and facilitates ongoing quality improvement.

Data resulting from hundreds of assessments with the CPC/CPAI indicate that most programs are not adequately incorporating the principles into their correctional programming, with about 70 percent of programs categorized in the *ineffective* or *needs improvement* ranges, and less than 30 percent of programs categorized in the *effective* or *highly effective* ranges. Researchers found that institution-based programs or those with a specialized focus (e.g., substance abuse, sex offenders) produced slightly higher CPC scores than programs in probation settings or those with a general treatment focus (Smith, Gendreau, & Goggin, 2005). In a validity study of the instrument, Holsinger (1999) found a high degree of correlation between CPC scores and offender outcome. Specifically, programs in the bottom 30 percent on the checklist scale had 18 percent more recidivism compared with programs rated higher on the scale. Programs in the top 30 percent had 20 percent lower recidivism (Hoffman, 2006).

THE STANDARDIZED PROGRAM EVALUATION PROTOCOL (SPEP)

In 2006, the AOC partnered with Dr. Mark Lipsey, Director of the Center for Evaluation Research and Methodology at Vanderbilt University to assess how closely Arizona juvenile justice contracted treatment programs are incorporating the key features of effective programs identified by Dr. Lipsey’s meta-analysis of research studies. These key program features identified in the meta-analysis are the primary service type, supplemental services, dosage of service (duration and intensity), and the youth’s delinquency risk level.

The purpose of the Arizona SPEP is two-fold: to measure the effectiveness of treatment programs and to serve as a roadmap for program improvement. Program improvements are guided by the numerical rating of each of the identified key features. Each program’s AZ SPEP score represents a measure of its expected effectiveness in reducing recidivism. To date, 107 programs have been evaluated using the AZ SPEP and have been required to respond with a plan of program improvement. The breakdown of the SPEP component scores shows that JJSD programs are

generally using effective types of services and serving some juveniles of sufficiently high risk to warrant service. While there is room for improvement in these areas, especially with regard to the targeting of high risk juveniles, the greatest shortfall in the SPEP scoring appears for the amount of service -- the duration of service and especially, the number of service contact hours with the juveniles served. Program improvement plans demonstrate how a program intends to better target key features impacting recidivism. Both AZ SPEP scores and program improvement plans are available for review by judges and probation staff.

The AOC maintains a statewide database to store treatment and juvenile case management information. This allows the information needed for evaluation to be generated centrally and easily accessed to measure improvements and changes down the road. The AZ SPEP provides the AOC with a practical and effective method for evaluating multiple treatment programs without the costs associated with visiting each program individually, collecting data on site, and conducting hours of analysis. Rather than a one-time snapshot of a program's effectiveness, the AZ SPEP guides a continuous process of evaluation and improvement over multiple programs statewide.

In a preliminary investigation of whether the SPEP ratings of service programs were related to recidivism outcomes for the juveniles they served, Dr. Lipsey (2008) found that juveniles served by providers with higher SPEP scores (≥ 50 points) had recidivism rates 12 to 13 percent lower than predicted on the basis of their assessed level of risk, while juveniles served by providers with lower SPEP scores (≤ 49 points) recidivated at a rate closer to what was predicted. This early evidence supports the validity of the SPEP and the value of the JJSD initiative to implement SPEP as a tool for program evaluation (Lipsey, 2008).

COMPARISON OF THE CPC AND AZ SPEP

The analysis reveals that both assessment tools measure the effectiveness of juvenile justice programs against characteristics that correlate with reductions in recidivism. Additionally, both tools are supported by research and have similar goals. There are only a few minor differences between the methodologies. The first difference is the process of collecting the data and material on which the program is evaluated. The AOC has oversight of the provider contract and monitoring processes and billing documentation resulting in a

greater ability to rely upon program information without conducting a site visit. The ADJC contract and monitoring processes are different than those of the AOC and as a result, the program information is collected during a site visit. Data collected during site visits are the result of structured interviews with key provider staff (i.e., director, clinical director and treatment staff), reviews of program curricula and manuals currently being utilized, reviews of the assessment tool(s) administered to the participants, observations of therapeutic groups provided and a review of the quality assurance measures in place.

The second difference between the CPC and AZ SPEP is the classification and rating of treatment interventions. The AZ SPEP identifies the primary and qualifying supplemental service(s) actually provided and matches those to program research categories developed by Dr. Lipsey using meta-analytic techniques to find those that correspond to large reductions in recidivism. For example, group counseling, a "primary service," can be expected to achieve high recidivism reduction effectiveness, on average, when provided to offenders in conjunction with a supplemental service that typically boosts the impact of group counseling in the available research. Hence, service providers that pair at least one of the specified supplemental services with group counseling will earn the maximum points for the paired services. The CPC treatment domain is composed of thirty-one scored items that combined determine the overall treatment domain rating. The items, all of which are features of effective programs and correspond to reductions in recidivism, range from treatment modality to duration, intensity and completion criteria. Programs receiving the highest ratings in the treatment domain delivered behavioral services to high-risk offenders, addressed responsivity and targeted criminogenic needs.

Lastly, program quality is measured differently. The CPC itself is a measure of program quality; specifically, it measures a provider's ability to deliver the services associated with the program; assess whether the characteristics of the actual programming are tied to effectiveness; and examines whether a program gathers the information necessary, through the use of assessment instruments, to allow them to adhere to the principles of risk, need and responsivity. The AOC, in conjunction with Drs. Lipsey and James C. Howell, is working towards development of an additional category for the SPEP that takes an in-depth look at treatment quality specific to service provision.

An example of how the slightly different methodologies yield somewhat different findings is presented below.

Program A is a not-for-profit facility licensed for adolescent females between the ages of 11 and 18 with a variety of diagnoses. The treatment program is offered as a continuum of care with evaluation, individual, group and family counseling, education and medication monitoring services provided through a Level I residential facility, while the therapeutic group home is reserved for girls who are in the final phase of the program and focuses on independent living skills.

Both probation and parole youth attend the same programming, which consists of a minimum of one hour of individual therapy each week, weekly psycho-educational group therapy sessions (group counseling) and at least bi-weekly family therapy sessions. The program is grounded in the Normative Culture, also known as Positive Peer Culture or PPC, approach with daily Guided Group Interactions (GGI). On average, the duration of the program is between six and twelve months.

CPC FINDINGS

In December of 2006, the overall program (level I residential and therapeutic group home) received a combined CPC score that falls into the *effective* category. The overall capacity score, designed to measure whether the program has the capability to deliver evidence based interventions falls into the *highly effective* category, with very few deficits noted or recommended for improvement.

The overall content score, which focuses on the substantive domains of assessment and treatment, falls into the *effective* category. While the program received high ratings for utilizing appropriate assessments, the low ratings for the core treatment modality, PPC, employed by Program A reduced the overall category rating. The research and empirical evaluations of programs based on PPC and GGI are inconsistent; some yield no effect, others yield beneficial effects, and still others yield adverse effects.

The CPC report addressed the program's strengths and weaknesses and made the following recommendations for program improvement: increase the focus on criminogenic risk and need factors associated with recidivism; consider incorporating cognitive

restructuring and skill enhancement groups; employ a standardized risk and needs instrument; offer a formal aftercare period and track participant outcomes.

AZ SPEP FINDINGS

In July 2008, Program A's Level I residential facility was evaluated, examining 41 youth. This vendor received a SPEP score of 63 points out of a possible 85. The program was classified with a primary service of residential group counseling, which for general delinquency populations, demonstrates a high effect in the research. Utilization of supplemental services identified in research, program duration, service contact hours and focusing service provision on high/medium risk youth were noted areas of deficit to maximize recidivism reduction.

Specifically, the SPEP identified that supplemental services offering an added "boost" to recidivism results were not being utilized by the vendor, only 40 percent of youth received the average optimal duration of 20 weeks or more of treatment, 60 percent of youth received the average optimal contact hours of 60, and 15 percent of youth had a JOLTS1 risk score which represents a low probability of re-offense.

At this same time, Program A's therapeutic group home received a SPEP score of 48 points out of a possible 85, based on review of 15 cases. The program's primary service, residential group counseling, fell into the *high effective* service range for general delinquency populations. Evaluation results were similar, with no supplemental services identified in research being provided, none of youth analyzed received the average optimal duration of 20 weeks or more of treatment, only 20 percent of youth received 60 face-to-face contact hours, and 15 percent of youth receiving service had a JOLTS risk score that represented a low probability of re-offense.

UTILIZATION OF THE CPC AND AZ SPEP FINDINGS

While both the CPC and SPEP assessments have a significant amount of research to support their purpose and design, neither tool has yet been utilized to effect agency policy or contractual agreements in Arizona. Currently, the ratings guide effective programming for juvenile offenders and have the potential to be used as a measure for making decisions surrounding who should continue to provide services for Arizona's youth. In the meantime,

the use of such evaluation tools substantiates the importance of providing juveniles in the justice system with quality, evidence-based programming. The use of such tools also assures legislators, policy makers and taxpayers that state appropriated treatment dollars are being spent effectively and efficiently.

The implementation of the CPC and AZ SPEP has brought with it an opportunity to promote evidence-based practice and reductions in juvenile delinquency among providers, judges and probation and corrections personnel. In fact, the AOC has conducted numerous trainings about the AZ SPEP process and principles of evidence-based practice as they relate to reducing recidivism. In addition, Drs. Latessa, Lipsey and Howell have held seminars in conjunction with ADJC and the AOC to highlight the benefits of systematic reviews and how to translate knowledge into practice. ADJC has also since created an implementation checklist from the CPC to guide those developing new programs to incorporate the principles of effective intervention.

CONCLUSION

Arizona's juvenile corrections and juvenile probation agencies assess whether juvenile justice programs are incorporating the principles of effective intervention and employing evidence-based practices through the implementation of two cutting-edge evaluation instruments, the CPC and the AZ SPEP. The selected assessment tools are based on empirically derived principles that are applicable to a wide range of juvenile justice programs and were designed to address inconsistencies in program design and practices. The assessments were also designed to identify program strengths and to guide programs in making improvements where needed, as well as to illustrate to providers that improved outcomes can sometimes be realized through a simple change.

While the methodologies of the CPC and AZ SPEP are only slightly different and sometimes result in different findings, the purpose of the tools are similar - to improve the effectiveness of juvenile justice programs, in turn increasing the effect on recidivism. ■ ■ ■

FOOTNOTE

¹ Juvenile On-Line Tracking System

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The authors wish to acknowledge the contributions of Dr. Mark W. Lipsey and Dr. Edward J. Latessa, who consulted on and reviewed the article.

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Research examining the effects of criminal justice policy initiatives tends to focus solely or primarily on whether the policy has achieved its original objectives. The effects of the policy on the people whose job it is to carry it out are often ignored. (Meithe and Moore 1988) The Ohio Adult Parole Authority established a “Progressive Sanction Grid” (hereafter the Sanction Grid) as part of a broader re-entry initiative. This policy had direct effects on the day-to-day operations of parole officers who managed offenders for the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction (hereafter, ODRC). This article describes the reactions of Ohio parole field personnel to the implementation of the Sanction Grid.

The Ohio Adult Parole Authority Progressive Sanction Grid was part of a policy that sought to limit discretion during the sanctioning decisions by forcing officers to use a graduated sanctioning system that is based on the seriousness of the behavior, the risk level of the offender and the number of prior sanctions. (Martin, Van Dine and Fialkoff 2009) The primary goals of the Sanction Grid were to encourage uniform responses to violation behavior and promote the use of graduated sanctions that escalate in severity. The Sanction Grid is of significance to parole officers in Ohio because it has the potential to greatly alter the day-to-day activities of the officers who manage offenders released from state prisons. This is because the policy was designed to re-structure the process of punishing an offender who has violated the conditions of their release. Since parole officers routinely deal with offenders on their caseload who violate their conditions of release and the Sanction Grid changes how parole officers respond to violations, the Sanction Grid has the potential to substantially alter how parole officers conduct business. (See table 1.) Regardless of whether or not the Sanction Grid achieved its desired goals of increasing uniformity, understanding the impact of the Sanction Grid on the attitudes and experiences of parole officers provides insight into its effects on the sanctioning agent.

The past 30 years has seen a growth of policies like the Sanction

Grid that seek to restrict the discretion of criminal justice agents by structuring decision making. (Schneider, Ervin and Snyder-Joy 1996) Prior research suggests that most actors in the criminal justice system tend to be cynical towards these policies because they are perceived to increase workload, restrict power and be tied to an underlying political agenda. (Lynch 1998, Harris and Jesilow 2000, Meithe and Moore 1988, Sadd and Grinc 1996, Schneider, et al 1996) Further, there is some evidence to suggest that the high degree of interaction that parole officers have with their clientele will make them more resistant to such policies than other criminal justice actors because they favor a case-by-case approach over aggregate risk management. (Lynch 1998)

In this article, we describe the attitudes and experiences of parole officers who transitioned to a graduated sanction grid in Ohio. Data collected for the study comes from both focus groups and a mail survey of parole officers. This research is of particular interest because it examines the effects of the Sanction Grid on those who were directly responsible for carrying out the directives of the policy. The results indicate that parole officers were dissatisfied with the Sanction Grid for four major reasons: officers felt the Sanction Grid increased their workload; officers felt the Sanction Grid was a political tool to save the state money; officers felt the Sanction Grid reduced their power over parolees and officers preferred a case-by-case approach over the actuarial method encouraged by the Sanction Grid.

STRUCTURING THE SANCTIONING DECISION

When offenders on parole violate the conditions of their release, parole officers respond by imposing a sanction. Sanctions can range from a verbal warning to pursuing a hearing for the revocation of the offender’s release. Traditionally, sanctioning decisions were associated with a high degree of discretion. That is, when responding to violation behavior, parole officers would use their professional judgment and personal knowledge of the offender to choose a sanction from the options available to them. Proponents of discretion suggest that officers are best suited to make these decisions because of their intimate knowledge of the case. (Lipskey 1980)

Restricting Discretion during Sanctioning: Parole Officers’ Responses to the Implementation of a Progressive Sanctioning Grid in Ohio

by Matthew D. Makarios, Ph.D., Benjamin Steiner, Ph.D. and Lawrence F. Travis III, Ph.D.

On the other hand, critics of discretionary decision making claim that decisions are based on unfair and arbitrary factors. From their view, discretion promotes disparities in the treatment of offenders. (Walker 1993) With the intent of increasing fairness and reducing arbitrary decisions, policy makers have sought to structure decision making in criminal justice by instituting actuarial instruments that provide similar responses to similar situations. (Walker 1993, Schneider, et al 1996) These instruments are viewed desirably because they quantify the decision-making process and force decisions to be based on objective, measurable criteria.

In Ohio, the Department of Rehabilitation and Correction worked with the National Institute of Justice to develop the Adult Parole Authority Progressive Sanction Grid. (Martin, Van Dine and Fialkoff 2009) The Sanction Grid was designed to provide officers with specific responses to violation behavior based on the severity of the violation, the risk level of the offender and the number of prior violations that the offender has accrued while on supervision. The policy was intended to provide consistent procedures and promote fair and objective responses to violation behavior. (Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction 2005) Important to note, the Sanction Grid was put in place as part of the ODRC's larger reentry initiative. The Reentry Initiative, which began several years earlier, is designed to decrease recidivism of parolees and encourage their successful integration into society. (Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction 2002) It calls for the increased use of assessment, programming and case-management to efficiently allocate ODRC resources in a manner that minimizes the odds of recidivism.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE ACTORS RESPONSES TO STRUCTURED DECISION-MAKING

Research that has examined justice system actors' responses to policies that limit their discretion has found that agents tend to express dissatisfaction and cynicism. For example, Bazemore found that judges in Florida opposed the implementation of detention criteria. (Bazemore 1994) Miethe and Moore, also found that almost 60 percent of responding court actors in Minnesota preferred either abolishing or making major changes to the sentencing guidelines enacted in that state. (Miethe and Moore 1988) On the other hand, Griffin and Wooldredge found that judges in Ohio were not opposed to the sentencing guidelines enacted in that state. (Griffin and Wooldredge 2001)

There is some evidence officers who supervise offenders in the community may be more prone to cynicism towards reductions in discretion because of the nature of their job. That is, working closely

with offenders may make community supervision officers feel that they are best suited to decide how to deal with offenders. For example, Lawrence and Johnson found that probation officers in Minnesota were opposed to sentencing guidelines because they did not take into account individual offenders' needs. (Lawrence and Johnson 1990) In their examination of probation officers' reaction to the implementation of an actuarial risk/needs assessment, Schneider and colleagues found that only 37 percent felt that the assessments were appropriate in determining risk level. (Schneider, et al 1996) Further, 61 percent of officers felt that the officer's knowledge was more accurate than the assessment tool in classifying offenders.

Along similar lines, Lynch's ethnographic work suggests that parole officers will resist strategies designed to structure decision making because it moves away from the case-by-case approach and instead treats offenders in the aggregate. (Lynch 1998) Essentially, Lynch argues that the daily interactions that officers have with offenders leads officers to view their clientele as individuals, with unique problems and issues. This view is affronted by attempts from upper management to quantify their clientele and treat offenders as numbers to be efficiently managed. As a result, Lynch suggests that cynicism and resistance is to be expected from parole officers when their professional judgment is replaced by actuarial assessment tools.

While the nature of parole work may make officers less sympathetic to an actuarial approach, there are also more general reasons to expect parole officers to be cynical towards policies that restrict their discretion. For example, parole officers may view the sanction grid negatively is because it is thought to increase the workload associated with their job. Actors within the criminal justice profession have been shown to resist policy initiatives that are seen to increase the amount of work required to complete the job. Harris and Jesilow found that a primary reason for dissatisfaction with restricting the discretion of the courtroom workgroup was that it resulted in more work for all members of the workgroup. (Harris and Jesilow 2000) Similarly, Sadd and Grinc found a source of resistance to a community policing initiative was because it was thought to be less productive and more time consuming than traditional police work. (Sadd and Grinc 1996)

Another reason the parole officers may resist policies that restrict their discretion is because they result in the reduction of power. Lawrence and Johnson found that probation officers had negative attitudes toward the sentencing guidelines because the guidelines reduced the importance of probation officer recommendations in the presentence investigation report. (Lawrence and Johnson 1990) Griffin

and Wooldredge found that almost 70 percent of judges in Ohio felt that the State's sentencing guidelines diminished judicial authority. (Griffin and Wooldredge 2001) Sadd and Grinc noted that police officers were resistant to community policing initiatives because they felt it diminished their perceived enforcement power. (Sadd and Grinc 1996)

As Walker points out, politics are often times the driving forces for change in the field of criminal justice. (Walker 1993) As a result, differences in political viewpoints and changes in political atmosphere can have consequences on the implementation of policy initiatives. Harris and Jeslow's analysis of the courtroom work-group during California's transition to a three strikes law is illustrative of how politics can make justice actors resistant change. (Harris and Jeslow 2000) They found public defenders felt prosecutors, at the expense of justice, were misusing the power the law granted for political gain. Sadd and Grinc also described how police officers resisted community policing because they felt the management was forcing it on them as a result of political pressure. (Sadd and Grinc 1996)

In sum, prior research suggests that parole officers in Ohio should be expected to be cynical towards the Sanction Grid for a variety of reasons. Specifically, research has found that, actors in the criminal justice systems are dissatisfied with policies that restrict their discretion because these policies are perceived to increase workload, reduce power and be tied to a political agenda. Furthermore, there is some research that suggests that parole officers may be particularly resistant to restrictions on discretion because the nature of parole work lends itself to the preference of a case-by-case approach. Taking this into account, this study examines the impact that the Sanction Grid had on the attitudes and experiences of parole officers in Ohio.

METHODS

The current study was designed to examine officers' perceptions, attitudes and opinions of the ODRC's transition to the Sanction Grid. In order to get a detailed understanding of officers' perceptions of the Sanction Grid, focus groups and semi-structured interviews with parole officers were conducted in four of the seven APA supervision regions. Following the completion of the focus groups and interviews, a mail survey was constructed to gather more general information regarding how officers responded to the grid in the aggregate.

FOCUS GROUPS AND INTERVIEWS

Although restrictions on time, resources and travel precluded conducting focus groups and interviews in all regions in Ohio, the regions in which focus groups and interviews were conducted were purposively selected to include two large urban regions, one midsized

region and one rural region. At a minimum, the focus groups were conducted by two researchers with one of the researchers acting solely as a note taker while the other led discussion with the use of open-ended, pre-determined questions. Although all participants were asked the same questions, discussion often veered away from the question at hand and additional probing questions were also asked when the researchers deemed them to be necessary to encourage discussion of a topic relevant to the study.

OFFICER MAIL SURVEY

Mail surveys were sent out to all line officers, senior officers and parole supervisors who were employed by the APA. Of the parole officers that carried a caseload, 81 percent returned usable surveys. For the purposes of this study, parole supervisors and officers who did not carry a caseload before the grid was enacted were excluded from the sample, leaving a final sample size of 291 senior and line parole officers who supervised offenders on released from prison by the ODRC.

Table 1 provides descriptive statistics for the sample. As the data in the table indicate, the sample is 81 percent white, 62 percent male, and the average age is 39. It is worth noting that the data obtained from the sample with regard to age, race and gender did not differ from official statistics provided by the ODRC.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics

	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Male	0.62	0.49	0	1
Age	38.67	7.79	24	65
White	0.81	0.39	0	1
African American	0.16	0.36	0	1
Other	0.03	0.18	0	1
Bachelor's Degree	0.89	0.32	0	1
Graduate Degree	0.12	0.33	0	1
Years of Experience	9.30	6.57	0	35
Line Parole Officer	0.86	0.35	0	1
Senior Parole Officer	0.14	0.35	0	1
Parole Supervisor	0.00	0.00	0	0
Urban Caseload	0.67	0.47	0	1
Rural Caseload	0.33	0.47	0	1
Caseload Size	77.70	26.13	0	165
Number of Written Sanctions Issued in the Past Month	7.37	6.32	0	40

RESULTS

Generally speaking, it is fair to say that most officers were dissatisfied with the Sanction Grid and held negative attitudes toward it. The vast majority of comments written at the end of the survey were critical of the Sanction Grid for a variety of reasons. Further, the results presented in Table 2 show that most parole officers viewed the Sanction Grid negatively. For example, 86 percent of parole officers disagreed with the statement that using the Sanction Grid made sense. Further, 76 percent did not agree that the Sanction Grid had helped them to make sanctioning decisions and almost 86 percent agreed that the Sanction Grid had lowered officers' spirits. The officers' dissatisfaction seemed to result from four major sources: perceptions of increased workload, perceptions of political agenda, perceptions of reduced power and favoritism of a case-by-case approach.

Table 2. General Indications of Dissatisfaction

	N	Percent
<i>Using the Sanction Grid makes since to me</i>		
Disagree	250	85.9
Agree	41	14.1
<i>The Sanction Grid has helped me make sanctioning decisions</i>		
Disagree	210	72.2
Agree	81	27.8
<i>The Sanction Grid has lowered officers' spirits</i>		
Disagree	34	11.7
Agree	257	88.3

DISSATISFACTION DUE TO CHANGES IN WORKLOAD

Officer comments on the mail survey and observations during the focus groups revealed that many parole officers felt that using the Sanction Grid created more work. When asked what the purpose of the Sanction Grid was, one officer sarcastically commented that its purpose was to make more work for parole officers. Another officer wrote as a comment, "The sanction grid is a joke. It causes a lot of paperwork for nothing." Another officer commented, "The sanction

grid is useless...It creates more paperwork that I don't have time to do with all the other paperwork the APA has us do."

Some officers not only felt that the Sanction Grid created more work, but also felt that the extra work took away from their other duties. One officer noted in their comments, "The paperwork and documentation that is required is so overwhelming that it prevents us from supervising offenders effectively." One officer felt that this was because it forced parole officers to spend more time with problematic offenders who would eventually end up back in prison: "the grid ties up more parole resources by keeping problem cases around longer, which results in unbalanced attention to the problem cases while there is not reduction in overall case load."

Another officer felt that the extra time spent on the Sanction Grid would have been better spent on case management and providing services to offenders. As they pointed out, "I should have the tools and time to spend with a parolee regarding life issues like budgeting their money, job searches, etc. Instead I may enter the same information in up to four separate locations and entering that information means nothing regarding the rehabilitation of the offender." Another officer was more cynical, stating, "It is a useful tool for those who do not use common sense...otherwise it is a redundancy of all the other tools, documentation, and policies we use."

Answers to the quantitative items in Table 3 support the qualitative officer comments regarding dissatisfaction with the changes that the Sanction Grid caused to officers' perceptions of workload. Eighty-two percent of officers in the mail survey reported that they agreed they had encountered more unnecessary paperwork since they started using the Sanction Grid. Further, 78 percent of officers agreed that since they started using the Sanction Grid, they have had to go through more steps to sanction non-compliance. Finally, 74 percent of officers felt that they were forced to issue more written sanctions since they began to use the Sanction Grid.

DISSATISFACTION WITH THE PERCEIVED POLITICAL NATURE OF THE SANCTION GRID

The focus groups and qualitative comments from the mail survey also revealed that many officers resented the Sanction Grid because they felt that it was a political initiative designed to reduce the costs associated with incarceration. As one officer wrote, "The sanction grid is a tool used to save money by the state of Ohio in reducing prison population." Further, many officers felt that the perceived reductions in incarceration were being achieved at the

Table 3. Perceptions Regarding the Increase in Workload

	N	Percent
<i>Since I started using the Progressive Sanctioning Grid I have more unnecessary paperwork</i>		
Disagree	52	18
Agree	236	82
<i>I go through more steps to sanction non-compliance now that I use the Grid</i>		
Disagree	63	22
Agree	227	78
<i>I give more written sanctions now that I use the Grid</i>		
Disagree	76	26
Agree	215	74

expense of public safety. Another officer noted, “I understand why various groups and/or entities conduct these types of projects, but the bottom line with corrections and government is that money is always the primary/overriding factor why anything is implemented program-wise. The Sanction Grid and Reentry philosophies were implemented because the state wants to cut costs regardless of the implications.” During the focus groups, many officers noted similar feelings. When asked what the purpose of the Sanction Grid was, one officer sarcastically replied, that it is used to make dereliction of duty easier. The officer clarified by saying that the Sanction Grid gives officers permission to save the state money by discouraging hearings. When asked about the purpose of the Sanction Grid, an officer at one of the focus groups stated that the goal of the Sanction Grid was to stop parole officers from arresting offenders and sending them back to prison.

Officers also expressed dissatisfaction with the Sanction Grid because negative attitudes toward the broader Reentry initiative. During the focus groups, it became apparent that many officers felt that Reentry was designed to reduce the prison population. Many officers viewed the Sanction Grid as merely another extension of the Reentry. One officer wrote, “To me the grid is a tool for the administration to reduce the number persons going back to prison ... prove that their Reentry initiative works.” During one of the focus groups, an officer noted that they thought the Sanction Grid was supposed to make Reentry look good in that no one was being sent back to prison. Still, the officer felt that the reduction in returns to prison was at the expense of the community safety, because they

thought that more of their parolees were now being sent back to prison on new arrests.

Table 4 presents statistics regarding officers’ beliefs about the intent of the Sanction Grid. The items support the idea that officers felt that the Sanction Grid was designed to reduce incarceration rates. Ninety-three percent of officers reported that they agreed that the Sanction Grid was designed to reduce the prison population. Similarly, almost 93 percent of officers felt that the Sanction Grid was intended to reduce the number of violation hearings.

DISSATISFACTION DUE TO THE PERCEIVED REDUCTION

Table 4. Perceptions Regarding Political Intent

	N	Percent
<i>The Sanction Grid is intended to reduce the prison population</i>		
Disagree	22	6.7
Agree	304	93.3
<i>The Sanction Grid is intended to reduce the number of hearings</i>		
Disagree	24	7.4
Agree	302	92.6

IN POWER

Another clear theme that emerged from the qualitative data was the dissatisfaction that parole officers had with what they perceived as the removal of discretionary power. For example, at one of the focus groups, when asked what was negative about the policy, one officer replied that it had taken away power from parole officers. Another officer followed by replying that offenders now believe that they got to make the calls. At another focus group, when asked about the purposes of the grid, one officer felt that offenders could continually violate the conditions of their parole while nothing happened and that there was no deterrent for non-compliant behavior. Another officer at the same focus group mentioned that they felt they had no authority and that parolees knew that they didn’t have to respect the officers. The comments on the mail survey revealed similar feelings. One officer wrote, “Offenders think we are a joke...We have completely lost our hammer with the grid.” Another officer wrote, “Basically, offenders are ruling us now. They just tell us what they are going to do.”

Table 5. Perceptions of the Reduction of Power

	N	Percent
<i>The Sanction Grid is intended to reduce officer discretion.</i>		
Disagree	42	12.9
Agree	283	87.1
<i>Since I started using the Sanction Grid it is harder for me to control offender behavior.</i>		
Disagree	51	17.7
Agree	237	82.3
<i>Since I started using the Sanction Grid my offenders respect me more.</i>		
Disagree	282	97.9
Agree	6	2.1

Some officers also felt that the reduction in power was having effects on their relationship with other law enforcement personnel. An officer mentioned at one focus group that they felt the Sanction Grid makes the Adult Parole Authority look pathetic to other law enforcement agencies. Another frustrated officer wrote in their comments, “I look stupid when I have to continuously go to the jail (to deal with parolees who have been arrested by the police) and sanction and release. The offenders are taking advantage of the number of chances.” Another officer, who had come under scrutiny because one of his parolees had committed a serious crime stated, “When someone violates continuously and then finally commits a serious crime, people don’t understand how a parolee with a violent history who has been busted using drugs and not reporting is still in the community. They don’t understand that our hands are tied.”

The qualitative response illustrate that officers who made comments on the grid clearly feel that they were dissatisfied because they felt that the Sanction Grid removed their power. The findings displayed in Table 5 show quantitative support for this notion. Eighty-seven percent agreed that the Sanction Grid was intended to remove officer discretion. Also, 82 percent agreed that it became harder to control offender behavior after they started using the Sanction Grid. Finally, 98 percent of the officers who responded felt that offenders did not respect them more since they started using the Sanction Grid.

DISSATISFACTION DUE TO OFFICERS’ PREFERENCE FOR A CASE-BY-CASE APPROACH

Many parole officers seemed dissatisfied with the Sanction Grid because they saw it as moving away from a case-by-case approach. Like the officers in Lynch’s study the parole officers in Ohio appeared to favor a case-by-case approach and rejected the Sanction Grid because they felt that it did not take into account factors that were unique to each offender and situation. (Lynch 1998) For example, in the mail survey, an officer wrote, “When you take away officer discretion, you take away our ability to customize supervision for each individual offender. No two offenders are the same and it should never be assumed that standardized punishments will have the same or even desired effects on all offenders.”

Another felt that the Sanction Grid was not suited to addressing human behavior, stating, “When dealing with humans we must be able to use discretion. There are different degrees to screw-ups and different degrees to remorse, potential, risk, blame and responsibility.” Another felt the removal of professional discretion was insulting: “With all due respect, the sanction grid is an insult to the intelligence of those that work in the field. Each case or offender presents his or her own unique risks and should not be ‘robotted’ into a grid that seeks to treat all offenders the same.”

The focus group revealed similar feelings. For example, when asked if the policy has changed the way officers managed their case load, one replied that the removal of discretion was bad because the officers are the ones who interact with the offenders in their environment. Another questioned the need for the Sanction Grid to

Table 6. Perceptions Regarding the Case-By-Case Approach

	N	Percent
<i>The Sanction Grid is based on research on effective discipline.</i>		
Disagree	252	80.3
Agree	62	19.7
<i>The Sanction Grid recognizes officers’ professional ability.</i>		
Disagree	302	93.2
Agree	22	6.8
<i>Parole officers should not be able to override the Sanction Grid.</i>		
Disagree	291	89.3
Agree	35	10.7

determine when to bring an offender to a revocation hearing when there were four trained professionals who had been working with the offender. When asked what was negative about the policy, one officer stated that it didn't seem to afford discretion to the people who worked closest to the offender and the offender's environment.

The findings presented in Table 6 support the qualitative findings and show that officers felt that the Sanction Grid did not adequately address violations because it did not have the ability to tailor sanctions to specific situations. Statistics for the first item reveal that over 80 percent of officers disagreed that the Sanction Grid was based on research on effective discipline. Further, 93 percent of officers disagreed that the Sanction Grid recognized officers' professional ability. Finally 89 percent of respondents disagreed that parole officers should not be able to override the Sanction Grid.

CONCLUSION

This study sought to examine how parole officers in Ohio responded to the implementation of a graduated sanction grid. Prior research suggests that when criminal justice actors experience restrictions to their discretion, they tend to respond with cynicism and dissatisfaction. (Lynch 1998, Harris and Jesilow 2000, Meithe and Moore 1988, Sadd and Grinc 1996, Schneider, et al 1996) Furthermore, Lynch's research on parole officers suggests that due to the nature of parole work, officers are more likely to resist policy initiatives that move away from a case-by-case approach. (Lynch 1998) Generally, the findings from this study support this notion.

Both qualitative and quantitative data show support for four major themes of dissatisfaction. First, many officers felt dissatisfied because the policy increased their workload. Parole officers felt the Sanction Grid caused unnecessary paperwork and took away from other more important duties. This is not surprising and suggests that resistance to policies may be reduced by minimizing the work associated enforcing the policy.

Second, officers felt that the Sanction Grid worked to reduce the amount of power they had when dealing with offenders. This not only resulted in a reduction in respect felt from parolees, but also worked to damage parole officers' working relationships with other law enforcement agencies. Perhaps some degree of dissatisfaction resulting from the loss of power should always be expected. Still, efforts that are made to provide clear and understandable

explanations for the reasons behind the policy and seek to prepare officers for the restructuring of power may help to alleviate or at least minimize some of these problems.

Third, officers were cynical towards that Sanction Grid because they felt that its political intent was to save the State of Ohio money. Further, officers perceived the cost savings to come at the expense of community safety because offenders who would have been sent back to prison on technical violations were left in the community until they broke the law. These findings imply that parole officers in Ohio did not buy into the overarching objectives of the Sanction Grid or Reentry, primarily because they felt these were at odds with community safety. Efforts that seek to explain how the goals of the Sanction Grid are aligned with those of public safety could work to improve officer understanding and satisfaction.

Finally, parole officers maintained negative attitudes towards the grid because they rejected its attempt to force them away from a case-by-case approach. This provides support for Lynch's argument, as officers in this study felt that violations of parole were too complex to address with an actuarial tool. (Lynch 1998) That is, officers in this study indicated that responding to parole violations was a complex process that required in-depth information that only those who worked closely with the offender could obtain. Officers felt that using a tool that only took into account quantified measures of risk and offense seriousness lacked the detail of information that was necessary to understand what sanction best suited the situation. The support for the preference of the case-by-case approach implies that parole officers felt that the use of professional discretion was justified because officers' knowledge of offender and the situation provided them with information that could not be quantified with an actuarial tool. The Sanction Grid was thus seen as an ineffective way of responding to violations because it did not utilize enough information and fails to recognize the professional ability of officers.

This described the reactions and attitudes of parole officers to a progressive sanction grid in Ohio. In doing so, it examined the impact of sanctioning reform on the sanctioning agent. Although it is not surprising that officers held negative attitudes toward the Sanction Grid, this research provides further understanding the sources of dissatisfaction. Understanding why officers held cynical views of the Sanction Grid can help policy makers anticipate and proactively respond to these types of negative reactions. ■ ■ ■

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Calendar of Events

2010-2011

January 11 – 13, 2010

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APPA 35th Annual Training Institute, Washington, DC. For more information, go to www.appa-net.org.

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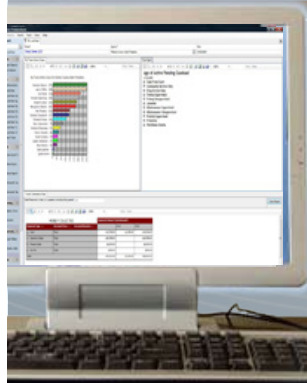
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