

PERSPECTIVES

the journal of the American Probation and Parole Association

w w w . a p p a - n e t . o r g
Volume 36 Number 4 Fall 2012



DISCOVER CORRECTIONS

EXTRAORDINARY CHOICES. EXTRAORDINARY REWARDS.



WHAT IT MEANS
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AND RETENTION

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TRAINING INSTITUTE



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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

SCOTT TAYLOR

President

American Probation and Parole Association



MANY VOICES, ONE MESSAGE

The future of community corrections is a changing landscape. As we look to elevate our role in the public safety system, it is important for those of us in the field to know exactly who we are and where we stand. At first glance this may seem an easy task until you consider the inherent complexity of community supervision and the multiple facets of our system. Our vast network of parole and probation officers, sheriffs, parole boards, pre-trial services, half-way houses and community providers can crowd a field and cause all players to lose their sense of where the proverbial guideposts are located. One of the priorities of my APPA presidency was to help lead the creation of an effective policy alliance across the nation's leading associations in community corrections. Whether you are a member of APPA, the International Community Corrections Association (ICCA), Association of Paroling Authorities International (APAI), the National Association of Probation Executives (NAPE) or the National Association of Pretrial Services Agencies (NAPSA), we are all ambassadors of community supervision. We share a common purpose and any future advancements or setbacks for community corrections will have an impact on all of us.

APPA has requested a technical assistance grant from the National Institute of Corrections (NIC) in partnership with the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) to help bring together representatives from all of these organizations to develop a strategic plan to raise our visibility and unite our messages. Working together gives us a chance to share information, examine our collective resources and achieve much more than each of us could do on our own.

Through the support of NIC, this collective has now met in various forms. While we are still negotiating our responsibilities and forming a shared vision, there are several areas emerging as consistent themes. The ability of everyone working in community corrections to speak on these themes is essential. My President's Message is intended to introduce these themes to our APPA members and begin to create consistency within our own association. The first priority area is to develop universal agreement upon our bodies of knowledge. By now, APPA members have embraced the term "evidence-based practices." However, it should be noted that the use of the term, evidence-based practice (EBP) is sometimes distorted and overused by professionals in our field. Too often EBP is described as a "thing" rather than a "process." All of us need to keep each other accountable in our use of EBP's and be committed in our fidelity to the processes that were originally intended and designed. APPA will continue to serve as an EBP exchange for our members where they can share feedback on what is working, not working and the types of outcomes that jurisdictions are achieving. For example, we just finished another highly successful

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Training Institute in Indianapolis with over 1,000 attendees. We want to create a community where researchers, supervisors and line staff can engage in problem-solving discussions that are the driver of innovation and ultimately all evidence-based practices. The second area where APPA members need to speak with one consistent voice is on the topic of managing risk of re-offending. Assessing and managing risk is at the foundation of community corrections practice. All jurisdictions must be measuring the outcomes of their current risk management practices, be willing to adjust practices in response to these outcomes and report on their results. APPA will continue to assist members in sharing risk assessment information not only amongst ourselves but also with our various public safety partners (e.g., court representatives, law enforcement, prosecutors, defense bar). The third priority area for APPA members is the wide range of interventions that we rely on to manage and help supervisees with the ultimate goal of changing their behavior. These are the tools of our trade and we must all understand how to administer and/or access them in the most effective ways possible. APPA will be an ongoing resource for members on how to best target these interventions to the most appropriate individuals. Each and every day our members are struggling to figure out which interventions are reflective of effective practices and how to implement them swiftly and with certainty. APPA will be doing its part to help each jurisdiction realize the highest payoff for these sanctions and services.

No matter what your role is in community corrections, we all have the same priorities and a shared mission of improved public safety. We need to find a way to articulate our goals and where we are headed as a network of professionals. A commonly understood language makes our voices stronger and clearer to those looking for new policy directions for both our jurisdictions and our nation. APPA will be at the table for these discussions and I encourage each and every member to remain fluent on the issues that matter most: evidence-based practices, managing risk and interventions for behavior change.



Scott Taylor
APPA President
Multnomah County, Oregon

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EDITOR'S NOTES

BILL BURRELL
Management Consultant



Welcome to the Fall issue of *Perspectives*. As I write this, we in the mid-Atlantic region are still reeling from the catastrophic effects of Hurricane Sandy, which struck just one week ago. Our hearts go out to all of those affected by the devastating storm. The scale of destruction is hard to comprehend, no less recover from. New Jersey Governor Chris Christie has spoken of the “new normal” that will emerge for this state in the aftermath of the storm. Much as our world changed and we adapted to a “new normal” after the attacks of September 11, the mid-Atlantic region, particularly the coastal areas will have to adapt to the “new normal”.

As I consider the content of this issue, I see many ways that our field is adapting to its own “new normal”. In our lead article APPA staffer Mary Ann Mowatt provides an excellent review of the issues related to attracting employees to our agencies and retaining them for the long term. The dual challenges of the changing expectations and demands of the Millennial generation and the rapidly growing digital environment are just two aspects of the “new normal” for probation, pretrial and parole.

In the article based on his keynote speech in Indianapolis, Ron Corbett describes returning to probation after a decade away. His journey of discovery exposed him to the “new normal” in supervision, a new, more humanistic approach.

In her article “Change is Possible!”, Margaret Barber describes how the South Carolina Department of Juvenile Justice created their own “new normal”. She presents a powerful story of transformation characterized by a long term commitment to change and improvement in outcomes for the youth and citizens of South Carolina.

Drivers of change can come from many sources. Don Evans reviews a book by Chris Trotter entitled “Working with Involuntary Clients: A Guide to Practice” that presents a guide to a “new normal” in terms of more effective strategies for working with the involuntary clients. As Don

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EDITOR'S NOTES, CONTINUED

notes, it can be a challenge to discover these new approaches, particularly when they are being discovered, practiced and refined outside of the US. I recommend Trotter's book to our readers, it is a short but powerful text packed with well researched and readily usable tools for the probation and parole officer.

Some times innovations are found closer to home, often in allied fields. Such is the case with the topic of this issue's Research Update. Contingency Management is a well validated tool developed in the substance abuse treatment field. It provides a simple mechanism for operationalizing the 4:1 rewards to punishment ratio that is well known from the EBP literature, but not widely implemented in probation and parole supervision.

Our Technology Update describes research on the effectiveness of electronic monitoring and GPS, funded by the National Institute of Justice (NIJ). Joe Russo provides a helpful summary of the studies. As with all tools, EM and GPS must be used properly if we are to derive the maximum benefit from them. These technologies (particularly EM) have been with us for some time now and we still have much to learn. These NIJ funded studies can help us as we work to define the "new normal" of technology-supported supervision.

In the Safety Update, Bob Thornton articulates a principle that should guide us all. He calls for us to learn from other experiences and those of our staff related to staff safety incidents and issues. We should learn from our experiences and use the information to constantly update policies,

training and awareness. Monitoring and analyzing safety incidents is an excellent way to detect threats and situations that may become part of the field officer's "new normal" in the community.

APPA President Scott Taylor presents the elements of the "new normal" for community corrections as a field going forward. He calls for collaboration among the various associations representing community corrections, for greater understanding and application of proven programs and strategies, such as EBPs, and for an increased focus across our respective organizations on the delivery of services and supervision to improve public safety in our neighborhoods and communities. I think we would all agree that a "new normal" with those characteristics would be a welcome change and a great benefit to us all.

I think this issue of *Perspectives* will give you a great deal to think about as you ponder what this "new normal" looks like for you, your colleagues and your agency. As your professional organization, APPA is committed to providing you with an array of services and products that will assist you in your work. Let us know how we are doing. We welcome your feedback on this, your professional journal. >>>



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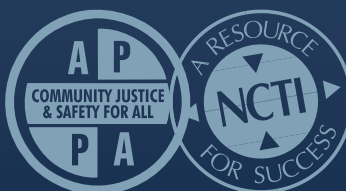


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table of contents

features

- 42** Discover Corrections: Extraordinary Choices, Extraordinary Rewards
By Mary Ann Schmitz-Mowatt

- 68** Fixing Broken Lenses: Toward Humanistic Practice in Probation
by Dr. Ron Corbett

- 76** Change is Possible
by Margaret Barber



departments

- 18 Spotlight on Safety
26 Technology Update
32 Research Update
40 ICAOS Update
90 Calendar of Events

plus!

- 15 APPA Specialized Training
16 APPA Corporate Members
22 Book Review: *Working with Involuntary Clients: A Guide to Practice* (2nd edition)
23 Call for Presenters: APPA 38th Annual Training Institute; July 28-31, 2013
29 APPA Call for Papers: *Perspectives* Articles

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 and mailed to Karen Mucci, 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:

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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).

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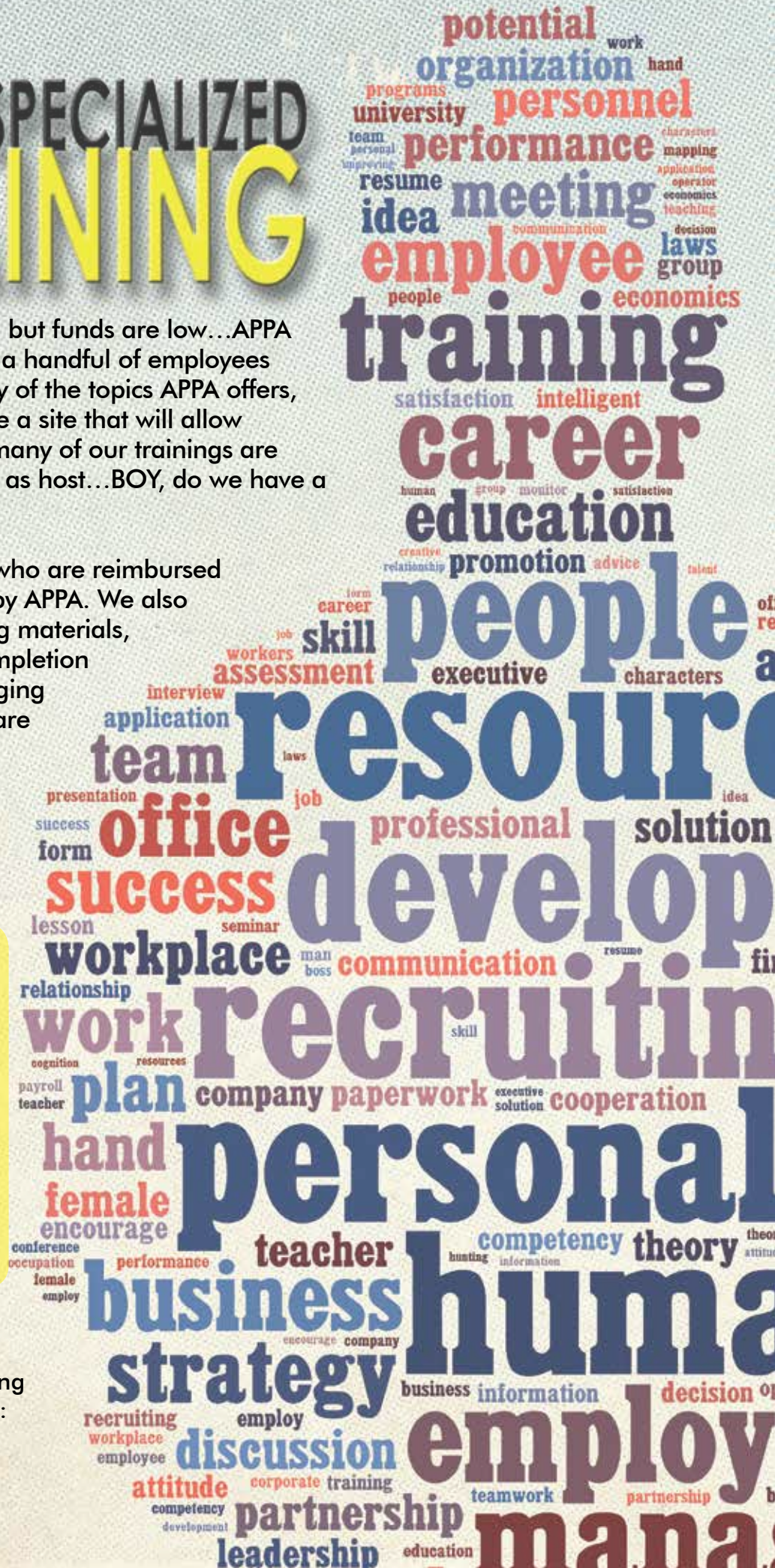
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ARE WE LEARNING FROM EACH OTHER?

"Hey, did you hear about what happened to...." Regretfully, that's the way we often hear about hazardous incidents that are occurring in community corrections--through rumor. Many times, the information is inaccurate and is not used to enhance the safety of other officers. Unlike law enforcement, there is no centralized collection of hazardous duty information nationally for community corrections officers. This lack of information has led some officers, who are lucky enough to work in areas that have had few hazardous duty incidents, to believe that "it will never happen here."

This lack of information has led some officers, who are lucky enough to work in areas that have had few hazardous duty incidents, to believe that "it will never happen here."

While some jurisdictions have some type of process in place to collect hazardous duty information, many do not. For those agencies that do have a system in place, we generally find that incidents are under-reported. When we question officers as to why that is occurring, common responses include: "That's just part of my job"; or "I don't want to be second-guessed by administration and/or other officers." What great training opportunities are being missed!

In 2011, the Federal Probation and Pretrial system reported 333 hazardous duty situations (U.S. Probation and Pretrial Services 2012); that's 333 training opportunities. Whether it is a threat over the phone or an actual assault during a home contact, we can learn from these situations.

Many law enforcement agencies use hazardous duty incidents, whether the incident meets their agency's hazardous duty reporting standards or not, to discuss with officers what went right during the incident and how they can improve in the future. These "debriefings" are not designed, nor are participants allowed, to criticize the individual or group involved in the incident, but participants are encouraged to speak openly and frankly.

Community corrections can use this same process, and we have plenty of

incidents to study. You, or someone in your agency, can conduct a Google search and can even set up an alert request so that notification of incidents published in the media (of course that doesn't mean the reports are completely accurate) can be obtained and used for discussion.

We can also use our "near misses" to highlight safety points. When an offender lowers their voice and goes back to addressing their issues because another officer heard the elevated voice and came in at the right time and in the right way; or that large dog that got off its chain and

came at the officer, but doesn't bite because the officer backed away appropriately, do we individually or as an agency use this as a "teaching moment"? We can learn as much, if not more, from incidents that end well as from those incidents that do not. But to maximize the teaching element, we must have staff who can analyze the incident and lead a discussion, pointing out the specific behaviors that led to the successful resolution. It is easy to just say "good job," but little is gained. The real benefit is from analyzing specifically what was said and done that resulted in a successful resolution.

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spotlight on safety

In looking at incidents that went well, we must not confuse luck with good tactics. Just because the officer searched the offender's house alone, found some contraband and walked out unscathed doesn't mean that was the right thing to do. It can be beneficial for officers--especially new officers--to discuss what worked in this situation may not work in the future and why.

So how do you set up a process to obtain and then analyze hazardous duty information and incidents? The first thing to do is discuss with your administrator that you, your committee or training unit would like to use safety-related incidents as talking points for discussion. The administrator or their designee, may want to set up some guidelines to ensure that all discussions are done in a positive manner, especially if incidents that occur in-house will be discussed.

Once guidelines are established and information is collected, the process can start with something as simple as sending out information electronically regarding incidents. Learning can be increased by formalizing the process to include debriefings, table-top exercises to examine the incident and analyze what worked and areas for improvement, and by including the incident in your scenario-based trainings. The information is there; what a shame if it is not used to enhance officer safety.

Hazardous situations are not new to community corrections, but what little information there is available indicates that the number of incidents is on the rise. History does repeat itself. The murder of Oklahoma Parole Officer Jeffery McCoy in May of this year contains some similar circumstances found in the murder of Ohio

Parole Officer Robert White in April 1979. By examining both hazardous incidents that did occur as well as near misses, we can better prepare both physically and mentally for the hazardous situations that will continue to occur in community corrections. >>>

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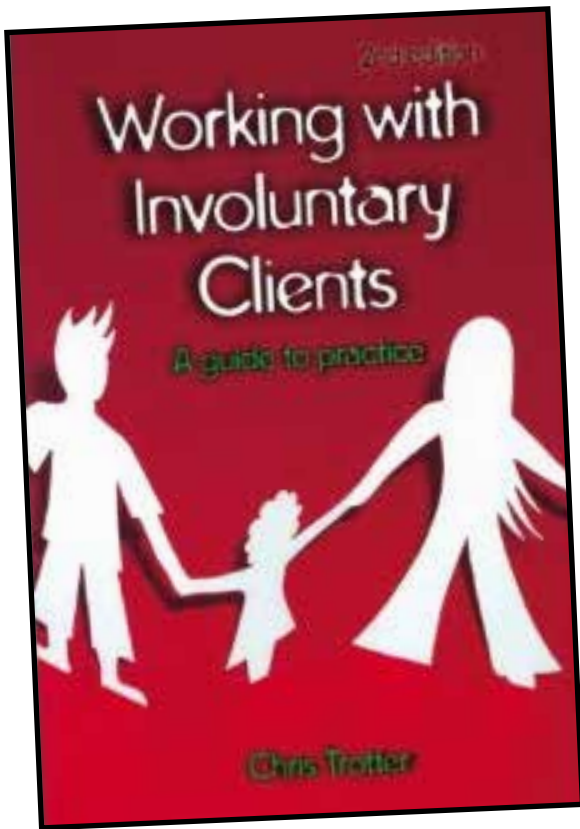
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EFFECTIVELY ENGAGING DIFFICULT CLIENTS

Book Review of *Working with Involuntary Clients: A Guide to Practice* (2nd edition) by Chris Trotter. Published by Sage Publications, 2006, 205 pages.

One of the difficulties in keeping up with the literature on effective practice and on offender supervision is the slowness of receiving information or becoming aware of the availability of work conducted in other parts of the world. In the case of this informative and useful addition to our knowledge on working effectively with difficult clients written by Chris Trotter, a former probation officer in Australia and now a professor at the Monash University,

Australia is a classic example. I first met the author when we were presenters at a community corrections conference in Beijing, China a couple of years ago and became aware of his research. Dr. Trotter teaches in the Social Work Department at Monash and his work in the area of effective practice reflects the work done by William Reid on task-centered casework and Don Andrews on pro-social modeling and is therefore an additional affirmation that there are critical factors that, when taken into account, enhance the outcomes in working with involuntary clients.

The book comprises eight chapters and he develops four key practice principles from research conducted in child protection work and probation supervision. The introductory chapter describes the involuntary client, the dual role workers have to carry out in their work with these clients, a discussion of evidence-based practice and the criticisms and the advantages of evidence-based practice. Trotter notes that "evidence-based practice involves workers being clear about what they are trying to achieve and making use of research findings in their day to day work." The author's purpose is to present a clear and concise framework for working with involuntary clients that is based on research on what works. What differentiates this approach is the emphasis on role clarification and pro-social modeling.

The second chapter concisely covers the knowledge of what we know does and does not work; information that should, by now, be familiar to most probation officers and administrators. Nevertheless, this chapter is



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a good refresher and is written clearly and would be useful in presentations to those who are not familiar with this literature. He defines effectiveness as improvements in specific outcome measures related to the objectives of the programs or interventions used. The rest of the chapter discusses approaches that work and those that don't and includes discussions on the link between theory and practice. Additionally, it outlines his practice model that will be explained in the next four chapters.

Chapters three to six outline and explain the author's framework for effective practice with involuntary clients and are carefully related to theory and research and illustrated with case studies. The framework consists of four basic principles: role clarification, promoting pro-social outcomes, problem-solving processes and the importance of the worker-client relationship. A brief summary of the framework for effective practice indicates where Trotter is putting the emphasis based on the evidence derived from his research and from similar research efforts:

Role Clarification: Involves frequent and honest discussion about the worker's role in the involuntary relationship. A couple of examples would be explaining the worker's purpose and the dual role of supporter and enforcer of conditions of release.

Pro-social Modeling and Reinforcement: For example, identifying behaviors the worker wishes to promote and modeling the behaviors the worker wishes to promote.

Problem-solving: The importance of soliciting the client's definition of the problem and not the worker's definition is an important aspect to an appropriate setting of goals and developing a plan or contract with consistency, ongoing monitoring of the course of action mutually agreed upon.

Relationship: The worker should be open and honest, empathic but able to challenge rationalizations and client minimizations of his/her behavior.

This framework is amply illustrated and fleshed out in the four chapters devoted to explaining the approach. Also there is a very useful appendix that a worker could copy and keep close for review of the practice model and to check his or her progress in applying the framework.

Trotter's seventh chapter deals with working with families, an often neglected area of work, especially with offenders. Fortunately more attention is beginning to be paid to the role of the family and of their role in supporting or blocking the progress of an offender trying to desist from crime. There has generally been an emphasis on working with the families of juvenile offenders but I am of the opinion we need to make an effort to involve families (including extended or non-traditional families) in our efforts to promote changed behavior in the offenders we are supervising. Trotter introduces us to this work with some insightful and informative suggestions based on research. The ideas presented are practical and the examples helpful to front-line workers. He discusses when it is appropriate to work

with families, draws our attention to a collaborative family counseling process and the value of pro-social modeling when working with families.

The concluding chapter is especially useful for any worker who wishes to improve and develop their skills in working with involuntary clients. Trotter provides a useful discussion of the role of evaluation in helping the worker know whether they are being successful in their interventions. The author provides two approaches that can be used by the worker or supervisor to assess progress of the client. The first approach is referred to as a single case study evaluation. It involves systematically evaluating the progress of the client against specific objectives throughout the period of the intervention and usually involves the client's comments on their progress. Suggested forms/questionnaires are included that can be adapted to the specific circumstances of the worker's agency or approach.

The second evaluation model discussed by Trotter is the case analysis approach. This approach involves analyzing the way a worker is working or has worked with a client or client family and involves reflecting upon and analyzing the extent to which the intervention is consistent with the research. Again the author provides a very useful series of questions to guide the worker in the effort of analyzing and reflecting upon the intervention. Another possibility regarding case analysis is the examination of critical incidents and again Trotter provides suggestive questions to guide this approach.

In this book Chris Trotter has carefully brought theory and practice together in an engaging and jargon-free manner that provides the reader with a useful guide to practicing evidence-based interventions in working with involuntary clients. This book would be a useful addition to any staff training focused on improving the role of supervision and promoting positive change for those under supervision. It is not the answer to all the difficulties supervision encounters but it does offer suggested evaluation approaches for us to gather information on successful interventions and maybe more importantly on what didn't work with those who didn't succeed. >>>

DONALD G. EVANS is a Senior Fellow at the Canadian Training Institute in Toronto, Canada and Past President of the American Probation and Parole Association.

ELECTRONIC MONITORING RESEARCH

The use of electronic monitoring – GPS tracking technology in particular – has grown in recent years. This is due to a variety of factors including legislative mandates and fiscal constraints which drive jurisdictions to explore less expensive alternatives to incarceration. Based in part on strong recommendations from their Community Corrections Technology Working Group, the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) has made substantial investments in support of research which seeks to determine the effectiveness of electronic monitoring. These studies have yielded results that indicate that electronic monitoring can be an important part of an effective community supervision strategy, however research questions still remain.

The first NIJ study I'll summarize was released in 2010 and was conducted by Florida State University. Researchers worked with the Florida Department of Corrections to examine their use of electronic monitoring and to assess outcomes. Researchers gathered information on offenders under supervision between 2001 and 2007 – a six year period. Using the agency's risk classification system, the research focused on 5,034 medium and high risk offenders on electronic monitoring compared to a sample of 266,991 offenders who were not on electronic monitoring. The quantitative analysis revealed that:

- Electronic monitoring reduced the offenders' risk of failure (revocation or absconding) by 31 percent.
- Within the electronic monitoring group, GPS technology had more of an effect on reducing failure than RF technology.

Two more recent NIJ funded studies also show promising results. The first, an evaluation of the use of GPS technology to monitor high risk sex offenders in California, was released in April, 2012. Development Services Group (DSG) worked with the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation to identify a study population of high-risk sex offenders released from prison between 2006 and 2009. The final sample consisted of 516 offenders equally distributed into a treatment group (supervised with GPS technology) and a control group (traditional parole supervision). The quantitative analysis focused on compliance (violations of parole) and recidivism (rearrest, reconviction, return to prison custody) as outcomes. During the one year study period the offenders in the GPS group showed significantly better outcomes for both compliance and recidivism. Specific findings include:

- Overall the risk of parole revocation and any return to custody event was about 38 percent higher in the group subject to traditional supervision.
- The risk of any arrest was twice as high in the group subject to traditional supervision.

continued on page 28

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The group subject to traditional supervision also was arrested at a higher rate for sex offenses; however the majority of cases were the result of a failure to register (FTR). The risk of arrest for a non FTR sex offense was lower among the GPS group, but the difference was not statistically significant.

- The risk of a sex-related violation was nearly three times higher in the group subject to traditional supervision.

The second recent study was released in June, 2012 and was conducted by researchers at the University of Illinois at

Chicago and Florida State University. This study examined the implementation of GPS technology as a tool to enforce court mandated “no contact” orders in domestic violence (DV) cases. This project had three components: a national survey of agencies providing pre-trial services; a quasi-experimental design study of three sites from across the country and a qualitative investigation conducted at six sites across the country.

Six-hundred and sixteen practitioners representing 43 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico responded to the web-based survey. Almost two-thirds

of respondents reported using electronic monitoring technologies and about a quarter of respondents reported using GPS for DV cases during pretrial supervision. Based on the respondent feedback there seems to be a gradual increase in agencies’ use of GPS technology for DV cases and it is being employed to enhance victim safety and defendant supervision.

The quasi-experimental design portion of the research focused on three sites from across the U.S. – referred to as “Midwest,” “West,” and “South”. Overall, 3,656 defendants comprised the sample. The analysis examined the impact of GPS technology on program

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technology update

violations and re-arrests during the pretrial period and on re-arrests during a one-year follow-up period after case disposition. The results overall indicate that GPS has an impact on the behavior of defendants over both the short and long terms. During the pretrial period, those on GPS monitoring were associated with practically no contact attempts with victims. Furthermore, defendants monitored with GPS had fewer program violations compared to those placed on radio frequency (RF) monitoring.

Defendants in the Midwest program had a lower probability of being rearrested for a DV offense during the one-year follow-up period, as compared to defendants in the non-GPS group.

In the West program, those placed on GPS had a lower likelihood of arrest for any criminal violation within the one-year follow-up period.

In the South program, there were no statistical differences between the GPS group and the non-GPS group. The researchers offer possible explanations for this observation which are related to the manner in which the sample was selected.

These studies offer promising results which seem to support the use of GPS technology as an important tool in community supervision. That said, it is clear that several important questions still need to be addressed. Many of these questions have been raised by

This is a brief summary of some of the key findings related specifically to outcome measures. However, each study also captured very important information regarding process components, cost relative to benefit and stakeholder (officer, offender/defendant, victim) perceptions. Readers are encouraged to download and review the full reports.

Florida State University study:

<https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/grants/230530.pdf>

Development Services Group study:

<https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/grants/238481.pdf>

University of Illinois-Chicago/ Florida State University:

<https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/grants/238910.pdf>



NIJ's Community Corrections Technology Working Group and have been echoed by the researchers. Some questions are:

- What are the effects of GPS tracking with a treatment component and without?
- Does GPS tracking encourage compliance with treatment requirements?
- Are there offender populations that respond better to GPS tracking than others?
- Is there an optimal length of time on GPS tracking before a point of diminishing returns is reached?
- Are there any long term residual effects of GPS tracking on recidivism after the device is removed?

Offender tracking technology will continue to be an important tool for community corrections, therefore it is critical that we keep learning as much as possible about what works and why or why not. There are

two current NIJ-funded research projects that readers may want to keep on their radar. The first is an evaluation being conducted by DSG of the use of GPS technology with high-risk gang offenders in California. The second is a project by the University of Oklahoma which will yield, in part, a toolkit ultimately available for agency use. The toolkit will enable agencies to easily analyze GPS monitoring data and display the results in a manner tailored to the needs of its officers. This will help officers identify previously hidden behavioral information that may be of concern such as anomalies in established movement patterns or location points that coincide with other tracked offenders.

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 Director of the NLECTC - Corrections Technology Center of Excellence and is chair of the APPA Technology Committee.

THE STATE OF CONTINGENCY MANAGEMENT (CM) AND ITS APPLICATION TO CRIMINAL JUSTICE SETTINGS

Two ways exist to manage the behavior of individuals: sanctions and rewards. Behavior is generally learned through the consequences from one's actions, with learned behavior more likely to occur when a person is incentivized for desired behavior. Emphasizing sanctions alone has been found to be an ineffective strategy to modify behavior (Gendreau, 1996; Wodahl et al; 2011). Rather, techniques that are based on operant learning theory (Skinner, 1948)

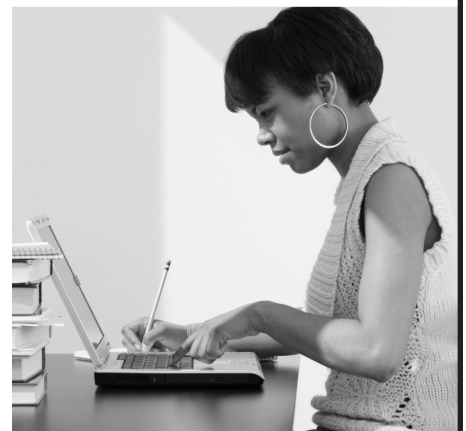
have been found to be more successful in generating behavior change. Rewards can be used to help instill motivation and "shape" behavior, particularly since the incentives are likely to compete with the immediate and potent reinforcement that comes from engaging in impulsive behaviors, criminal acts, and using drugs (Taxman et al., 2010). To be effective, rewards need to be based on the concepts of swift and certain actions, with the person aware of the desired behaviors (expectancies) that are likely to generate

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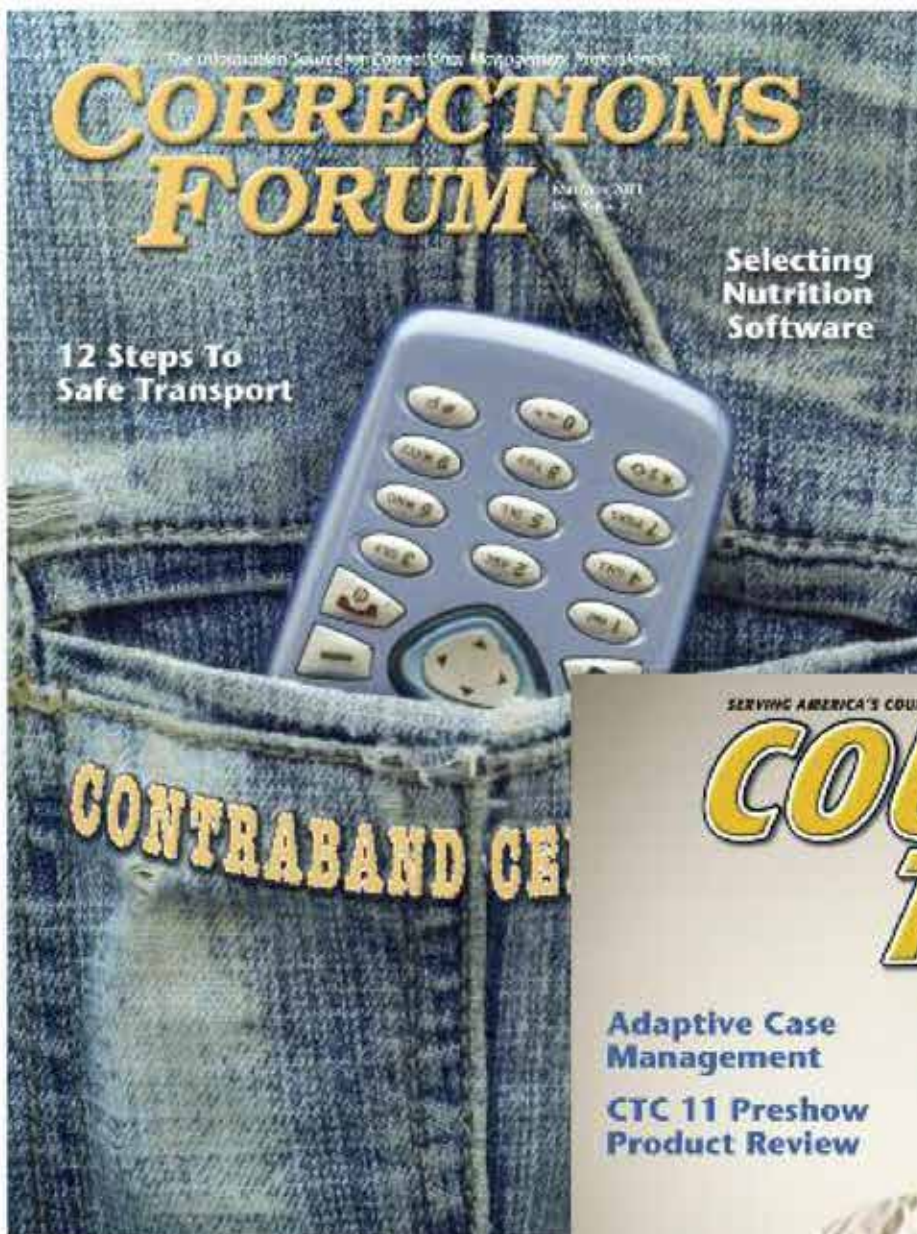
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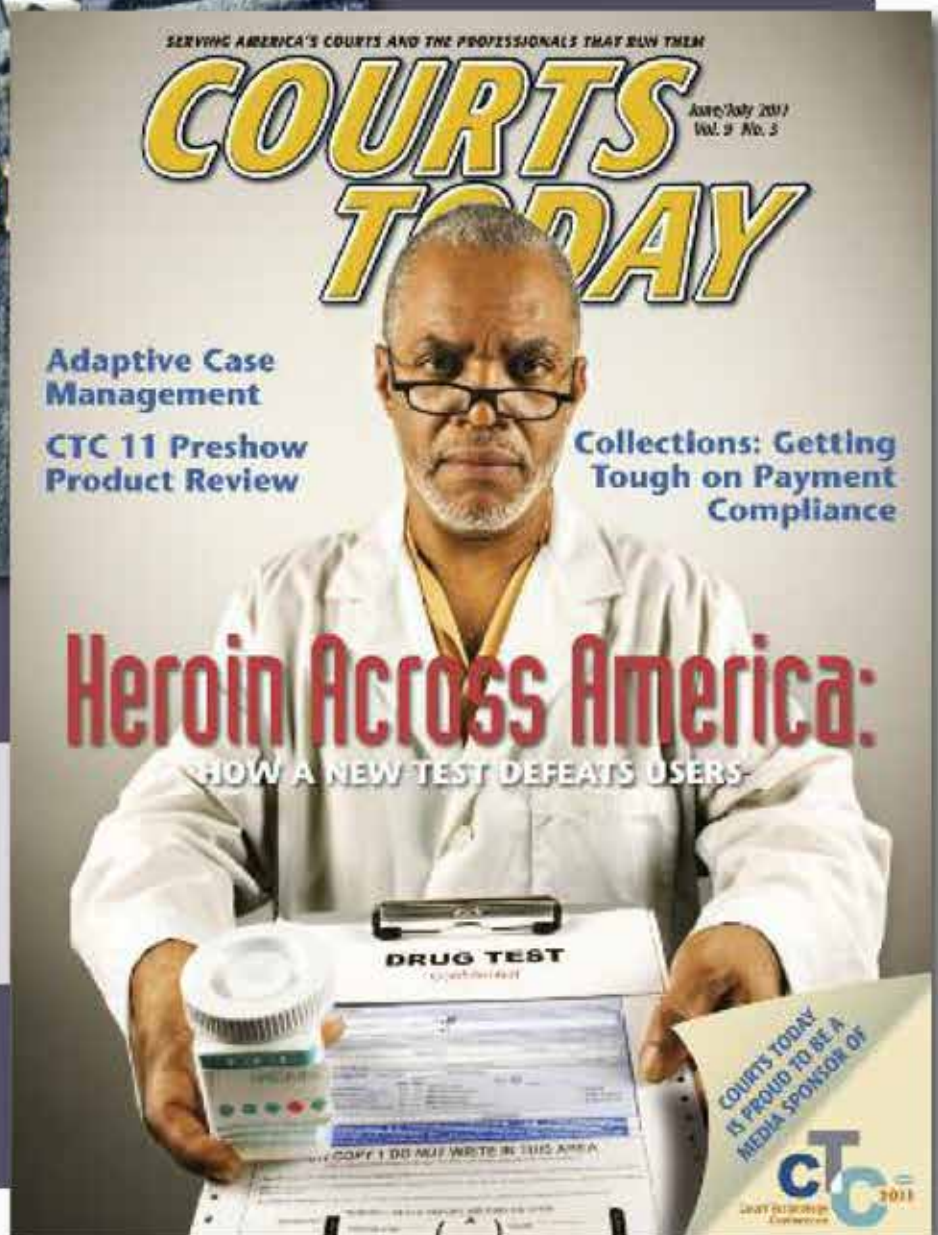


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rewards. This strategy is generally referred to as contingency management (CM), or the technique that relies on the application of rewards to manage the behavior of individuals.

WHAT IS CONTINGENCY MANAGEMENT?

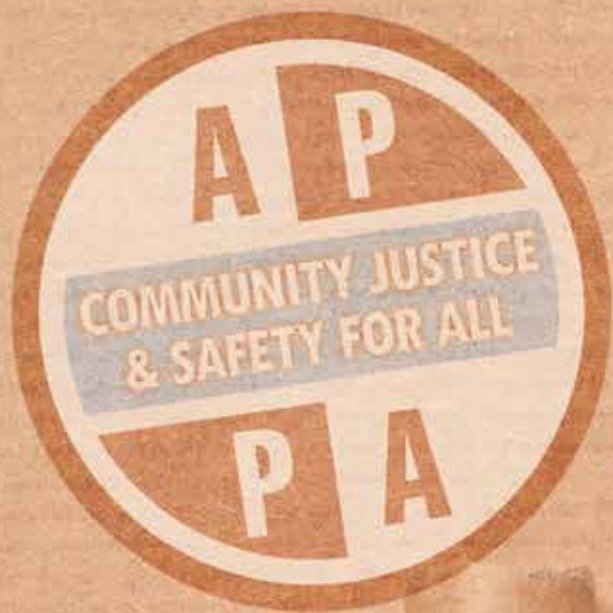
Contingency management (CM) is a behavior modification program that involves the use of positive reinforcements (incentives) to change behaviors in a constructive and supportive manner (Petry, 2000). The use of rewards allows for the recognition of desired behaviors on a frequent basis, inspiring individuals to make progress. Receiving personal gratification from being involved in behavioral changes can increase the commitment to and engagement in the change process (Taxman et al., 2010). Behaviors that would typically result in punishments are replaced with reward-earning behaviors (Rudes et al., 2012).

KEY STUDY ON SANCTIONS AND REWARDS (Wodahl et al; 2011)

- **STUDY DESIGN:**
 - Retrospective research design
 - Random sample of 283 offenders on Intensive Supervision (ISP) from 2000-2003
- **KEY MEASURES:**
 - Completion of ISP
 - Sanctions received
 - Rewards received
 - Ratio of rewards-to-sanctions
- Findings on recidivism:
 - The use of rewards improves supervision success for offenders more than sanctions
 - A ratio of four or more rewards for every sanction produced the best results in terms of ISP completion

The underlying principles of CM are that the use of positive reinforcements for target or desired behaviors helps to shape the individuals thinking patterns in an attempt to encourage individuals to continue engaging in desired behaviors (Griffith et al., 2000; Lussier et al., 2006; Petry & Martin, 2002; Rudes et al., 2012). Specifically, CM creates a social learning process where the use of incentives disrupts the influences associated with undesirable behaviors, such as drug use. Instead CM provides rewards for positive behaviors, such as abstinence, thus making abstinence more attractive (Higgins & Petry, 1999; Griffith et al., 2000). There are three primary principles of CM: 1) the treatment provider creates an environment where target behaviors, such as drug abstinence, are quickly noticed, 2) reinforcers are used when the individual achieves the targeted behavior, and 3) reinforcers are not provided if the target behavior is not achieved (Higgins, Budney & Bickel, 1994; Petry, 2000). For example, with

drug abstinence as a targeted behavior a treatment provider can reward a client's behavior when they provide a negative urinalysis (UA). However, if the client provides a positive UA, the reward will be withheld.



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WHERE IS CM TYPICALLY IMPLEMENTED?

CM has been tested in substance abuse treatment settings to reinforce abstinence and treatment attendance (Stitzer & Petry, 2006). Substance abuse clinics provide an optimal environment to implement CM due to their therapeutic nature and clients' ability to visit clinics frequently, which allows for easy monitoring of abstinence and treatment session attendance (Milby et al., 1978; Stitzer et al; 1977; 1980). CM has been found to be especially effective in reducing the use of cocaine (Higgins et al., 1993; Higgins et al., 1994a); opioids (Stitzer et al., 1980; Bickel et al; 1997); alcohol (Miller, 1975; Petry et al; 2000); and nicotine (Roll et al., 1996; Stitzer & Bigelow, 1986). Despite its effectiveness as a tool, researchers find that substance abuse and mental health counselors

do not routinely use CM, mainly due to the perceived costs associated with supplying rewards as well as the cost of conducting more frequent urine analyses and the administrative time necessary to facilitate the CM protocols (Kirby et al; 2006; McGovern et al; 2004; Petry, 2000).

Eight Main CM Principles

- Positive incentives with point escalation
- Clear guidelines about earning points
- Emphasize abstinence
- Early incentives
- Point escalation
- Integrating point system into existing system
- Bonuses
- Focus on no more than three behaviors at a time

EFFECTIVENESS OF CM

In a review of meta-analyses (quantitative research syntheses) through George Mason University's Center for Advancing Correctional Excellence's (ACE!), Evidence Mapping to Advance Justice Practice (EMTAP) project, researchers have found that CM is generally effective at promoting abstinence in substance abuse treatment settings (Watson et al; 2012). Watson et al. (2012) identified three meta-analyses that find CM increased abstinence among drug abusers (Griffith et al.;2000;

Lussier et al; 2006; Prendergast et al; 2006). Common components of CM found to be effective are immediate delivery of rewards, targeting a specific drug rather than multiple drugs, higher value positive incentives, fidelity of intervention implementation and maintenance, use of CM as an additional component to another treatment intervention (i.e. medication-assisted treatment (Griffith et al; 2000)) and the close monitoring of abstinence (i.e. more frequent urine analyses) (Watson et al; 2012).

CM IN CRIMINAL JUSTICE SETTINGS

While CM is common in the substance abuse treatment literature, there are only a few studies examining the use of CM with criminal justice-involved populations (Doctor & Polakow, 1973; Marlow et al; 2008; Marlow & Wong; 2008; Friedmann et al; 2010). CM is more likely to be used in problem-solving court programs. In these settings, rewards commonly include praise from the court team, promotion to a new phase or early release from the program (Lindquist, Krebs, & Lattimore, 2006). In justice settings, punishments or sanctions are also used to reduce the likelihood that unwanted behavior will be continued (Wodahl et al; 2011). Common sanctions include short jail terms, increased treatment requirements (such as more frequent UAs), or dismissal from the program altogether (Lindquist et al., 2006). Programs that are able to effectively implement rewards and sanctions to reinforce targeted behaviors are found to be more effective than programs that rely on sanctions alone (Marlowe & Kirby, 1999). Further, it is suggested that rewards should outnumber sanctions by at least a 4:1 ratio for programs to be most effective (Gendreau, 1996; Wodahl et al., 2011).

Existing research has highlighted several challenges associated with introducing CM into a justice setting. CM is typically administered by trained clinicians rather than justice workers or substance abuse staff (Sinha et al; 2003) and there is a lack of attention towards justice worker's perceptions and use of CM, which leaves little information about the feasibility and potential uptake of this intervention in a typically punitive and

control-oriented environment (Rudes et al., 2012). Recently, Rudes et al. (2012) examined the efficacy of applying CM in a criminal justice setting in the Justice Steps (JSTEPS) study. The JSTEPS study used a longitudinal, mixed-method approach to assess the use of CM across five federal justice settings (specialized problem-solving courts, a halfway house, and general probation supervision caseload). Eight main principles were designed for consideration when implementing CM in each agency including: developing positive incentives with a point system; establishing clear guidelines about earning points; emphasizing abstinence; providing incentives early; point escalation (i.e. accumulating points for reaching targeted behaviors); integrating the point system into existing practices; developing point bonuses; and focusing on no more than three behaviors at a time. Rudes et al. (2012) identified several factors important in the implementation of CM within a criminal justice setting. For example, although many of the probation agencies found the idea of using CM as acceptable and feasible, several barriers hindered the use of CM within these agencies. Common barriers across the five agencies included focusing on too many target behaviors with clients; lack of consensus regarding CM protocols; and placing too much focus on the use of sanctions instead of rewards.

WHAT NEEDS MORE RESEARCH/ CONCLUSIONS

Although Rudes et al. (2012) found support for the acceptability and feasibility of CM, effective implementation was challenging. More studies of the application

of CM in criminal justice settings are needed to build a stronger knowledge base about the efficacy of this approach. The future of CM in criminal justice settings will depend on the collaboration between researchers and practitioners to move it from a “promising practice” to an “evidence-based” one. Also there is a need to help CJ practitioners deal with three issues that negatively affect the use of CM:

- limit the target behavior to no more than 3;
- provide a mixture of financial and behavioral rewards; and,
- ensure that the rewards have value to the person who is likely to get them.

The justice system generally focuses on punishment, particularly for compliance reasons. Incentives and CM techniques tend to be used to minimize negative behaviors. Incentives are powerful tools for CJ professionals given that they are linked to motivation and encouraging people to focus on clear, specific target behaviors. This is the best way to achieve behavioral change and to assist people who are apprehensive about change to make positive, small steps to move towards a crime-free lifestyle. ▶▶▶

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ICAOS CELEBRATES 10 YEARS

Interstate compacts are born out of necessity. For the Interstate Commission for Adult Offender Supervision (ICAOS), the tragic death of Peyton Tuthill in 1999 crystallized the need to establish and enforce a uniform set of rules to control the movement of probation and parole offenders who relocate from one jurisdiction to another.

Through the efforts of the National Institute of Corrections (NIC), the Council of State Governments (CSG) and many others, thirty-five states approved legislation for adoption of a new compact for the supervision of adult offenders, and ICAOS became a reality in June 2002. During the years that followed, the Commission refined the rules, established policies and procedures, implemented training programs, and created a national office staffed with individuals responsible for handling the Commission's day-to-day activities.

In 2008, the Commission reached a milestone with the launch of the Interstate Compact Offender Tracking System (ICOTS), a national information system for tracking interstate compact offenders, representing an unmatched level of cooperation and standardization across the nation. Since launch, ICOTS has provided detailed metrics to inform policy decisions, measure efficiencies and promote accountability. A clear example of this is the average amount of time needed to investigate a transfer request. In FY 2009, it took 45.5 days on average to investigate and respond to a transfer request. In FY 2012, states completed investigations in an average of 32.7 days, or 28 percent less time.

Another pivotal moment occurred in FY 2010 when a compliance program built on a solid foundation of training, reliable data, established rules and recognized best practices launched. Since that time, states have continually improved their adherence to the rules and their ability to meet the established requirements. This greater accountability substantially improves public safety and better serves the offenders under supervision.

This year, at our Annual Business Meeting in Madison, Wisconsin, we marked the beginning of a new chapter of cooperation and collaboration for ICAOS. This year the Commission conducted a judicial panel to improve our understanding of the difficulties the judiciary faces when dealing with Compact offenders. In addition, the Commission reached consensus on pursuing automated victim notifications. We also took time this year to mark the Interstate Commission for Adult Offenders Supervision's 10th Anniversary by reflecting on accomplishments and inviting previous leadership to speak and take part in our meetings. We are very proud of the accomplishments of the past decade and look forward to future. >>>

LS/RNR & LS/CMI

Gender-Informed. Strength-Focused.

The Level of Service suite of risk assessments is the BEST-VALIDATED group of risk/need instruments in the corrections and criminal justice community. Specifically, the *Level of Service/Risk, Need, Responsivity* (LS/RNR™) and the *Level of Service/Case Management Inventory* (LS/CMI™) are gender-informed tools that are reliable and able to accurately classify, and effectively predict re-offending within male and female populations.



www.mhs.com/LSRNR



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Created for both genders, the LS/RNR and LS/CMI include added features to address requirements of a growing female offender population:

- Normative data collected from over 20,000 females from inmate and community populations
- Guidelines that instruct users to consider gender-specific factors, as well as, the importance of minor risk/need factors and non-criminogenic needs
- Assessment items that address gender-informed responsivity factors—such as mothering concerns and adult victimization

In addition, the LS/CMI provides an opportunity for users to evaluate positive offender attributes so that offender strengths may be highlighted and built upon in service delivery.

For more information on the LS/RNR and the LS/CMI contact Tammy Holwell, MHS Public Safety division, at 1.800.456.3003 ext. 269.



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DISCOVER CORRECTIONS

EXTRAORDINARY CHOICES. EXTRAORDINARY REWARDS.



By Mary Ann Schmitz-Mowatt



WHAT IT MEANS
FOR RECRUITMENT
AND RETENTION

In the next decade, an exodus of baby boomers will require the community corrections field to replace experienced workers with new personnel. Attracting, hiring, and retaining quality people will become even more important as knowledgeable and skilled workers leave the field. Today's uncertain economic conditions—and plethora of job seekers—may give employers the illusion that there is no shortage of candidates. Attracting a large number of candidates may not be an issue for some agencies; however, finding the right candidates is a concern. While it may appear unnecessary to focus on recruitment and retention issues, these remain critical in order for an agency to create a positive, productive, and attractive workplace (Leip, Stinchcomb, & McCampbell, 2009).

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (2012), employment for probation officers will increase by 18 percent from 2010 to 2020. Significant factors having an impact on the community corrections recruitment environment also include changes in the means of seeking and keeping employment, the salary and benefit differentials between corrections and traditional law enforcement positions, the negative image of corrections as portrayed in the media, competition with the military, law enforcement, and homeland security for public service workers, and the demanding and challenging nature of the work itself (McCampbell, Hall & Layman, 2002; Paparozzi, & DeMichele, 2008).

In 2003, the American Correctional Association (ACA) conducted a nationwide survey of corrections administrators and human resource managers. Results showed that 72 percent of the respondents reported some difficulty in recruiting to fill vacant positions, while 64 percent indicated that retention of employees was problematic (Workforce Associates, 2004).

In the previous generation, most employees expected to remain with their agency for many years but that dynamic has now changed. The average nationwide employee tenure is only 3.6 years (National Institute of Corrections, 2004). Today, it is not surprising that the typical young worker between the ages of 18 and 32 will average nine jobs during that time span (Arthur, 2001).

Until now, seeking specific jobs in community corrections, as well as other disciplines within the field of corrections (i.e., jails/detention, prisons/institutions), required time and

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**DISCOVER
CORRECTIONS**
EXTRAORDINARY CHOICES. EXTRAORDINARY REWARDS.

determination to find positions which match the job seeker's background and interests. There was no national resource bringing together all postings for positions in the field, so reviewing multiple sources was necessary. To address this critical workforce issue, the U.S. Department of Justice's Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) awarded competitive funding to the American Probation and Parole Association (APPA), for the development and implementation of the DiscoverCorrections.com website.

Discover Corrections provides in-depth comprehensive information about entry level and advanced careers in corrections. Employers are able to share relevant job posting information making it possible for job-seekers to locate job opportunities nationwide. Discover Corrections also offers a practical and concise overview of corrections for those who are interested in the field. In addition, Discover Corrections provides strategies to improve the effectiveness and retention of valuable correctional employees. This collaborative effort continues to be maintained by a core project team of corrections stakeholders including APPA, the American Correctional Association (ACA), the American Jail Association (AJA), and the Center for Innovative Public Policies, Inc. (CIPP).

ATTRACT, HIRE AND KEEP THE BEST RECRUITMENT

How do agencies find, reach, and encourage potential employees? Attracting the best possible employees for the next generation of community corrections is one of the most important tasks of an employer.

IT BEGINS WITH VISION AND MISSION

Recruitment spawns from the organization's vision and mission. What an organization defines as its job—its mission—and where it sees itself headed—its vision—determines the workforce needs of the organization. There is a direct link. A mission statement describes the purpose of an agency and the fundamental reason that it exists. The vision statement describes what the agency wants to become, achieve, or create. Therefore, the foremost recruitment issue is not how to fill vacancies, but how to identify and attract job candidates who will best advance the organization's mission (Berry, 2007).

When hiring, an agency should identify the specific knowledge, skills, abilities, and attitudes needed to fulfill its mission and advance its vision. This will help identify quality future employees. Without that guide, you may find yourself really impressed with a given candidate but, once hired, you may discover they don't possess the traits you desire.

IDENTIFY THE CORE COMPETENCIES NEEDED TO DO THE JOB

The process of figuring out who to hire as the next generation of employees begins with identifying the core competencies of the job. Core competencies are an observable set of knowledge, skills, and abilities that an individual needs to perform the work role (Stinchcomb, McCampbell, & Layman, 2006). To find core competencies for community corrections professionals, it is critical to define *future* core competencies – not *present* core competencies (Stinchcomb, McCampbell, & Layman, 2006). Administrators and managers must look ahead and ask themselves how the job will change in the next ten years. How will the employees change? Will future policy changes influence community corrections work? What new technology will be available to assist the field? These future and present core competencies indicate change will be inevitable in the job and the workplace.

In addition to innovations in available technologies, one of the greatest changes affecting community corrections is the commitment to evidence-based practices (EBPs). Stinchcomb, McCampbell, & Layman (2006) have identified new core competencies needed to successfully work in the field, now, and in the future that include the following:

- Computer literacy
- Interpersonal and interviewing skills
- Ability to motivate offenders
- Analytical and critical thinking skills
- Written and oral communication skills
- Group facilitation skills
- Ethics and integrity
- Knowledge of human behavior
- Ability to be flexible
- Ability to self-manage
- Project management and organizational skills

Bogue and colleagues (2004) expanded the list further to include the following knowledge and skills:

- Knowledge of research identifying what strategies work most effectively with what types of offenders
- Ability to analyze and apply research findings
- Knowledge of diverse strategies for working with offenders (motivational interviewing, group facilitation, relapse prevention, cognitive restructuring, etc.)
- Ability to detect antisocial thinking and behavior
- Ability to match treatment modalities with offender needs



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CORRECTIONS**
EXTRAORDINARY CHOICES. EXTRAORDINARY REWARDS.

Officers who supervise individuals under community supervision will be required to not only enforce conditions of supervision ordered by the court or releasing authority, but also will be required to facilitate positive behavior change in the individuals they supervise. Therefore in community corrections, the single most important quality that an employee can have is the belief that people have the ability to change and an optimistic view that is supportive by this belief.

As a result, if these are the core competencies and attributes sought from job applicants, they must be incorporated into recruiting strategies and practices. Potential applicants who are most likely to possess these qualities must be identified and then targeted for recruitment. Management in particular, must recognize those who already possess these traits, or seem to have the best potential for learning and incorporating them into their professional practice. It is also important to facilitate the process of self-selection by carefully and clearly explaining the nature of the job to potential applicants, including dimensions of the job that may not be the most appealing. Individuals who do not see themselves as a “good fit” for the position can then make a decision not to move forward with a formal application (Stinchcomb, McCampbell, & Layman, 2006).

THE RELATIONSHIP OF VISION/MISSION, CORE COMPETENCIES, AND RECRUITMENT STRATEGIES

Approaching the challenge of recruitment in a systematic way requires an understanding and appreciation of the relationships between recruitment and critical organizational components of agency’s vision/mission and the core competencies of its staff. Once these are established, then recruiting can begin. These components are described below:

VISION/MISSION	CORE COMPETENCIES	RECRUITMENT STRATEGIES
What objectives does the agency intend to achieve?	What measurable knowledge, skills, and abilities are needed to fulfill the agency’s vision/mission?	What strategies are most likely to attract those with the required core competencies?

(Wood & Payne, 1998)

KNOWING WHAT ELSE YOU NEED FROM YOUR APPLICANT POOL

In addition to core competencies and specific skills, a community corrections agency needs to identify other variables that are important in recruiting new employees. Formal job descriptions may specify that applicants must have an advanced degree in a specific discipline. Some positions may mandate that specific prior experience is needed to be considered for employment. In addition, it is important to determine if there are other special needs that the

agency wants to consider, such as developing a multi-lingual workforce. Factors such as these will also drive your recruitment strategies.

WHAT IS IMPORTANT TO APPLICANTS?

Talking with individuals who have recently decided to work for an agency can provide invaluable information to assist in the development of recruitment and hiring strategies. This process can identify what was important to new employees when they were considering career or job options and can help determine how to market the agency and available positions. Stinchcomb, McCampbell, & Leip (2009) conducted a survey of new employees of a correctional program and found that the following variables influenced those individuals to accept a job offer:

- Job Security (78%)
- Good retirement (60%)
- Attractive salary (54%)
- Attractive benefits package (64%)
- Opportunities for career growth and development (41%)

It is important that recruitment efforts include information about these variables. Agencies that listen and learn from their current employees will better understand what's important to applicants and have better success.

“The most powerful ‘outside the Box’ recruitment advantage that any agency enjoys is simply being known as a place where higher education and hard work are rewarded, where bureaucratic regulation has been replaced by collaborative participation, where relationships between management and workers are characterized by mutual trust and respect...where only the best will fit”

(Stinchcomb, 2004, p. 96)





**DISCOVER
CORRECTIONS**
EXTRAORDINARY CHOICES. EXTRAORDINARY REWARDS.

It is important to keep the recruitment and hiring process as efficient and timely as possible. Government hiring procedures should be as simple and expeditious as possible. Here are some of the items listed by candidates as positive factors regarding the recruitment and hiring process (Stinchcomb, McCampbell, & Leip, 2009):

- Prompt answers to questions
- Knowledge regarding who to contact for information
- Relatively prompt decision making process
- Feedback to applicants at each step of the process
- Didn't have to fill out too many or redundant forms
- On-line application option
- Recruitment Plans and Strategies

Developing an agency's recruitment plan is critical. Recruitment should not be an activity that is undertaken only when facing an immediate need to fill vacancies. It should be a carefully planned, ongoing process, with clearly established leadership. There should be an adequate recruitment budget established that's understood to be an investment in the future of the agency. Small agencies may need to be flexible in their approach to a recruitment plan based on their specific needs.

**An agency's
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An agency's reputation in the community is one of the strongest assets that support a positive recruitment effort. If the community knows about the agency and views it positively, then recruitment of the right individuals will be easier. In marketing terms, creating a "brand" for an organization will set it apart from others, make it more easily recognizable, and will effectively convey the agency's mission and values. Branding can also aid in providing the public with an accurate and positive image of corrections—countering the often negative images seen in the media (Stinchcomb, McCampbell, & Leip, 2009).

Current employees are also significant recruiters for your agency. Word-of-mouth is consistently listed as one of the primary sources of knowledge about job openings and what a job actually entails. Forty-six percent of applicants in one survey learned about current job openings from personal contacts, while 21 percent learned about the openings from current employees. There are many other possible components to a recruitment strategy that include utilizing the following components (Stinchcomb, McCampbell, & Leip, 2009):

- DiscoverCorrections.com
- Agency website job posting section
- College and university career centers
- Word-of-mouth — utilizing recent retirees as emissaries for your organization
- Job fairs
- Internship programs
- Volunteer programs
- Military outplacement centers
- Radio and television advertising
- Professional publication postings and advertisements
- State job center for displaced or unemployed workers
- Establishing a speakers bureau and making certain that current job openings are always included in presentations to community organizations, and college and university classes
- Ads in publications, including local and regional newspapers, and other printed media

RECRUITMENT STRATEGIES BY GENERATION

Recruitment initiatives should recognize today's multi-generational workforce and the differences in the employment motivators for each generation. It is important to address recruitment approaches specifically for each generation. It is estimated that by 2020 the Baby-Boomer generation will move entirely into the 55 year and older age group, while the 16 to 24 year old age group is anticipated to account for 11.2 percent of the workforce (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2012). Most new recruits in community corrections will be a part of the Millennial generation or Generation Xers. Some hires, especially those seeking second careers, may be Baby Boomers. Research generally describes the characteristics of each generation found in the contemporary workplace as the following (Stinchcomb, McCampbell, & Leip, 2009):

Millennials (born after 1980)

- Emphasize technology
- Highlight teamwork
- Highlight leadership's openness to dialogue and discussion
- Emphasize training, advancement opportunities, and mentoring
- Recognize their optimism and high expectations of the workplace
- Stress flexibility and opportunities for work/life balance

Generation Xers (born between 1965 and 1980)

- Emphasize the unique aspects of the organization and the job
- Highlight leadership's openness to dialogue and discussion



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CORRECTIONS**
EXTRAORDINARY CHOICES. EXTRAORDINARY REWARDS.

- Emphasize technology
- Show how the job can make a difference to the community
- Point to opportunities for training and career advancement
- Stress the opportunities to work independently to develop their own solutions to the problems they encounter
- Identify opportunities for personal growth and development
- Recognize that they value competence over rank
- Stress means of regular feedback and coaching
- Stress opportunities for work/life balance

Baby Boomers (born between 1946 and 1964)

- Acknowledge the achievements and experience of applicants and stress how that can be used on the job
- Stress making a difference in the community
- Focus on the agency's personnel benefits
- Highlight teamwork and collaboration

Each generation views the workplace (and potential employment) from a somewhat unique perspective. As a result, what attracts, motivates, and rewards employees will likely differ between generations. Keep these differences in mind when developing a recruiting strategy and be prepared to approach each generation differently when targeting potential employees (Stinchcomb, McCampbell, & Leip, 2009).

Turnover for One Position in Community Corrections

**\$998 TO HIRE A REPLACEMENT
PAROLE OFFICER**

**\$16,000 TO TRAIN A NEW
PAROLE OFFICER**

ANNUAL WAGE:

$\$50,000 \times .25 = \$12,500$

ANNUAL BENEFITS:

$\$50,000 \times .30 = \$15,000$

TOTAL COST= \$44,498

(Arthur 2001)



RETENTION

Finding that new employee is just the first step, while retaining and assisting the individual to make a career for themselves in community corrections is the second step. National workforce data reveals that in 2007 there was nearly a 20 percent turnover rate for all corrections employees in their first year on the job (Keystone Group, 2008). Retention of employees provides the foundation for a solid, consistent, and contiguous future of community corrections.

THE COSTS FOR FAILURE TO RETAIN ARE HIGH

The cost of turnover for positions in the corrections field is high. Turnover costs equal 25 percent of the lost employee's annual salary, plus 30 percent of their annual benefits costs (Arthur, 2001). According to 2004 data from the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction, the cost to recruit and hire a new parole officer is \$998 and the cost to train a new parole officer is \$16,000 (Stinchcomb, McCampbell, & Layman, 2006). Combining these two calculations means that the turnover in one parole officer position costs the agency a total of \$44,498. To get a sense of the real cost to your organization, multiply this figure times the annual turnover of professional staff.

The workforce is an organization's most valuable resource. The loss of an experienced employee is expensive in terms of recruiting, screening, hiring, and training a replacement. In addition to the visible costs of turnover, there are other effects that, in the long-term, are costly to the organization. These impacts have implications for the day-to-day operations of an agency and include the loss of experience, stability, and continuity. These indirect cost factors include (Stinchcomb, McCampbell, & Layman, 2006):

- Loss of knowledge, skills, and abilities from the workforce
- Increased workloads in field and supervision functions for other staff
- A temporary decrease in quality of service
- A negative impact on an agency's reputation
- Increased organizational stress
- Loss of cultural and historical knowledge and affirmation
- Loss of consistent delivery of services
- Loss of the public's goodwill, which can have an impact on the level of political support and funding
- Less attractiveness to potential applicants



**DISCOVER
CORRECTIONS**
EXTRAORDINARY CHOICES. EXTRAORDINARY REWARDS.

WHY DO EMPLOYEES LEAVE?

To begin to determine the retention dynamics operating within an agency, managers need to collect some data from both those employees who have left and those who have chosen to stay. Exit interviews are one way to learn why individuals have made a decision to leave an organization. Periodic retention interviews are a good way to learn why loyal employees continue to stay with the agency. Annual surveys can also be useful if they are well constructed and the anonymity of the respondents is assured.

Here are the results of surveys in several correctional agencies that have attempted to identify why employees leave their current agency (Arthur, 2001; Simmons, Cochran & Blunt, 1997; Sims, 2001; Slate, Wells, & Johnson, 2003):

- Job is not what they expected
- Job/person mismatch
- Little coaching or ongoing feedback
- Few opportunities for growth/development
- Don't feel valued, or actually feel devalued, or discounted
- Overworked—job demands too high, or too stressful, resulting in life imbalance
- Lack of trust/confidence in leaders
- Not feeling part of the organization—being taken for granted, inability to contribute
- Inadequate supervision
- Lack of flexible work schedules
- Unsatisfactory relationships with coworkers
- Inadequate or substandard equipment or facilities
- Perceived dictatorial management style
- Micromanagement
- Organizational "politics"

It may be surprising to an agency or organization's leadership that economic variables, such as salary and benefits, played a role in only a small portion of the employees' decision to leave an organization. Studies indicate that 80 to 90 percent of employees leave for reasons not related to money, but instead decided to leave the employer due to issues with the job itself, the manager, the culture, or the environment (Branham, 2005).

WHY DO EMPLOYEES STAY?

While it is important to understand why employees leave your agency, it is more important to understand why others continue with their employment. The following variables emerged in several surveys exploring why employees stay with their current employers (Simmons, Cochran & Blunt, 1997, Stinchcomb, McCampbell, & Leip, 2009, Buckingham & Coffman, 1999):

- Challenging and exciting work
 - Career growth, learning, and development opportunities
 - Working with great people
 - Fair pay
 - Reasonable work rules
 - Supportive management/good boss/good supervisor
 - Being recognized, valued, and respected
 - Meaningful work—making a difference
 - Pride in the organization and its mission
 - Great work environment and culture
 - Sense of being treated fairly
 - Participation in management strategies, decision-making, and empowerment
 - Their opinions counts
 - The job expectations are clear and consistent
 - Somebody at work genuinely cares about them
-

“When all parts of the organization are aligned, everything is in concert with the overall mission—from recruitment practices and selection criteria to how employees are treated, trained, rewarded, evaluated, promoted and disciplined. Accomplishing this requires a cultural shift away from enforcing compliance with unilateral directives, toward inspiring commitment to universal objectives”

(Stinchcomb, McCampbell, & Layman, 2006, p. 21).





This clearly demonstrates that retention is not always about how much money individuals are earning, but for most individuals is dependent on how they are treated.

BUILDING A RETENTION PLAN

After reviewing the lists of why employees leave and why employees stay, the next step is to critically evaluate your own organization. Results of the exit and retention interviews, and surveys, will help to make the process objective. Management and employees often do not share the same perception of the agency in terms of how it cares, treats, and appreciates its employees. In order to effectively address the retention issue, it is critical to understand the view and feelings of the employees.

A good retention plan should address, change, and/or eliminate factors that are detrimental to the agency, and determine how to increase the impact of variables attractive to current and prospective employees.

YOUR ORGANIZATION'S CULTURE IS CRITICAL

The culture of an agency is the single most important factor influencing retention. An organization's culture can be its most significant asset or its worst liability. "Culture is essentially the 'personality' of an organization. Just as an individual's personality prescribes



THE IMPACT OF CULTURE

"The culture of an organization can be very positive, empowering, and productive. It can also be very negative, destructive and counterproductive. Above all, culture seeks to maintain the essential character of the organization, the "way we do things around here." (Burrell, 2000, p. 53)

that person's behavior, culture defines and reinforces what is acceptable and unacceptable behavior in a certain environment. Organizational culture defines 'how things are done' in a particular workplace" (Stinchcomb, McCampbell, & Layman, 2006, p. 16). An agency's culture reflects all of the basic, shared assumptions, and values that are taught formally and informally to new employees, and reinforced by experienced staff as the "correct" way to act (Schein, 2004). If an organization does not have a proactive visionary climate in which employees are valued, then it can expect high rates of turnover. Employees may realize that they don't fit in with the culture of the organization and look to get out.

Leadership plays a key role in the identification, realignment (as needed), and maintenance of organizational culture. A major challenge for leadership in community corrections is to align operational practices with administrative values and priorities. The organization needs to keep everybody moving together in the same direction. This means there must be a "culture of innovation" that is positive, productive, and properly aligned.

Attitudes reflecting an "if it ain't broke, don't fix it" or "this is how we've always done it" mindset have to be altered. Culture is a dynamic factor that reflects the best and worst of the organization's mission and efforts. Everything that an organization does, and how it does it, must be consistent with its vision and mission. A critical part of this is how employees are treated and as a result, how they feel on a day-to-day basis in the workplace. This is the impact of "culture" within an agency. A useful tool to address culture and organizational change can be found in a recent National Institute of Corrections (NIC) publication, *Culture and Change Management, Using APEX to Facilitate Organizational Change* which is available at <http://nicic.gov/>.

BEGIN AT THE BEGINNING: GETTING THE NEW EMPLOYEE OFF TO A GOOD START

Retention efforts begin with a strong, positive, organizational culture. Culture is a petri dish in which applicants have their first experience with the organization and new employees are placed to learn, thrive, and grow. Once a positive environment is established, the next step is getting each new employee off to a good start. One of the most vulnerable moments in many people's lives is the day they start a new job. A new employee's approach to the job and its expectations is shaped by early experiences in the workplace. Information provided to a new employee must be provided at a pace that allows for internalization and a comprehensive understanding of the context in which that information, or those directions, will be utilized. New hires are looking for guidance, direction, support, and reassurance (Stinchcomb, McCampbell, & Layman, 2009). Sometimes, new employees are assigned to "shadow" an experienced worker during their initial time on the job, one whose work and ethics are worthy of replication. This is an opportunity to see and understand the job as it is performed, to ask questions, and to incorporate values.



**DISCOVER
CORRECTIONS**
EXTRAORDINARY CHOICES. EXTRAORDINARY REWARDS.

THE IMPORTANCE OF MENTORING

Mentoring involves the assignment of a senior employee with a positive attitude to work with a new hire. This process gives the new employee an opportunity to learn from the experience of seasoned veterans and recognizes the valued expertise of senior employees. The mentoring process is effective because it does not have an evaluative component. The mentor is a resource who can be called upon at any time. Everyday questions can often lead to profitable discussions about components of the job in a safe context. It can be more informal than a regularly scheduled supervisory conference. A positive experience with the mentor—someone who is there for the employee—can serve as a retention factor for both parties. It can provide a new dimension of job satisfaction and organizational contribution to the mentor's employment experience and be a useful source of information and support for the new employee. The relationship establishes a point of connection between the organization and the new employee (Stinchcomb, McCampbell, & Leip, 2009).

The corrections field recognizes the importance of mentorship. Although tailored for jail settings, the Mentor Handbook guides agencies through this process and is available in versions for the mentee and mentor at www.leadingjails.com. While the mentor role is more informal than a supervisory relationship, there still needs to be a degree of structure in a mentorship. The mentor needs to know what is expected in this role, including time needed to devote to the function. The new employee needs to understand the role and expectations of a mentor. A periodic check-in, conducted by the mentorship coordinator (if available), with the mentor and mentee, is also important. Numerous advantages have been identified for the mentoring process (Peer Resources, 2004):

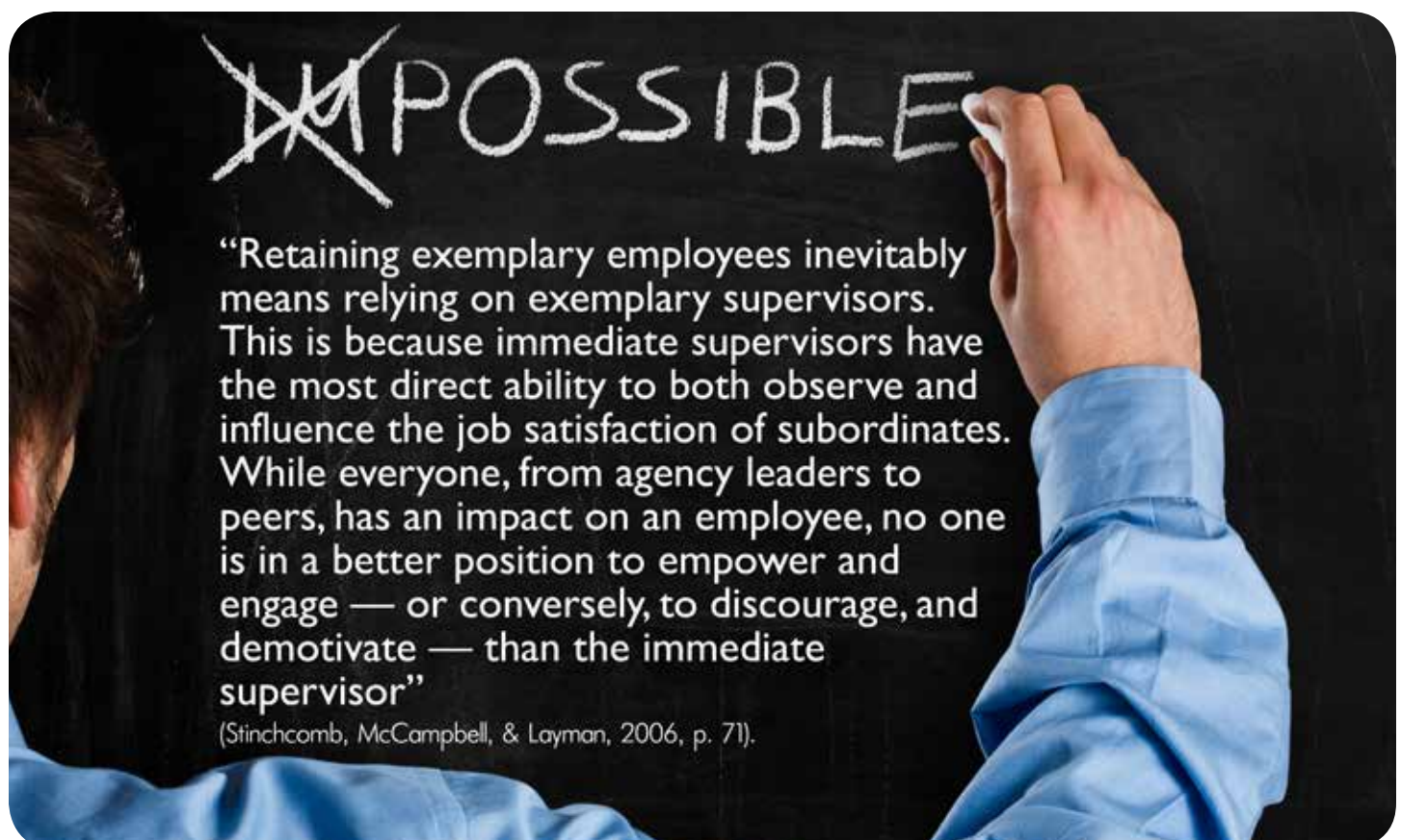
- Easing the transition of the new employee by helping them become more familiar with the job
- Accelerating learning and skill development
- Providing emotional support to employees beginning a new and challenging career
- Encouraging both parties to grow and develop personally, as well as professionally
- Giving veteran employees the opportunity to share their knowledge and experience, thus providing a form of recognition for their expertise and job performance
- Providing an opportunity to increase job satisfaction
- Providing a method for the agency's leadership to obtain feedback about cultural and operational issues of the organization
- Increasing the commitment to the organization
- Demonstrating the organization's commitment to helping new employees achieve success.

Mentoring does have a direct payoff for retention. “Studies reported that 35 percent of employees who do not receive mentoring opportunities seek other employment within twelve months, as compared to only 16 percent of employees who receive regular mentoring. For every 1,000 employees, this translated into 160 who will leave jobs where mentoring practices are in place, in contrast to 350 who will leave where mentoring practices are not in place” (Arthur, 2001).

PARTICIPATORY MANAGEMENT MODEL AS A RETENTION STRATEGY

Slate and Vogel (1997) have found empirical evidence suggesting that a relationship between participatory management and retention: increased perceptions of a participatory management environment by employees resulted in decreased turnover intention.

Participatory management theory assumes that employees prefer to have an active role in decision-making that directly affects their work. Also, the theory seeks to balance the involvement of both superiors and subordinates in information sharing, decision-making, and problem solving (Wagner, 1994). A participatory climate is a non-traditional mode that facilitates a sense of control and self-efficacy among employees (Spreitzer, 1996).





**DISCOVER
CORRECTIONS**
EXTRAORDINARY CHOICES. EXTRAORDINARY REWARDS.

Community corrections agencies are often described as rigid, hierarchical, paramilitary, and bureaucratic. This organizational design is characterized by well-established tradition-based operations, standardized procedures, top-down decision making, extensive regulations, and close supervisory oversight. Traditional “command-and-control” strategies are incongruent with the contemporary workplace. A top-down process does not appeal to the new generation entering the corrections field. In many ways, this environment is the antithesis of a participatory management style (Stinchcomb, McCampbell, & Layman, 2006).

Following the results of a 2009 study conducted on probation officer retention rates it was recommended that probation administrators should be aware of significant organizational factors (absence of participatory climate, in particular) leading to staff turnover rates. Based on these findings, more focus needs to be placed on the development and implementation of participatory management strategies in an effort to reduce turnover rates for probation officers. A strategy shift needs to be made in supervisory and management style, from directing and controlling officers in a traditional autocratic approach, to a dynamic facilitating, coaching, consulting, and listening mode (Lee, Joo, & Johnson, 2009).



“The talented employee may join a company because of its charismatic leaders, the generous benefit, and its world class training program, but how long that employee stays and how productive he is while he is there is determined by his relationship with his immediate supervisor.”

(Buckingham & Coffman, 1999, p. 11-12).

IMPACT OF SUPERVISORS ON RETENTION

Perhaps one of the least recognized but most important factors in employee retention is the supervisor. Research indicates that an employee's relationship with a direct supervisor is critical to creating and maintaining a positive experience on the job. In fact, 94 percent of respondents in one study said it was "definitely important" to be trusted by their supervisor, and 88 percent said it was likewise "definitely important" to respect their supervisor (Stork, et al., 2005). Research in corrections has found that the degree to which employees feel their supervisors care about them as an individual is significantly related to their sense of job satisfaction. Fostering this sense of caring is an important principle and simple retention strategy (Dial, Thompson, & Johnson, 2008).

Since the youngest new hires (Millennials) value competency over rank, it is even more important to develop highly skilled supervisors and managers who are able to coach and mentor their new associates. In addition to teaching specific skills, routines, and efficiently managing the work site, a good supervisor has the ability to promote these characteristics upon new hires or employees (Stinchcomb, McCampbell, & Leip, 2009):

- Affirm the newcomer's importance to the work team
- Establish clear objectives and provide related accountability
- Assure that new staff know where everything is — and especially know where to go for help
- Ensure they are not placed in positions they are not yet prepared to handle
- Obtain their candid feedback without fear of retaliations
- Provide opportunities for frequent debriefings to address issues, concerns, or uncertainties

Supervisors must understand the impact of generational differences within their team. Employees are looking for different things from their supervisors; how best to provide direction and feedback differs from generation to generation. It is important to recognize that each individual in a generational grouping brings a unique set of strengths to the team. Recognizing individual strengths, and assigning work in a way to maximize those strengths, will reinforce meaningful contributions to the team and create a more harmonious working environment. That's the type of work setting that keeps employees around.

STRATEGIC WORKFORCE PLANNING

Successful recruitment and retention doesn't just happen; it takes careful, ongoing planning and continuous attention to the critical variables in the process. Stinchcomb, McCampbell, and Leip (2009) have identified several fundamental aspects of workforce planning:



**DISCOVER
CORRECTIONS**
EXTRAORDINARY CHOICES. EXTRAORDINARY REWARDS.

Leip (2009) have identified several fundamental aspects of workforce planning:

- A strong foundation based on firm commitment, collaborative team work, and sufficient fiscal resources
- Close alignment with the agency's vision and mission
- Acknowledgement of the inter-relatedness of all components
- Availability of information related to both past trends and future projections
- The ability to translate conceptual plans into to operational practices
- An interactive process for keeping employees and stakeholders informed and involved
- The capacity to track progress toward achieving the goals of the plan
- The flexibility to make necessary adjustments based on ongoing feedback

Organizational leadership must make a strong commitment to workforce issues. There must be a willingness to engage in change when it is needed and the courage to take risks in order to allow individuals and organizations to grow and thrive.

EXTRAORDINARY CHOICES, EXTRAORDINARY REWARDS: DISCOVER CORRECTIONS

DiscoverCorrections.com is a new and innovative website that was launched in February 2012. As the first and only national website dedicated to promoting correctional careers, it exists to help with recruitment and retention. It provides a new, comprehensive description of the field of community corrections, as well as corrections in jails and prisons. One of the website's primary objectives is to attract quality applicants to jobs in the field and match applicants to job openings. This is done by providing a description of the various roles in corrections, a nationwide list of vacancies, a description of open positions, and information about the jurisdiction in which vacancies are located.

The DiscoverCorrection.com website is divided into four components that will assist the reader in the navigation of the site:

- Why Corrections?
- Explore the Field
- Career Resources
- Find Your Career!

The next section will provide an overview of what the site covers in these four areas.

WHY CORRECTIONS?

The DiscoverCorrections.com website explains why the corrections field is a positive career choice and why it's an area where people would want to devote their life's work. Applicants

YOU CAN HELP WITH THE FUTURE OF DISCOVERCORRECTIONS.COM

To further the development and utilization of the website by community corrections agencies and professionals, it is important for employers in the field of corrections to use the *DiscoverCorrections.com* website. To help, employers can:

- Register their agency as an Employer on the site. Once they do, they will be able to create an agency profile, list job posting at no cost, search resumes, and reach thousands of potential qualified candidates.
- Promote *DiscoverCorrections.com* by posting a link to *DiscoverCorrections.com* on their agency's website.
- Contact the career service centers at local colleges and universities, tell them about the website and invite them to use *DiscoverCorrections.com*. Ask them to add the website link to their career resource website.
- Submit a personal Story from the Field, describing how you began your career in corrections. You can read other professionals' stories and submit your own story online at <http://www.discovercorrections.com/explore/stories-from-the-field>. What better way to tell others about this unique and rewarding profession?

Submit photos from your agency depicting your staff at work to be considered for feature on *DiscoverCorrections.com* at <http://www.appa-net.org/DiscoverCorrections/release.htm>. Photos help present an updated and positive image of community corrections in action.





**DISCOVER
CORRECTIONS**
EXTRAORDINARY CHOICES. EXTRAORDINARY REWARDS.

determine if this field is a viable career choice for them. They can assess the fit of a job after reviewing and understanding the job duties, requirements, and general qualifications for positions in the field. And the website informs potential applicants about what is necessary to prepare for a career in corrections.

DiscoverCorrections.com provides “Extraordinary Choices, Extraordinary Rewards” as a theme for those interested in pursuing a career in the field of corrections. It also provides important information to potential applicants who are looking for their first job after high school or college, who are looking to make a mid-career change, or who are veterans of military service. Future corrections employees can discover that they can make a difference in the lives of individuals, and that they will be presented with opportunities for professional growth and promotion, and that the corrections field represents a financially stable career.

EXPLORE THE FIELD

The public is often misinformed about the field of corrections and is lead to believe that “sensational — not the routine” portrayals in the media are accurate (Paparozzi & DeMichele, 2008). The majority of the public does not understand the difference between probation and parole, jail and prison, or the difference between a juvenile detention center and a juvenile correctional treatment facility. This site provides a central resource for much needed factual and comprehensive description of the field for any individuals seeking general information on corrections, as well as those who are thinking about corrections as a career option.

This section presents an overview of the three core disciplines of corrections: community corrections, jails and detention, and prisons and institutions. Each discipline has its own unique function within the field. Although there is overlap between the three disciplines, each one demands specific knowledge, skills, and abilities among its professionals. Additionally, each discipline consists of various job roles and responsibilities. This information is summarized in a section called Explore the Field that discusses the knowledge base requirements, skills, and abilities needed for each role. The information available in this section allows the user to not only become more familiar with the field, but also to determine where they best fit within the corrections field.

This section also contains the location for the Stories from the Field . This feature includes personal accounts from current and former professionals who have worked in various aspects of the corrections field, on why they chose a career in corrections, and what it is like to do their job. This information is prepared and written in these individual’s own words, by people who have done, or are doing, the very job that they describe. This is one area where visitors to the



**DISCOVER
CORRECTIONS**

EXTRAORDINARY CHOICES. EXTRAORDINARY REWARDS.



**HELP US
HELP YOU.**

We've created a powerful, **FREE** recruitment tool for corrections professionals.

Recruiting and retaining qualified talent is one of the toughest challenges facing the corrections field today. DiscoverCorrections.com is here to help. As the first hiring website dedicated to promoting corrections careers, DiscoverCorrections.com puts powerful tools in your hands. Post your jobs. Search resumes. Reach a local and national audience of informed, interested and qualified candidates. And do it all, absolutely **FREE**.

To learn more and get started, visit us today at **www.DiscoverCorrections.com**.



The Council of State Governments/American Probation and Parole Association (CSG/APPA) in partnership with the American Correctional Association (ACA), American Jail Association (AJA) and the Center for Innovative Public Policies (CIPP), with funds from the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) manages the Discover Corrections website.

This project was supported by Grant Nos. 2009-D2-BX-K004 and 2010-DJ-BX-K054 awarded by the Bureau of Justice Assistance. The Bureau of Justice Assistance is a component of the Office of Justice Programs, which also includes the Bureau of Justice Statistics, the National Institute of Justice, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, the SMART Office, and the Office for Victims of Crime. Points of view or opinions in this document are those of the author and do not represent the official position or policies of the United States Department of Justice.



**DISCOVER
CORRECTIONS**
EXTRAORDINARY CHOICES. EXTRAORDINARY REWARDS.

have done, or are doing, the very job that they describe. This is one area where visitors to the website can learn more about some of the varied backgrounds people have and the journeys they took to get to their position in the field today. Visitors to this feature can also obtain more information on some of the nuances of the careers in the profession, and obtain a better understanding of how the same types of jobs may differ among jurisdictions.

CAREER RESOURCES

Individuals are often unaware of the breadth of correctional job opportunities available in local, state, federal, and tribal jurisdictions. The *Corrections in Your Area* segment allows potential candidates to view a summary of a state's core correctional agencies. The DiscoverCorrections.com website also provides a comprehensive glossary of correctional terms. Each profession has a language of its own and the corrections field is no exception. The extensive glossary of terms used within corrections is provided as a reference resource for those seeking a better understanding of the field, as well as those looking for the meaning of a specific term in the correctional context. It is probably the most extensive and accurate corrections glossary available today and is useful for students and others working or writing about the field.

Locating a potential job is only the first part to becoming a professional in the corrections field. DiscoverCorrections.com provides information that will help a candidate to write an attention catching cover letter and prepare for an interview. In the *Tips for Getting the Job You Want* section there are suggestions to assist the applicant in presenting their best attributes and strengths during the recruitment process.

Finally, the website provides access to many sources of focused and useful information, in a speedy and efficient manner, by including a list of important web links.

POST YOUR JOB AND FIND YOUR JOB

The last major section of the DiscoverCorrections.com website, *Find Your Career*, is where employers can post job openings and job seekers can locate specific jobs in the field. Finding and retaining qualified employees is one of the toughest challenges facing community corrections today, and attracting a new generation of quality colleagues will assist with placing a face on the future of the profession. These potential new hires will bring fresh enthusiasm, new ideas, and a commitment to quality.

This section is divided into two parts — one for job seekers and one for employers. This will help agencies reach a broad audience of qualified job seekers. You can communicate important information about your agency and the specific requirements for the positions

you are seeking to fill. You can also search the resumes posted on the site by those seeking positions.

As an employer, DiscoverCorrections.com enables you to:

- Reach a local and national audience of informed, interested, and qualified candidates ready to apply for your position.
- Register your agency's profile and provide future candidates with detailed information about your organization
- Post your positions to the job board, **at no cost**.
- Search resumes of registered job seekers.

As a job seeker, simply log onto the website, search current jobs, set up an "alert" for job openings of interest to you, and if you choose, post your resume!

CONCLUSION

Successful employee recruitment is the first step in developing and maintaining the quality workforce we are seeking for community corrections agencies. Retaining them provides agencies with the capability and stability to continue to provide the most effective services possible in a dynamic work environment. DiscoverCorrections.com is a powerful resource to use in securing and maintaining the work force of the future, as well as educating the public about the corrections field! >>>

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DISCOVER CORRECTIONS

EXTRAORDINARY CHOICES. EXTRAORDINARY REWARDS.

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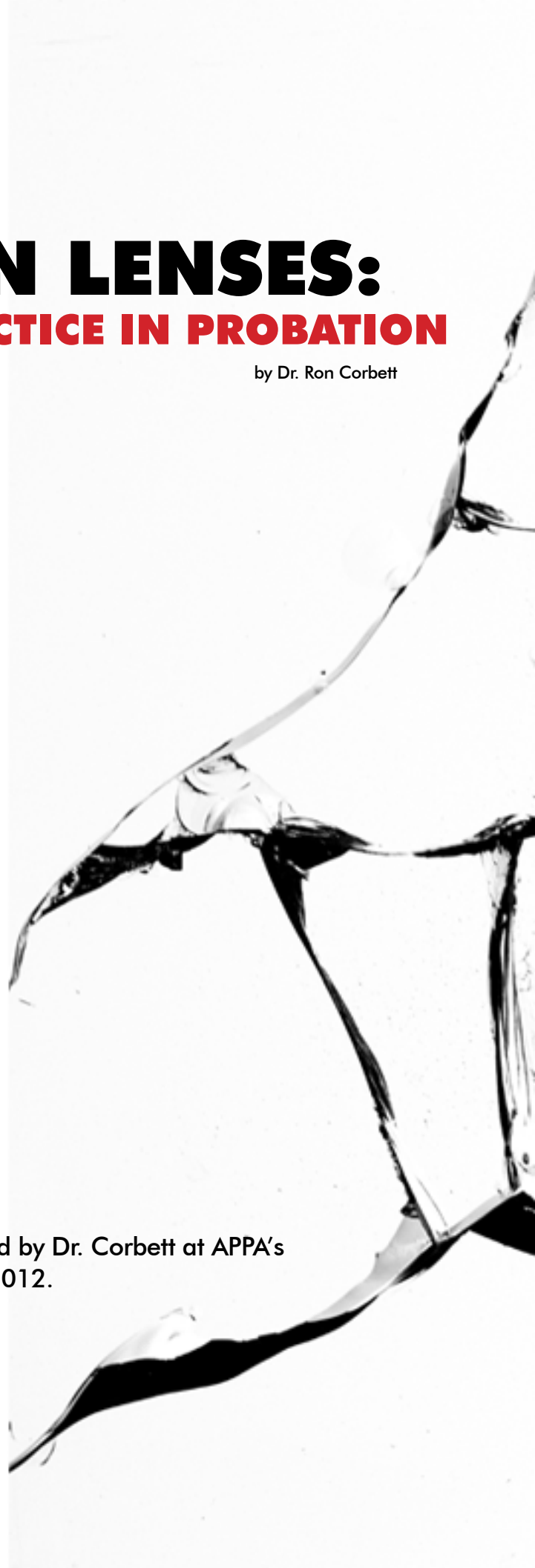
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FIXING BROKEN LENSES: **TOWARD HUMANISTIC PRACTICE IN PROBATION**

by Dr. Ron Corbett

EDITOR'S NOTE:

This article is based on the keynote address delivered by Dr. Corbett at APPA's 37th Annual Institute in Indianapolis on August 13, 2012.





In July of this year, an article appeared in the New York Times that did not concern corrections directly, but still reinforces profound lessons for all us in this field. Titled "Healing One Village at a Time" (Rosenberg, 2012), it reports on a study by the Global Mental Health Center at Columbia University. In response to a report by the World Health Organization documenting a severe epidemic of clinical depression in poor countries, a plan was developed to train qualified teams of health workers to conduct interventions with depressed adults. The trained workers did not materialize but the efforts went forward anyway, relying on volunteers who often did not have education beyond the secondary level. These lay therapists, so to speak, had a few weeks or sometimes a few days of training in such things as listening skills. The results were astonishing: Rates of depression in such countries as Uganda, Pakistan, and India were reduced by 75-90 percent. I will come back to this study a bit later.

I write not as any self-proclaimed expert but as a fellow traveler in community corrections, who began his career almost exactly 38 years ago and who has tried, along the way, as all of you have, to deepen his understanding of this noble profession we share and unwrap the secrets of interventions that can change lives. A quote from T.S. Eliot captures this journey which many of us find ourselves on. In his poem "Little Giddings", Eliot writes, "We shall not cease from exploration. And the end of all our exploring will be to arrive where we started and know the place for the first time" (Eliot, 1943, p. 39).

That exploration has taken me across several decades, each with its own dominant focus and reigning theory. The 1970s saw the preeminent goal of rehabilitation give way to the notion, captured in the famous and widely misunderstood study by Robert Martinson (1974), that Nothing Works. The 1980s saw the advent of Intensive Probation Supervision and other intermediate sanctions as a response to a crisis of confidence in traditional models. The 1990s saw a turn toward a more surveillance and enforcement-oriented approach, embodied in electronic monitoring and GPS and police-community corrections partnerships. And, finally, the 2000s turned our collective attention to Evidence Based Practices (EBP) and learning from research about what works and how that translates into best practices. Obviously these decades offered more than these single notes but those themes did serve as focal points.

**So much depends, I
learned, on fixing
broken lenses.**

I missed this last decade (let's call it the EBP Era) because I was otherwise engaged as a state court administrator, from 2000 to 2010. I returned to probation two years ago, like a latter day Rip Van Winkle, awakening to a new, wondrous and mysterious world. I began to immerse myself in the major research of the last ten years or so. Having been away for a while, I was unencumbered with the prejudice of settled views. I had shaken off the previous conventional wisdom. On monthly ride-alongs with probation officers (PO), I could observe their work with fresh eyes, not anymore the veteran observer but instead someone who was looking to learn anew. I came away changed in ways I did not anticipate. We all hope to grow and mature in our basic beliefs and professional convictions over time but these changes are most often incremental and not radical departures. In my case, I became a born again probation official. Echoing the poet T. S. Eliot, I felt I knew the place (probation) for the first time.

SNAPSHOTS FROM A CAREER

I will explain that journey I took, but not right away. First, an interlude, snapshots from my career, with lessons that add to the newspaper story I started with.

All POs have particular cases that always come back to them, often because they were an unexpected success, or a tragic failure or endlessly comical. Over the years, I kept recalling the case of Paul D., a case that fit none of those descriptions particularly. Paul was arrested for running a bike stealing syndicate with other 16 year olds. It was a very unremarkable case. Paul was required to attend school regularly and observe his mother's reasonable rules, which he mainly did not do. So I called him in and did what all POs do in such circumstances: I read him the riot act or started to. He had his head buried in his lap (he was the sad-sack type of probationer, not the bold and assertive type) so as I got into a full gallop on my high horse, I asked him to pick his head up and look at me. He did and I saw that one of the lenses in his glasses had a major crack on the diagonal, large enough so that it was clear that he could not see through that lens. I stopped in my tracks - something more important than my disappointment in him struck me all at once. Paul's mother barely got through the month financially and was constantly worrying about bills, which left her very short-tempered with Paul. She had no means to fix his glasses or get him a new pair. Paul was no doubt deeply embarrassed by the condition of his glasses. At the time, I worked for a wonderful Chief Probation Officer. He has an arrangement with the local bank, which sponsored a small emergency fund for needy cases. I excused myself from the office and went to see the Chief. He called the local bank and they agreed to cover the expenses of a new lens and recommended a local optician. I went back to the office and explained to Mrs. D. that if she had no objection, I was going to take Paul to get his glasses fixed and we could pick up the conversation later. Paul got his glasses fixed and things got slowly better with him. So why does this case stay with me? I think it is because it taught me a valuable lesson about falling back too easily and thoughtlessly on my authority and role instead of attending to the mundane but significant human drama that unfolds in front of us every day. So much depends, I learned, on fixing broken lenses.

CHANGING ROLES, BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS

In 2009, the leaders of a program we run in our agency entitled *Changing Lives through Literature* (CLTL) asked me to write a brief essay for their new website, reflecting on my experiences with the program. The program works this way: Probationers who have an appropriate reading level are assigned as part of their probation to a literature seminar where they read short pieces (plays, short stories, or novellas) focusing on themes related to justice, personal struggle and courage in difficult circumstances. The seminar is led by a local college-level English teacher and a judge and probation officer attend and participate in each session, as equals with the probationers. They all - officials and probationers alike - sit around a seminar table. The program began in 1991 and is thriving and growing to the present day. The University of Massachusetts recently completed a second major study and found greater declines in reoffending for the participants compared to a matched control group (Schutt, Deng, and Stoeher, 2012).

I told the leaders that I would focus on the role of the judge, not only in the *Changing Lives* program but in drug courts and otherwise. These are a few excerpts from what I wrote:

Dateline 1975 — Brookline Municipal Court, MA. Juvenile session in the late afternoon. Veteran street worker Dave Wizansky approaches a recently appointed probation officer. Ron, I think this new judge is really going to make a difference. He approaches the cases in a very different way. Did you notice how he always addressees the juvenile directly? That rarely happens. These kids are used to being talked about, or at, or around. They are not used to being talked to. And that is what Judge Shubow does.

Dateline 1995 — Henderson House, Weston, MA. A meeting of judges, probation officers and educators involved in or supporting the *Changing Lives Through Literature* program. Each participant is asked to offer a reflection on the program and its power. A probation administrator mentions how empowering it is for probationers to sit with judges and educators and get treated as equals at the discussion table.

Dateline, 2005 — University of Massachusetts, Lowell, MA. A graduate class in criminal justice. A judge and staff from Ayer District Court discuss the workings of their drug court. The probation officer coordinating the program suggests that the attention from the judge and the heart-to-heart communications that take place each week between judge and drug court participant account for much of the program's effectiveness.

Each of these vignettes strikes a common theme and illustrates a basic truth about the latent - and commonly overlooked - power of relationships in the administration of justice. In these examples, the relationship implicated is that between a judge and the judged.

Some traditionalists might say: What is this talk of relationships? Our judicial system requires that the judge distance himself/herself from individual defendants. This is a proceeding, not a relationship. Professionalism and objective decision-making rules out any sort of "relationship". And yet, something very much along those lines seems to be happening.

Could it be that judges themselves can be instruments of transformation? That their way of relating to - even more, *being with* - offenders can act, in the language of social science, as an independent variable, impacting outcomes for offenders under the court's supervision? In *Changing Lives through Literature*, does the substance of the reading material and the ability to master the assignment help? No doubt. But I am convinced that it is the collegiality and mutual respect shared around those seminar tables among faculty, judges, probation officers and probationers that is the key. It turns out that treatment matters - that is, it is how the probationer is treated that, again, seems to make the vital difference.

I think this is a profound lesson. Beyond the details of a sentence or the particulars of probation conditions and treatment requirements, there are - inescapably - relationships. Scores of interviews over the years with ex-probationers have taught me how discerning they are about how they were treated by judges, probation officers and treatment staff. Were they alive to these officials? Was attention paid to them and their individual circumstances? Would anyone remember their name? These were their worries.

For me, the magic of *Changing Lives through Literature* lies in the wholly unconventional relationship it establishes among court (and university) officials and offenders. The *Changing Lives through Literature* discussion table literally levels the playing field. The judge is looking across to, and not down at, the probationers. The judge and probation officer are listening to and valuing their views. It is a dialogue for which there is no time in our customary interactions.

THE POWER OF DIALOGUE

Martin Buber would be pleased. Buber, philosopher and educator in the first half of the twentieth century, taught at the University of Frankfurt and Hebrew University in Jerusalem. His preeminent work was an essay entitled *I and Thou* (1970), an examination of the way human beings encounter and engage with each other. In what Buber called *It* relationships, other people were objectified, treated as means to an end, communicated with, characteristically, in a monologue. Each group was blind to the other's essence. In *I and Thou* relationships, mutuality and receptivity to the other prevail; it is an encounter without prejudice, without gain or utility in mind. It is characterized by genuine dialogue. Perhaps veteran street worker Dave Wizansky had read Martin Buber.

How is it that the minimally trained lay counselors are so effective in Uganda and elsewhere? Those findings - and related findings on the effectiveness of therapy by highly trained professionals - all point in the same direction: patients respond to the fellow-feeling, the concern, and support they receive from another human being more than the particulars of any technique.

Back to my reading the recent research and the sea change in belief and perspective. Across a wide variety of leading studies - featuring such scholars as Don Andrews (Dowden and Andrews, 2004), Chris Lowenkamp (Lowenkamp, et al; forthcoming) and Jennifer Skeem (Skeem, et al; 2012), to name a few - it is clear that there is overwhelming support for what I would now call a return to an older, more traditional, and - here is the key word - **humanistic** approach to the work we do. I read the research of the last decade or so to say that the vital difference in succeeding with our cases - whether we are probation officers or judges is not **what we do** but **how we are** with those on our caseloads. Those qualities of empathy, caring, dignity, respect and fairness are not the means to an end but the end in themselves, not values in support of an intervention but the intervention itself. Before we have risk-needed, cognitively restructured and motivationally interviewed our probationers, it is first and foremost how we fill the space in our actual encounter with probationers that will be the life-changer.

Let me add to this research support in three ways. In May of 2012, a report on a multi-site evaluation of drug courts, sponsored by the National Institute of Justice, was released. Let me read you its key finding: The primary mechanism by which Drug Courts reduced substance and crime was through participants' perception of and attitudes toward the judge. (Rossman and Zweig, 2012, p. 4) Similarly, a long line of work by Tom Tyler (2006), formerly of NYU and now at the Yale Law School, finds that conformity with the orders of such public officials as judges and police officers is a

product not so much of the substance of the order itself but whether it was presented in a fair and respectful manner. Finally, a recent evaluation of the *Changing Lives* program by the University of Massachusetts found a greater reduction in reoffending for those in the program compared to a matched sample (Schutt, Deng and Stoehr, 2012).

How is it that the minimally trained lay counselors are so effective in Uganda and elsewhere? Those findings - and related findings on the effectiveness of therapy by highly trained professionals - all point in the same direction: patients respond to the fellow-feeling, the concern, and support they receive from another human being more than the particulars of any technique.

I do not mean to diminish the tools of our trade. We have learned a great deal from research about the instruments and programs and supervision practices that contribute to lowered recidivism. But we must not be in thrall to the mystique of technique. It is our capacity for humane and authentic encounter, for the just and fair exercise of our important authority that lays the foundation for all that follows. It is what explains the success of those lay counselors in Uganda, of the judges who give so much of themselves in problem-solving courts, of the probation officers whose sensitive interactions on the streets and in the homes of offenders preserve the dignity of each human being they deal with and thereby set the stage for positive change.

The good news about these findings is that we are resource-rich - if we want to be - in the most important resources available

to us. These essential human qualities are in potentially infinite supply and, paradoxically, replenish themselves - in ourselves and in others - as we use them.

Within two blocks of my office in Government Center, Boston, is a plaque commemorating the work of John Augustus, on the site of the old police court where he first appeared. It is a pleasure - and a matter of pride - for Massachusetts probation folks like myself to point out that plaque to visitors. Because it is on a main thoroughfare, I pass it on foot regularly. I can't help but think that if that bronze image of Augustus could speak, he would say to me, well, it took you a while but you did finally figure it out. >>>

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- DR. RON CORBETT** is the Commissioner of Massachusetts Probation.

A glowing keyhole is positioned in the upper left, emitting a bright yellow light. A dark, metallic key is inserted into the hole, its shaft extending diagonally across the frame towards the bottom right. The background is a warm, orange-brown gradient, creating a sense of depth and focus on the keyhole and key.

CHANGE IS POSSIBLE

By Margaret Barber

Ten years ago, the South Carolina Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) was under the shadow of a federal lawsuit, and had been since 1990. This led many to believe that DJJ would never find its way out of the federal oversight that accompanied it. The lawsuit had been filed over the unacceptable conditions of confinement in DJJ facilities and the agency had spent some 13 years under federal supervision. Many citizens in South Carolina came to believe that these conditions were endemic to juvenile justice in South Carolina and that there was no hope for improvement.

As a 40-plus year juvenile justice veteran, I am no stranger to juvenile justice in South Carolina. I began my career in 1968 as a juvenile probation officer—before DJJ, which I now direct, even existed. I have seen many ups and many downs since then, and countless good and bad ideas come and go. Every DJJ Director since this agency was created has worked in his or her own way to improve this agency and many had great successes in improving a system that is not very far removed from a time when industrial schools and reformatories were the norm in this state. Some changes, like desegregation of the state's juvenile justice system in 1969, did make things better. New treatment philosophies, organizational changes, and legislative mandates that came along between 1972 and 1989 certainly paved the way for a more rehabilitation-oriented juvenile justice system.

In 1981 the South Carolina General Assembly enacted the South Carolina Children's Code, embracing the key principle of maintaining children in the least restrictive environment, preferably their own homes. It would be another 22 years before the least restrictive principle was embodied in the DJJ mission statement. Many setbacks in need of reform existed during that time: budget cuts, public perceptions that juvenile offenders were becoming more predatory and violent, and tougher laws that put a lot of children behind the fence who didn't belong there—including children whose only "crimes" were status offenses like truancy, runaway and being ungovernable. Not surprisingly, DJJ facilities became increasingly crowded. More escapes and more incidents of serious assault/injury inevitably followed.

This situation culminated with the filing of a federal lawsuit by a private attorney and the Protection and Advocacy for People with Disabilities Agency on behalf of a group of incarcerated juveniles against the agency in 1990. The lawsuit hung as a pall over the agency for 13 years, obstructing forward progress and leaving many employees believing that it would never end. It was tempting for many in those days to say that we would never secure enough funding to end the lawsuit. Finding the right combination of leadership, programs and alternative sentencing options to end it proved difficult, even as a series of agency directors worked to innovate and change attitudes. Many naysayers said that DJJ would never gain political support to change the agency and the way we did business.

They were wrong. Change *is* possible.

THE DETERMINATION TO CHANGE

Long before I became Director of DJJ, there were efforts to reform our system and effect improvements in the juvenile justice system in South Carolina. New treatment philosophies led to more rehabilitative efforts. Alternative sentencing programs, such as Wilderness Camps and Juvenile Arbitration were established. Agency leaders opened more modern evaluation and detention centers and began closing down some of the department's most decrepit and dangerous facilities. In 2003, the work that would pave the way for a new era in the South Carolina juvenile justice system began.

William R. Byars, Jr. was appointed DJJ Director in 2003, beginning a new era of change at the agency. He was a former Family Court Judge in South Carolina and had seen many of our problems first-hand (though he was far enough outside the process to offer a fresh perspective). He spent his first months just asking questions and carefully learning the system. I would later join him as his Chief of Staff and succeed him as Agency Director in 2011.

As an agency, DJJ staff has begun in the past few years to pool the programs that we know work into a unified reform effort designed to:

- provide an array of sentencing alternatives to long-term incarceration,
- concentrate heavily on front-end prevention programs,
- provide intensive supervision to all juveniles on parole,
- improve and replace deteriorating physical structures, and
- revise our staff development strategies and governing policies.

Many aspects of this plan were bold. Implementing intensive supervision services meant reducing parole caseloads from an average of 73 to a maximum of 20 juveniles per officer, a strategy achieved only at a significant extra cost for DJJ. Convinced of the efficacy of intensive supervision and with generous legislative support, DJJ expanded its five-county, federally-funded pilot program to a statewide, state-funded program by 2007. The department now has officers who have the time to work proactively with all youth re-entering the community from DJJ beds (as well as some high risk probationers). These officers enroll youth in education and job readiness programs, make certain that counseling appointments are kept, facilitate the exploration of opportunities for employment, and actively supervise youths during evening and weekend hours, all in the effort to ensure that youth are not falling back into their old patterns of maladaptive behavior. In a study of the program, the recidivism rate of DJJ's intensively supervised juveniles was found to be 37.5 percent lower than a control group of similar youth who did not have the benefit of intensive supervision.

Other ideas were much simpler. Taking incarcerated children out of prison jumpsuits and putting them into normal adolescent clothing was a small thing, but it had a surprisingly powerful impact in our efforts to stop them from developing a prisoner mentality. There was an even more pronounced effect when this was combined with the agency's existing Juvenile Reserve Officers Training Corps (JROTC) program behind the fence. DJJ youth no longer looked like prisoners. Many could take pride in a military uniform they had earned.

And while juvenile crime has been dropping across the country since the mid-1990's, DJJ has achieved in the last ten years some remarkable and unique accomplishments as a result of the reforms the agency began in 2003. These accomplishments include:

- In 2003, DJJ was released from Federal supervision and the lawsuit that had hung over the agency for 13 years.
- The number of persons seeking assistance from South Carolina's juvenile justice system has declined 38 percent or an average of four percent per year since 2002-2003. Referrals to South Carolina's juvenile justice system for violent and serious offenses have declined 57 percent since the peak year of 1994-1995, when juvenile violent crime was escalating across the nation. Although these trends mirror observations around the country, their impact on South Carolina has been a reduction in probation caseloads and lower population levels in facilities.
- The population of youth incarcerated in DJJ's secure long-term correctional facilities (BRRC) has dropped by 71 percent since 2003.
- Escapes from long term DJJ correctional facilities have averaged one (1) per year since 1998. Seven of the fourteen years, including 2010-2011, were escape-free.
- DJJ's secure management unit had an average daily population of 13 in 2010-2011. This represents a 70 percent drop in the average daily population held in lockdown since 2005-2006.
- In school year 2011, 120 students in DJJ's School District received their GEDs. Seventy-eight percent of DJJ students taking the GED exam passed, which exceeded the state passing rate of 75 percent and the national passing rate of 73 percent.
- Average probation caseloads have dropped from 73 in 2007 to 39 in August 2011.
- DJJ had an average daily caseload of 4,293 youth under supervision in 2011. This compares to an average caseload of 5,693 youth under supervision in 2003, a reduction of 28 percent.
- An average of 1,200 youth were receiving intensive supervision statewide in fiscal year 2010-2011, compared to 100 in 2002-2003 under the original pilot program that was limited in scope to just five counties. Offenders receiving DJJ's intensive supervision services were 37.5 percent less likely to re-offend than those under standard supervision.²

These accomplishments would not have been possible without that range of programs that we put in place to pursue our larger goals or the DJJ staff who implemented and supervised them. We borrowed some of these programs from other juvenile justice agencies, others are modified versions of law enforcement programs, some are original to DJJ and many are hybrids of various effective programs created by staff who worked for years to find the best solutions to specific problems. They all give testimony to the fact that there are effective programs available and that they can work, even in an agency with a legacy of poor performance.

HOW WE CHANGED OUR APPROACH IN THE COMMUNITY

In the community, DJJ leadership prioritized prevention and early intervention efforts and the development of alternatives to incarceration for Family Court judges to help avoid the incarceration of status offenders and less serious offenders. Providing these alternatives was especially important to Director Byars and to me, as we were both painfully aware of the lack of sentencing options based on our first-hand experiences in the community and the Family Court. South Carolina desperately needed more options for offenders than a one-size-fits-all approach to sending all offenders behind the razor-wire of its long-term facilities.

To that end, agency staff first stepped up their support of the Juvenile Arbitration Program. Judicial Circuit Solicitors, who are district attorneys or prosecutors, are elected officials representing geographical districts, administering this restorative justice program, which operates through trained volunteer arbitrators. The solicitor's role is to prosecute cases. Juveniles who complete the Arbitration program, which includes restitution to victims and community service hours, avoid formal court processing and stigma of delinquency adjudication on their record. With a consistent 85 percent approval rating by victims and a strong history of positive outcomes for participants that were recently verified in an independent evaluation, we knew that Arbitration was an essential part of DJJ's plan to divert appropriate offenders from the deep end of the juvenile justice system. In 2007, DJJ community staff succeeded in bringing this program to all 16 court circuits in the state. In 2011, an evaluation of the Arbitration Program

outcome data showed that only 19 percent of juveniles that participated in the program re-offended.³

Through partnerships with Clemson University and community organizations, DJJ also began offering a number of other alternatives to placement in secure facilities for committed juvenile offenders. Many less serious offenders are now sent to programs at Clemson's Camp Long Youth Development Center and wilderness programs throughout the state. These efforts to divert lower risk offenders from secure correctional facilities, coupled with declining numbers of referrals to the juvenile justice system and better front end identification/ treatment of juveniles with mental health issues and addiction issues are the driving forces behind a dramatic 71 percent drop in the daily population of juveniles incarcerated in long-term secure facilities over the last nine years.

But we also knew that more diversion and sentencing options do not really get at the heart of the problem in the community. While these options gave solicitors and Family Court judges more appropriate choices for sentencing juveniles, DJJ ideally wanted to stop juveniles from ever coming into contact with the juvenile justice system. The cornerstones of the agency's primary prevention efforts are Teen After-School Centers (TASCs), job training programs in the community (including enhanced TASC-JRT job readiness programs), and adoption of the Gang Resistance Education and Training (G.R.E.A.T.) prevention program, all of which specifically target at risk youth.

As many juvenile justice professionals are no doubt aware, studies have shown that the peak time for violent juvenile crime

is in the after-school hours, specifically, 3-4 p.m. After that one hour period there is an hourly decline through 6 a.m. (by contrast adult violent crime peaks at 10 p.m.). The ideal preventive solution is to establish more teen after-school centers across the state to give children safe and supervised educational, recreational and job readiness training programs to attend during after-school hours. Our limited budget simply did not allow for us to establish these centers by ourselves. Undeterred, DJJ established community partnerships with local churches and community organizations. These partners provided key components of the program such as space for the activity, transportation and volunteer mentors. DJJ provided limited "seed" money to sustain the programs on a day-to-day basis. Using this partnership approach, DJJ was able to establish 24 TASC's across the state at relatively little cost to the taxpayer. In an independent study of the effectiveness of the program, we found that 90 percent of youth served by TASC did not re-offend while participating in the program, and 86.8 percent of youth served by TASC were not suspended from school. Over one-third of youth did exhibit the desired change in school performance and 31.8 percent reduced the number of unexcused school absences, according to the study conducted by the South Carolina Department of Education.⁴

The DJJ has also been working with community partners to provide more job readiness training for youth, as part of a very recent push to emphasize employability training. The agency has a job-training program in Kershaw County to provide at-risk youth with training and paid internships at local businesses. And we've just begun an expansion of the TASC program, called

TASC-Job Readiness for Teens (TASC-JRT), to provide additional funding to existing TASC programs to supplement their existing educational and recreational programs with job readiness training.

Another of the agency's most recent efforts has focused on gang prevention. As in many states, South Carolina has a serious gang problem. Our own survey of juvenile justice involved youth revealed that those reporting gang affiliations had been recruited at an average age of 13 years. Just last year, South Carolina became one of the first states in the country to certify a statewide group of probation officers to go into local elementary and middle schools throughout the state to teach the Gang Resistance Education and Training program.

When juveniles do come into the system, a great number end up on probation and parole in the community. One of DJJ's greatest problems has been overloaded probation and parole caseloads. As recently as 2007 the average supervision caseload of a DJJ probation or parole officer was 73 juveniles. With that kind of caseload, it was obviously difficult for officers to provide even basic supervision, much less the kind of individual attention many of these children desperately need. To address this need, we decided that we needed to secure additional funding. With the generous support of the South Carolina General Assembly, the agency was able to establish Intensive Supervision services for DJJ juveniles on parole, other youth leaving agency beds to re-enter the community and most recently, probationers who present a high risk profile.

A defining aspect of Intensive Supervision services is a maximum individual caseload

of 20 juveniles. This greatly reduced caseload allows for more individualized supervision of the juveniles. And these new Intensive Supervision Officers (ISO) are not just performing traditional supervision. For committed youth, the first step is a comprehensive reentry planning process that begins as soon as the juvenile enters a DJJ facility. When youth are released to the community, and when a high risk youth receives a disposition of probation, ISOs are expected to take them on job interviews, help them deal with family issues, maintain them in safe housing, assist them with educational goals, ensure that counseling appointments are kept and generally facilitate anything related to a successful outcome. Supervision after normal business hours and on weekends comes with the territory as ISOs also are responsible for helping to keep communities safe.

DJJ's Intensive Supervision service has been one of the agency's most successful community efforts. Our studies have shown that youth re-entering the community under Intensive Supervision are 37 percent less likely to reoffend than youth under our traditional parole system, based on information collected from case closure documents. Needless to say, this has contributed greatly to the drop in juveniles returning to the juvenile justice system, or entering the adult correctional system in the state.

In the community, DJJ has also emphasized an increased focus on victims. The agency now communicates closely with crime victims and regularly surveys their satisfaction with our performance. DJJ not only provides the standard victim notification services and assistance with victim restitution

that is common in juvenile justice, but we also have innovative programs such as our Victim Offender Dialogues, offering crime victims a chance to confront their offenders in a face-to-face meeting as a means of gaining closure.

Change has been possible not only in the community, but also "Behind the Fence" in our facilities as well.

BEHIND THE FENCE

As part of the reform efforts at DJJ, we have also been making great strides in improving conditions in our secure facilities. These efforts have focused not just on physical improvements in these facilities, but also improvements in agency procedures, programs and opportunities for incarcerated youth.

In the last several years, the agency has constructed four state-of-the-art dormitories for juveniles, allowing us to demolish many of DJJ's dilapidated facilities that dated from the 1960's. These new dormitories now provide juveniles with individual living spaces (as opposed to the shared dorm-room style housing in our old dormitories). They also provide added security and give security staff the ability to deal with smaller groups of youths in any given living "pod."

DJJ has also greatly improved family visitation facilities in the agency's long-term incarceration complex with the addition of the Bill Rogers Community Connections Center, a multi-purpose 10,500 square foot facility built entirely with private donations through our non-profit, "Friends of Juvenile Justice" (an organization that collaborates with individuals and agencies within the public

and private sectors to provide resources and care to at-risk youth inside and outside of DJJ). Families now have the opportunity to visit with juveniles in spacious, secure, well-lit private areas. Additional security measures in this facility have also greatly cut down on contraband smuggling. And the improved environment has led to a 100 percent increase in visitation for youth in long-term custody.

But the physical improvements are only a small part of the story of reform efforts “behind the fence.” One of the areas in which DJJ has made incredible strides the last few years is in our Birchwood School.

We have seen a drastic jump in graduation rates in recent years at Birchwood School, which provides education for incarcerated youth in long term facilities. With incoming students often performing substantially below grade level for their age, and with returning students often facing obstructions to reenrollment in their home schools, DJJ decided to focus efforts on helping incarcerated students obtain their General Equivalency Diploma (GED) during their stay with the agency. After securing a waiver from the South Carolina General Assembly to allow students as young as 16 to take the GED test at DJJ, we placed an emphasis on helping students to attain the GED credential in an environment where there is no option to drop out of school. The resulting graduation rate at Birchwood School has increased from a negligible number of 54 in 2001, to 116 in 2012 (even as the incarcerated population was declining drastically). While the DJJ School District as a whole posted a GED passing rate of 78 percent (surpassing the state and national rate in 2010-2011), the Birchwood School

serving DJJ’s long-term facilities led the way with a passing rate of 92 percent.⁵

DJJ’s educational efforts are not only geared towards helping students obtain their GED, but also toward job-readiness training and employability skills. Birchwood School has numerous vocational training programs for students. Even during after-school hours, staff and volunteers take every opportunity to provide students with job readiness and vocational training. Most recently, we began building *Habitat for Humanity* houses behind the fence at our main facility, with volunteers and staff working with our youths to teach them construction skills. The first of these houses was recently completed and was lifted over our fence thanks to the generous assistance of a local crane company and a local house moving company, who donated their services to help move “The House That DJJ Built” to its permanent site, where DJJ youth in the community finished the house. In all my years as a juvenile justice practitioner and administrator, I have never seen a project achieve more in the way of galvanizing staff, youth and volunteers to achieve a common purpose. Our youths behind the razor wire are clamoring to begin another *Habitat* house.

Our efforts to improve conditions at DJJ’s secure facilities not only involved efforts aimed at agency juveniles, but also involved security and treatment staff. DJJ now provides a Career Ladder program for our correctional officers, which rewards our most promising young officers with a clear path for raises and promotions, greatly improving morale and improving the retention of seasoned employees. The agency has seen its security staff turnover rate drop to 17 percent for fiscal year 2011-2012 compared to 32

percent the previous year. This was made possible in part by efforts to consolidate security staff across all our secure facilities, standardizing their training and allowing correctional officers to advance across all facilities, statewide.

Improving conditions for our staff has not only improved retention rates by six percentage point over the past five years in the agency, it has also allowed us to hold this more experienced and professional staff to a higher performance standard. To help with this, DJJ has adopted the nationally-recognized Performance-Based Standards (PbS)⁶ approach to continuous improvement

in all our facilities. These standards track staff performance by institution in an ongoing fashion and ensure that living and working conditions at our facilities remain consistent throughout the agency. DJJ has won multiple PbS awards for excellence, including a Barbara Allen-Hagen Award in 2010 for our Coastal Evaluation Center. In the important PbS measure of “Incidents of youth misconduct that resulted in injury, confinement, and/or restraint per 100 days of youth confinement,” DJJ’s facilities continue to rank below the national average in PbS evaluations based on data that compares the agency to other juvenile justice systems.⁷



PbS standards are just part of a larger effort of accountability and transparency at DJJ. Since 2003, the agency has published an annual agency “Report Card” (www.state.sc.us/djj) with detailed data on performance metrics within the agency. This simple report not only highlights areas of improvement, but also highlights areas of weakness that remind us that we should always be working to improve. Change remains an ongoing process at DJJ.

One specific area of improvement in DJJ’s secure facilities worth highlighting is in the area of juvenile lockups. A significant part of the practices that prompted the 13-year federal lawsuit was the appalling number of juveniles held in secure lockup and solitary confinement within the agency. We are proud to report that, as part of our recent reforms, DJJ has seen a 70 percent drop of youths held in lockdown since 2005-2006. The agency has even recently closed one of our two lockdown facilities, as lockdown is now so rare at the agency that this facility was no longer needed. At the close of 2011, DJJ had just 12 juveniles in our secure management unit, one of our lowest numbers ever.

Like many other juvenile justice agencies in the U.S., DJJ has seen a steady decline in the average daily population of youth in long term correctional facilities in recent years. For DJJ, being a consolidated, stand-alone juvenile justice agency proved to be an advantage in efforts to reduce our long-term population. The fact that we were able to transfer resources in the form of clinical staff to the community side where they were sorely needed to bolster front end services saved jobs that might otherwise have been lost as the institutional population continued to drop and secure living units were closed.

Change is happening at DJJ. But this doesn’t have to be limited to us. We have been fortunate to have tremendous support from other key actors in the state.

LEGISLATIVE AND OTHER INITIATIVES

The DJJ has worked diligently with the South Carolina General Assembly, other state agencies and partners within the juvenile justice system to garner support for its reform efforts. Highlights of these efforts include:

- DJJ worked with the state Department of Education to make truancy an education system issue rather than juvenile justice system issue by changing regulations on required planning efforts by the school district before action was taken in Family Court. This resulted in a substantial drop in truancy cases after FY 2002-2003 when cases reached an all time high of nearly 2,300 compared to slightly more than 500 cases today. ⁸
- DJJ introduced a commitment order to the Family Court judges for their voluntary usage that changed a child’s legal status from commitment to probation if DJJ placed the child in an alternative setting rather than a secure correctional facility after an initial period of assessment. This gave the agency more flexibility in placing children, in funding streams and in length of stay in agency beds.

- DJJ supported legislation that was enacted, setting the caseload for its intensive supervision officers at a maximum of 20 and providing the agency with the authority to determine the target population for intensive supervision services. Both of these provisions are keys in maintaining the integrity of the intensive supervision model.
- DJJ supported legislation that was passed, to allow good time credit to shorten sentences for certain types of committed offenders.
- DJJ supported legislation that was enacted, giving credit for pre-dispositional secure confinement days (in detention and evaluation centers) against the sentence handed down at final disposition, a provision which adult offenders in the state already enjoyed.
- DJJ introduced and saw renewed a Legislative Proviso to allow probationers to earn ten days off their sentences per month if their behavior has demonstrated compliance with the conditions of probation. "Earned Compliance Credit" introduced an incentive based system that is in line with evidence based approaches to juvenile and adult supervision. The Proviso is expected to be codified into law this year.
- DJJ was also able to establish, through legislative efforts, its own Release Authority for releasing lower-level offenders. This allowed the agency to streamline the release process for many incarcerated juveniles.

The net impact of these changes has been to reduce front-end referrals for the status offense of truancy, reduce populations in commitment programs by shortening length of stay and reduce probation caseloads by shortening the amount of time that a youth spends under supervision. In 2011, 3,940 juvenile probationers earned a total of 167,340 credit days off their sentence for good behavior.⁹

CHANGE IS POSSIBLE FOR ALL OF US

As I look back at a career spanning over 40 years in the South Carolina juvenile justice system, I am most proud of the last few years here at DJJ. I am fortunate to have been one of the many leaders of a reform effort that I and many of my colleagues once would have thought impossible. We were in a sense blessed by an unstable state and national economy that forced us to think outside the box and develop lasting, effective partnerships to support the change process. We were the beneficiaries of legislative and gubernatorial support and the innovation and dedication of many agency directors and staff over several decades. Paraphrasing Sir Issac Newton's famous quote, if I have accomplished anything, it's because I stand on the shoulders of the giants who have preceded me and the all-too-often unrecognized staffers who make the gears turn at DJJ. And we all share the pride of what this agency has accomplished in recent years.

DJJ's leadership started the agency on the path to reform by first observing how the juvenile justice system works. We then enlisted leaders from within the ranks to carry out a new vision for the future, thereby reducing the fear element that so often accompanies and impedes innovation. Many leaders stood up and served as change agents. Out of necessity we started with our "deep end" programs in order to rectify substandard conditions in facilities that had been identified as lawsuit issues. We soon came to realize the importance of intensive supervision for high risk youth reentering the community and worked tirelessly to make these services accessible on a statewide basis. On the primary prevention side, we developed Teen After-School Centers to offer safe haven in the community for at risk youth. We even partnered

with a non-profit fund-raising and advocacy organization dedicated specifically to juvenile justice reform in South Carolina.

As agency director, I came into this position with a community perspective that has since evolved into a “one agency” focus of unity and shared resources to improve the outcomes of our youth wherever their lives intersect with the juvenile justice system. Like my predecessors, I have focused on maintaining the momentum for reform as we seek to provide evidence-based programming across the entire juvenile justice continuum. A source of great inspiration to our staff, youth, partners, volunteers and private citizens has been the *Habitat for Humanity* project which embodies the principles of restorative justice. I have never before experienced the sense of unity and wonder that I felt when we lifted the house over the razor wire for its journey home.

The results of juvenile justice reform in South Carolina are conclusive and compelling. We figured out what works and we instituted the necessary changes to make it happen. Along the way there were plenty of naysayers insisting that the agency would never change. There are always naysayers. It’s easy to conjure up any number of excuses as to why things will always be the same. “We don’t have the funding.” “We don’t have political support.” “Nobody really cares about making things better for kids who commit crimes.” “We have an endemic, immovable culture of obstruction here that resists change.” I’m sure that many readers have heard and experienced variations of these excuses.

But I can tell you from personal experience, as someone who has spent a very long time in a juvenile justice system that was once one of the worst in the nation, that

change is always possible. Funding, political support, centralized authority, all these things are helpful. But the will of juvenile justice staff to say “We are going to change. We are going to improve,” is far more important than any of these. Just the belief that change is possible is the necessary predicate for everything else. If you don’t have that, you’ve created a self-fulfilling prophecy of failure, where positive change will never be achieved. But if you start with the belief that change is possible, you have taken the most important step in your journey.

We have improved in South Carolina. We can all improve. Change is possible. And that’s true for our troubled juveniles. It’s true for our communities. It’s true for our staff. It’s true for our juvenile justice systems and agencies.

Change is possible for those who have the courage to innovate. Go make it happen. >>>

ENDNOTES

¹ SCDJJ Report Card, 2011, 8.

² SCDJJ 2011 Report Card, 8.

³ Evaluated by System Wide Solutions, Inc. (September 14, 2011).

⁴ South Carolina Department of Education Study, 2005-2006.

⁵ South Carolina Department of Education.

⁶ <http://pbstandards.org//default.aspx>.

⁷ <http://#pbstandards.org//default.aspx>.

⁸ SCDJJ 2011-2012 Annual Statistical Report, P14, (www.state.sc.us/djj).

⁹ SCDJJ Statistical Data (Office of Planning and Programs).

MARGARET BARBER has worked with the South Carolina juvenile justice system for over 40 years, moving from probation officer in 1968 to County Director in her native York County from 1982-1999, to a position as Piedmont Regional Administrator, and later to DJJ Chief of Staff. In 2011 she was appointed as Agency Director by South Carolina Governor Nikki R. Haley.

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