# The Potential of Community Corrections to Improve Safety and Reduce Incarceration

# THINK FLORIDA

A Word From *Carmen*

**CARMEN RODRIGUEZ**
President
American Probation and Parole Association

Since its beginning in 1975, the American Probation and Parole Association has come to be viewed as a respected voice for the field of community corrections. This is evidenced, in part, by the fact that the APPA leadership and staff are often invited to participate in myriad policy and practice discussions on local, state and national levels; and staff, along with a cadre of subject matter experts, continue to produce hundreds of state of the art publications and training programs that focus on critical issues of the field and provide direction on what the field needs to address to be moving toward.

Within the administrative offices at APPA, we have kept up with the ever evolving research and technology which has allowed us to advance our ways of communicating with our constituents through the use of e-publications, webinars, virtual meetings, online training programs, several topical websites and the use of social media. The leadership of APPA will continue to work with APPA staff so we can adhere to the mission of the association which is to serve, challenge and empower our members and constituents by educating, communicating and training; advocating and influencing; acting as a resource and conduit for information, ideas and support; developing standards and models and collaborating with other disciplines.

On an individual level, as community corrections professionals, each of us is privileged to be able to make a difference in our communities and with those we supervise

and assist every day.  APPA continually demonstrates, through training and by example, values that our clientele need and each of us need as leaders.  As always, your goal is to provide the best service to those involved with the justice system and continue to enhance the safety of our communities.  You are the Force for Positive Change.

Development of future leaders for the field is an important goal for APPA.  We have over the past several years focused resources and efforts toward the development of emerging leaders in the field.  For example, over 90 prospective leaders have received training through the APPA Leadership Institute.  As a result, many of the graduates of this program have gone on to assume various leadership positions with APPA, within their own agencies, and in new employment opportunities.  APPA also recently worked with the National Institute of Corrections through a grant project to create a new curriculum for the NIC Probation and Parole Executive Orientation session.  Through this curriculum, APPA helped shape the training NIC provides to new chief executives to assist them in gaining both the immediate knowledge and the long-term skills needed in the areas of leadership, personnel, strategic planning, staff safety, collaboration, fiscal resources and other organizational development issues.

Our leadership role in community corrections is also expanding internationally.  APPA, in partnership with the International Community Corrections Association (ICCA), is co-hosting the 2nd World Congress on Community Corrections in Los Angeles on July 14-16, 2015.  This event promises a vibrant program featuring presentations from top professionals throughout the world who work in this field to deepen participants' understanding of developments in community corrections globally.  All areas of community corrections will be focused on including adult and juvenile, probation, parole and pretrial services, residential facilities and halfway houses, specialty courts and community initiatives.

In recent years, APPA has made great strides, through our Training Institutes and our work with all levels of government, in spreading valuable information on trauma informed care.  This has been one of my primary platforms during my term as president of the association and we will continue our efforts related to this important topic.

APPA's values of leadership, civic engagement and service to others will be on display as we celebrate another milestone in our history—our 40th Annual Training Institute in Los Angeles, July 12-15, 2015.  To those of you who have been with us as we have journeyed to this point over the past 40 years, I want to express my appreciation for all you've done to help the association get to where it is today and your efforts in helping keep our communities safe. For those of you who are new to APPA, I urge you to

become involved with us and take advantage of all the rewards membership in APPA can offer you including, but not limited to, opportunities for public service, professional development, social networking and leadership education.

I wish you all a healthy and happy holiday season and I look forward to our work together to make 2015 a memorable year in APPA's history! ▷▷▲

*Carmen Rodriguez*

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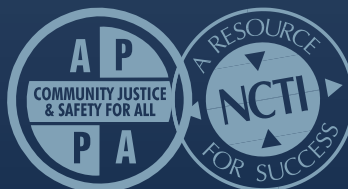


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# editor's notes

**W**elcome to the Fall issue of *Perspectives*, the final issue for this year. Once again, we have an issue that is full of interesting and wide-ranging articles that address many of the critical issues facing our field.

In our cover article, Shames, Subramanian and McGarry of the Vera Institute of Justice provide a valuable review of the status and future of community corrections. They start with a brief review of our history, explore recent developments and improvements and most importantly, identify six significant recommendations for the field. These recommendations are the foundation for building an effective agency and for successfully implementing evidence-based and best practices.

In their article on employee screening and selection, Tatman, Kreamer and Dix explore a much neglected aspect of community corrections: ensuring that we hire the right people for the job! As Jim Collins wrote in his best-selling book, Good to Great, we need to "get the right people on the bus" if we are going to build effective organizations. Tatman and his colleagues describe a systematic process that requires an upfront investment, but improves outcomes significantly.

In the decade and more that we have been talking about and working on offender reentry, many jurisdictions have struggled mightily to design, build and implement collaborative reentry programs. In his case study of the Wyoming offender reentry efforts, Stroker provides a powerful review of the inner workings of successful implementation. This is one area where our field has lagged behind. We have an enormous body of research providing comprehensive models for offender supervision. Where we too often fall short is the effective implementation of

**WILLIAM D. BURRELL**
Editorial Chair for *Perspectives*
American Probation and Parole Association

these models. Reentry doesn't just happen, it takes a great deal of hard work to develop cross-agency collaboration, implement evidence-based practices and institutionalize a new culture. The review of the work in Wyoming shows how one jurisdiction made the process work.

As you may already know, the Second World Congress on Community Corrections will be held in Los Angeles in July of 2015, immediately following the APPA 40th Annual Training Institute. As a lead up to the Congress, we are featuring an article about the United Nations Rules for the Treatment of Women Prisoners and Non-Custodial Measures for Women Offenders. The article describes implementation of these rules in Thailand. Additionally, our International Update focuses on the Kenya Probation and Aftercare Services, whose director was the winner of the 2014 Community Corrections Award from the International Corrections and Prisons Association.

We are pleased to mark the return of the regular update from the National Institute of Justice (NIJ). In this issue, we get an update on the NIJ-funded work on one of the most talked about programs in our field in the last decade, the HOPE project from Hawaii. While the data from HOPE is significant and compelling, many practitioners, judges and policy-makers remain skeptical about the "transportability" of HOPE. In other words, can it work as effectively in other jurisdictions? The work of NIJ, in collaboration with the Bureau of Justice Assistance, will help to answer these lingering questions and help us address the chronic challenge of dealing effectively, efficiently and intelligently with offender non-compliance.

I will depart from my usual practice of highlighting the remainder of the content of this issue and use the rest of this Note to let you know that with this issue, I am stepping down as Editor and Chair of the Editorial Committee for Perspectives. My tenure began with Volume 25, number 1 in 2001 and will end with Volume 39, number 4, for a total

of 57 issues (56 regular issues and one special issue). It has been a good long run, and I want to take the opportunity to recognize and thank the people who have helped me along the way.

First, thanks to Ray Wahl, who as President, appointed me to the Editorial Committee in 2000 as co-chair with then editor, Ron Corbett.  When Ron left due to a career change, Ray appointed me Chair. To all of Ray's successors as President of APPA, thank you for allowing me to continue to serve in this role.

Production of this journal is a process that is largely invisible to you, the readers. With the assistance of the Editorial Committee, I select the articles and send them to the APPA staff. Miraculously, a polished and professional journal appears in relatively short order. I must recognize the efforts of two APPA staff in particular. First is Karen Blackwell Mucci, the production coordinator. In addition to her other duties at APPA (no one wears just one hat!), Karen coordinates the myriad details and processes of assembling the journal. And she does it with such grace and poise, it astounds me. Karen's predecessor in this role, Susan Meeks, was enormously helpful and patient with me as I assumed the editorship.

The second person I need to acknowledge is John Higgins, graphic artist extraordinaire! John is the person responsible for the layout and graphics

of Perspectives, its "look" and feel. One of the pleasures of being Editor is seeing what John comes up with for the cover of each issue. His imagination and creativity continue to amaze and delight me. Many of you may know John as the voice of the APPA Institute Exhibit Halls, calling out the winning names for the prizes.

I realize that by highlighting Karen and John, I run the risk of not recognizing the others at APPA who contribute mightily to the production of Perspectives. These include Carl Wicklund,. Executive Director, Diane Kincaid, Deputy Director and Lynda Wilkerson, Administrative Assistant.

The APPA staff, under Carl's leadership, performed in extraordinary fashion when we transitioned to the electronic publication platform. This was something that was essentially forced on the Association due to financial constraints. In relatively short order, the staff created the electronic platform and migrated the journal over, seamlessly and with no visible glitches. I must salute everyone involved with that transition.

The content of the journal benefits greatly from the members of the Editorial Committee, who review and comment on the submissions. This input is invaluable and I want to thank all of the members, past and present for their time and assistance.

I also want to thank the regular contributors of our Updates, which connect the readers to the work of the Association's committees, and also Don Evans, our ever-reliable book reviewer.

Most importantly, I thank the hundreds of authors who have written for Perspectives. The authors are practitioners at all levels, researchers, academics and policy experts. Without their interest in our field and willingness to write for us, we would not have been able to produce this journal.

I am passing the editorial torch to Faye Taxman and Brian Lovins as Editorial Committee chair and co-chair respectively. Faye, a professor at George Mason University, is a longstanding member of the Editorial Committee and a frequent contributor as well. Brian, of the Harris County (TX) Community Supervision and Corrections Department, is a newcomer to the Committee, but is well known to the field through his work with the University of Cincinnati's Corrections Institute. I look forward to their leadership of this journal.

During my tenure, we have tried to focus on and emphasize a number of themes. We wanted to feature things that were evidence-based, supported by data, innovative and most importantly, capable of being implemented in the real world. I hope we have succeeded.

It has been my privilege to serve as editor of *Perspectives* for the past 14 years. I have enjoyed it immensely and have grown and developed personally and professionally through the contacts I have made and the relationships I have formed. It has been one of the highlights of my career and for that I am deeply grateful. ▷▷▲
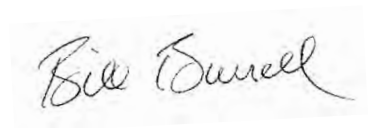
*Bill Burrell*

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## INSTRUCTIONS TO AUTHORS

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

Spring 2015 Issue: December 19, 2014
Summer 2015 Issue: February 17, 2015
Fall 2015 Issue: May 21, 2015
Winter 2016 Issue:  August 23, 2015

Unless previously discussed with the editors, submissions should not exceed 12 typed pages, numbered consecutively and double-spaced. All charts, graphs, tables and photographs must be of reproduction quality. Optional titles may be submitted and selected after review with the editors.

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

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

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

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

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

# vision

where community partnerships are restoring hope by embracing a balance of prevention, intervention and advocacy.

## We seek to create a system of Community Justice where:

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

Primary prevention initiatives are cultivated through our leadership and guidance;

Our communities are empowered to own and participate in solutions;

Results are measured and direct our service delivery;

Dignity and respect describe how each person is treated;

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

Partnerships with stakeholders lead to shared ownership of our vision.

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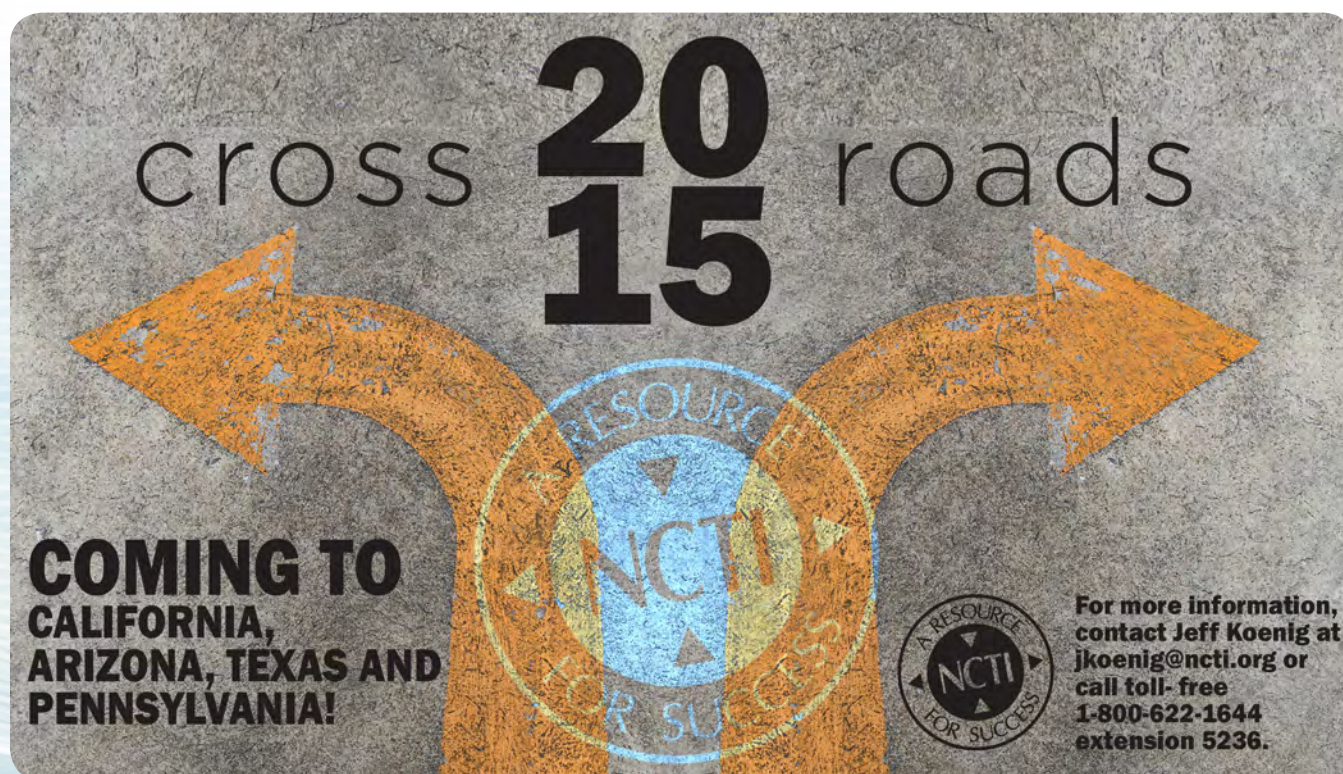
# APPA SPECIALIZED TRAINING SPOTLIGHT

## NATURAL RESPONSE CONTROL TACTICS™

There are many good defensive tactics programs available today; however, many of the programs are designed for police and do not take into consideration the diverse make-up and unique role of parole, probation and community corrections staff. This program examines the realities of how parole, probation, and community corrections officers are most likely confronted, both in the office and in the field. It then provides tactics that officers can apply in these situations that will increase their ability to successfully avoid or control these situations. During this dynamic training program, officers will learn how to employ control tactics in a manner that will minimize the risk of injury to both the officer and the aggressor.

Participants will learn control techniques that are effective and appropriate at all levels of the use of force continuum. These techniques are based upon the Natural Response Control Tactics (N.R.C.T.) System™, which was specifically designed for parole, probation, and community corrections personnel. The techniques are designed to be quickly learned, easily applied and retained, and can be effectively applied by officers of varying size, strength, experience and age, irrespective of gender.

The techniques are designed to add more tools to their toolbox, and provide them with techniques that, under stress, in a crisis, are easily retained and effectively applied. Techniques taught include:

- Body mechanics and movement
- Defending against blows
- Distance and movement
- Arm and leg strikes
- Relative positioning
- Control techniques

- Assailant repositioning techniques
- Ground defense and recovery
- Escape from grabs
- Team tactics
- Edged-weapon defense
- Defense against firearms

Once officers participate in the above skills training, they are given the opportunity to apply their skills in simulation exercises during which they will need to determine the assailant threat level and respond with an appropriate control response. This allows participants to not only learn the skills, but to apply them under stress, in a realistic but controlled environment. This technique increases skill retention and enhances the officer's confidence in their ability to handle various types of physical threats. It also helps to assure the agency that officers respond appropriately to a threat, accurately recognizing and responding to the threat, while not overreacting.

# technology update — by Joe Russo



## THE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS: AN APPA ISSUE PAPER

During the 2014 APPA Annual Training Institute in New Orleans, the Board of Directors approved a new issue paper submitted by the Technology Committee which addresses the use of social media in community corrections. This topic was tackled at the suggestion of APPA's Executive Committee which recognized the need to provide the field with guidance and information about the impact of social media and how monitoring client activity on social media sites can support investigation and supervision functions. This Technology Update will provide a brief summary of some of the issues covered in the Issue Paper. Those readers interested in the full paper can view it online at:  http://www.appa-net.org/eweb/docs/APPA/stances/ip_USMCC.pdf.

## WHAT IS SOCIAL MEDIA?

Social media can be defined as forms of electronic communication through which users create online communities to share information, ideas, messages and content (to include videos and images). Common social media sites include Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Pinterest, Google+, Tumblr and Instagram.

## WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Like it or not, social media plays an important and growing role in people's lives, particularly among younger demographics. According to the Pew Internet Research Project, 74 percent of all online adults use social networking sites. This figure grows to 90 percent for those between the ages of 18 and 29. While there are no statistics readily available one would assume that persons under supervision use social media at similar rates. Because more of a client's activities now involve social media or an online profile, supervising officers and agencies need to move beyond the brick and mortar world and include the social media sphere as part of their standard investigative and supervision activities.

## WHAT ARE THE APPLICATIONS OF SOCIAL MEDIA MONITORING?

Agencies may examine a client's social media activity to assist in the preparation of a pre-trial/pre-sentence investigation report. Information gathered may provide the court with a better portrait of the client, one not otherwise readily available.

For example, social media activity can reveal evidence of substance abuse, gang affiliation or provide an indication of hidden assets, all of which might be important to the court.

For those persons already under supervision, investigations of client profiles can also detect evidence of both technical and new law violations. Examples of violations officers have discovered while reviewing clients' activity include unauthorized use of the Internet, inappropriate criminal associations, substance abuse, unauthorized leave and ongoing criminal behavior.

Monitoring social media has also been extremely helpful for locating absconders from probation or parole supervision. Absconders often maintain their social media activity even while seeking to elude authorities and the contacts, status updates and pictures they post (and associated geo-location data) are invaluable clues to apprehension.

Monitoring social media activity can also yield significant officer safety benefits. For example, clients may post information about the weapons they have access to; the fact that they are trained in hand-to-hand combat; that they have animals in the home or have violent associates and/or use drugs. Some clients comment about or post threats about officers. Social networking sites, such as Twitter, may give officers an overall understanding of the community, particularly after a

recent significant news event. Some larger supervision agencies may consider using social media monitoring tools, which gather data and provide information on trends in a particular area.

## HOW MONITORING IS ACCOMPLISHED

A policy guide developed by the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) with the support of the Global Justice Information Sharing Initiative Advisory Committee (GAC) and the Criminal Intelligence Coordinating Council (CICC)[1] notes three methods of accessing social networking sites by law enforcement: *Apparent/ Overt Use, Discrete Use* and *Covert Use*. Each method has a different level of intrusiveness.

## APPARENT/OVERT USE

Apparent/Overt Use involves accessing of social networking sites without any interaction with the client. Access is limited to information in the open or "public" areas of social media sites. For instance, depending on the user's privacy settings on any given social media site, an officer could view a client's entire profile, friends, photos and/or posts. However, access would not include information contained in the client's social networking site email messages or to data behind a restricted area set by the client. This method has a low level of intrusiveness as the information accessed is in public areas.

## DISCRETE USE

Discrete Use involves techniques concealing the officer's identity but no online interaction with the client. It differs from Apparent/Overt Use in that anonymous tools, such as proxy servers or websites, or a fictitious identity, are used. In some cases, a fictitious identity is created to allow the user to access public areas of social networking sites without disclosing who they are to other members of the site. For instance, one might create a fictitious identity to access the public areas of an adult-oriented dating site to determine if a client charged with a sex crime has created a profile on the site. In this case, the fictitious identity is created not for interaction with the target but to view public areas. If the user created a truthful identity they would be revealing themselves to all other members, something the user likely would not want to occur.

## COVERT USE

The most intrusive method is Covert Use and this requires special training, equipment and specific authorization. This method involves concealing the officer's identity and requires online interaction with the client to gain information and/ or evidence of a violation. It may also involve the use of search warrants, to obtain access to a client's account. If this approach is used, the agency must have full understanding of the social networking site's policies about the creation of profiles. Many sites prohibit creating

fictitious profiles and if discovered the site will delete the profile without advance notice to the creator.

## REVIEW WITH CLIENT COOPERATION

One additional investigative method available to community corrections but not law enforcement is the ability to require clients to provide access to their profiles. Standard supervision conditions usually require clients to permit officers to visit them at home or place of employment or "elsewhere." In this case "elsewhere" can be the virtual world of social media. In cases where such rules do not exist, establishing such conditions would allow such access.

## THE NEED FOR GUIDANCE

As demonstrated, social media monitoring can yield important information critical to the investigation and supervision process. That said, there are pitfalls to consider and agencies need to develop sound policy for conducting investigations and supervision using social media.

The Global Justice Information Sharing Initiative document, *Developing a Policy on the Use of Social Media in Intelligence and Investigative Activities*[2] is an excellent resource. The document provides seven well-reasoned elements for law enforcement agencies to consider when developing a guide to intelligence and investigative activities in a social media environment. While developed for law enforcement the principles also apply to community corrections:

1. Articulate that *the use of social media resources will be consistent with applicable laws, regulations and other agency policies.*

2. Define if, and when, the use of social networking sites or tools is authorized (as well as use of information on these sites pursuant to the agency's legal authorities and mission requirements).

3. Clearly define the authorization level(s) needed to use information from social networking sites.

4. Specify that information obtained from social media resources will undergo evaluation to determine confidence levels (source reliability and content validity).

5. Specify the documentation, storage and retention requirements related to information obtained from social media resources.

6. Identify the reason(s) and purpose(s), if any, for off-duty personnel to use social media information in connection with their law enforcement responsibilities, as well as how and when personal equipment may be used for an authorized law enforcement purpose.

7. Identify dissemination procedures for criminal intelligence and investigative products containing information obtained from social media sites, including appropriate limitations on the dissemination of personally identifiable information.

## CONCLUSION

For better or worse, social media is a large and growing part of modern life. Community corrections agencies need to recognize that their clients maintain a virtual presence and what happens online can be very important. Effective investigation and supervision, therefore, require an understanding of social media, an appreciation for the potential value of the information that can be obtained and knowledge of the available tools and techniques to monitor what their clients are doing on social networking sites.

A client's social media presence provides a glimpse into their personality, which may reflect serious non-compliance or behavior that places the community at risk. With the proper protocols in place, social media monitoring can provide a very powerful investigation and supervision tool. Agencies simply cannot afford to operate in the 21st century and beyond without these new tools.  ▷▷▲

## ENDNOTES

1   Global Justice Information Sharing Initiative (2013) Developing a Policy on the Use of Social Media in Intelligence and Investigative Activities Guidance and Recommendations.

2   Global Justice Information Sharing Initiative (2013) Developing a Policy on the Use of Social Media in Intelligence and Investigative Activities Guidance and Recommendations.

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## YOU NOW HAVE A CRIME SCENE!  WHAT WILL YOU DO - PART II

In Part I of this article we discussed, and gave guidelines for, dealing with a crime scene resulting from an officer's use of force. Officer safety is the first concern. If dangers still exist, leave and, when in a safe location, call police, medical aid (if needed) and your administration.  If you can safely stay;

- secure all weapons,
- secure the scene—no one leaves,
- contact police and medical aid,
- contact your administration,
- know your rights as to what you should say to responding investigators.

In Part II we'll provide guidelines for both the officer(s) and the agency regarding responding to a use of force incident. For the officer(s) this is a critical time; emotions are high, they may be concerned over how their actions will be perceived by the agency and the public and they may be concerned regarding legal ramifications even if they know they responded properly.

**Agency Response.** The agency should have a response policy for any use of force where injuries occur, especially if the use of force involved a shooting. After an incident occurs is not the time to be wondering what to do and in what order.

A member of the administration should be immediately sent to the scene. This may be the Chief or Director or their designee. Upon arrival the administration representative should contact the officer, remove the officer from the immediate scene and check to see if the officer is injured in any way, and if so, make sure medical attention is provided either at the scene or at a hospital.

Some law enforcement agencies make it standard procedure that officers are immediately taken to a hospital for evaluation even if there are no apparent injuries. The officer's removal provides time to decompress and reduces the chance that the officer will make statements without full understanding of his/her rights.

The responding administrator should express they are glad the officer is okay (if they are) or provide support if there are injuries. Don't praise the officer for the shooting, but also don't "Monday morning quarterback" the situation. There will be plenty of time to get factual information later.

If the officer is taken to a medical facility, the administrator should aid in handling paperwork for admittance and advise the intake personnel that this is a Workman's Compensation Program situation. Human Resources should be contacted immediately during working hours and advised of the incident.

**Peer Support.** If the officer has a close relationship with a specific officer, consider asking the fellow officer to respond as support. The responding officer should understand they are there to provide support, not to discuss the incident. The responding officer should also be trained to discourage the officer involved in the incident from discussing the situation until the involved officer has had the opportunity to talk with counsel. The responding officer should assure the involved officer that not discussing the incident is merely procedure and not an indication that the officer did anything wrong.

**Other Officers Involved.** If there are other officers involved in the incident, but not directly involved in the use of force, they too should be contacted by the administrator for determination as to whether they should be removed from the scene. If they are allowed to remain at the scene, at their discretion, they can be allowed to make statements to investigating officers. However, if they have been significantly affected by the incident, it may be better to advise law enforcement they are too upset to give a statement at that moment, but can be interviewed later.

**Taking Care of the Family.** If any of the officers involved have significant injuries, the administrator or their designee should be assigned to contact appropriate family members and arrange for their transportation to the treatment facility. This must be done prior to any names being released to the media. The administrator should also advise investigating law enforcement not to release any involved officer names until given permission by the agency.

**Legal Representation.** If there is any indication that the officer will likely be subject to any potential criminal investigation the responding administrator should suggest that the officer contact legal representation before making any statements. This representation may be in the form of the attorney that would represent the officer and agency in any litigation or it may be representation obtained through the officer's union, association or privately.

Most agencies will not provide a government attorney for internal investigations, thus the officer may wish to contact their own legal representation until it is determined that such representation is not needed or it is clear that legal representation for further investigations will be provided by the agency.

**Understanding the Effects of Use of Force Incidents.** For law enforcement, especially in larger cities, investigation of officer-involved use of force incidents occurs all too often. But even with such agencies, there have been incidents of involved officers being interviewed after being awake for over 24 hours, not being allowed to speak with family and being treated as if they were the "criminal" in the situation. Statistically, most law enforcement use of force situations are fully justified, yet those cases are not the ones that we hear about.

Research has shown that stress affects both vision and cognitive function. We can expect that in any use of force situation there will be perceptual and memory distortions. That is why current best practices regarding interviewing involved officers dictates they be allowed 24 to 72 hours after the event before being asked to give a detailed statement. Hopefully, before any significant interviews, they will have completed one to two sleep cycles.

Fortunately, community corrections has experienced far fewer high-level use of force incidents compared to law enforcement. However, in those few agencies that collect hazardous duty statistics, we have generally seen an increase of hazardous duty situations which include use of force events. Thus, as there is an increasing number of use of force incidents, there is a duty for both officers and agencies to become educated on how to best respond to those situations.

As Alexis Artwohl, Ph.D. has stated in her study of officer involved shootings, "Officers who discharge their weapons obviously must be held accountable for their use of deadly force and it is appropriate that these events undergo a thorough investigation. All those involved in judging the aftermath of an officer involved shooting should be trained in the existence of memory and perceptual distortions so they understand that these are normal phenomena during critical incidents. This would include the officer themselves, investigators, command staff, district attorneys, juries, journalists and any other individual who will be second guessing the behavior of the involved officers. It should never be assumed that the witnesses and participants of any event, including officers, are automatically lying if the memories of an event do not coincide with the physical evidence or other witness accounts." (Artwohl, 2003).

## CONCLUSION

While thankfully, many agencies are providing safety training on how to avoid use of force situations, and if they cannot avoid the situations how to control it, few provide training on how to respond to use of force events, both from the officer's perspective and the agency's. Like anything else, there is a skill both in the response to and the investigation of, use of force incidents.

Research shows, for officers involved in use of force incidents, how the agency and peers respond to the event carries long-lasting ramifications. Neither officers nor administrators have to reinvent the wheel. There are model policies and procedures available that have been created based upon current best practices in dealing with use of force incidents.

Both officers and agencies are encouraged to educate themselves on how to deal with use of force incidents, obtain training and create policies and procedures now, **before** the incidents occur. ▷▷▲

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# OFFENDER NOTIFICATION MEETINGS

## INTRODUCTION

Offender notification meetings represent one of several potential intervention strategies utilized under Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN), a nationwide effort under the leadership of the 94 U.S. Attorneys' Offices (USAOs) (McDevitt, Decker, Hipple, McGarrell, Klofas, & Bynum 2006). It is typically a component of larger coordinated responses to rising gun and gang violence in a given jurisdiction. These meetings focus on probationers or parolees identified as high risk, often gang-affiliated, for committing gun related crimes. The first objective is to send a clear message of targeted enforcement to these individuals communicating that gun violence will not be tolerated

and consequences will be severe for those convicted (a.k.a., specific deterrence). This part of the meeting often involves representatives of law enforcement, prosecutors and corrections outlining the consequences for violating conditions of supervision, possessing a firearm and/or engaging in further criminality. The second objective is to provide pro-social alternatives to continued violence for these individuals. This consists of a network of local social service, community- and faith-based programs willing to provide services that will assist in reintegration. This is considered a 'balanced approach,' though local initiatives may vary in dosage and emphasis. This article provides a brief overview of PSN's prevalence, process and experiences utilizing such meetings.

## PSN AND OFFENDER NOTIFICATION MEETINGS

As many as 36 of the 94 PSN jurisdictions have adopted the use of offender notification meetings (McDevitt et al., 2006). Consistent with the *pulling levers* ideology espoused by Kennedy (1997) and reiterated by others (Braga, 2008; McGarrell, Chermak, Wilson, & Corsaro, 2006), PSN adopts a comprehensive arrangement of justice and community actors which can each contribute to the initiative collectively. As Kennedy has argued, in the past agencies (e.g., probation, parole) knew who the most dangerous individuals in the community were, but did not communicate or communicate effectively

to other justice and community entities in order to maximize that knowledge. As such, relevant stakeholders at these meetings, under the leadership of the local U.S. Attorney's Office, have included local police, federal agencies, state police, sheriffs, probation, parole, institutional corrections, U.S. Marshals, judges, outreach street workers and other community entities active in local gang suppression efforts. In some jurisdictions, other programs involved with the aftermath of gun violence have joined the coalition. These include victim advocates, restorative justice leaders and clergy.

The goals of Offender Notification Meetings, as defined by PSN, are to (McDevitt et al., 2006):

- Develop informed deterrent strategies which target offenders who are at high-risk for gun crime.
- Develop strategies that provide a coordinated and aggressive law enforcement response to firearms violence.
- Utilize prevention and intervention methods to communicate a clear deterrent message.
- Reduce the sense of impunity and anonymity of offenders by publishing convictions and arrests.
- Provide a range of services including housing, education, employment and treatment programming in tandem with an aggressive law enforcement approach.

## THE PROCESS

The first step in the implementation of this intervention is to identify the individuals, group(s), or area which will be the focus of the effort (McDevitt et al., 2006). Local crime analysis is adept in assisting in identifying the most likely targets. In most sites that have selected this option, members of specific gangs have emerged as the focus of the strategy. Selection of the right individuals who represent the highest risk for future gun offenses is paramount to the success of the initiative.

Once the targeted individuals have been identified, the next step is to request that they voluntarily attend the notification meeting. Since most of these youth and young adults are not likely to attend a meeting that is not mandatory, officials sought to identify the types of leverage that might be available to encourage their participation. A significant number of these individuals have been identified as being on probation or parole. Community supervision officers were instrumental in getting requested individuals, who had been identified as high risk for gun offenses, to attend the meetings. Community leaders with credibility on the streets were called upon to encourage those individuals for whom there was no formal leverage available to attend. An unanticipated successful strategy was personal letters from the local police chief requesting identified individuals to attend the meeting (McDevitt et al.,

2006; Meares, Papachristos & Fagan, 2009). Outreach was extended to parents of others on the list and the option of services for assistance to leave the world of gun/gang violence was stressed in the approach to these parents and to influential clergy.

The meetings are designed to be an offer of assistance as well as a warning (McDevitt et al., 2006). The meeting typically begins with a straightforward explanation of the purpose of the initiative with a clear message that gun violence will not be tolerated in the community. Law enforcement officers stress the intensity of the monitoring the individuals will be experiencing and how law enforcement agencies will be coordinating their efforts with other justice agencies. The U.S. Attorney or a staff attorney often participates in these meetings and explains that most cases will be prosecuted vigorously in Federal Court where sentences are more severe. Probation and parole officers explain the intensity of the supervision they will be providing including increased home visits, knock-and-talk visits with police officers, and more frequent office reporting requirements.

For the message to be effective, it has to be short, clear and forceful with a strong emphasis on the "violence will not be tolerated" message (McDevitt et al., 2006). The unambiguous theme is that there will be an increase in law enforcement attention focused on each

of them individually and their affiliations collectively; there will be no 'breaks' or 'warnings'; and nothing is negotiable. At some meetings, police intelligence staff review the activities and associates of each individual attending over the past few weeks so that participants will understand that officials know exactly who they are and know a great deal about their activities, all of which serves to break down their sense of anonymity and invulnerability.

The focus of the meeting then shifts to the offer of the 'alternative.' Everyone present is offered the availability of a multitude of services to help them leave the world of violence and refocus their lives in a positive direction. Services such as employment assistance, education and substance abuse treatment are outlined. Some meetings include presentations from other community residents known to the group, who have turned their lives around. The program in Boston, for example, used a visual presentation featuring those who have survived major gunshot injuries with specific images of how their lives have been changed forever including living with disabilities, loss of independence and living with constant pain. Both the 'stick' and the 'carrot' are presented in a balanced manner during the meeting and the carrot must be presented in a way that appears to be feasible and the rewards possible by making a lifestyle change must be stressed.

In addition to the meetings themselves, word about the new initiative must be communicated to others in the neighborhood (McDevitt et al., 2006). All segments of the community at-large must spread the word that gun violence will not be tolerated. The culture of acceptance of violence and anonymity for those responsible must be altered.

Once the meeting itself has been held, the real work begins for justice and community entities. It is not enough to threaten probationers and parolees with consequences; the threat must be substantiated. Akin to a former project known as *Project Exile* (see O'Shea, 2007), some sites circulate posters with pictures of recently sentenced gun offenders and a full report of the length of their prison sentence and the facility in which they will be serving their time (McDevitt et al., 2006). The dissemination of this important information about people others know and the number of such convictions and the length of their sentences is a part of the deterrence impact aimed at improving the visibility of the probationer/parolee.

Partnerships among various law enforcement entities need to be visible. Information must be shared on a real-time basis. Police and probation and parole officers need to make home visits, drug testing specimen collection and warrant service activities together (for more on police-probation/parole partnerships see Matz, 2013; Matz & Kim, 2013; Kim, Matz, Gerber, Beto, & Lambert, 2013).

Probation and parole officers have to be visible on the streets at non-traditional times and need to interact with those individuals on the target list whenever they are encountered.

Of equal importance to the enforcement effort is the offer of services. If resources are not actually available to support these offers of assistance, then the credibility of the intervention is significantly compromised. There is recognition by justice partners that the long-term impact of the initiative will be less effective if appropriate alternatives and services are not provided. Participants in the meeting must see that service providers are making a genuine effort to deliver those promised services and those services must be accessible in or near the communities in which probationers/parolees reside.

## CONCLUDING REMARKS

Notification meetings were found to be the strongest aspect of the PSN program in Chicago, capable of substantial reductions in homicide in the treatment jurisdiction and recidivism (i.e., new offense or technical violations) among returning parolees (Papachristos, Meares, & Fagan, 2007; Papachristos, Wallace, Meares, & Fagan, 2013). That said, the authors were unable to differentiate between the impact of the two distinct meeting components; the deterrence message from the rehabilitative offerings of social services and community- or faith-based organizations. In other words, it is unclear which component of the meetings accounts for the greatest impact on offender behavior, specific deterrence or social service or some combination thereof.

Nonetheless, the success of the offender notification meetings are predicated on the following nine factors (McDevitt et al., 2006):

- Leadership and direction from the Office of the U.S. Attorney.
- Inclusion of criminal justice agencies, service providers and community partners.
- Viable threats of federal and local sanctions for gun crime.
- Focused deterrent message directly to individuals at high-risk for gun crime.
- Utilizing probation and parole professionals, street workers, community leaders and the media to deliver a strong deterrence message.
- Provision of a balanced sanctions and support message.
- Follow through with enforcement and sanctions threat.
- Provision of needed support and services.
- Inclusion of a research component which assesses process and outcomes to inform and guide the PSN task force. ▷▷▲

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## ENDNOTES

1    The PSN Update is supported by Cooperative Agreement Number 2011-GP-BX-K032 awarded by the Bureau of Justice Assistance under the Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN) anti-gun/gang initiative. 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, and the Office for Victims of Crime. Points of view in this document and related materials are those of the authors and do not represent the official policies or positions of the United States Department of Justice.

2    1000-1500 word submissions (otherwise follow Perspectives' submission guidelines) for consideration in the PSN Update are welcome and encouraged. To be considered papers must be relevant to community corrections (probation/parole) and concern interagency collaboration (e.g., police-probation/parole partnerships), Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN), gangs, and/or gun violence. Please direct PSN Update manuscripts to amatz@csg.org.

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# book review

By Donald G. Evans
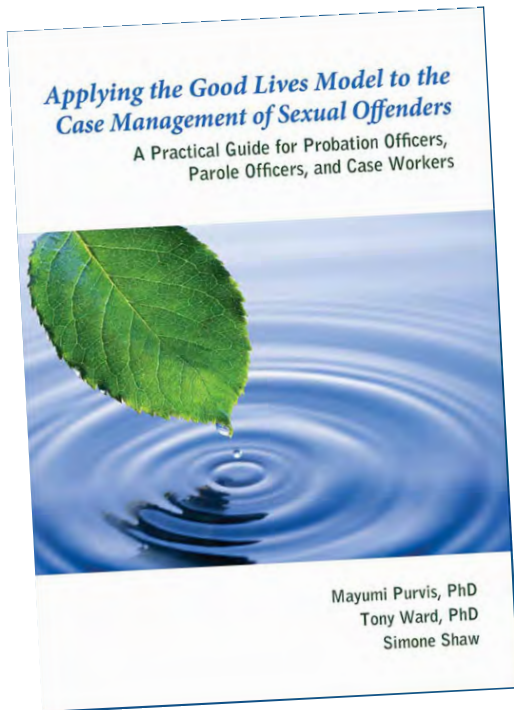
## APPLYING THE GOOD LIVES MODEL TO THE CASE MANAGEMENT OF SEXUAL OFFENDERS: A PRACTICAL GUIDE FOR PROBATION OFFICERS, PAROLE OFFICERS, AND CASE WORKERS

Mayumi Purvis, Tony Ward, and Simon Shaw. Safety Society Press, Brandon, Vermont, 2013.

With the emphasis on evidence informed practice, probation and parole practitioners have seen a consistent improvement in assessment technologies, but have seen limited development in appropriate interventions and case management approaches to implement the assessment recommendations. In the past few years there has been an effort to remedy this situation. The renewed interest of researchers have in "probation officer-offender relationship" has resulted in an exploration of the "black-box" of supervision and a consideration of the importance of the therapeutic alliance. The risk-need-responsivity model dominates the correctional field but in recent years there has been an interesting development building on the RNR model as well as efforts at developing integrative frameworks that expand on the RNR approach. One such development is the subject of the book by Purvis, Ward and Shaw that takes the Good Lives Model (GLM) approach and applies it to the case management of sex offenders. This particular approach began in the early 2000s and was initiated by Dr. Tony Ward, a professor in clinical psychology at Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand. The general thrust of this approach aids to reduce recidivism by assisting offenders to live better lives and not to simply target isolated risk factors. This approach posits the idea that the most effective way to reduce risk is to provide individuals with the necessary conditions that will allow them to lead better lives (or what is referred to as "good lives") rather than simply encouraging them with how to minimize the chances of going to prison. For GLM, the focus is on interventions that assist the offender to secure personal and social goods as well as seek to manage risk and reduce recidivism. In

short, this approach is strength based and is based on a belief that goals that are negative in nature are less effective than goals that promote pro-social behavior and are personally more satisfying. The concept draws on the work being done in the field of "positive psychology" as support for its emphasis on strength-based interventions. For readers wishing to learn more about this approach, there is a surprising amount of literature and studies devoted to GLM and the bibliography in this book provides a great starting point.

In the first chapter the authors explain the purpose of the book and discuss sexual offender case management using the good lives model. They discuss the issue of who the sexual offenders are and the value of tailoring case management and intervention services to them. This leads to a discussion of what is entailed in case management and for these authors "case management should be centered on the rehabilitation of the offender with a focus on the avoidance of future offending".

The structure of this book allows the authors to deal with their topic by moving from current theory and research through certain important clinical factors to putting theory into practice. The book's content is divided into three parts: the theory and research regarding managing sexual offending, additional factors in managing sexual offenders and consideration of putting theory into practice.

**The concept draws on the work being done in the field of "positive psychology" as support for its emphasis on strength-based interventions.**

The first part consists of four chapters dealing with what is known about the case management of sexual offenders, a discussion of the Good Lives Model of offender rehabilitation, desistance theory and the Good Lives Model and the role of the self-regulation model in relapse prevention. This section gives the reader a clear and concise rendering of the theory behind the GLM approach and notes the considerable research on which the approach is based.

In the second part, the authors devote two chapters to dealing with some additional factors they consider important in working with the sexual offender. The first is related to disclosures and their role in case management. There is provided for the practitioner some helpful definitions relating to disclosures together with a typology of disclosures as well as strategies for eliciting disclosures. The chapter ends with a brief discussion of readiness to change and a reminder that the over-arching goal for practitioners is the protection of the community. In chapter seven, the authors present important and useful information on challenging cognitive distortions and implicit theories underlying or supporting the distortions. Again the authors offer short but useful "bites" of information and a helpful chart that makes explicit the material being discussed. There is no doubt that this chapter is important in the management of sexual offenders.

> **Again the authors offer short but useful "bites" of information and a helpful chart that makes explicit the material being discussed. There is no doubt that this chapter is important in the management of sexual offenders.**

The final three chapters of the book are contained in part and deal with turning theory into practice. This section presents some ready, useful information and tools that the probation and parole officer can use to enhance their work with sexual offenders. Chapter eight provides the reader with a quick but clear presentation of what is meant by an integrated GLM case management approach. The authors include a discussion and examples of GLM case management tools such as: the GLM past offending analysis table, GLM current life analysis and the primary human needs acquisition analysis. Examples are given and explanations offered as to how these tools can enhance case management of sexual offenders. In addition, websites are given where these tools can be downloaded! As a further help to practitioners interested in learning more about this approach the authors in chapter nine provide a case study of the GLM case management approach. While in chapter ten, they explore the question of sexual offenders as moral strangers or fellow travellers by reminding us that there is a need to understand the basic premise of

GLM, namely the need to promote the development of conditions that provide for "goods promotion" and community protection. Goods promotion is the enhancement of offender well being that enables them to live productive, pro-social lives thus reducing reoffending. This chapter also looks at the incorporation of GLM into operational practice and a brief discussion of key support and policy factors such as: organizational support and secure resourcing, training, quality assurance and mentoring programs.

This is a very practical guide and introduction to using GLM as an intervention with sexual offenders and is easy to read and follow the description of how to use the tools suggested. In fact, the appendix contains two of the major instruments discussed in the book. Although some might see this approach as a competitor to the RNR model, I see it as rather a building on and extension of the RNR principles and incorporating theories and practices consistent with recent discussions about therapeutic alliances and desistance theory. This a book/manual that should be in every probation and parole office library and read and discussed so as to be applied to the difficult case management of sexual offenders. ▷▷▲

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## FOCUS ON KENYA PROBATION AND AFTERCARE SERVICES AND THE ICPA 2014 NAMIBIA CONFERENCE

On the 29th October, 2014 in the Namilo Room of the Safari Hotel in Windhoek, Namibia the International Corrections and Prisons Association's (ICPA) Correctional Excellence Awards were presented. The Community Corrections Award "recognizes exceptional work and innovative approaches in supporting offenders in the community; and acknowledges the vital role played by probation and parole in the work of the Association".

At the ICPA Gala Event Dinner the recipient of the 2014 Community Corrections Award was announced - Jerim W.O. Oloo, Director of Probation and Aftercare Service in Kenya. Unfortunately Director Oloo, as a result of work commitments, was unable to attend the ceremony. As a result the Award was presented by ICPA President Peter Van der Sande and accepted on behalf of Director Oloo by Assistant Director, Clement Okech.

The above occurred on the approximate ninth year anniversary of Jerim Oloo assuming the duties and responsibilities as the Director of Probation and Aftercare Service in Kenya. The appointment that occurred in August, 2005 was preceded by five years as the Deputy Director. This article will provide an overview of the probation reality in Kenya both pre and post 2005. Key results attributed to Director Oloo as a result of his energy, belief in the work ethic, his vision and his appreciation of the key role that community corrections can play in protecting the community and contributing to the rehabilitation of both youth and adult offenders will be shared.



Director Oloo Receiving ICPA 2014 Community Corrections Award from Assistant Director Okech – 3rd November 2014, Nairobi

A brief overview of the community corrections content of the ICPA conference focusing primarily on Africa will also be shared.

A key aspect of the ICPA award nomination process was the receipt of letters of support. The Director's nomination received support from: the Republic of Kenya; the continent of Africa (Kampala - United Nations African Institute for the Prevention of Crime and Treatment of Offenders - UNAFRI); and from two other continents and cities considerable distances away from the Kenyan capital of Nairobi; Adelaide, Australia (11,000 kilometers away); and, Victoria, Canada (14,400 kilometers away). The consensus concluded that Director Oloo's community corrections career had breathed considerable life into the ICPA Values. Consistent with this the Director's achievements as shared below are also consistent with APPA's Mission.

*To serve, challenge and empower our members and constituents by educating, communicating and training; advocating and influencing; acting as a resource and conduit for information, ideas and support; developing standards and models; and collaborating with other disciplines.*

In 2005 at the time of his appointment the Probation and Aftercare Service was facing many significant challenges, including:

- diminished resources;
- lethargy among staff largely occasioned by lack of promotion and motivation;
- an inadequate and inefficient transport system;
- limited staff training opportunities;
- poor infrastructure;
- a poor communication network; and,
- a lack of international exposure.

The most serious and troubling of the challenges highlighted above related to the staffing complement that Director Oloo "inherited". The Service had just experienced a significant reduction in the number of probation officers, a reduction of approximately 50 percent to 240 professional staff. This reduced complement could not at the time meet the increased demand for departmental services and adversely affected the effectiveness of service delivery thus diminishing the image of the department and standing within the justice system and with the public. This resulted in poor offender supervision, a high default rate, low case referrals and an overall poor perception of the department by stakeholders, especially the judiciary.

As a result, Director Oloo's vision, dedication and hard work led to many positive changes and improvements that were evident for the period from 2005 to 2014. The achievements that can be directly associated with the Director include:

- improved infrastructure;
- enhanced human resource base;
- significant programme development;
- enhanced image for the department within the criminal justice community and with civil society;
- heightened international exposure, collaboration and networking; and,
- an improved transport system.

The benefits and results achieved during the Director's tenure were acknowledged by ICPA and are highlighted further below.

An improved infrastructure and an enhanced human resource base occurred during the Director's tenure that has afforded the Probation and Aftercare Service the opportunity to increase the access to justice for the citizens of Kenya and criminal justice partners with shared justice sector goals. The funding of the department has risen significantly during the Director's tenure. As of June 2014, under the watch of Director Oloo, there are now 122 probation stations countrywide compared to 85 when he

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took over managing the department. The department has significantly improved its office accommodation. Correspondingly and in meeting the human resource gap, an additional 450 probation officers were recruited. In addition 120 support personnel are now employed in the Service.

To enhance the Kenya Probation and Aftercare Service's exposure to the international criminal justice community, mutually beneficial activities championed by the Director and involving the following countries occurred: Uganda; Zambia; China, Canada and South Sudan. Positive interactions with a number of international organizations such as: the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC); UNAFRI; the United Nations Asia and Far East Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders (UNAFEI); Penal Reform International (PRI); and, the International Centre for Criminal Law Reform and Criminal



Director Oloo with workshop trainer Donald Evans, past President of the American Probation and Parole Association and the International Community Corrections Association. November 2007 Nairobi, Kenya

Justice Policy (ICCLR) also took place. This also included the participation of probation staff from Kenya in past APPA institutes.

The current UNAFRI Acting Director John Kisembo indicated that there has been a long standing relationship with the Kenya Probation and Aftercare Service; however, it wasn't "until 2006 when this relationship began to flourish. This was about the same time that Director Oloo took over the leadership of the organization."

Director Oloo was a key organizer, along with colleagues from: Kenya Prison Service (KPS); UNAFRI; UNODC; and, ICCLR in a successful three day Probation Parole & Community Corrections Workshop held in Nairobi, Kenya in late November 2007. The workshop was attended by thirty-nine participants primarily from KPS and the Kenya Probation and Aftercare Service. Four participants from the Southern Sudan Prison Service (SSPS) were also in attendance.

# international update

In December 2007, a three day community corrections workshop took place in Kampala, Uganda. The workshop was attended by forty-five participants primarily from the Uganda Prisons Service (UPS). Two SSPS representatives from Juba and two participants from the United Nations Mission in Sudan (UNMIS) team based in Khartoum attended. Director Oloo attended and contributed to the workshop programme. Director Oloo also contributed to a similar workshop in Zambia that was attended by fifty-six participants primarily from the Zambia Prisons Service.

Significant contributions were made by the Director to the reintroduction and development of community corrections in South Sudan. In June 2008 with UNMIS support an inter-agency workshop with 36 participants – two thirds were inter-agency representatives – addressed the issue of conditional release. Key senior personnel from the Kenya Probation and Aftercare Service including Director Oloo presented.

In 2009 the Director contributed to a workshop again in Juba entitled "Assisting the Process of Prison Reform in Southern Sudan Building Leadership Capacity within the Prison Service and Addressing the Circumstances of Prisoners with Special Needs". It was supported and coordinated by SSPS, UNODC and ICCLR.

In July 2011, a mutually beneficial relationship between community corrections in China and Kenya was endorsed by the Director and Director Rong Rong of the Chaoyang District Bureau of Justice. This mutually supportive arrangement was similar to a "partnership agreement" that was endorsed between APPA and the Chaoyang District.

With the support of the Open Society Initiative for Eastern Africa which promotes public participation in democratic governance, the rule of law and respect for human rights, the Director played a key role in a three day event that took place in Nakuru, Kenya in the summer of 2012. The event was entitled "Symposium on Criminal Justice Practices Criminal Justice Reforms in the New Constitutional Dispensation: Challenges and Opportunities in the Alternative Measures to Imprisonment."

In November 2012, a National Workshop on Alternatives to Imprisonment was held in Juba South Sudan. Issues related to probation, community service and the use of paralegals with best practice presentations were made by Kenyan Probation and Aftercare personnel.

United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for Non- Custodial Measures (Tokyo Rules) 6.1 reads "Pre-trial detention shall be used as a means of last resort in criminal proceedings, with due regard for the investigation of the alleged offence and for the protection of society and the victim". This key issue and the Director's management style that empowers the staff

of the Probation Service and encourages them to take leadership roles concerning key issues, resulted with Assistant Director Okech taking such a role in relation to pre-trial detention.

With the Director's support, the Assistant Director was the lead Probation Service contributor to the November 2013 Workshop for the National Council on the Administration of Justice Technical Committee Policy Special Working Group that was supported by the Raoul Wallenberg Institute's Kenya Programme. The workshop addressed issues and concerns related to pre-trial detention. Pre-trial detention was a consistent theme of the recent ICPA Conference.

The Director was instrumental in the conceptualization, development and initiation of the current Kenyan bail information and supervision policy - a bail information system where probation officers assist the courts in providing bail assessment reports thus helping the courts deal with the problem of absconding while at the same time targeting the unnecessary use of prison custody.

The Director initiated and recommended amendments to two key legal mandates critical to implementing alternative measures to imprisonment (i.e., the Probation of Offenders Act and the Community Service Orders Act). These two pieces of legislation are currently awaiting government review and if endorsed will go a long way to improving safe offender management. Other key initiatives include the:

- implementation of a victim support programme that includes the preparation of victim impact statement reports that are provided to the courts;

- initiation of a volunteer probation officers (VPO) programme that supports the number of probation officers' capabilities and for some volunteers is an entry point for community participation in offender management - there are currently 295 VPOs assisting line probation officers;

- introduction of programmes in the probation hostels especially programmes that are marketable and resonate with the youth who are the majority of the probation caseload;

- introduction of two Probation Community Resource Centres, which are unique crime prevention programmes targeting at risk offending and youth criminality; and,

- an enhancement of community service order programmes - these programmes are offered in the community to help offenders on community service learn skills through knowledge and competency transfer while working in projects enabling them to start their own small businesses.

The following is a portion of the acceptance speech read at the Awards Gala by Assistant Director Okech.

## PORTION OF ACCEPTANCE SPEECH

*May I also pay tribute to my colleagues at the Kenya Probation and Aftercare Service who have through focus, team work, dedication and commitment, contributed immensely to my success by supporting the various offender improvement programmes initiated by the department. Notably, most of these major achievements have been realised in the past ten years of the current regime. With this award, I feel rejuvenated to propel the organisation into greater heights by transforming both the probation practice infrastructure and more importantly, the lives of the many offenders and victims of crime in our workload.*

*Finally, I wish to thank the following partners among others who have helped us make this happen. Penal Reform International, London, for helping us expand the scope of alternative measures to imprisonment in the past decade and a half and United Nations Asia and Far East Institute, for building our capacity to deliver and ensuring that we remained abreast with the international best practices, and the Africa Probation and Community Services Network-APC NETWORK for promoting collaboration and networking among the African states. Lastly, may the ICPA Board find it still fitting to decorate more of those who merit such awards.*

The Director's support for improving correction's response to the issues of special needs offenders has been a consistent goal. The Director forged a mutually beneficial relationship with the International Institute on Special Needs Offenders and Policy Research (IISNO) headquartered in Canada.

The Director also forged a positive relationship with UNAFEI and received a delegation in August 2010 from Japan in relation to a juvenile justice partnership initiative called the Child Care and Protection Officer (CCPO) Capacity Building Project.

Another positive international relationship that has been nurtured during the Director's tenure has been with the United Kingdom based Penal Reform International (PRI).

Director Oloo's vision for community corrections is consistent with and supportive of APPA's Mission. His nine year tenure as the Director of the Kenya Probation and Aftercare Services is liberally sprinkled with numerous examples of significant contributions not only to corrections in Kenya but also to many other countries on the African continent. His contributions are consistent with international instruments such as the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules. Director Oloo was a well deserving recipient of ICPA's 2014 Community Corrections Award.

This article would be remiss if it did not also briefly address some of the community corrections highlights from the Windhoek Conference. A presentation by Tomoko Akane from UNAFEI highlighted the benefits of the volunteer probation officer program in Japan. Kenya Probation, later in the proceedings, shared how they have successfully introduced a similar program in Kenya based on the Japanese model. Considerable attention, in several sessions, addressed the history, strengths, weaknesses and challenges of community service order programs on the African continent following their introduction in Zimbabwe in 1992 with the PRI assistance. A further highlight was shared by Deputy Commissioner Mariana Martin, Namibian Correctional Service. The roll out of their comprehensive Offender Risk Management Correctional Strategy including a key role for the community to play in the safe reintegration of the offenders was highlighted. One of the more significant themes that thread its way through the programme was the excessive use internationally of pre-trial detention. The challenges of this "growth industry" and possible solutions were provided through various international lenses, one being the increased use of paralegals in several African jurisdictions, who assist pre-trial detainees with their many challenges. A significant number of the presentations are currently available on the ICPA

website for review by interested parties (www.Icpa.ca/namibia2014).

A key statement from the conference resonates with the writer of this piece – "there is a corrections revolution occurring in Africa." A revolution that is transforming corrections, both custodial and non-custodial consistent with the theme of the ICPA conference *From Incarceration to Reintegration Change with a Purpose*. Having worked in correctional settings in Kenya, South Sudan, Uganda, Zambia and currently with the Community Security Project, United Nations Development Programme in Somalia I sincerely wish my African colleagues all the very best with their "corrections revolution". With the leadership of such dedicated professionals as Dr. J. Byabashaija,

UPS Commissioner General and the President of the African Correctional Services Association and Director Oloo I am confident that in relation to the many challenges facing corrections, both custodial and non-custodial on the African continent, there are better days ahead. It is sincerely hoped that some of our African colleagues will be able to join us at the 2nd World Congress on Community Corrections this July in Los Angeles.  ▷▷▲

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# SOCIAL SUPPORT AND OFFENDER REENTRY: FOCUSING ON OFFENDER SOCIAL NETWORKS TO INFLUENCE POSITIVE OUTCOMES

## SOCIAL SUPPORT AND OFFENDER REENTRY

With increased numbers of offenders being released from prison each year (Guerino, Harrison, & Sabol, 2011), the offender reentry process has emerged as an important topic for both research and practice. Offenders reentering society face many challenges, including finding housing and battling substance use, that may increase their risk of recidivism (LaVigne, Visher, & Castro, 2004; Petersilia, 2001; Visher & Travis, 2003). Upon release from prison offenders often rely on the support of family, friends and other members of the community to ease their transition. These social networks can also provide the informal control needed to desist from crime. Social support is defined as "perceived or actual instrumental and/or expressive provisions supplied by the community, social networks and confiding partners" (Lin, 1986:18). Instrumental support consists of material and financial assistance while expressive support refers to the emotional and psychological assistance that enhances a person's self-esteem or provides a way to cope with negative life circumstances.

In his American Society of Criminology Presidential Address, Francis Cullen (1994) predicted an inverse relationship between social support and crime. That is, more social support would reduce crime. Cullen and colleagues (1999:188) noted that "the connection of social support to crime is likely to strike most people as a matter of common sense. The importance of being supported is consistent with the personal experience of knowing the value of having been helped in life." Despite the common sense notion, emphasizing social support for criminal offenders typically takes a back seat to reducing risk factors, often overlooking the importance of social support to addressing criminogenic needs (Andrews and Bonta, 2010).

The positive impacts of social support for offenders upon release from prison are well-documented. Research shows that social support for offenders is positively associated with stable housing, increased employment and reduced recidivism (Petersilia, 2001; Visher et al. 2009; Bahr et al. 2010). More importantly, social support can provide the bonds and conventional attachments to others that are linked with prosocial behavior. Social support may also buffer the chronic nature of stressors, such as those associated with re-entry experiences like ongoing financial problems, housing issues and substance abuse, because they can provide tangible resources or emotional coping (Farrell, Barnes, & Banerjee, 1995). For example, in a study of parolees, Hochstetler and colleagues (2010) found that increased social support upon release reduced feelings of hostility which is linked with anger and deviant behavior. In addition, parolees with greater social support experienced reductions in psychosocial problems (Hochstetler et al. 2010).

## PRIMARY SOURCES OF SOCIAL SUPPORT FOR OFFENDERS

Family, intimate partners and friends are often the first source of social support for offenders and the primary providers of housing, employment connections and assistance with community supervision. Many offenders identify family support as one of the most important factors in desistance and positive behavior change (Visher and Travis, 2003; Solomon et al. 2006; Naser and LaVigne, 2006; Visher and Courtney, 2007; Mallik-Kane and Visher, 2008; Mills and Codd, 2008). Visher and Courtney (2007) found that 63 percent of offenders in their sample felt family support would be the most important factor in avoiding a return to prison. Interviews with offenders released in New York City indicated that the most important functions of family were expressive support and housing

**Research shows that social support for offenders is positively associated with stable housing, increased employment and reduced recidivism.**

assistance (Nelson, Deess, & Allen, 1999). Other studies show that families provide financial assistance and enhance sobriety for offenders after their release from prison (Mallik-Kane & Visher, 2008; Solomon et al. 2006). Family support plays a key role in assisting the offender in developing social capital within their community by connecting them to employment opportunities, encouraging positive behavior change and providing emotional support (Flavin, 2004).

Research has also identified that positive, pro-social relationships with a spouse or intimate partner are important for offender success as they can provide the conventional bonds needed to desist from crime (Laub and Sampson, 2003; King, Massoglia, & Macmillan, 2007). Support from intimate partners can enhance the offender's ability to cope with stressors thereby reducing the likelihood of offending (Cullen, 1994). In the *Returning Home* studies conducted by the Urban Institute Justice Policy Center, results showed that married offenders had significantly lower levels of subsequent criminal activity and drug use than unmarried offenders (LaVigne, et al. 2004; Visher et al. 2009).

Positive aspects of marriage are also linked with enhanced social capital, such as securing employment. In a study of offenders returning to the community in Illinois, those who indicated strong intimate partner support were more likely to be employed than those without

partner support, increasing their chances of success while on parole (Solomon et al. 2006). Though not all marital relationships have a protective effect (see Horwitz et al. 1998), the positive aspects of marriage include emotional support and other changes in daily activities, such as reduced time spent with criminogenic peers (Warr, 1998).

Friends can also be a source of social support for offenders upon release from prison. Friends can provide positive instrumental and expressive support, such as employment connections and improved self-esteem (Mallik-Kane & Visher, 2008). Successful parolees are also more likely to engage in positive activities with friends that contribute to desistance (Warr, 1998; Bahr et al. 2010). However, friendships are often complicated by the fact that most offenders' friends are part of their criminogenic social network (Cobbina et al. 2012; Visher & Travis, 2003). In Visher and Courtney's (2007) Ohio sample, only 22 percent of men in the study had positive peer support, but a similar sample in Texas admitted that over half of their friends were involved in illegal activity (La Vigne et al., 2004). Cobbina and colleagues (2012) found that men who had criminal friends failed on supervision more quickly than those without friends or who had positive friendships.

## COMMUNITY SUPERVISION AND SOCIAL SUPPORT

An important feature of the social support perspective is the inclusion of
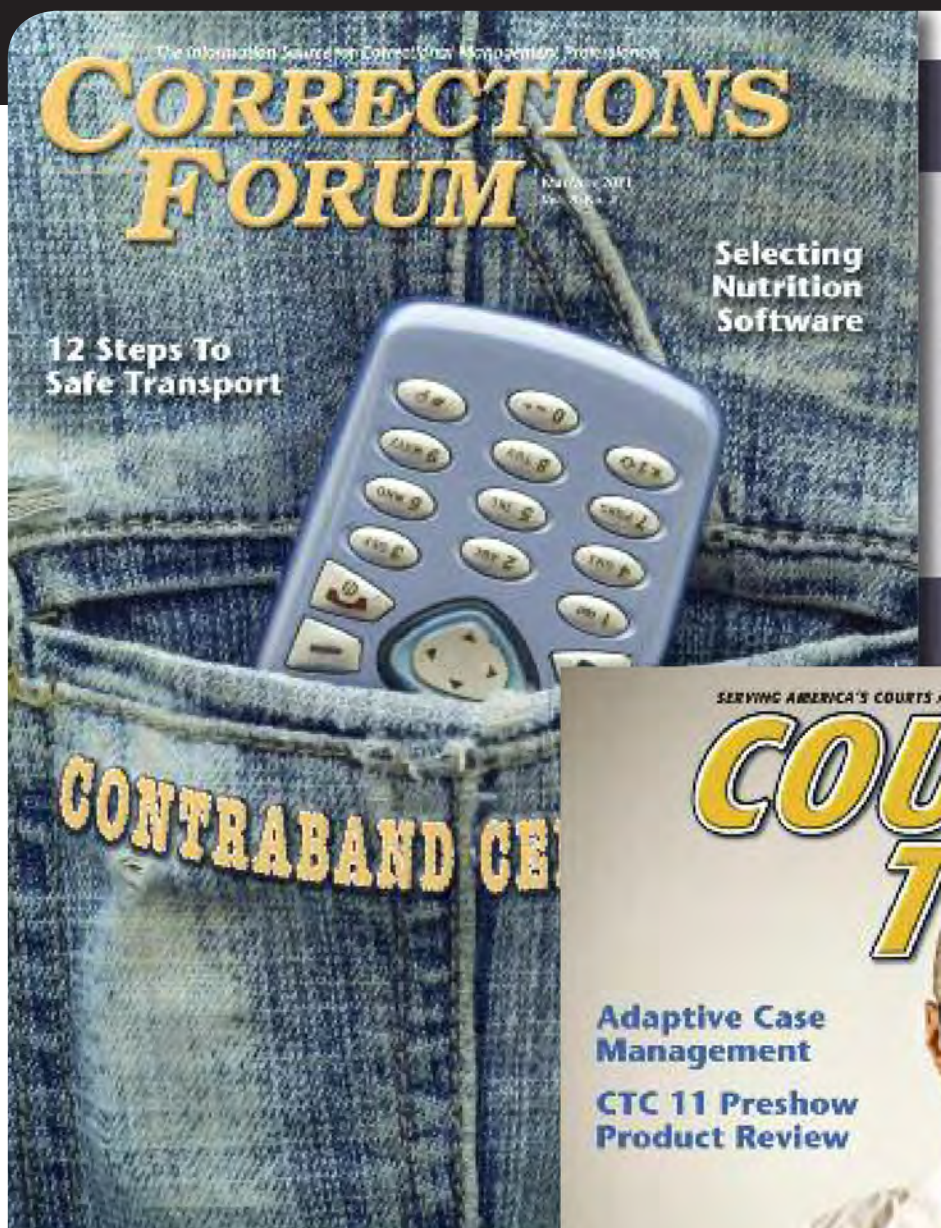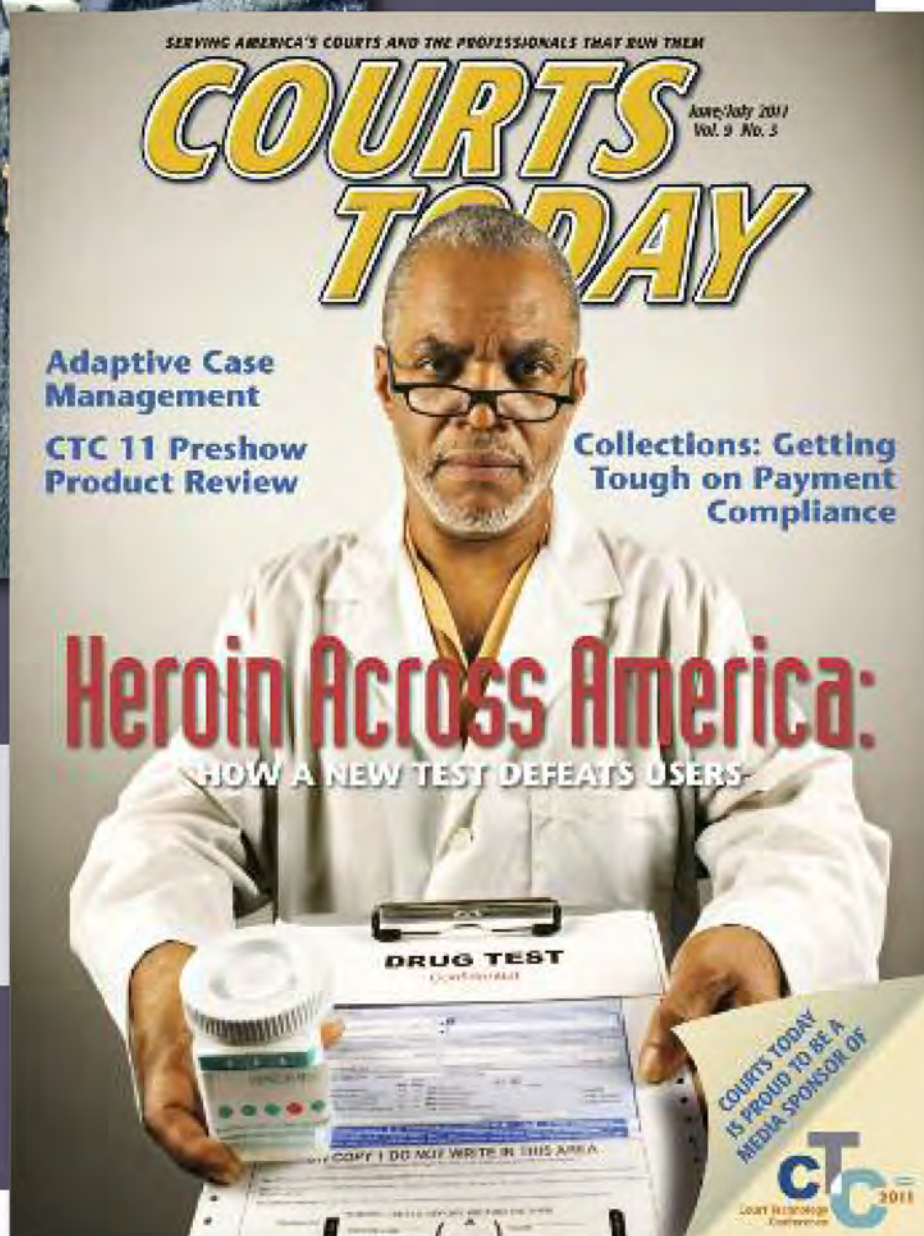
criminal justice agents as part of the support network (Cullen, 1994). Probation and parole officers (POs) and other community supervision agents provide formal social control through supervision and sanctions and informal social control through interactions with offenders and their social support networks. Mills and Codd (2008) suggest that POs assist in repairing relationships with family and friends through counseling, referrals and accountability. More generally, Yahner and colleagues (2008) found that over half of offenders felt their supervision in the community would help them stay out of prison. In a qualitative analysis of probationers, Rex (1999) found that offenders appreciated the problem solving efforts of their officers and felt that genuine caring gave them motivation to stay away from criminal activity.

The "common sense" notion of the importance of social support begs the question: what should you do with an offender who has little or no support upon release? In this circumstance, the role of the community and supervision agents becomes even more important. Coordination of services acts as an important catalyst for linking offenders with potential sources of social support, such as peers and treatment providers (Taxman, 1998). Participation in programs may serve as a proxy for social support for offenders. In a study of women parolees, Reisig and colleagues (2002) found that women offenders in service programs reported significantly more emotional

and social support than those not in a program. Those who were poor and undereducated experienced the lowest levels of social networks (Reisig et al. 2002).

## CONCLUSION

While it seems intuitive that social support assists offenders with the reentry process, the existence and variability of support for offenders is acknowledged by researchers and practitioners. Cullen (1994) distinguishes between the delivery of support and perceptions of support as positive or negative. Support can be positive or negative, or both, but depends on how the individual interprets it. For example, Pettus-Davis and colleagues (2011:480) assert that "a family member that provides encouragement, but who models substance using behaviors or a romantic partner that offers material support, but who is abusive is negative social support." Even if combined with positive qualities, social support is perceived as negative by an individual if the outcome (such as return to substance use or emotional distress) is negative.

This dynamic is crucial for supervising agents to consider when encouraging social support relationships. Despite the surge in reentry programming across the United States, many agencies have not formalized the inclusion of social support networks in the reintegration process. Likewise, community supervision agents have oft been overlooked as potential

linkages to social support. As Cullen and colleagues (1999:188) state, emphasizing social support from these actors during the reentry process is "good criminology." ▷▷▲

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## EVALUATING HOPE PROBATION: HOW NIJ IS POISED TO ANSWER LINGERING QUESTIONS

**Author's Note**: *Findings and conclusions reported in this article are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice.*

NIJ has been closely involved in the objective evaluation of HOPE, Hawaii's Opportunity Probation with Enforcement program. HOPE is an experimental probation program that emphasizes the delivery of "swift and certain" graduated sanctions when probationers violate their probation conditions. HOPE has been widely lauded as a success. Still, to address lingering critical concerns and evaluate the effectiveness of the program, NIJ has commissioned two evaluation projects that are currently in progress. The goal is to answer questions such as: How effective would HOPE be when deployed in other jurisdictions? Does the program have lasting effects? Can HOPE be sustained as a long-term

community corrections program? Was it the sanctioning, the training and expertise of the Hawaii community-corrections staff or the treatment provided to the Hawaii HOPE probationers that drove the initial successes and are these unique to the Hawaii experience or can they occur in other venues (Duriez et al., 2014)? NIJ believes that the results from the evaluation projects will make strides in addressing these issues.

## THE HOPE PROGRAM

Under HOPE, probationers are assigned a color code at a formal hearing. Every morning, probationers call a hotline to learn what the day's randomly-selected color is; if it is their color, they must appear at the probation office before 2 p.m. for a drug test. If a probationer fails to appear, a bench warrant is issued and served immediately. Probationers who fail the random drug test are immediately arrested and within 72 hours are brought before a judge. If the judge determines they violated their probation, they are immediately sentenced to a short stay in jail, typically for several days. This swift and certain punishment for violating probation terms sends a consistent message to probationers about personal responsibility and accountability. Research shows that a swift response to an infraction improves the perception that the sanction is fair; the immediacy is a vital tool in shaping behavior.

## NIJ AND HOPE

Findings from an initial evaluation in 2006 were promising; results showed that probationers under HOPE were 55 percent less likely to be arrested for a new crime and 72 percent less likely to use drugs, when compared to probationers in a control group. As a result, HOPE probationers served or were sentenced to 48 percent fewer days on average than probationers who were not in the HOPE program.

Despite the impressive results gathered during the initial evaluation, questions remained. So, NIJ commissioned the two evaluation projects. The first, the HOPE demonstration field experiment (DFE), is a four-site demonstration and replication of the HOPE program that uses randomized control trials (RCTs) to evaluate the model in jurisdictions that vary widely in population, density and geographic location. The second project is a long-term follow-up investigation of the original HOPE implementation in Hawaii that examines the long-term effectiveness and lasting impact on probationer outcomes. This follow-up will also look at fidelity measures to ascertain potential difficulties in consistent and sustainable HOPE implementation.

## PROJECT 1: HOPE DEMONSTRATION FIELD EXPERIMENT

In 2011, the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) and NIJ collaborated to

conduct and evaluate a strict replication of Hawaii HOPE on the U.S. mainland. BJA, with assistance and input from NIJ, selected four sites for HOPE implementation: Clackamas County, OR.; Tarrant County, TX; Saline County, AR.; and Salem County, MA. These jurisdictions represent not only geographic diversity, but also diversity in organization, capacity and common community corrections practices (scope of probation officer authority and discretion and method of processing technical violations). This diversity will allow for a thorough examination of HOPE's replication capacity across diverse localities. NIJ provided funding to the Research Triangle Institute (RTI) and their partner Pennsylvania State University (PSU) to implement the RCTs and conduct process, outcome and cost evaluations of the program. To ensure that the program was faithfully implemented like the original HOPE program, BJA commissioned Pepperdine University (where the principal HOPE evaluation was conducted) to provide training and technical assistance.

## KEY COMPONENTS OF THE EVALUATION

RTI and PSU are conducting a full-scope evaluation that examines the program from the process of implementing HOPE and its impact on probation, courts and law enforcement staff; to its impact on the probationers themselves, such as changes in offender attitudes, compliance with probation conditions and recidivism. Further, the overall cost of the program and its cost effectiveness given the outcomes will be evaluated. To determine HOPE's effectiveness relative to the common probation practices in each jurisdiction (their "probation as usual"), NIJ mandated RCTs at each site. Each RCT has a target sample size of 200 probationers randomly selected for HOPE and 200 selected for the PAU control group. The HOPE DFE research design should provide the most rigorous multisite test of HOPE to date.

## ENHANCEMENTS TO OTHER STUDIES

NIJ capitalized on the innovative thinking of its evaluators to ensure that the HOPE DFE would be able to speak to the unresolved questions surrounding HOPE, especially if it would work elsewhere in the same way it worked in Hawaii and if the positive results lasted longer than 12 months. To observe changes in offenders' behavior and attitudes, RTI is conducting interviews of offenders at intake into probation (baseline) and performing six-month and 12-month follow-up interviews for many offenders in the HOPE DFE. Beyond the baseline and follow-up interviews, RTI is collecting over 1,000 mini-interviews from 250 offenders to gather data on how offenders' attitudes may change throughout the course of the program.

HOPE is a complex program with many moving parts. To capture the changes in business practices these agencies experienced in implementing HOPE,

RTI and PSU are also mapping out the day-to-day interactions of the HOPE program staff using a social network analysis technique that tracks stakeholder interactions with each other as they collaborate on HOPE.

The sites have had difficulty in implementing the HOPE DFE. Most notably, the rate of enrollment at most sites has created some delays in achieving the target sample size. Although this has pushed back the date when full findings will be available to the spring of 2016, these delays will give RTI and PSU an expanded follow-up window to monitor offender outcomes. Since all four sites were enrolling probationers into the HOPE DFE in fall of 2012, over half of the participants will have up to 18 months exposure to their probation program (HOPE or PAU) when RTI collects administrative data for analysis. Previous NIJ-funded research on HOPE had only a 12-month follow-up window (Hawken and Kleiman 2009).

## PROJECT 2: HAWAII HOPE LONG-TERM FOLLOW-UP

The HOPE DFE will answer many questions surrounding the program, but two critical concerns remain: the long-term impact of HOPE and the sustainability of the program. NIJ commissioned Pepperdine University to resolve these concerns. Led by Angela Hawken, Ph.D., Pepperdine's research team is examining data generated from

2004 to 2007. In addition, graduates from the original program participated in surveys and researchers collected hair assays for drug testing. Finally, the research team investigated the Oahu Adult Probation Office's ability to sustain implementation of HOPE with fidelity over the long-term, especially as it pertains to processing swift and certain violations.

Although analysis and reporting is still underway, preliminarily findings suggest that HOPE may have an impact in gradually reducing recidivism. However, it also appears that implementing swift and certain sanctions in the years following implementation remains a challenge (Hawken et al., forthcoming). NIJ expects to release the final report from the HOPE follow-up in late 2014.

## NIJ IS POSITIONED TO ANSWER CRITICAL QUESTIONS

While initial evaluations are promising, researchers often caution against adopting the program until critical questions are answered (Cullen et al., 2014). For HOPE, these questions have centered on what exactly made HOPE work well in Hawaii. The diversity inherent in the four HOPE DFE jurisdictions will help tease out the more nuanced mechanisms that may be driving offender outcomes in the HOPE program and should help illuminate factors that vary from one jurisdiction to another and that may also affect offender outcomes.

The offender interviews will provide further insight into offender attitudes, and will, at the very least, reveal if offenders who participate in HOPE probation experience a change in the attitudes regarding criminal offending. These interviews will also help assess the impact that perceived transparency and legitimacy of the HOPE program (Kleiman et al., 2014) have on the probationer. NIJ agrees with the researchers who have proposed that a successful community corrections program will address the common factors driving persistent offending (see Kirk 2009), especially attitudes towards criminal behavior (Duriez et al., 2014).

## CONCLUSION

NIJ's mission involves investigating and exploring programs that enhance the fair administration of justice. For HOPE, NIJ has established a systematic and robust inquiry into its implementation and impact. Researchers will be building on the results of the HOPE studies to investigate additional aspects of HOPE, such as program adaptations that can achieve additional results and how the organizational structure of a jurisdiction (in terms of the unification of the correctional system between the state and local levels) impacts the cost and savings a jurisdiction may experience. While the HOPE DFE may provide some of these answers in part, more work in these areas will likely need to be done. ▷▷▲

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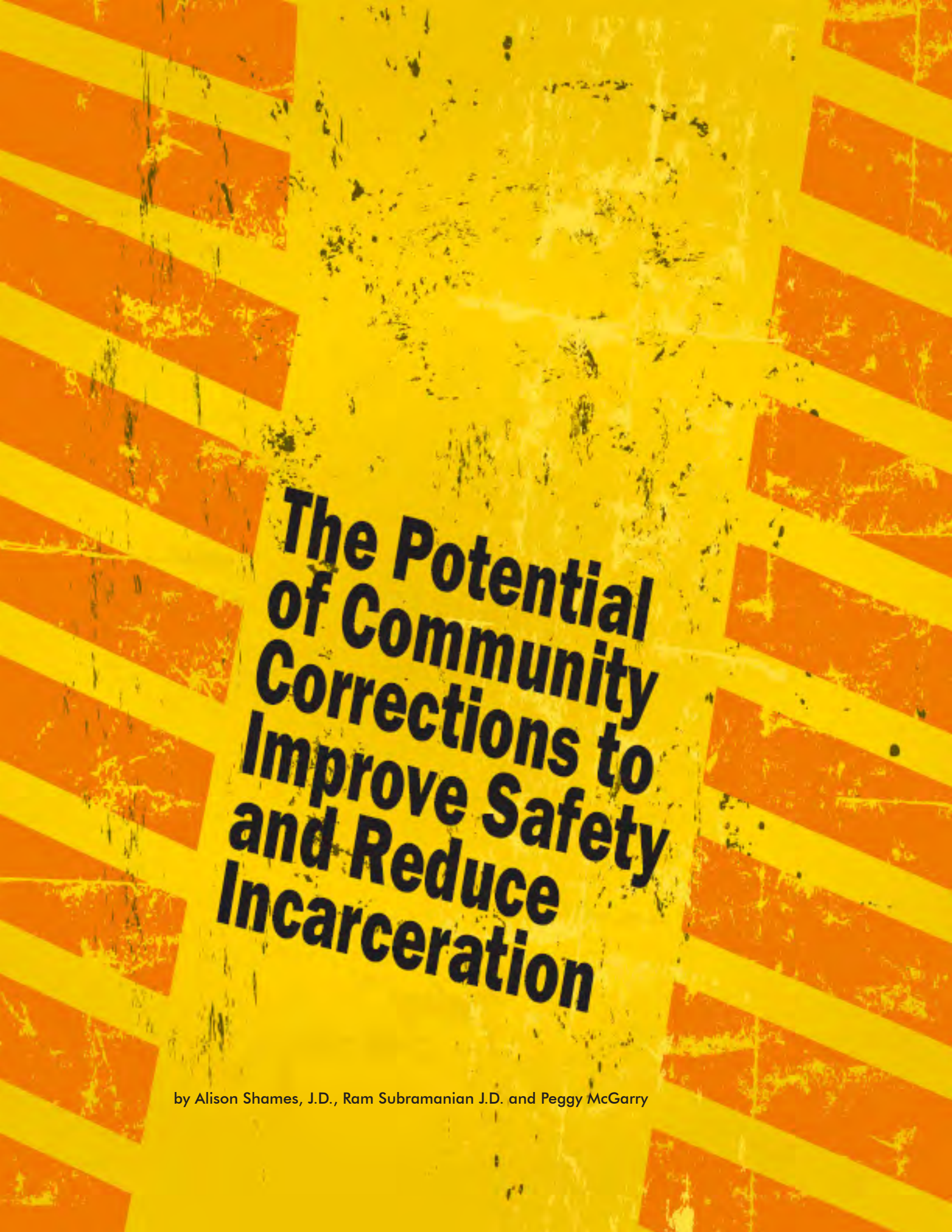
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# The Potential of Community Corrections to Improve Safety and Reduce Incarceration

by Alison Shames, J.D., Ram Subramanian J.D. and Peggy McGarry

The United States is in the midst of a wholesale reevaluation of its system for responding to criminal behavior. What we see today is a broad shift away from the punitive policies of the past that favored incarceration, to a system that is trying to match the sentence with the crime, its circumstances and the individual law breaker, looking in particular to community corrections systems to supervise more offenders. While this has been in part to reduce or contain the spiraling costs of operating prisons, recent system changes have been accompanied by a growing recognition that offenders have specific needs or limitations—such as anti-social attitudes, drug addiction or mental illness—that cannot be effectively addressed in prison. What is remarkable about this broad policy shift is that it is occurring on many different levels and is being championed by policymakers of all political stripes: Attorney General Eric Holder announced his "smart-on-crime" initiative in August 2013; President Obama established new clemency guidelines directed at nonviolent felons in April 2014; significant legislative reforms have been passed, both in Republican- and Democratic-run states over the last five years that expand offenses eligible for non-prison sanctions or reduce the length of custodial sentences and bipartisan legislation being considered by Congress in 2014 would specifically restrict the use of federal mandatory minimum sentences. There is no question that it is a time of change.

The Vera Institute of Justice (Vera) has been working alongside legislative councils, sentencing commissions, courts and corrections agencies as these changes have been deliberated and implemented. In looking across this new landscape, what Vera sees is striking: from "nothing works" to "we can do it all" in just shy of 40 years.[1] But Vera has also observed a certain amount of anxiety and fear among those in the field, particularly practitioners in community corrections. What will happen if this shift in policy fails? What will be the reaction if an inadequately, ineffectively managed parolee or probationer commits a terrible crime? Will policymakers turn their backs on the idea that an increased and improved use of community corrections can reduce incarceration and achieve public safety?

The fact remains that not every community corrections agency is equipped or resourced to do it all—and that more needs to be done to ensure that as larger numbers and different kinds of cases get sent to community corrections agencies, they are ready. This article begins by summarizing the current state of community corrections and, in so doing, offers a list of factors that contribute to the disappointing success rates of those being supervised under community corrections.[2] We then review some current best practices in the field and also some emerging practices in need of further study; all of

which hold the potential to produce much-improved results. Finally, we offer suggestions to help ensure that community corrections agencies fulfill the promise of this monumental reform.

> Between federal, state and local incarcerated populations, the U.S. currently locks up approximately 2.2 million people. The cost of housing prisoners has also grown—total state spending on corrections is now estimated at $52 billion a year, the bulk of which is spent on prisons.

## CURRENT STATE OF COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS

The story of mass incarceration in the United States is, by now, well known. In the last 40 years, the number of people confined in state prisons has increased more than 700 percent (Pew Center on the States, 2010). Between federal, state and local incarcerated populations, the U.S. currently locks up approximately 2.2 million people. The cost of housing prisoners has also grown—total state spending on corrections is now estimated at $52 billion a year, the bulk of which is spent on prisons (Pew Center on the States, 2011a). A Vera study of 40 states found that the average annual cost per inmate in 2011 was $31,286 when all prison costs were included (Henrichson and Delaney, 2012).

Starting in 2008, policymakers in greater numbers began re-examining their corrections systems. The increasing costs were no longer sustainable due to the Great Recession that began that same year. At the same time, the crime rate—for both violent and property crimes—had been dropping for years; and public opinion polls showed that a majority of the electorate favored community supervision for certain offenders and believed that prison growth had yielded insufficient public safety returns (Public Opinion Strategies, 2010). Backed by extensive research demonstrating that offenders can be effectively and safely supervised using well-targeted, well-designed and well-resourced

community-based supervision programs, legislators became convinced that moving inmates out of expensive prison beds and into community corrections—probation, parole and post-release supervision— would not only save money, but also result in better societal outcomes.

What many policymakers did not necessarily know is that community corrections had also been victim to rising populations and limited resources. While about one in 108 adults was in prison or jail at year end 2012, an estimated one in 50 adults was under community supervision (Glaze and Herberman, 2013). At year end 2012, about 4.8 million people in the United States were supervised in the community by the criminal justice system (Maruschak and Bonczar, 2013).

Most people under community supervision fall into one of three categories: (1) defendants with open cases who have been released pretrial and those who have been diverted to a specialty court or diversion program and who will be convicted and sentenced if they fail to comply with the conditions of their program; (2) offenders who have pled or were found guilty of their charges and are sentenced to a term of community supervision, usually probation, that may include participation in specialized programs like a drug treatment program or (3) offenders who have completed

prison or jail terms and return to the community but remain on supervision, usually parole but also probation or post-release supervision, for a certain amount of time.

While the number of adults under community supervision has declined each year over the last four years, the population had increased every year from 1980 to 2008, during which time the yearly growth rates ranged from 0.5 percent to 10.9 percent (Maruschak and Bonczar, 2013). Between 1977 and 2010, the number of people on probation supervision more than quadrupled, from about 800,000 to more than four million (Klingele, 2013). Unfortunately, the resources allocated to community corrections did not keep pace with the increases in population. Although the average annual cost of community corrections varies from state to state (see table below), it costs on average $1,250 for an individual on probation and $2,750 for an individual on parole or post-release supervision (Pew Center on the States, 2009).

## PRISON AND COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS POPULATIONS AND EXPENDITURES IN FISCAL YEAR 2010

| State | PRISON | | COMMUNITY SUPERVISION | | AVERAGE COST | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Population | Expenditures | Population | Expenditures | Prison | Community Supervision |
| Alabama | 30,739 | $433,745,923 | 62,200 | $45,938,006 | $14,111 | $739 |
| Arizona [2,6] | 38,423 | $897,343,500 | 7,993 | $12,989,300 | $23,354 | $1,625 |
| Arkansas | 16,147 | $288,888,121 | 49,900 | $28,342,706 | $17,891 | $568 |
| Colorado [2,6] | 22,815 | $749,093,130 | 11,014 | $42,417,112 | $32,833 | $3,851 |
| Connecticut [2,6] | 13,308 | $607,667,376 | 2,894 | $14,708,644 | $45,662 | $5,082 |
| Delaware [1] | 6,598 | $143,800,000 | 16,900 | $24,916,000 | $21,794 | $1,474 |
| Florida [3,7] | 104,306 | $2,003,605,196 | 260,300 | $240,909,947 | $19,209 | $926 |
| Georgia | 52,523 | $1,113,443,858 | 482,300 | $140,327,782 | $21,199 | $291 |
| Hawaii [1,2,6] | 5,912 | $187,613,165 | 1,850 | $3,381,876 | $31,734 | $1,828 |
| Illinois [2,6] | 48,418 | $997,859,100 | 26,009 | $50,847,900 | $20,609 | $1,955 |
| Indiana [2,6] | 28,012 | $562,247,665 | 10,872 | $9,215,074 | $20,072 | $848 |
| Kentucky | 19,937 | $286,381,151 | 71,400 | $37,074,773 | $14,364 | $519 |
| Louisiana | 39,444 | $610,880,240 | 70,000 | $60,166,708 | $15,487 | $860 |
| Maine | 1,942 | $93,225,747 | 7,300 | $8,805,889 | $48,005 | $1,206 |
| Maryland | 22,275 | $733,670,238 | 101,400 | $101,873,275 | $32,937 | $1,005 |
| Massachusetts [2,6] | 10,027 | $514,150,199 | 3,260 | $19,006,816 | $51,277 | $5,830 |
| Michigan | 44,113 | $1,517,903,300 | 206,800 | $223,889,300 | $34,409 | $1,083 |
| Missouri | 30,614 | $533,210,722 | 76,900 | $90,639,112 | $17,417 | $1,179 |
| Montana | 3,716 | $74,625,506 | 11,100 | $58,400,264 | $20,082 | $5,261 |
| Nebraska [2,6] | 4,498 | $158,190,135 | 941 | $3,538,366 | $35,169 | $3,760 |
| Ohio | 51,712 | $1,265,011,710 | 263,900 | $88,700,000 | $24,463 | $715 |
| Oklahoma | 24,514 | $441,772,058 | 28,300 | $34,897,398 | $18,021 | $1,233 |
| Oregon [4] | 13,971 | $568,476,929 | 31,347 | $107,371,389 | $40,690 | $3,425 |
| Pennsylvania [7] | 51,075 | $1,867,230,000 | 275,200 | $96,496,000 | $36,559 | $351 |
| Rhode Island [1] | 3,357 | $152,666,473 | 25,700 | $10,843,932 | $45,477 | $422 |
| South Dakota [2,6] | 3,431 | $57,967,921 | 2,843 | $3,785,177 | $16,895 | $1,331 |
| Tennessee | 27,451 | $622,011,500 | 72,100 | $74,644,600 | $22,659 | $1,035 |
| Texas | 164,652 | $2,471,827,691 | 521,400 | $449,682,860 | $15,012 | $862 |
| Utah | 6,795 | $130,653,000 | 14,500 | $44,928,500 | $19,228 | $3,099 |
| Virginia | 37,410 | $980,674,412 | 57,900 | $73,540,055 | $26,214 | $1,270 |
| Washington [5,7] | 18,212 | $638,568,378 | 18,690 | $124,342,088 | $35,063 | $6,653 |
| West Virginia [2,6] | 6,642 | $154,936,305 | 1,796 | $3,589,371 | $23,327 | $1,999 |
| Wisconsin | 20,812 | $738,334,059 | 63,900 | $188,417,956 | $35,476 | $2,949 |

**(1)** Prison population includes only inmates under state jurisdiction; **(2)** Community correction population includes parole only; **(3)** BJS community correction populations were not comparable to the figures provided to Vera by the state; **(4)** Community correction population figures obtained from the Oregon Department of Correction; **(5)** Community correction population figures include only offenders supervised by the Washington State Department of Correction; **(6)** Community correction expenditures include parole expenditures only; **(7)** Does not reflect all community corrections expenditures.

Source: Ram Subramanian and Rebecca Tublitz. *Realigning Justice Resources: A Review of Population Spending Shifts in Prison and Community Corrections.* New York, NY: Vera Institute of Justice, 2012.

The current reform strategy of sentencing fewer people to incarceration, releasing more people from prison through an enhanced use of early release mechanisms and placing more people under community supervision, has the potential to enhance public safety and reduce corrections costs. However, without adequate planning and resources, success for people under community corrections is far from assured. Although 68 percent of the 2.1 million probationers exiting supervision in 2012 completed probation successfully, 15 percent were incarcerated (for either a new offense or revocation) (Maruschak and Bonczar, 2013). For parolees, only 58 percent complete parole successfully, and 25 percent were re-incarcerated (Maruschak and Bonczar, 2013). In the most recent national study of recidivism more generally, about two-thirds of released prisoners were arrested for a new crime within three years, and three-quarters were arrested within five years (Durose, Cooper, and Snyder, 2014). As one commentator noted, "These statistics suggest that rather than serving as an alternative, community supervision often is no more than a deferred sentence of incarceration." (Klingele, 2013: 1020).

While research has yet to definitively identify the reasons why such a large number of people on community supervision fail and are (re)incarcerated, Vera has learned a great deal from existing studies, our observations in the field and conversations with corrections professionals. We offer the following reasons.

**Large caseloads.** In the 1970s, parole officers supervised an average caseload of 45 parolees (Reentry Policy Council, 2005; Petersilia, 2000). By 2003, the last year for which there is good data, parole officers were responsible for approximately 70 parolees, and probation officers for 130 probationers (Reentry Policy Council, 2005; Petersilia, 2000). Not only are caseloads higher, but the restrictions and conditions placed on supervisees have become more complex: sex offender registration requirements, living restrictions, curfews, GPS monitoring, program requirements (e.g., mandated drug treatment), to name just a few. Budget constraints also force officers to supervise offenders with fewer resources—such as a lack of clerical support and outdated technology. While smaller caseloads alone will not produce better results—and Vera knows that many supervision agencies now use specialized, risk- or place-based caseloads—many jurisdictions continue to lump all offenders together and assign too many supervisees to their officers (Jalbert, 2011).

**Long supervision terms.** While terms of supervision are limited in some jurisdictions to two or three years, it is not unusual for offenders to be subject to longer supervision terms, such as five

or ten years and sometimes much longer (Klingele, 2013: 1062). Such long terms can cause supervisees to chafe under their restrictions and reporting requirements while exposing them to incarceration for minor violations that would otherwise be punishable with a fine or community sentence.

**Boilerplate conditions.** All individuals placed on community corrections are subject to supervision conditions determined by the sentencing judge or paroling authority. In most instances, the conditions are not individually tailored to the case; jurisdictions impose mandatory, boilerplate conditions—e.g., do not commit new crimes, report to a supervising officer, pay restitution, avoid alcohol, do not use drugs, comply with travel restrictions, obtain permission before changing residences, do not socialize with convicted felons, attend rehabilitation program(s), etc. While each restriction when considered individually appears reasonable, the laundry list of conditions, especially when applied universally and not responsive or tailored to an assessed level of individual risk, places an impossible burden on most offenders. As a result, violations are frequent and offenders are exposed to unnecessary revocation and incarceration. The long list of conditions may also engender disrespect among supervisees, especially when coupled with long supervision terms. The list of restrictions

and obligations may also hinder a person who would otherwise be successful if simply left alone.

**Reliance on the surveillance model of supervision.** Surveillance and enforcement—"trail 'em, nail 'em, and jail 'em"—have historically been the supervision strategies of choice for corrections agencies (Jalbert, 2011: 15). The methods used include frequent drug testing, increased contacts (most of which are in the office), the threat of incarceration for rule violations and electronic monitoring. Although it may appear tough, exclusive reliance on surveillance has repeatedly been shown to have little impact on recidivism. Supervision programs that do not tailor surveillance to assessed risk and do not focus on programming for assessed needs do not, in general, produce a reduction in recidivism rates (Drake and Aos, 2012). Although the use of evidence-based practices, in which a supervision plan is responsive to each individual's risk and needs, is becoming more commonplace, surveillance remains the most common form of supervision.

**Focusing on contacts, rather than outcomes.** In too many jurisdictions, officers are judged by their adherence to contact standards (the amount and frequency of their contact with their supervisees) rather than the outcomes achieved by their supervisee, such as

obtaining gainful employment, abstaining from drugs and alcohol and maintaining a stable family environment. Contact standards also do not measure the quality of contacts, the problem-solving ability of officers nor their persistence in seeking appropriate interventions and services for their supervisees.

**Uniform case supervision.** Decades of research demonstrate that assigning offenders to correctional programs based on their level of risk and directing resources to those offenders who are at highest risk of recidivating, will result in lower rates of recidivism (Lowenkamp, Latessa, and Holsinger, 2005; Lowenkamp, Latessa, and Holsinger, 2006). Probation and parole departments across the country have introduced evidence-based principles and embarked on transforming their supervision model. Nevertheless, far too many jurisdictions still lump all supervisees together and provide too few services to those who need them most, while at the same time, require too much supervision (with harmful results) for those who need it least.

**Inadequate and insufficient treatment resources.** Even if a jurisdiction applies best practices— such as using a case management approach, focusing resources on high-risk offenders and developing case plans that target an offender's individual risk

and needs— results will be lacking if the needed resources are not available in the community at large. From mental health and sex offender treatment to cognitive behavioral therapy and temporary housing, offenders have specific criminogenic needs that, if left unaddressed, will only lead to further criminal activity and more victims. In too many jurisdictions, there is inadequate system and resource planning; little is known about the capacity or quality of the services that are available in the community and whether those services are responsive to the particular needs of supervisees.

## CURRENT AND EMERGING BEST PRACTICES

There are current and emerging best practices in the field of community corrections that address many of the shortcomings listed above. A growing body of research not only demonstrates the positive impact that a variety of community-based interventions can have on individual behavior, but also shows that community supervision, with appropriate and targeted programming and services, can be more cost-effective than prison in responding to and preventing criminal behavior.

This section first describes some best practices that are supported by a significant body of evidence; it then discusses some emerging practices that

are in need of further study. What these innovations have in common is their singular focus on public safety through long-term behavior change.

## CURRENT BEST PRACTICES

### SHIFTING TO A BEHAVIORAL-MANAGEMENT APPROACH TO SUPERVISION

Research over the last several decades has demonstrated that treatment-focused—rather than surveillance-based—strategies can reduce recidivism, particularly when applied to those at highest risk of reoffending (Paparozzi and Gendreau, 2005; Lowenkamp, Latessa, and Holsinger, 2005).

**Changing the agency.** Implementing behavioral-management, recidivism-reduction strategies requires more than simply adopting new techniques and programs; agencies must reshape their mission, restructure supervision and redefine the role of supervision officers. Because so many agencies were previously encouraged to take an enforcement and surveillance approach to supervision, shifting to a behavioral-management model and embracing a mission of producing public safety through the success of supervisees (rather than through the punishment of their failures) is a significant undertaking. Everything from job descriptions, officer training, promotion criteria and reward structures must be reviewed and adapted in order to stimulate and encourage this change. In many ways, the transformation being asked of agencies mirrors what agencies are encouraging their parolees and probationers to undertake: new values, new ways of thinking and new skills.

**Changing the role of the officer.** The role of a supervision officer in a behavioral-management model combines enforcement responsibilities with a duty to instruct and model pro-social behavior. A key ingredient in this process is developing the skills to assess supervisees accurately, interact with them effectively, motivate them to modify their behavior and understand the services and interventions that will support the desired change (Trotter, 2013). To do this, the routine interactions between the officers and the people they supervise need to be reframed. Research suggests that strong, positive working relationships that are based on mutual respect, openness, honesty and warmth, among other qualities, can increase supervisees' compliance and engagement with supervision and decrease recidivism (Robinson, 2005). Successful working relationships find a balance between the dual roles of rehabilitative care and rule enforcement; officers who develop a "firm, fair, and caring" relationship with supervisees have seen a decrease in recidivism (Kennealy et al., 2012). Positive and consistent working relationships

are related to improved outcomes in correctional treatment programs and they are also thought to improve officers' ability to gather information and monitor their supervisees (Dowden and Andrews, 2004).

By building and establishing trust between the supervisee and officer, the supervisee becomes an active participant in developing and then "owning" his or her supervision and treatment plan. This approach also requires officers to establish goal-directed contacts; each interaction—whether an interview, collateral contact (contact with key people in an offender's life, such as an employer, neighbor, or family member), or phone call—should have a clear purpose in securing behavior change. Typical officer responsibilities, such as checking on restitution payments or attendance at mandated treatment, can be part of achieving trust and engagement if done with care. The supervisee's success in the community becomes the definition and measure of the officer's success.

Although more research is needed in order to determine which skills, competencies and interactional styles of officers best promote offender success (not to mention, the efficacy of training programs that aim to develop these), the field has started to answer some of these questions. For example, research has shown that the use of pro-social modeling by officers correlates with offenders'

compliance with supervision requirements and desistance from crime (Trotter, 1996). In addition, the use of motivational interviewing techniques has been shown to have some impact on offender retention and engagement in treatment programs, offenders' motivation to change and risk of future offending (McMurran, 2009). Research has also shown that officers are responsive to training and other supports that assist them in applying core correctional practices during face-to-face interactions with supervisees (Smith, Schweitzer, and Labrecque, 2012).

**RISK AND NEEDS ASSESSMENT TOOLS**

The foundation of good correctional practice is the administration of a validated risk and needs assessment tool at various points and times while in prison and on supervision. Risk assessment instruments measure the probability that a person will reoffend. Needs assessments identify a person's criminogenic needs—i.e., the factors that are strongly correlated with criminal behavior, such as drug addiction, anti-social attitudes and associates, lack of problem-solving skills, lack of education or job skills. Modern assessment tools measure both static (those things that can't be changed such as age, criminal history, etc.) and dynamic (those that can be changed such as drug addiction, anti-social attitudes, etc.) risk factors, needs and strengths present in an individual's life.

The mere administration of a tool will not achieve better outcomes. Agencies and officers must use the results to assign the offender to an appropriate supervision level (low, medium, or high intensity); allocate limited resources (direct treatment to those at highest risk of reoffending); and craft individualized case plans to guide supervision, programming and interventions. Additionally, since the best tools evaluate the individual's dynamic or changeable risk factors and needs, they should be re-administered routinely to determine whether current assignments and plans are still appropriate. There are multiple assessment tools available to the field (LSI-R, COMPAS, Ohio Risk Assessment System, to name just a few), but whatever tool the jurisdiction uses, the results must be validated using data from their own populations.

**ALLOCATING SUPERVISION AND TREATMENT RESOURCES BASED ON LEVEL OF RISK**

Research over many decades demonstrates that supervision and intervention resources are used to best effect on those who pose the highest risk to public safety. In terms of promoting law-abiding and pro-social behavior, the greatest return on corrections dollars can be realized by supervising moderate-to-high-risk offenders more intensively—in terms of the number and frequency of contacts and the range and intensity (or

dosage) of services and interventions (Andrews, 2006; Lowenkamp, Latessa, and Holsinger, 2005; Lowenkamp, Latessa, and Holsinger, 2006).

Conversely, research has shown that assigning low-risk offenders to intensive supervision and programming can be counterproductive. Intensive interventions risk disrupting already established pro-social behaviors, activities or relationships (such as jobs, school, parenting, or religious observances). Moreover, placing low-risk offenders in programming alongside high-risk offenders risks exposing them to more entrenched anti-social attitudes and subcultures. In doing so, agencies can in fact increase these supervisees' risk of offending (Lowenkamp and Latessa, 2004).

What this means in practice is that all people placed under community corrections need to be assessed for risk and then assigned to an appropriate supervision status. Levels of supervision will vary across jurisdictions, but generally include: administrative (no reporting requirement and officer has no contact unless offender commits another crime or misses a required payment); minimum or low (reporting is done by mail, phone, or walk-in); medium-high (regular face-to-face reporting, including in the field, and may include targeted programming); and intensive (regular and frequent face-to-

face reporting, mandatory interventions or treatment, home visits, collateral contacts, drug testing).

For supervision agencies, caseload sizes can be tailored according to the level of supervision. An officer monitoring an administrative or low-risk caseload may be able to supervise 200 or more supervisees, since what is required of the officer is much less than officers monitoring a medium-to-high risk caseload. For those supervising an intensive caseload, they may be able to monitor only 20 or 30 people, since contact will be more frequent and supervision will be more intensive.

## DESIGNING A SUPERVISION PLAN BASED ON NEEDS

To have an impact on criminal behavior, a supervision officer must develop a nuanced understanding of a supervisee's total attitudinal, educational, family support, mental health and cognitive assets and needs. For example, research conducted by Vera on a large cohort of parolees found that when a parolee cannot maintain stable housing or keep a job, it may be that he lacks sufficient resources to afford rent or the necessary job skills, but it may also be an underlying inability to get along with or take simple directions from others that money and job skills will not address. To help this supervisee succeed and to

select the intervention most likely to produce results, the officer must have an understanding of the individual based on both the risk and needs assessment and the officer's own interactions with the offender.[2]

Using the assessment instrument's diagnostic of a person's criminogenic needs as its basis, an individualized case management plan, should prioritize the supervisee's treatment, education and service needs and identify the most effective ways to address these. Incorporating both strengths and needs in the case plan ensures the officer does not order an intervention that will interfere with or disrupt protective factors (i.e., the factors that are correlated with positive behavior, such as employment and family relationships), while also guiding the officer in how to recognize and reinforce positive behavior during the supervision process.

The current generation of risk and needs assessment tools incorporates case planning into the tool itself. Once the assessment is completed, a case management plan is automatically generated that picks up on the highest needs and identifies the offender's strengths. The officer then discusses the plan with the offender and together they agree on a strategy to address the identified needs.

## EMERGING PRACTICES IN NEED OF FURTHER STUDY

### AUTOMATED REPORTING FOR LOW-RISK INDIVIDUALS

Jurisdictions are experimenting with different methods to effectively and efficiently monitor low-risk offenders. In Georgia, certain low-risk offenders call into an automated telephone system, the Probation Reporting Contact Center (PRCC), on a monthly basis to report their status. Non-standard responses trigger an alert to a "call handler" who tries to resolve the matter without engaging the probation officer. The PRCC allows the state to increase the caseload of officers handling low-risk offenders and frees up probation officers to work with higher-risk offenders. Other jurisdictions, such as New York City and counties in California, have implemented automated kiosk reporting systems for use by low-risk probationers to report to supervising officers. Entering a password or other identifier, offenders can update their information, receive messages from their supervising officers, be assigned to drug testing or ask questions about the conditions of their supervision. Both kiosks and the PRCC provide offenders who may be in school or working with flexibility in reporting times. The agency saves staff time and costs by requiring the offender to input information directly into the machine, which uploads it into agency data systems. Further research is needed, however, on the effectiveness of kiosk supervision and other automated systems and the circumstances under which these should be used in community corrections (Jannetta and Halberstadt, 2011).

### ELECTRONIC AND GPS MONITORING

Electronic monitoring (EM) and the use of global positioning systems (GPS) have gained traction as alternative methods to monitor people who require more intensive supervision. EM with GPS has been used most frequently with those convicted of domestic violence and sexual offenses. The potential for cost-savings in using EM as an alternative to incarceration suggests that its use is likely to continue to grow (National Institute of Justice, 2011). However, the field still lacks a solid evidence base from which to learn about EM best practices (Bottos, 2007). Given the variety of correctional settings in which EM is used and the range of offenders it is used with, much research is still needed to determine the fiscal and social impact of EM and to identify the practices that lead to the best outcomes (Roman, et al., 2012).

### ENHANCING SOCIAL SUPPORT

Research suggests that facilitating the development of family ties and social networks deters criminal behavior. For many, social networks are more effective in meeting employment and accommodation needs than are social-welfare organizations (Haines, 1990).

Many programs designed to lessen the risk of offending focus on the development of human capital—individual attitudes, skills and education—to the almost total exclusion of social capital—the value inherent in and between social networks (McNeill and Weaver, 2010). Finding employment, for example, is not only aided by acquiring new skills (human capital), but by the cultivation of social networks that provide access to job opportunities (social capital), many of which are available only through word-of-mouth. One way to cultivate social capital is through offender mentorships (Brown and Ross, 2010). Research suggests that providing ex-prisoners with opportunities to help others can lessen the risk of offending (Maruna, 2001). Mentorships also help to limit social isolation, which can greatly inhibit successful job-seeking (Payne, 1996). Further research is needed to identify successful programs that support social reintegration and identify ways in which officers can promote social support without jeopardizing public safety.

Research also demonstrates that family support can be a highly influential factor in the success of ex-prisoners (Niven and Stewart, 2005). Securing employment and abstaining from drugs are both related to intimate partner and family relationships (Visher, LaVigne, and Travis, 2004). Unfortunately, offenders often find themselves incarcerated many miles from their homes and maintaining meaningful contact with their families can be financially and logistically challenging. In the community, public housing policy and conditions of supervision can further limit supervisees' ability to participate actively in family life (for example, restrictions on associating with known felons when family members are felons). Corrections agencies and local governments are experimenting with ways to facilitate family contact and enhance family relationships: Many corrections departments are piloting video visitation, to help inmates maintain family contact.[3] Some supervision agencies use case management plans that encourage the involvement of family members. Finally, local governments, such as New York City and New Orleans, are piloting programs that reunite formerly incarcerated individuals with their families in public housing.[4]

## GRADUATED RESPONSES AND INCENTIVES

Revocation to jail or prison is a severe, expensive and mostly ineffective sanction for many supervision violations. Yet officers often express the fear that, if they do not revoke for lower-level violations, a supervisee may commit a more serious offense later for which the officer and his or her agency will be held liable. Many jurisdictions have addressed this concern by formally adopting policies that support a system of administrative and graduated responses for rules violations that offer individual officers a measure

of legal protection. These policies are grounded in a growing body of research showing the importance of responding to every infraction in an appropriate and proportionate fashion. From a missed appointment to a failed drug test, there are many behaviors that can be safely managed with prompt, defined sanctions that directly address the reasons the violation occurred without a motion to violate (Burke, 2004; Burke, Gelb, and Horowitz, 2007).

In addition to sanctions, an effective system of graduated responses should also incorporate incentives and rewards. Research indicates that a ratio of at least four positive to each negative verbal response (4:1) is most effective for reinforcing behavior change (Gendreau and Goggin, 1997). By rewarding compliant behavior and achievements, officers encourage offenders to accomplish pro-social goals and other positive behavior change. In addition to verbal praise, the positive reinforcement may include a letter of commendation or certificate of achievement from a supervising agent or office director, a small gift card, transportation allowance or similar inexpensive item.

Providing a continuum of responses— from programming interventions and sanctions in response to violations (such as an official reprimand from a senior supervising officer, more frequent reporting, home confinement, and more frequent drug testing) to incentives and awards to encourage and recognize compliance—gives officers the necessary tools to work with their supervisees not only when they violate a condition of supervision, but also when they excel.

In recent years, a number of states (including Arkansas, Delaware, Louisiana, and South Carolina) have legislatively mandated and authorized the use of a graduated response grid to respond to technical violations. While anecdotal evidence and initial outcomes reveal that graduated responses contribute to a reduced number of revocations, there is little research on the effects of graduated responses on recidivism (Martin, 2008). Evaluating the effectiveness of the range of sanctions will inform agencies which sanctions and interventions are effective for specific violations and populations, based on their risk level and treatment needs.

Some states supplement a continuum of community-based graduated sanctions with small amounts of jail time or a secure residential option. Providing community corrections officers with the authority to impose one to several days of jail time without going before the court or paroling authority provides officers with greater flexibility to respond to violations and ensures that the sanction can be imposed swiftly. Another commonly used sanction

is a limited period of time (up to 90 days, in most instances) at a secure facility, such as a technical violators center or "half-way back" program. More research is needed to determine whether such secure sanctions produce better outcomes. Recent studies have cast doubt on the usefulness and cost effectiveness of these programs, particularly for technical violations. Research has shown that it may only be useful if there is a demonstrated need for intensive, residential drug treatment and if supervisees are placed in the secure facility immediately following a violation (Drake and Aos, 2012: 9).

A less disruptive and expensive alternative to a secure facility is day reporting, which requires a supervisee to report to a center daily, weekly or otherwise, depending on his or her level of risk and needs (Diggs, 1993). These centers structure free time by offering rehabilitative programming, such as substance abuse treatment, educational and vocational skills trainings, together with surveillance and accountability activities (such as drug testing). Research demonstrates that day treatment centers can reduce risk level, reduce recidivism and keep communities safer (Martin, Lurigio, and Olson, 2003; Van Vleet, Hickert and Becker, 2006).

## LIMITING THE LENGTH OF SUPERVISION TERMS

Community corrections agencies have historically had little ability to modify long supervision terms. While most states have laws that permit officers to petition judges or parole boards to reduce the active supervision time of individual parolees or probationers, these tools are used rarely and inconsistently. In recent years, many states (including Arizona, Delaware, Kansas, Oregon, and South Dakota) have passed laws that offer probationers and parolees earned time credit or other benefits if they comply with the conditions of their supervision. These new programs award a certain amount of credit to supervisees who are compliant (e.g., 30 days of credit for every 30 days of compliance). Because the credit is awarded automatically based on criteria established by statute or policy, it eliminates the political pressures that can otherwise influence the judge, parole agency and supervising agent.

For those on community supervision, earned discharge is the ultimate incentive for compliance and behavioral change (Petersilia, 2007; Solomon, 2008). In addition, moving lower-risk, compliant probationers and parolees to less-intensive levels of supervision or off supervision altogether, allows corrections agencies to allocate resources to less compliant, moderate-to-high risk offenders who present a greater threat

to public safety. Initial outcomes suggest that earned discharge results in fewer revocations and a decline in new crimes being committed by the supervisees (Pew Center on the States, 2011b). Additionally, at least one study has determined that offenders whose supervision is terminated early, regardless of risk level, have lower rates of recidivism than those who remain on supervision for their entire term (Baber and Johnson, 2013). However, more research is needed to determine whether earned time credit policies contribute to reduced recidivism for probationers and parolees.

## MOVING FORWARD: RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE FIELD

Community-based supervision has always had the potential to support individual change, help make communities safer and reduce public costs. Implementing research-based and emerging best practices is a necessary, but insufficient step towards achieving these positive outcomes. Other essential ingredients are also required.

**Adequate Resources.** Community corrections will be effective only if adequate resources are made available to the supervising agencies. Given the enormous pressure that states have faced from shrinking budget dollars and rising costs, many have focused primarily on legislative and policy changes aimed at

producing a swift reduction in the prison population, such as increasing earned good-time credit, advancing parole eligibility dates for certain offenders, making a larger group of offenses— particularly drug offenses—eligible for community-based sentences and rolling back release dates with a requirement of post-release supervision. These reforms not only expand the number of people community corrections agencies must supervise but also increase the levels of risk and needs in the supervisee population.

While these legislative and policy changes are good and important, there is a risk that they will not be implemented as intended or will prove ineffective without the necessary oversight and resources. Funding must be secured for adequate staffing and ongoing skills training. Extensive training that provides staff with the knowledge and skills they need to meet new job expectations—such as motivational interviewing, communication skills, case planning and risk and needs assessments—is critical.

Many states and counties have embarked on their reform process under the rubric of "justice reinvestment"— the promise of reallocation of institutional cost-savings to community-based treatment, education and other services aimed at crime prevention or recidivism reduction. Several states have also

implemented "performance incentive funding" programs that reward local supervision agencies with some of the savings that states accrue when community supervision agencies successfully reduce the number of offenders revoked or sent to prison (Vera Institute of Justice, 2012). While a promise of future funding is very positive, up-front investment is also needed, particularly to fund additional supervising officer positions and extensive training programs (LaVigne, et al 2014).

**Collaboration with Key Stakeholders.** Securing the outcomes sought by policymakers—in public safety, dollars saved, communities' safety improved—is more likely if key stakeholders are part of the process. Corrections agencies cannot affect desired outcomes on their own: police, judges, prosecutors, paroling authorities and others play an important role as well. Success is more certain if all stakeholders know about and accept proposed strategies for supervision that no longer have a singular focus on surveillance and enforcement. Often, legislators and executive branch policymakers can help provide needed outreach to these constituencies to enhance their understanding of why change is needed and to encourage their cooperation. Legislators can also convene forums or hearings through which corrections agencies and other stakeholders can

discuss the progress and impact of change.

**Realistic Expectations.** Elected officials must not expect anticipated outcomes, such as a reduction in prison population, to happen overnight. For some agencies, the kinds of changes needed to achieve the outcomes envisioned may take a long time. Changes in hiring, training, case classifications, caseload assignments, staff reward structures and so on, all require extended, focused effort on the part of agency leadership. Leadership must also acknowledge the importance of achieving secondary outcomes that contribute to the primary outcome. For instance, instead of just focusing on a reduction in the number of people being sent to prison, officials should also track the number of supervisees who complete supervision successfully, obtain permanent employment, complete educational courses and abstain from drugs.

**Skilled, Bold Leaders.** Effective community supervision requires agency leaders who have the support of policymakers to produce systemic change. Leaders need vision and freedom to create an executive team of their own choosing. With support from above, they will have the ability to withstand the pressure to maintain the status quo. Governors and county executives also need help; the search for corrections

leaders should warrant the same kind of professional recruiting effort that most executives undertake when hiring an education or health official. Once hired, these agency heads need ongoing support to implement policy and practice changes throughout their agencies.

**Cultural Change.** Changing supervision practices within agencies includes changing the ethos of the entire operation; in other words, the core mission, vision and values—everything from policies to job descriptions and staff promotion criteria. This process is long and arduous. Not only is there predictable resistance to changes to the way things have always been done, but recalibrating an agency toward the success of probationers and parolees (as opposed to just avoiding or catching failure) can be a fundamental challenge to the way an agency's employees see themselves, their work and their purpose. Despite this, there are many proven ways to make these changes successfully—from using vertical implementation task groups drawn from different levels of staff and different divisions within an agency, to providing rewards and incentives to employees in order to encourage change.

An additional challenge may be frequent changes in leadership and, hence, approach. Staff may resist change in anticipation that existing leadership will not be in place for very long. This

attitude makes it all the more imperative that hiring and promotion criteria be overhauled quickly, and policy changes be developed with input from line staff and institutionalized as rapidly as possible. Support from outside experts is usually helpful in identifying and managing the many different aspects of the change process—including coaching leaders, framing messages to staff, creating new hiring criteria and developing policies that reflect new goals.

Available and Adequate Programs and Services. While evidence-based programming is key to producing positive public safety outcomes, it may not be available in certain jurisdictions. Especially in rural and smaller metropolitan areas, access to providers may be extremely limited. Agencies must have the resources to assess providers and to seek either training for their own staff or to create incentives for providers to acquire needed skills and assets *to fill program gaps.*

## CONCLUSION

At a moment when federal, state and local governments are pursuing sentencing and policy changes that would have been unthinkable five years ago, it is essential that far greater attention be paid to, and resources invested in, community corrections and supervision. The feeling of accomplishment in many state capitols and county seats as legislative and policy changes are enacted is premature unless

and until these changes are implemented as envisioned. Only when community supervision agencies have the assistance they need to deliver on anticipated outcomes will the potential for community corrections to bring about personal transformation and improved public safety be realized for individuals, their families and their communities.  ▷▷▲

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## ENDNOTES

1  Robert Martinson famously concluded, "nothing works," in his 1974 essay, "What works? Questions and answers about prison reform," which originally appeared in The Public Interest.

2  This article is based on a report previously published by the Vera Institute of Justice in 2013.

3  Vera is currently conducting NIJ-sponsored research that is exploring whether providing incarcerated people with access to video visitation improves the nature and frequency of prisoners' contact with their families and other people who support them. It will also explore if these contacts improve their compliance with custodial rules and outcomes after their release from prison.

4  Vera is working with the housing authorities in New York City and New Orleans to develop screening guidelines, modify tenant selection criteria, and research pilot programs that allow formerly incarcerated people to reside in public housing.

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# Reflections on the Importance of "Process" in Bringing about Successful Changes: A Case Study on Wyoming's Offender Reentry Work

by Richard P. Stroker, J.D.

Leaders in criminal justice agencies are often trying to bring about substantial changes in either the direction of their organizational efforts or the ways in which critical aspects of work are performed.  Practitioners know that simply bringing a group of knowledgeable people together to implement a new idea does not guarantee that the group will be successful in accomplishing the desired mission. Research on successful (and unsuccessful) implementation efforts and organizational change supports this notion, pointing to the critical importance of strong leadership, developing a full understanding of the problem, gaining buy-in from various stakeholders and securing the necessary resources prior to executing the desired changes (Carol Flaherty-Zonis Associates, 2007; Fixsen, Blaze & VanDyke, 2011). This article focuses primarily on the process that was followed by the state of Wyoming to improve its offender reentry practices and the steps taken to implement significant changes within and across several agencies.  It also draws parallels from the research on successful implementation and organizational change to Wyoming's work, and ultimately, their success.

In 2009, Wyoming was selected by the National Institute of Corrections as a "Transition from Prison to the Community" (TPC) site (see Burke, 2008 for more information on the TPC Initiative).[1]  Directors and managers from the Wyoming Department of Corrections (WDOC) and the Wyoming Board of Parole (Parole Board) led this effort. As a result of their TPC work, WDOC (both the Prisons division and the Field Services division), and the Parole Board made  significant changes in their practices over a four year period – and these changes continue to occur both inside and outside of these agencies as the statewide TPC effort continues to evolve.  For instance, some of these changes included:

- A reduction in the number of parole hearings waived by offenders.
- An increase in the number of positive parole grants.
- The development of an effective reentry checklist that ensures that critical issues are addressed prior to offenders' release to the community.
- Enhanced processes that better attend to various offender stabilization factors when they return to the community, including the attainment of identification, medications and clothing.
- The development of tools for use by field staff to ensure a seamless transition of individuals returning to the community.
- New methods to provide objective and consistent recommendations by institutional personnel to the Parole Board.
- Improved methods to provide critical information to offenders as they prepare for release and following their return to the community.

- Improved housing options available to sex offenders returning to the community.
- An enhanced ability to collect and analyze data, both within the DOC and from partner agencies (e.g., Department of Workforce Services).
- Increased prospective employer education and use of career readiness certificates to enhance the likelihood that offenders are hired, and revised licensing and certifications to increase offenders' eligibility for jobs.
- Significantly increased collaboration among state agencies, local agencies, private sector organizations and other critical reentry partners.

**"TPC was the catalyst that caused us to look internally to identify gaps and priorities in the reentry process. We then expanded that effort by working with myriad external stakeholders to fill the gaps identified and meet priorities as best we could for a more meaningful, seamless and successful transition process. TPC is a lot of work. But the results are worth the effort."**

*Bob Lampert, WDOC Director*

These successes and others noted below suggest that attention to the implementation process matters and can result in significant payoffs.

## LESSONS FROM EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION EFFORTS

Whenever a significant change in the direction of an organization is contemplated, it is because leaders believe that the action will help the organization achieve its goals. But orchestrating these changes can be a very difficult undertaking for a variety of reasons: staff may be reluctant to learn new skills, question the data provided, doubt that problems exist or that contemplated changes will actually work, be unwilling to collaborate or feel overwhelmed by current responsibilities. Furthermore, data may not exist or may not be collected and shared in an effective manner.

Can the emerging field of implementation science help us to overcome some of these problems? Implementation science suggests that a change effort include the following elements to be successful (Fixsen et al., 2005):

- A stage of exploration and adoption, that includes a review of information and a process that leads to a decision to proceed with implementation.
- Careful practitioner selection to ensure personnel are qualified to perform the job.

- Training and opportunities for staff to practice new skills in a safe environment.
- Evaluation of program and staff performance.
- Leadership that oversees the process and keeps people focused on the desired goals.
- Strategies for working with external systems to ensure the availability of needed resources to support the work.
- A strategy to sustain the new policies and practices over time.

Indeed, these features were important to the process that Wyoming followed to change its reentry policies and practices and are discussed in greater detail below.

## A KEY INGREDIENT TO SUCCESS IN WYOMING: LEADERSHIP
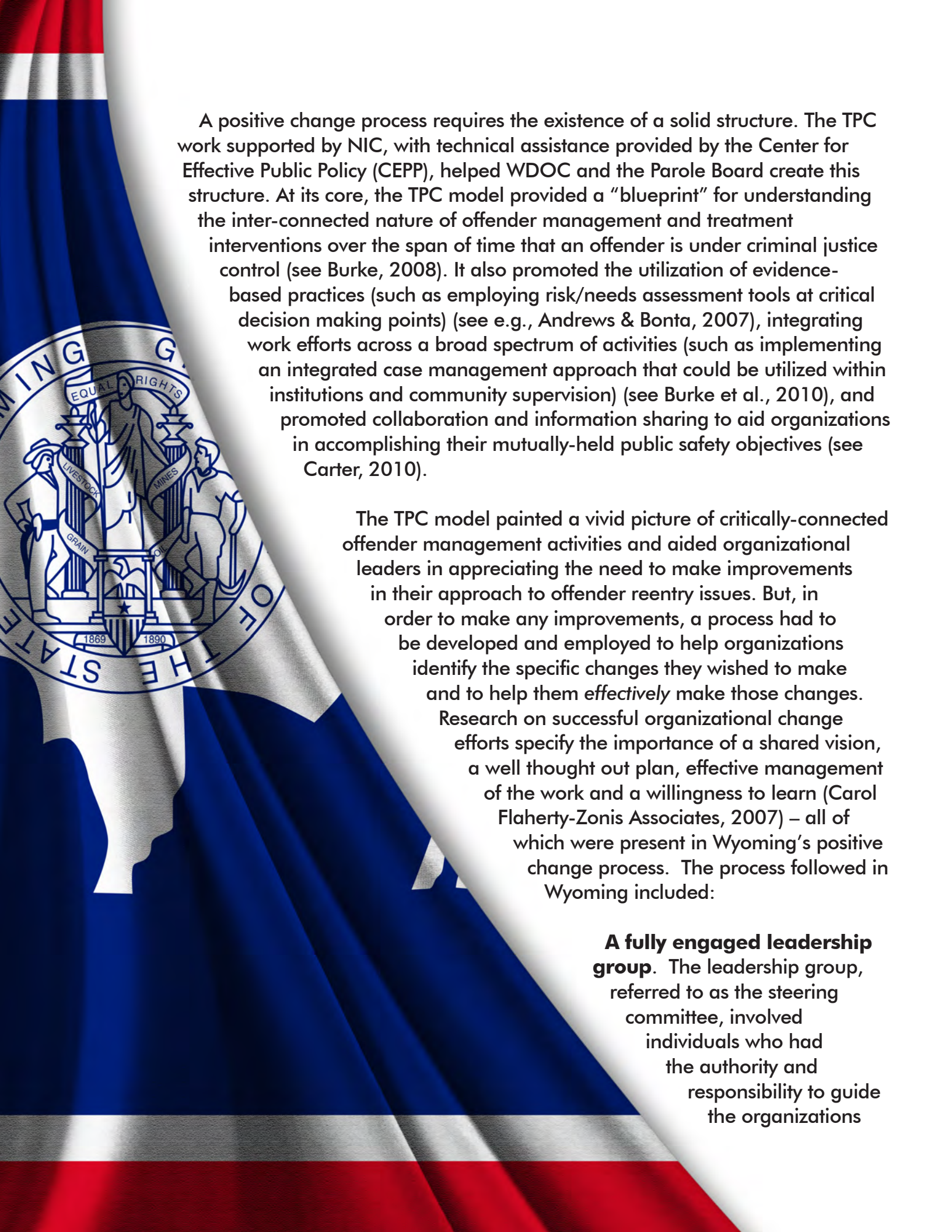
From the beginning of their TPC work, leaders in Wyoming (WDOC and the Parole Board) were able to agree upon and articulate a clear "vision" for their offender reentry work. It involved promoting offender success as a means of helping to improve institutional and public safety. Secondly, these leaders were willing to empower others to discover both the problems and the solutions to problems that needed to be pursued in order for their Departments to move in the direction of their vision. Establishing a clear vision, employing a results-driven structure, including others in the planning process and respecting their knowledge and accomplishments are critical elements to achieving large scale change initiatives (Carol Flaherty-Zonis Associates, 2007, Larson & LaFasto, 1989). Finally, these leaders were willing to invest the necessary time and effort over a four year period to continually support both the people involved, as well as the process followed. Stability in a variety of key leadership positions over this period of time allowed for work and team efforts to continually move forward.

## THE STRUCTURE OF A POSITIVE CHANGE PROCESS

Leaders must create a process that:
- allows knowledgeable staff to determine, examine and consider problems;
- allows for the creation of possible solutions to these problems; and
- involves staff effectively in the implementation of appropriate changes.

The process should produce results – and be a good use of everyone's time. This could be referred to as the "positive change process." The positive change process allows leaders to outline broad organizational goals and to retain appropriate decision making authority – but empowers others to identify and explore existing methods, practices, issues and opportunities, and to identify the best ways of moving toward goals.

A positive change process requires the existence of a solid structure. The TPC work supported by NIC, with technical assistance provided by the Center for Effective Public Policy (CEPP), helped WDOC and the Parole Board create this structure. At its core, the TPC model provided a "blueprint" for understanding the inter-connected nature of offender management and treatment interventions over the span of time that an offender is under criminal justice control (see Burke, 2008). It also promoted the utilization of evidence-based practices (such as employing risk/needs assessment tools at critical decision making points) (see e.g., Andrews & Bonta, 2007), integrating work efforts across a broad spectrum of activities (such as implementing an integrated case management approach that could be utilized within institutions and community supervision) (see Burke et al., 2010), and promoted collaboration and information sharing to aid organizations in accomplishing their mutually-held public safety objectives (see Carter, 2010).

The TPC model painted a vivid picture of critically-connected offender management activities and aided organizational leaders in appreciating the need to make improvements in their approach to offender reentry issues. But, in order to make any improvements, a process had to be developed and employed to help organizations identify the specific changes they wished to make and to help them *effectively* make those changes. Research on successful organizational change efforts specify the importance of a shared vision, a well thought out plan, effective management of the work and a willingness to learn (Carol Flaherty-Zonis Associates, 2007) – all of which were present in Wyoming's positive change process. The process followed in Wyoming included:

**A fully engaged leadership group**. The leadership group, referred to as the steering committee, involved individuals who had the authority and responsibility to guide the organizations

involved and the ability to involve others and clarify roles and responsibilities for all involved. The steering committee articulated its broad vision and desired outcomes.  This group also established expectations for a working group that was charged with exploring areas or issues identified by the steering committee; made decisions regarding recommendations made by the working group; and provided oversight to implementation efforts. In other words, the steering committee provided direction, guidance and support. And – once it had all the necessary information – it made decisions. Charters, which outlined expectations, time frames, duties, methods to be used and other matters, were developed for each group.

**A dedicated working group**.  This group explored the issues or areas of interest, identified by the steering committee. This group was tasked with first understanding the current landscape – and comparing desired outcomes or objectives to current practice (a "gaps" analysis). Once issues, barriers or problems were identified that may be keeping the organization (or group) from achieving its stated goals, these issues were prioritized.  Once the top issues were determined, this group developed what they considered to be workable solutions and presented recommendations for action to the steering committee.

**A process facilitator and process manager.**  Consultants from CEPP served as process facilitators – suggesting how the change process could be organized and structured and helping individuals understand the elements of TPC and offender reentry work based on its work in jurisdictions across the country.  An on-site process manager aided the steering committee and working group to stay on track, gathered and provided necessary information and data, managed issues that emerged among the teams, resolved individual and group problems and helped the work move forward.

**An appropriate problem identification process**.  Process facilitators helped groups avoid the temptation of simply pointing out "problems" that were *not* based on objective information – and from jumping immediately to solutions regarding these perceived problems. By following a disciplined process by which the group examined data and information before making a decision, the most significant problems were identified.  This allowed for a better understanding of the scope, nature and extent of the problem.

**An effective system for developing and considering recommendations for change.**  A process was put in place so that information about problems and possible solutions could be transmitted from the working group to the steering committee and considered in a timely fashion. Recommendations were carefully reviewed (to include fiscal and other potential impacts of possible solutions) and, if approved for action, the steering committee empowered the working group to move forward with implementing the proposed solutions.

## TPC Effort in Wyoming: Group Roles and Responsibilities

**LEADERSHIP GROUP**

- Articulate vision and desired outcomes
- Review recommendations and make decisions
- Provide implementation oversight

PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION

RECOMMENDATIONS

IMPLEMENTATION

**WORKING GROUP**

- Explore issues /review data identified by Steering Committee
- Prioritize issues
- Develop recommendations for action
- Implement desired changes

**An efficient method for implementing desired changes.** Once it was clear what would be done (and why it should be done), sub-groups (or specific individuals) were tasked and given the necessary authority to implement specific changes. A continuing dialogue between sub-groups and the larger working group – and between the working group and the steering committee – continued until approved changes were implemented. Implementation problems were either solved by the sub-groups, the working group or the steering committee depending on the nature of the problems presented. Considerable attention was paid to involving appropriate individuals in the implementation process, adhering to approved actions, following an appropriate time table and celebrating successful implementation efforts.

## A MORE DETAILED LOOK AT WYOMING'S POSITIVE CHANGE PROCESS

To examine and improve its offender reentry efforts, WDOC and the Parole Board first determined that they should work together to examine and improve their "internal" reentry activities. A steering committee was created that contained the top managers of both organizations and this group agreed on its offender reentry vision. These leaders identified the most significant areas that should be explored and created a working group (made up of about 40 people) to investigate these areas and make

recommendations for change to the steering committee. The initial working group topics were focused on:

- data and information;
- assessment and case management;
- parole board processes and pre-release programs;
- transition and release; and
- community supervision.

Each individual topic had working group members assigned (approximately 8 people in each group) to examine the specified area.

WDOC's Reentry Program Manager was tasked with providing internal guidance to this effort and served as the process manager for this work.  She helped to ensure that appropriate members were serving on work teams, assisted these groups to work together effectively, aided groups in following the specified process, worked to resolve team conflicts, helped find and encourage local "champions" for changes and assisted groups with developing recommendations, implementing solutions and creating sustainability plans.

## NOTABLE PROCESS APPROACH: PROBLEM IDENTIFICATION

Significant attention was paid early in this effort to the methods that would be followed by work groups regarding the identification of specific problems. A form was created that required individual work groups to describe their goals, describe current practice and specify existing problems or issues that were keeping WDOC and the Parole Board from reaching their desired goals. Groups were required to review and consider pertinent data in making decisions about the existence of a problem. Once a problem was identified by an individual work group,

"In addition to the highly effective project management model used by the Transition from Prison to Community (TPC) initiative, another important component of the four year effort's success in our agency, was a promise by the Director and senior management team to be fully committed to the initiative.  A key aspect of this commitment was the designation of a staff member to serve as the full-time internal project coordinator.  This worked exceedingly well and was instrumental in keeping the overall process and work groups on task and moving in the right direction."

*Steve Lindly, WDOC Deputy Director*

it was then discussed in greater detail with the entire working group. For those problems thought to be of greatest importance, a finalized problem identification form was shared with the steering committee so that they could determine whether they wanted the individual work group to explore the issue further.   This process helped to ensure that three things were happening.

- First, knowledgeable staff were involved in determining the issues that required some attention.
- Second, the steering committee could determine whether an appropriate problem had been identified, and if it wanted the problem explored further (and recommendations for action developed).
- Finally, the steering committee's approval for further exploration of a problem and the development of recommendations gave working group members confidence that they were working on the right issues.

## NOTABLE PROCESS APPROACH: RECOMMENDATIONS

**"One of our first tasks in implementing the TPC model was to fully explore the identified obstacles and problem areas prior to generating potential solutions. This in-depth review resulted in a much greater understanding of the obstacles and problems, increased and reinforced staff's commitment to work towards change, and promoted consensus on the solution attempts to be implemented."**

*Sam Borbely, WDOC Treatment Program Manager*

Once a problem had been identified and approved for attention, individual work groups were then tasked with producing recommendations for action. Groups were encouraged to identify a variety of potential solutions to a problem (not just focusing on the first solution that came to mind) and to then compare these solutions in terms of effectiveness, cost and time to implement.  Ultimately, individual work groups developed recommendations that were considered either "short-term," meaning that the solution could be implemented in six months or less and would not involve significant costs, or "long-term," meaning they would take more than six months to implement and require additional funding, legislative changes or other action. Breaking recommendations into "short-term" and "long-term" solutions helped group members see opportunities

to take immediate action. Most of the recommendations produced fell into the short-term category.

Once recommendations were developed they were reviewed by the entire working group and then presented to the steering committee. These recommendations included descriptions of cost, action that would be required, training implications, impacts on policies or procedures, etc. Each recommendation was considered and the steering committee determined whether a recommendation would be approved, whether more information was needed or whether action should be taken to implement a solution. This process allowed the working group to identify problems and develop solutions, while allowing the steering committee to maintain control over the issues selected and the changes that would be implemented.

## NOTABLE PROCESS APPROACH: IMPLEMENTATION

Once a recommendation was approved by the steering committee it was then returned to the working group to implement the solution. This largely involved modifications to policies and procedures, changes in training, the development of forms and checklists, the sharing or development of information and other matters that were entirely within the purview of the two agencies involved. At this stage, individual work groups became "implementation groups." Implementation groups kept the steering

committee aware of their progress, as well as any problems that they were having with implementation so that the steering committee could take necessary action to assist them with moving forward.

## NOTABLE PROCESS APPROACH: EXPANDING THE WORK TO EXTERNAL AGENCIES

After internal improvements had been made in the offender reentry area, WDOC and the Parole Board, with the approval of the Governor's Office, expanded their efforts to include a wide variety of additional state agencies, private organizations and other entities. This was termed the Wyoming Reentry Task Force. WDOC's Director and the Governor's Deputy Chief of Staff co-chaired this large inter-agency group.  Again, WDOC's Reentry Program Manager provided internal guidance and support while staff from CEPP facilitated meetings. The Reentry Task Force followed the same process as was detailed above for the internal work – creating a vision for its work, identifying goals and key areas of interest, developing charters for itself and a working group and relying on forms and processes similar to those used by the internal teams.

The Reentry Task Force identified the following areas as critical for review: housing, employment, continuity of treatment, community supports, information sharing and access to resources.  Community supervision, which was a focus of the internal reentry work, was continued as a topic by the

Task Force. Working groups were established, problem areas were identified by the working group members, recommendations were developed and presented to the Task Force, decisions were made regarding these recommendations and appropriate implementation actions were initiated. The Task Force continued for two years and a variety of significant changes were made in the areas noted above. At the conclusion of this effort, each working group developed sustainability plans – which outlined the actions that needed to be taken in the future and the persons responsible for those actions, to ensure that the progress made would be continued.

### NOTABLE PROCESS APPROACH: AN EXTERNAL REVIEW OF THE PROCESS FOLLOWED

As important practice changes were being implemented, numerous participants began to note the value of the process that had been followed. As Carrie Stanley, WDOC's Adult Community Corrections Coordinator stated: "The TPC process allowed our department to not only recommend changes, but to also implement products which have had a positive impact on the lives of the population we serve."

It was determined during the last two years of the reentry work that the University

## Survey Results of TPC Participants Confirm the Value of the Process

Results from a participant survey were overwhelmingly positive indicating that Wyoming's effort had operated with fidelity to the national TPC process. For instance:

- Ninety-six percent of those surveyed felt that people with appropriate backgrounds were placed on the various teams.

- Ninety-five percent felt their supervisors were supportive about them having to spend time engaged in TPC work.

- A large majority (eighty-six percent to – ninety-two percent respectively) agreed that the process facilitator and manager provided clear guidance regarding work efforts and helped to resolve issues.

- Ninety-two percent felt that workgroup meetings were conducted in a manner that allowed for constructive discussion and input from all members.

- Eighty- three percent felt that they were able to spend an appropriate amount of time working on their identified issues.

- Eighty-four percent felt that the Task Force members gave careful and thoughtful consideration to recommendations given.

- Eighty-two percent felt that the implemented recommendations will have a very positive impact on future operations.

of Wyoming's Survey and Analysis Center (WYSAC) would be asked to engage in a review of the on-going process. Staff from WYSAC interviewed and conducted surveys with a wide variety of individuals who participated in the TPC work. The survey results were shared with working group and Task Force members as the process moved forward, as well as at the conclusion of the process. The results highlighted many of the strengths associated with the TPC process and confirmed that it was successful in helping teams investigate issues, develop recommendations and implement solutions (WYSAC, 2013). Overall, this external survey provided participants with an opportunity to express their thoughts about the process being used, the value of the time they invested in the work and whether they thought it was an effective way of bringing about changes. The findings helped leaders in Wyoming appreciate and embrace the value of following the above described process when engaging in significant change efforts.

> **"The success of TPC in Wyoming has built stronger working relationships internally and externally, created a model of change we continue to use in other areas of need, and is an initiative the Department is truly proud of."**
>
> *Christy Hahn, WDOC Reentry Program Manager*

## CONCLUSION

Organizational leaders have the opportunity to design and utilize specific approaches when they strive to bring about significant changes. In Wyoming, the process used was fully embraced by WDOC leaders, managers and front-line staff, accepted and used by staff within external agencies involved and supported by the Governor's Office. The adoption of the TPC process in Wyoming helped to keep group members focused, involved and committed to following through with necessary actions.

Some key elements from implementation science were demonstrated as part of Wyoming's TPC effort. These elements are highlighted in the chart below.

Having a specific process to follow helped individuals understand what the group was supposed to do and where it was regarding its efforts, and – perhaps most importantly – ensured that their work

| Element of Successful Implementation (Fixsen et al., 2005) | Practice Example from Wyoming's TPC Effort |
|---|---|
| A stage of exploration and adoption that includes a review of information and a process that leads to a decision to proceed with implementation | In Wyoming, the TPC process provided structure for participants to gain an understanding of the scope and nature of problems and collect and review data before making decisions about the alteration of policy and practice. |
| Careful practitioner selection to ensure personnel are qualified to perform the job | One change initiative the steering committee took on included reviewing screening criteria for parole officers and rewriting job descriptions to ensure that future hires had the knowledge and skills to successfully support offenders during reentry. |
| Training and opportunities for staff to practice new skills in a safe environment | Wyoming DOC staff was provided with training on risk and need tools and on case management approaches, and benefitted from regular interaction with their superiors who were able to continuously coach them while on the job. |
| Evaluation of program and staff performance | One of the resulting products of the DOCs effort included a coaching tool, the Field Services Audit Instrument, which was developed to support the fidelity of the case management process and provide feedback to the department on the progress of implementation. |
| Leadership that oversees the process and keeps people focused on the desired goals | The Steering Committee oversaw the work internal to the DOC and Parole Board and the Task Force facilitated the work under the broad scale effort to change offender reentry practices throughout the state. |
| Strategies for working with external systems to ensure the availability of needed resources to support the work | The establishment of the Wyoming Reentry Task Force was in itself an effort to develop the necessary multi-disciplinary partnerships needed to support policy changes to a complex reentry problem. One concrete example of its success included its ability to develop new approaches to housing sex offenders. |
| A strategy to sustain the new policies and practices over time | Each of the work groups of the Task Force developed sustainability plans that defined the future activities, roles, and responsibilities necessary to ensure that progress would continue. |

was receiving appropriate attention from their leaders. Additionally, through the use of this process, group members were able to recognize at any given time where they were in their work – and the relationship of individual activities to the broad-scale reentry effort within the state.

The WDOC, Parole Board and Reentry Task Force addressed and resolved real problems and their results were significant. This success was likely due – in addition to the various contributions of the many individuals involved – to the care and attention paid to the change process itself. The use of an effective change process offers organizations the opportunity to use staff time wisely, collaboratively engage others regarding key issues, thoroughly examine and understand significant issues of interest and bring about desired changes. ▷▷▲

## ENDNOTES

1 The National Institute of Corrections (NIC) initiated its Transition from Prison to the Community Program in 2002, and over the next ten years provided leadership, oversight, and funding for technical assistance that aided fourteen states that participated in this

"Having been involved in various aspects of juvenile and adult corrections for nearly four decades, I've seen plenty of well-intentioned initiatives come along. At the risk of sounding hyperbolic, it is my view the "Transition from Prison to Community" (TPC) initiative the Wyoming Department of Corrections has been involved in for the past four years is clearly one of the best (if not the best) efforts of substantive system change I've been involved with. And one of the striking aspects of the effort is it cost the agency hardly anything monetarily, beyond staff time and effort, under the guidance of a highly effective consultant. It was not a typical response to improvement, which often requires substantial increases in agency funding."

*Steve Lindly, WDOC Deputy Director*

# OUTCOMES FROM WYOMING'S TPC INITIATIVE

The methods used regarding offender reentry work in Wyoming promoted the development and implementation of many meaningful changes.  The following provides a sample of the changes that were implemented as a result of the TPC work.

## INTERNAL EFFORT 2009-2011:  STEERING COMMITTEE AND WORK GROUP OUTCOMES WDOC AND PAROLE BOARD

1. Created a common approach to data analysis to measure multiple points of recidivism and whether specific efforts in WDOC Reentry are effective.

2. Improved Parole Hearing attendance – reduced the number of hearings waived by offenders and increased the number of positive parole grants through education and awareness for the offender.  This included creating materials for offenders such as frequently asked questions and using various speakers to provide information to offenders regarding the parole board process and the pre-release program.

3. Updated the pre-release curriculum to ensure it addresses the needs of offenders releasing to the community; pre-release programming is now mandatory if sentence structure allows for it.

4. Developed an external website for the public to access resources and information regarding reentry services in the community.

5. Developed an internal website for staff to have quick access to all reentry related resources.

6. Created a uniform identification process for offenders to obtain social security card, driver's license/state ID and birth certificate.

7. Improved access to medication resources in the community.

8. Improved access to clothing resources in the community.

9. Created a "Community Reentry Checklist" - a tool developed to ensure all transition planning needs are addressed prior to release.

10. Improved the coordination of efforts in cases where offenders transitioned between parole and probation.

11. Created a checklist to enhance the transition process from incarceration to either an Adult Community Corrections Center or Intensive Supervision Placement (ISP).

12. Developed policy and procedure for the Case Management Manual to ensure accurate and timely updates and additions are made by the subject matter expert once a year.

13. Created Field Services Audit Instrument to serve as a coaching tool for improving case management practices.

14. Created a Community Reentry Checklist for Agents form to involve field agents in the process of transition prior to release to include pre-parole investigations. This allows for a more rapid release from prison with an approved community plan.

15. Created a set of core competencies for hiring field agents to ensure WDOC is hiring staff with a skill set specific to the demands of the job, which includes their understanding of reentry needs of offenders.

# EXTERNAL EFFORT 2011-2013: TASK FORCE AND WORK GROUPS OUTCOMES WDOC, PAROLE BOARD, STATE AGENCIES, PRIVATE SECTOR PARTNERS, AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS

1. Improved housing opportunities for sex offenders transitioning to the community – developed a shared living arrangement housing program.

2. Provided additional information to prospective employers on the economic benefits of hiring offenders by creating an informative brochure, "Hiring an Offender."

3. Drafted a contract with the Department of Workforce Services to gain access to data to research work history, time frames to obtain employment, employment retention, wage history and earnings and occupational groups. This information will provide direction to WDOC on future vocational, educational and employment program efforts.

4. Increased the number of Career Readiness Certificates obtained by offenders while incarcerated to improve their chances of earning a sustainable wage in the community.

5. Revised and updated the "Starting Point" booklet to be given to offenders to increase their knowledge and skills in obtaining employment in the community.

6. Revised the licensing and certification jobs that an offender can and cannot obtain as a felon.

7. Conducted offender "Job Fairs" at two prisons giving offenders the opportunity to interact with community employers and service providers. This will be expanded to all prisons.

8. Enhanced the sharing of information regarding client care within and between WDOC and community treatment providers. This includes a written communication protocol that details the process of referring offenders to treatment upon release.

9. Created information for offenders regarding pro-social community activities to address isolation, peer associations and self-empowerment.

10. Created a video visitation pilot project for offenders and families with limited transportation, cost and time.

11. Provided more information to friends and family about in-person visits and the restrictions, as well as the importance of visits for offenders to keep a strong support system.

12. Documented success stories about offenders who have transitioned successfully to the community. These stories will be published in an annual publication for distribution.

13. Partnered with Recover Wyoming to support and refer to the peer mentoring program of Recover Wyoming.

14. Created resource fairs – to be conducted at all institutions every 18 months – to provide offenders with opportunities to gain additional information and ask questions relevant to their release.

15. Increased partnership with "211" – which will provide information and assistance to offenders after release.

16. Increased community provider networking opportunities through on-site meetings to share information and resources.

comprehensive offender reentry initiative. The TPC model developed by NIC, and the TPC handbooks and materials created during the life of this project, were instrumental in creating a structure for the reentry work undertaken in Wyoming.

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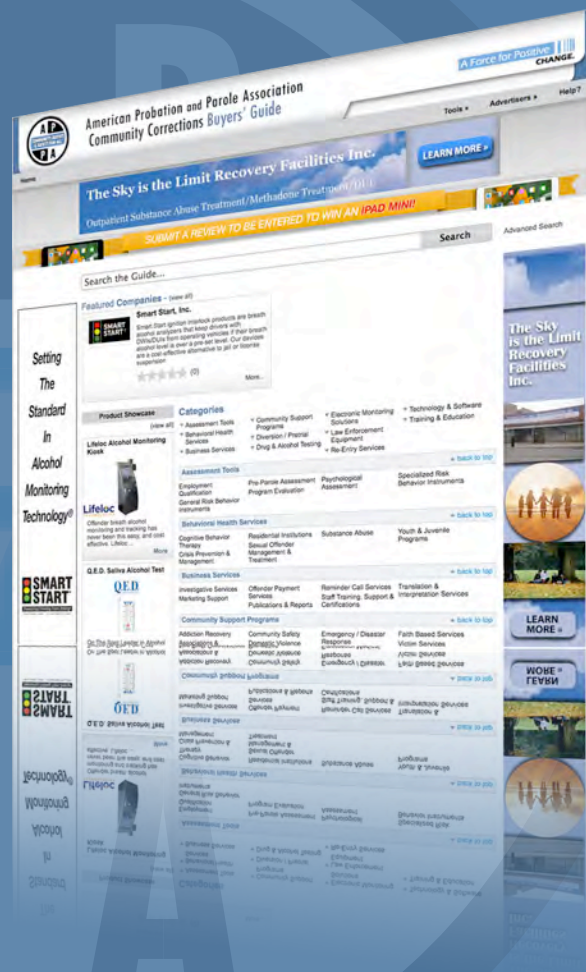**RICHARD P. STROKER** J.D. is a Senior Manager for the Center for Effective Public Policy

# IMPLEMENTATION OF THE BANGKOK RULES IN THAILAND: FRONT-END AND BACK-END MECHANISMS

by Nathee Chitsawang, Ph.D.
edited by Barbara Owen, Ph.D.

Known as the "Bangkok Rules," the United Nations Rules for the Treatment of Women Prisoners and Non-Custodial Measures for Women Offenders serve as international standards that specifically address the needs and characteristics of women and girls in the criminal justice system. The government of Thailand played the key role in initiating standards for the treatment of female offenders and hosting the rather lengthy process of negotiation and approval by the relevant UN bodies, Member States (countries) and non-governmental organizations. Her Royal Highness, Princess Bajrakitiyabha of Thailand, has taken a particular interest in reforming women's prisons and continues to champion these standards. The United Nations General Assembly adopted these Rules in 2010. While much of the attention to the Rules has centered on women in prison, these Rules contain specific guidance for managing and providing services to women sentenced to non-custodial measures, such as those commonly placed under the umbrella of community corrections in the United States. Currently, the Thailand Institute of Justice (TIJ) is charged with implementing the Bangkok Rules and promoting this initiative globally. They have partnered with Prison Reform International in producing toolkits and other projects

that promote these Rules. In this article, Dr. Nathee Chitsawang, the Deputy Executive Director of the TIJ outlines the implementation of these Rules with Thailand and places these Rules within the Thai criminal justice context.

## FRONT-END AND BACK-END NON-CUSTODIAL MEASURES IN THAILAND

After the adoption of the Bangkok Rules in December 2010, Thailand's criminal justice system has made an enormous effort to put these Rules into practice, especially those with regard to the treatment of female prisoners. Various measures relating to the custody and care of women behind bars to conform to the Bangkok Rules have been developed. However, like many justice systems around the world, the crucial challenge for Thailand is the increasing number of women in the female prison population. Figure 1 describes this upward trend.

As of March, 2014, the number of women prisoners in Thailand is approximately 42,388 (Department of Corrections, 2014), with the total capacity of all correctional facilities at 30,000. It should also be noted that there are only about 1,500 female prison officers working in prisons throughout the country. Like many other systems

## FIGURE 1
## NUMBER OF FEMALE PRISONERS IN THAILAND:
## SEPTEMBER 2007 – MARCH 2014[1]
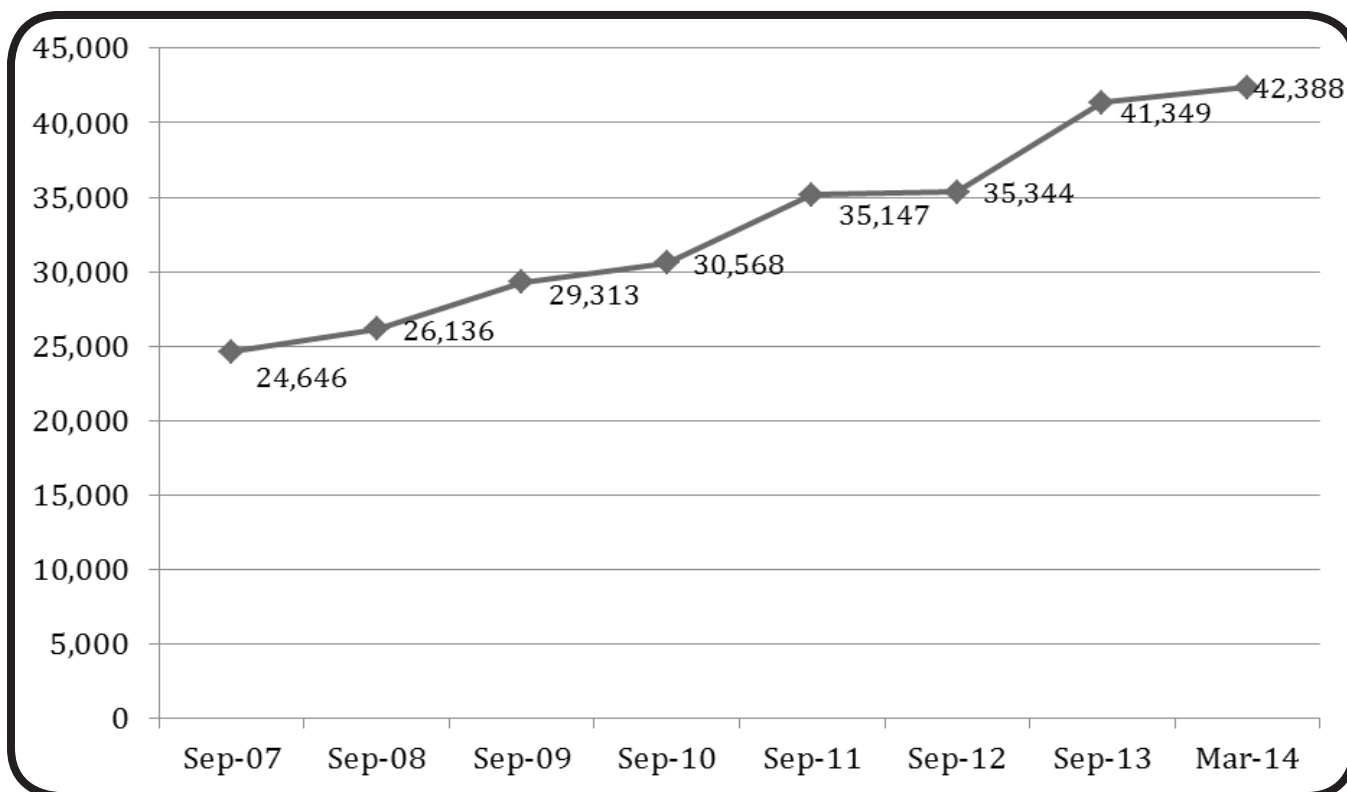


*Source: The Center of Prisoner Statistics, Planning Division, Department of Corrections*

experiencing these increasing numbers of female prisoners, overcrowding within the prisons is a significant hurdle to implementing the Bangkok Rules within Thailand. Because of this, many parties in the Thai criminal justice system have now started to focus and consider non-custodial measures as a practical target for implementing the Bangkok Rules. This paper aims to discuss these non-custodial measures in Thailand and describe the mechanisms facilitating the successful implementation of the Bangkok Rules. In Thailand, there are two major mechanisms of implementation: front-end and back-end.

## FRONT-END IMPLEMENTATION

To implement the Bangkok Rules on the treatment of women offenders in the community, Thailand has begun to develop alternative and non-custodial measures for this population. Recent developments include amendments to laws regarding the diversion and alternative measures for women offenders.

## DEVELOPMENT OF EFFECTIVE ALTERNATIVE MEASURES FOR WOMEN OFFENDERS

At present, non-custodial measures employed in Thailand include fines, suspended sentences, parole and compulsory drug rehabilitation under the Narcotics Addict Rehabilitation Act. As with most community corrections options, these measures are implemented at different stages of the Thai criminal justice system. As seen in Table 1, women were more likely to receive a non-custodial sanction than men. In total, about 76.8 percent of all women offenders were sentenced to non-custodial measures while the percentage of the male offenders was 69.57.

## TABLE 1: OFFENDERS UNDER THE NON-CUSTODIAL MEASURES IN THAILAND IN 2012

| Measures | Male | % | Female | % |
|----------|------|-----|--------|-----|
| Non-custodial | 366,771 | 69.57 | 84,306 | 76.80 |
|    Fine | 127,808 | 24.24 | 56,656 | 51.61 |
|    forfeiture of property | 325 | 0.06 | 48 | 0.04 |
|    suspended sentence or punishment | | | | |
|     - with probation | 140,194 | 26.59 | 11,957 | 10.89 |
|     - without probation | 98,444 | 18.67 | 15,645 | 14.25 |
| Custodial (i.e. imprisonment, detention, capital punishment) | 160,391 | 30.43 | 25,462 | 23.20 |
| **Total** | **527,162** | **100.00** | **109,768** | **100.00** |

*Source: Office of Planning and Budget, the Courts of Justice*

Table 1 suggests that Thai courts of justice seemed to take into account the specific needs and problems of women offenders when making sentencing decisions. The lesser degree of seriousness of offenses typically committed by women may also account for these community correctional sanctions.  It is also likely that that the Thai courts are applying the Bangkok Rules when sentencing women offenders (Chitsawang, 2013).

**Amendments to laws relating to alternative measures for women offenders**

Prison overcrowding and problems of women prisoners, especially pregnant women and those with children, are critical issues in Thailand. One of the most significant efforts concerns the amendment to the Criminal Procedure Code of Thailand. According to the Criminal Procedure Code Amendment Act (No. 25) B.E. 2550 (2007), pregnant inmates and women with young children can be considered for alternatives to imprisonment. Article 89/2 of the Criminal Procedure Code has been amended to give the courts authority to order alternatives to a prison sentence for those having already served one-third of their sentence or at least ten years in cases of long term and life imprisonment. The alternatives are varied and include confinement outside prison, intermittent imprisonment and house detention. Women eligible for these measures, as specified in the Ministerial Regulations, include those who have caretaking responsibilities. In this case, a female prisoner having  dependent children,

parents or husband may receive early release under these alternative measures.

Article 246 of the Criminal Procedure Code was also amended to give the court authority to suspend the prison sentence for specific groups of offenders including pregnant women and women raising children younger than three years. During the suspension of imprisonment, offenders will be confined outside the prison walls and the prison sentence will be in effect until their children are over three years of age. Additionally, article 247 reduces capital punishment for pregnant prisoners to life imprisonment and allows women prisoners to raise their children behind bars for three years. To put these laws into practice, electronic monitoring will supplement these measures. The first pilot project of electronic monitoring was launched by the Department of Probation, Ministry of Justice in 2013. After evaluation of the pilot project, the Ministry of Justice will continue the application of electronic monitoring to other groups of offenders as specified in the law. While these alternatives seem promising, it is important to note the obstacles to such efforts in implementing these front-end mechanisms. Such obstacles include legal limitations and public attitudes that support more serious sanctions.

**Back-end implementation**

Another approach to increasing non-custodial measures for women offenders is found in the back-end mechanisms. To put it simply, the back-end mechanisms refer to the non-custodial measures which will be applied not before (as in the front-

end measures), but after women have already entered the prison system. Eligible women can then be granted parole which is the authority and power of the executive of the administration of state affairs. In the past three years, the Department of Corrections has granted female prisoners different types of parole as follows:

### Ordinary parole

Ordinary parole is a release of convicted prisoners who have been well-behaved in prison; have served at least two-thirds of their sentence and have less than three years left to serve. The eligible prisoner will be selected by the appropriate committee and then released to the community. In the past three years, about 2,105 female prisoners have been granted this type of parole.

### Special parole

This type of parole will be given to a convicted prisoner who is seriously ill, disabled or over the age of 70. The grant of special parole is usually awarded on auspicious and important occasions, for example, the 80th Birthday of HRH the Queen on 12 August 2012. To be eligible, the prisoner must have been imprisoned for at least one-third of his/her prison sentence.

### Parole given to convicted prisoners participating in the 'Viwatpolamueang Rachathan'

The Viwatpolamueang Rachathan is a program providing drug-involved inmates with intensive training to develop and prepare themselves before release. Each inmate group completes the three-month program at the training center. To be selected to join the Viwatpolamueang Rachathan, a prisoner must have served at least one-third of his/her sentence. There were 602 and 668 female participants joining the program in 2012 and 2013 respectively. As for the program in 2014, there are 512 women prisoners completing the training program in correctional institutions. Those undertaking this program will receive parole and be on supervision in the community.

### Good-conduct allowance system

Good-conduct allowance is an enforcement of the law regarding remission. Similar to "good time" provisions in the U.S. system, prisoners who meet the requirements will receive the good-conduct allowance days varying upon his/her class behind bars. For example, 'the excellent-class' inmate will receive 5 days per month which will be reduced from his/her sentence, while the 'very good class' prisoner and 'the good' class inmate will get 4 and 3 days per month respectively. Those inmates in the "moderate" and "bad" classes will not receive the good-conduct allowance days. Throughout 2013, there were 26,382 male and 5,142 female prisoners released under this policy to be on probation.
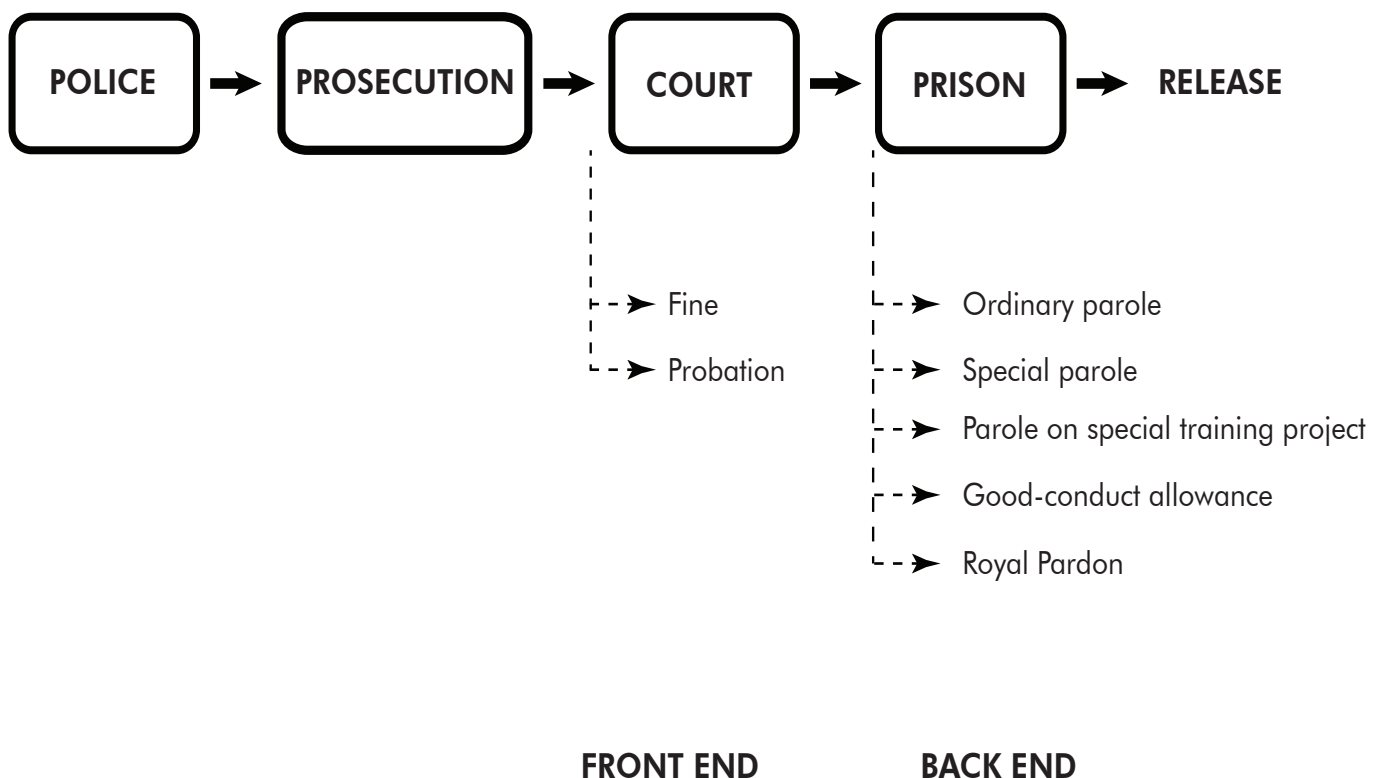
### Royal Pardon

On special and auspicious occasions in Thailand, a Royal Pardon will be collectively granted to both female and male inmates, once every three or four years, depending on the period of time of the national celebrations, such as

His Royal Highness, the King's Birthday. The Royal Pardon can be given to prisoners in various forms: an unconditional release, a commutation and reduction of punishment. The latest collective Royal Pardon was granted in 2013 in which there were about 30,000 prisoners receiving this benefit.

These back-end mechanisms are applied after women serve some proportion of their time in prison and are eligible for release before the original prison term would end. These mechanisms appear to be more agreeable to the Thai society which supports a focus on the prison sentence. More importantly, they have a greater chance of implementation as the executive of the state administration has the power and authority to regulate them. Without both mechanisms, overcrowding in the prison system for women would become a serious concern, undermining reform efforts as outlined in the Bangkok Rules. Figure 2 provides a graphic description of this process.

**FIGURE 2**

**CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM IN THAILAND AND THE FRONT-END AND BACK-END MECHANISMS**



POLICE → PROSECUTION → COURT → PRISON → RELEASE

Fine
Probation

Ordinary parole
Special parole
Parole on special training project
Good-conduct allowance
Royal Pardon

FRONT END          BACK END

## CONCLUSION

The adoption of the Bangkok Rules by the UN General Assembly is a remarkable step towards the improvement of women offender treatment. Efforts toward implementation are equally important. Steps undertaken by the Thai criminal justice system are at the initial stages, with some measures at the developing stage with more work to be done. As the country proposing the Rules, Thailand is determined to actively implement the rules in both prisons and throughout community corrections. ▷▷▲

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## ENDNOTES

1 The figures include both convicted and unconvicted female prisoners.

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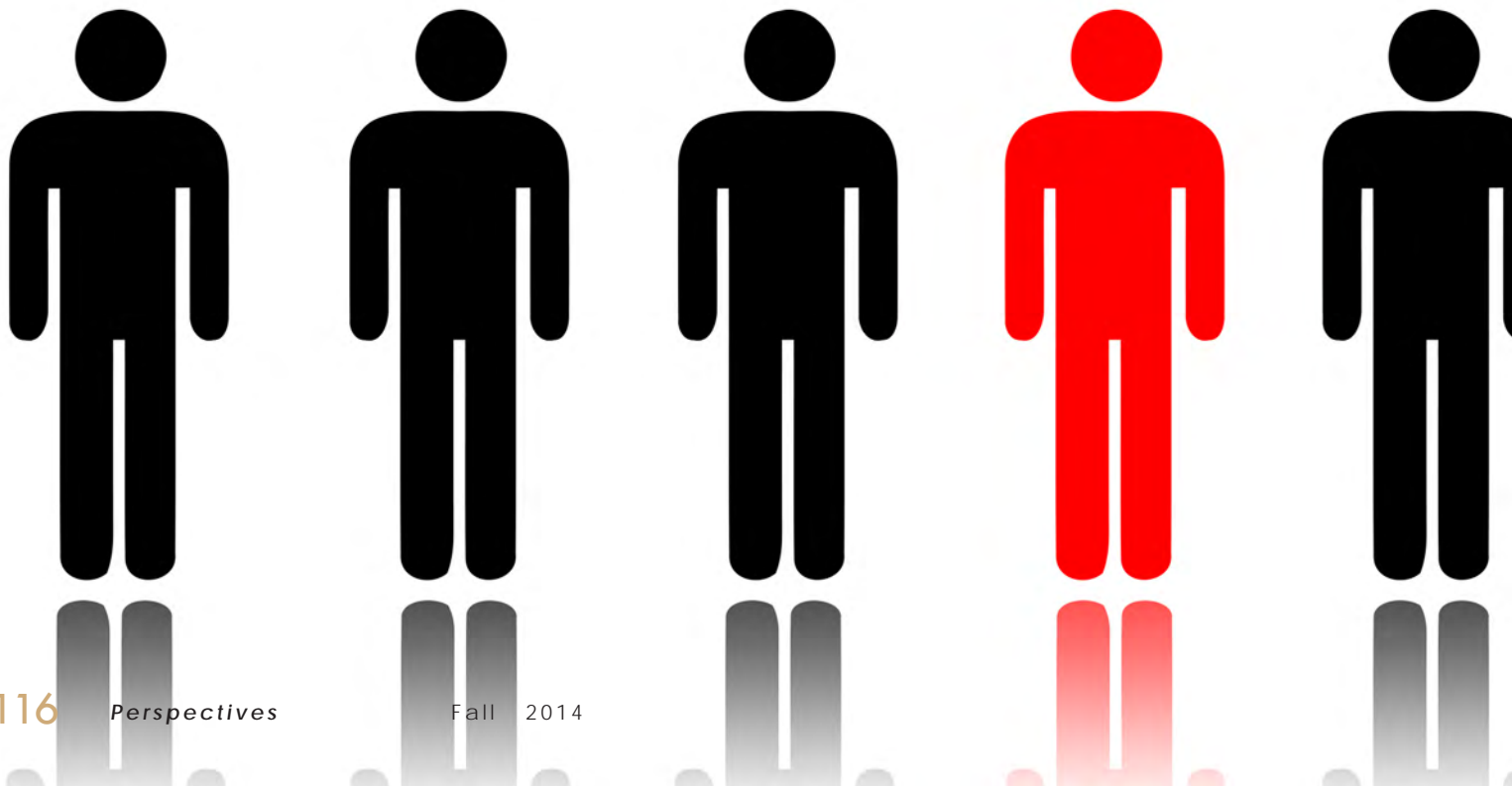
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# EMPLOYEE SCREENING AND SELECTION IN COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS:

## A COMPREHENSIVE PROCESS

by Anthony W. Tatman, Ph.D., Sally Kreamer and Michelle Dix

**E**mployers know all too well that hiring good employees is critical and that hiring the wrong individual has devastating costs. A recent study found that the average cost to replace an employee making less than $50,000.00 amounts to approximately 20 percent of the employee's annual salary. This percentage decreases only slightly to 16 percent for employees making less than $30,000.00 per year (Boushey & Glynn, 2012). A recent survey of 2,696 employers conducted by CareerBuilder.com (Lorenz, 2011) revealed that 41 percent estimated that each bad hire they made cost them more than $25,000, with 25 percent estimating the cost to be more than $50,000 per problematic new hire. One author even estimates that the cost of hiring a problematic employee can cost over 20 times their annual salary (Smart, 2005), which includes lost productivity, time spent on training, resentment or loss of morale from existing staff, disciplines and arbitration or even law suits due to an employee's criminal activity while on the job. As one could see over the course of a single year the loss of just a couple of employees to voluntary or involuntary turnover could accumulate into significant financial loss for a correctional agency.

Research would also suggest that the type of employee hired would have a significant impact on offender recidivism. Bogue, Diegel, and O'Conner's 2008 article summarizes nicely how critical the working alliance is between the probation and parole officer (PPO) and offender and how this relationship can impact over 30 percent of the positive change an offender can experience (Bogue, et al 2008). Research has shown that change, be it in therapy or while on supervision, comes from four sources: The intervention used, the placebo effect, the working alliance and individual offender factors (Lambert & Barley, 2002; Horvath, 1994). The intervention used (e.g., groups or curriculum used) accounts for 15 percent of the overall change. The placebo effect or an offender merely expecting to change and get help, accounts for an additional 15 percent of the overall change. The working alliance or therapeutic relationship, between the PPO and offender account for an additional 30 percent, while offender individual factors, such as internal motivation and external social supports, account for the remaining 40 percent. In other words, 30 percent of the positive change experienced by offenders comes directly from the relationship with their PPO. Therefore, the relationship between the offender and their PPO has a significant impact on whether or not that offender will
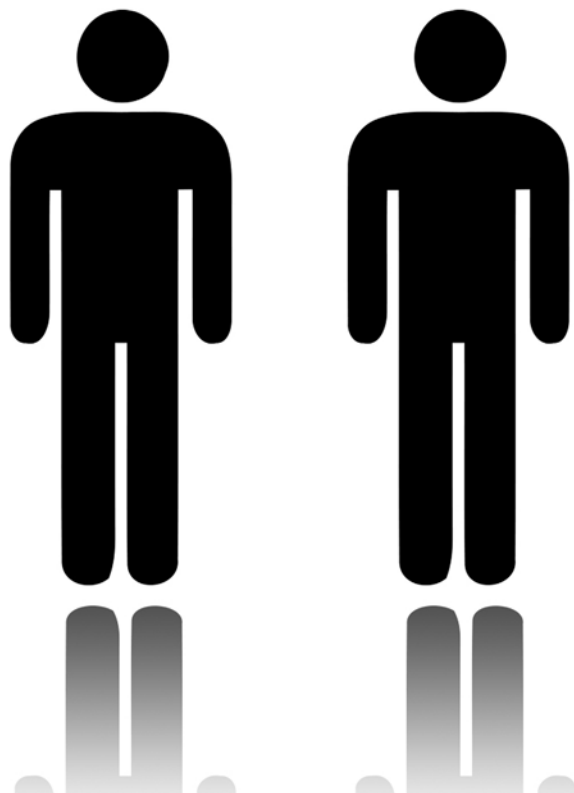
experience positive outcomes from supervision. Bogue et al. (2008) also write about how PPOs could further enhance the likelihood of positive change by including the offender into the change process, enhancing motivation, fostering positive social supports and working collaboratively toward a mutual goal, therefore capturing the positive change captured in the individual offender factor. In terms of employee selection, employees who naturally build healthy working alliances, collaborate with offenders to develop and meet personal goals, help develop positive social supports and who foster buy-in from the offender into the change process have a significant impact in reducing recidivism. Employees who do not build this working alliance considerably hinder their offender's ability, willingness and ultimately their chances to desist from crime and use the supervision experience to foster positive change.

Hiring the right PPO is also critical due to the high risk nature of the population that PPOs work with. It is quite evident that offenders can be manipulative and aggressive and the environment as a whole can be quite fast paced, intense and stressful. How an employee responds to offender manipulation, aggression and overall stress in the environment, for example, significantly impacts offender outcomes, interpersonal relationships with peers, as well as the safety of the employee, peers and offenders. For example, an employee who routinely escalates aggression and frustration in offenders continually puts those around them at risk for violence and therefore may not be a good fit for working with offenders. Another example of a poor fit between employee personality traits and the offender population is antisocial attitudes. A correctional employee who possesses antisocial attitudes and engages in antisocial behaviors with offenders is toxic to the working environment, threatens the safety of fellow staff and offenders and quashes any chance of rehabilitation and prosocial development. It is therefore crucial for correctional agencies or departments to hire the right employee, with the right personality and attributes, for the right job.

## TABLE 1
## CORE COMPETENCIES FOR TOP PROBATION OFFICER PERFORMERS (HERMANN & BRODERICK, 2011)

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Ability to Build Trust | Ability to Collaborate | Good Communication Skills |
| Conflict Management Skills | Desire for Continued Learning | Cultural Competence |
| Strong Decision Making Skills | Ability to Facilitate Change in Others | Being Client Focused |
| Good Organizational Skills | Ability to Positively Influence Others | High Stress Tolerance |
| Team Mentality | Use of Professional Judgment and experience Informed Problem Solving | |

## WHAT MAKES A GOOD PPO?

A number of studies have identified traits or characteristics that correspond with top performers. By analyzing the various traits and characteristics of over 1,500 probation officers, Hermann and Broderick (2011) identified 14 core competencies, or "must-have" traits and characteristics which characterize top performers (see Table 1).

In an extensive meta-analysis of law enforcement selection studies, Aamodt (2004) found that tolerance was the single best predictor of performance when compared to all other personality traits or characteristics. Similarly, a line of research has also identified that an employee's conscientiousness is a strong predictor of job performance and overall behavior in the workplace (Miller, Griffin, & Hart, 1999; Sarchione, Cuttler, Muchinsky, & Nelson-Gray, 1998; Tett, Jackson, & Rothstein, 1991). Conscientiousness is one of the "Big Five" factors psychologists have routinely identified that make up an individual's personality and is typically comprised of traits such as self-discipline, having an internal sense of responsibility or duty, motivation to succeed at a particular goal, feelings of self-competence, organizational skills and the ability to deliberate on a decision prior to acting. Multiple instruments have been developed to measure the Big Five factors, with the NEO Personality Inventory-Revised (NEO PI-R; Costa & McCrae, 1992) being arguably the most comprehensive (Claussen-Rogers & Arrigo, 2005; Schinka, Kinda, & Kremer,

1997). It is noteworthy to point out that "hard skills" or traits, such as professional experience or level of education, are not typically identified within the literature as key factors predicting employee success. Rather, the literature routinely identifies "soft skills", such as those found in Table 1, as key skills or traits that predict top performers. However, little emphasis or attention is typically given in an interview or hiring process to the various soft skills that research has routinely identified as significantly predicting success in the workplace. Furthermore, the need for information on an applicant's soft skills is further enhanced due to soft skills being relatively hard to teach or train and are typically innate. For example, it is quite difficult to teach someone to be empathetic when they are naturally judgmental or to be highly driven and ambitious when are naturally uninspired and satisfied with the status quo or to be warm and conscientious when they are naturally aggressive and punitive. Information about an applicant's natural propensity for various soft skills is therefore a critical, but often overlooked, component in the interview process.

## A NEW METHOD OF HIRING

In an effort to reduce hiring problematic employees and employee turnover and enhance the probability of retaining candidates who naturally possess the skills shown to give the best outcomes in changing offender behavior, the Iowa Department of Correctional Services' Fifth Judicial District (Fifth District) developed a new, comprehensive hiring

process. This process began in 2005 with the Fifth District implementing behavioral interviewing and work simulations. In 2006 structured behavioral interviews anchored on formal job analyses and performance targets were added, along with work simulations and role plays, to the interview process. Research has shown that employers are five times more likely to make good hiring decisions when using well-designed, structured behavioral interviews, as opposed to unstructured or traditional interviews (West Virginia Division of Personnel Staffing Services, 2004). In 2007 a variety of screening tools, a hiring selection matrix and scoring guide were added, along with structured/ measurable reference check guides. These guides were specifically designed to help solicit behavioral evidence via collateral reference information about the attributes viewed as critical to the applicant's success on the job. The screening tools implemented during this phase consisted of the Step One Survey (SOS), Profiles XT (PXT), and Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory-2 (MMPI-2). In 2008, the Personality Assessment Inventory (PAI) and NEO PI-R were added. The SOS and PXT were developed and copyrighted by Profiles International.

The SOS is a valid and reliable test of integrity, ethical and moral workplace attitudes, reliability and work ethic. Test items ask about beliefs on stealing from the work place, drug use in the work place and rule violations. The PXT is a job fit test, and measures an applicant's thinking style (e.g., learning index, verbal and reasoning

skills), workplace behavioral traits (e.g., energy level, sociability, manageability, decisiveness and level of autonomy), and job interests (i.e., personal interests that lead to a job fit). The SOS and PXT have proven invaluable in helping to identify positive traits and potential growth areas in applicants in the early phases of the hiring process and provide valuable information for subsequent interviews.

The MMPI-2, PAI, and NEO PI-R are administered at the end of the process. The MMPI-2 and PAI are psychological instruments commonly used as screening tools for employment in high risk occupations, such as with law enforcement or fire fighters. The MMPI-2 and PAI largely measure pathology, while the NEO PI-R is quite different in that it measures personality over a "normal" continuum. For this reason the NEO PI-R is uniquely positioned to be a valuable coaching tool regarding an employee's strengths and potential growth areas for a given position.

## INITIAL IMPACT FOLLOWING IMPLEMENTATION

In order to determine whether or not this new hiring process had an impact on the Fifth District's rate of turnover, a brief study was conducted. Results from this study revealed that since implementing this comprehensive hiring process the Fifth District's turnover rate has decreased and the ability to identify potential growth areas for an employee has been enhanced along with the ability to provide coaching specific

to those needs. Between 2004 and 2006 the Fifth District had an average turnover rate (defined as a voluntary or involuntary departure within the 1st year of employment) of 20.3 percent, which accounted for seven departures. These seven departures had an average employment duration of five months, with each departure costing the Fifth District approximately $21,500 in salary, interview costs and training fees. This accumulated into a total loss of approximately $150,500 for the Fifth District over three years. After initiating the comprehensive hiring process in 2008 the Fifth District's turnover was reduced to 14.8 percent in 2008, and has since remained constant. The study found that the length of probationary time for each departure differed between new hires going through the comprehensive hiring process and those who did not. Iowa state correctional employees have a six month probationary period prior to full employment. Results from this study revealed that individuals hired through the comprehensive hiring process had an average probationary period of three months before termination, while those hired prior to the process had an average probationary period of five months before termination. This mere two month reduction in the length of probationary employment prior to the probationary employee's involuntary departure resulted in a total cost savings of $20,295 between 2008 and 2010. This reduction in probationary period is attributed to having better information on potential growth areas for new employees

and then immediately offering coaching and supervision over those issues. Should the issues persist despite coaching and behavioral contracts and are seen as traits significantly impacting job or interpersonal performance, the Fifth District could then remove the new hire faster than without this valuable information. In other words, the speed at which informed decisions could be made was assisted by the considerable amount of information available at the time the employee begins employment.

## RESEARCH STUDY

In 1967 the President's Commission on Law Enforcement and the Administration of Justice recommended that psychological examinations be conducted on all law enforcement candidates. Since that recommendation the use of pre-employment psychological examinations has grown to become a standard practice across the country and highly researched with police officers and firefighters (Cochrane, Tett & Vandercreek, 2003). However, although probation and parole officers are identified within the Law Enforcement Bill of Rights, an exhaustive literature search failed to identify research on using pre-employment psychological assessments with probation and parole applicants. Therefore, in order to fill an apparent hole in the current literature, we conducted a study of the Fifth District's hiring process to measure the degree to which the psychological test information could predict future problem behaviors.

## METHODS AND PARTICIPANTS

Methods used in this study mirrored those used by Sellbom, Fischler, and Ben-Porath, (2007) who used the MMPI-2 to predict problem behaviors in police officers by completing relative risk ratios to predict future problem behaviors. A relative risk ratio is the ratio of the probability of an event occurring in one group to the probability of the event occurring in a comparison group. For example, the ratio between being terminated as compared to not being terminated or in medical terms, having cancer and not developing cancer. Using this method, a relative risk of one means that there is no difference in risk between the two groups. A relative risk greater than one means the event (e.g., termination) is more likely to occur in the experimental group than in the comparison group. For example, if predicting the risk of future disciplinary problems from pre-employment psychological testing, a relative risk ratio of four would mean that if an applicant's score exceeds a certain point they are four times more likely to be disciplined within the defined time frame as compared to applicants not exceeding the cut score.

The study compared scales from the MMPI-2, PAI, and NEO PI-R against supervisor evaluations and disciplinary history in order to identify significant risk ratios. Participants consisted of 94 full-time community-based corrections staff from a midsized, Midwestern city who underwent psychological testing as a component of the hiring process.

The sample population consisted of 53 females (56 percent) and 41 males (44 percent). The participants had a mean age of 34 (SD = 9), ranging from 20 to 64. The majority of the participants were Caucasian (n = 72; 77 percent) and African American (n = 19; 20 percent). The remainder of the sample consisted of two (two percent) Asian and one (one percent) Hispanic participant.

In their study measuring police officer applicants, Sellbom et al. (2007) chose to report on MMPI-2 scale elevations of 55T and 60T as cut points in determining risk ratios. Sellbom et al. found that even at this relatively low level of elevation numerous scales still generated significant risk ratios. A different methodology for determining cut scores was chosen for the risk ratio calculations. Rather than preselecting, or choosing, only one or two cut scores, the analysis focused on risk ratio cut scores that fell 1.5 or more standard deviations from the mean for each test's scale. The rationale for this decision was that, for this sample population, test scores of 55 or 60 sometimes fell within one standard deviation of the scale mean and would therefore fall within "normal limits." Therefore, the decision was made to measure risk ratios that both exceeded the normative range for the sample (> 1.5 SD), as well as were a statistically significant predictor of problematic behaviors.

Results revealed that scales contained in all three psychological tests significantly

predicted multiple risk ratios for future problematic behaviors. MMPI-2 results, for example, revealed that individuals who scored moderately high on the Non-K-Corrected Psychopathic Deviance Scale (T > 60) were five times more likely to be seen by supervisors as someone they would not hire again and nine times more likely to be seen by supervisors as someone who is hard to manage, as compared to individuals with lower scores. In regard to the PAI, individuals who scored high in sensation seeking behaviors (T > 60), for example, were six times more likely to be terminated, nine times more likely to have poor dependability, nine times more likely to have poor rapport with clients and nine times more likely to be seen as hard to manage by supervisors then employees who scored lower in sensation seeking behaviors. The NEO PI-R also revealed that individuals who scored low in warmth (T < 40) were three times more likely to be seen by supervisors as someone they would not hire again, nine times more likely to be terminated, 12 times more likely to have poor (i.e., rigid) boundaries with clients, 13 times more likely to be seen by supervisors as being hard to manage and 21 times more likely to have poor rapport with their clients, as compared to employees who have higher warmth. In total, 122 risk ratios from the MMPI-2, 78 in the PAI, and 89 in the NEO PI-R were identified in this study.

Consistent with existing research on police officers, this study also revealed that our community-based corrections applicants tend to exaggerate their level of virtuousness and have higher levels of defensiveness (Aamodt, 2004; Visweswaran, Ones, Cullen, Drees, &Langkamp, 2003), when compared to community samples. In other words, when it comes to interpreting the validity scales for these psychological instruments within community corrections pre-employment selection settings, profiles that would typically be considered invalid or even questionable, may in fact fall within a statistically normal range, when compared to other community corrections applicants. This finding is critical for future evaluators when interpreting the MMPI-2 or PAI during community-corrections pre-employment evaluations in order to minimize the number of test protocols unnecessarily interpreted as "invalid." It makes intuitive sense that employment applicants would put their "best foot forward" during the testing administration, as they would in an interview. These findings help identify to what degree this positive impression management exceeds limits typical for community corrections applicants.

A post hoc analysis of the validity scales was also conducted and revealed some eye-opening data. The procedure the Fifth District uses when an applicant produces an invalid profile due to excessive social desirability or defensiveness is to address the test taking approach with the applicant and request that they complete the assessments again. Anecdotal evidence suggested to us that individuals who endorsed items on the psychological tests in significantly virtuous and defensive ways and were determined

invalid despite the new validity scale norms mentioned above, had a higher rate of behavioral problems and termination than those who did not produce invalid test profiles. Therefore, a post hoc analysis was conducted, comparing the involuntary and voluntary departure rates for probationary employees whose initial testing was deemed invalid compared to departure rates for probationary employees who did not have invalid testing. Results revealed that over a three year period, 50 percent of probationary employees who initially produced invalid profiles were terminated or resigned within their first six months of employment, as compared to 21 percent of probationary employees who did not produce invalid results. Although additional research with larger sample sizes is needed, this preliminary finding at least suggests that the impression management observed in these administrations may not only be a feature of the test setting (i.e., pre-employment testing) and therefore situational. Rather, it may be indicative of a heightened propensity to be defensive in general, to over-control their emotions and environment around them, be uncritical of their own behavior and potentially be insensitive to the negative impact their behavior has on others and themselves.

## EVALUATION FEEDBACK

Effective use of the valuable information obtained from this comprehensive hiring process also includes a candid and open discussion with the new hire about the various strengths and potential growth areas identified in the testing. Shortly after the applicant is hired, and with signed releases of information a meeting is arranged between the new hire, their direct supervisor and the evaluator to discuss the various strengths and potential growth areas identified within the NEO PI-R. Given that the NEO PI-R is a measure of "normal" personality traits, it is uniquely positioned to be a valuable coaching tool regarding an employee's strengths and growth areas for a given position. This feedback session has been found to be invaluable for the supervisor and new employee in identifying the various strengths the individual will bring to the position, as well as the one or two growth areas the employee and supervisor can jointly monitor and coach as early as possible in their probationary period. Because the job of a PPO is a very stressful position, these coaching and feedback sessions are also used to help facilitate communication regarding stress triggers for the employee, how the employee responds to stress and how the supervisor can "pick up" on cues that the employee is experiencing stress. By knowing this information and working conjointly with the employee, the supervisor can identify these stress responses and work with that individual rather than waiting for the situation to compound and potentially lead to behavioral, interpersonal or motivational problems. For example, if an employee is considerably warm, compassionate, altruistic, trusting and tender minded, but at the same time quite low in assertiveness, this coaching

session could be used to talk to the employee about how the various strengths inherent in those warm qualities will likely strengthen the ability to build rapport with offenders and have compassion for them. This feedback session could also point out that this combination of traits could be an area of concern or something to be mindful of, when working with highly manipulative and antisocial offenders, and help generate a discussion on ways in which the employee could being "conned" or "sucked in" and, if applicable, how to build healthy boundaries with offenders. Feedback from the employees has been universally positive, with specific comments made about how valuable the feedback session was in initiating discussions on strengths and growth areas and how it helped initiate and nurture the working relationship between the employee and supervisor.

## CONCLUSION

This article outlines a process for screening, interviewing, hiring and coaching that may prove useful for other community-based corrections agencies. This comprehensive hiring process has proven invaluable in increasing the ability of the Fifth Judicial District to select top performers, reducing the odds of retaining poor performers and enabling a good fit between applicant traits and job expectations to facilitate better offender outcomes. This process has also provided us with valuable information critical for coaching and supervision, has helped to reduce the number of offender grievances, employee turnover and improved our

odds of hiring top performers. In addition to providing practical information and guidance to the agency, the research study conducted out of this process is the first known empirical study on pre-employment screening evaluations for probation and parole officers, filling a gap in the existing literature. However, given its infancy, additional research is recommended on best practices for interviewing, hiring and screening applicants for positions in community corrections.

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# calendar of events



APPA 2015 WINTER TRAINING INSTITUTE
**JANUARY 11-14, 2015**

## JANUARY 11-14, 2015

APPA 2015 Winter Training Institute
Tampa, FL. For more information, go to:
www.appa-net.org

## JANUARY 20-24, 2015

National Sheriffs' Association 2015 Winter
Conference Washington, DC. For more
information, go to http://www.sheriffs.org/
iframepage/winter-conference-registration

## JANUARY 26-30, 2015

World Congress on Juvenile Justice
Geneva, Switzerland. For more
information: http://www.ipjj.
org/news/events/?tx_browser_
pi1[showUid]=466&cHash=0536f16c67

## FEBRUARY 6-11, 2015

American Correctional Association's (ACA)
2015 Winter Conference Long Beach, CA
For more information: http://www.aca.
org/ACA_Prod_IMIS/ACA_Member/Events/
ACA_Member/Meetings/Meetings_Home.
aspx?hkey=095d31c1-3ebd-4485-9ed6-
b7685e702c48

## MARCH 2, 2015

2015 International Community Corrections
Association DC Day Washington, DC.
For more information: http://iccalive.
org/icca/index.php?option=com_
content&view=article&id=85&Itemid=482

## MARCH 3-7, 2015

Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences
(ACJS) Annual Meeting Orlando, FL. For
more information: http://www.acjs.org/
pubs/167_668_2915.cfm

## MARCH 29-31, 2015

Correctional Education Association 2015
Leadership Forum Columbia, MD. For more
information: http://www.ceanational.org/
index2.htm



## JULY 12-15, 2015

APPA 40th Annual Training Institute
Los Angeles, CA For more information, go
to:  http://www.appa-net.org



## JULY 14-16, 2015

Second World Congress on Community
Corrections. Los Angeles, CA For
more information, go to: http://www.
worldcongressoncommunitycorrections.org