Increasing Public Safety Through Successful Offender Reentry: Evidence-Based and Emerging Practices in Corrections

A companion document to:

THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF CORRECTIONS
TPC REENTRY HANDBOOK

and

THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF CORRECTIONS
TPC CASE MANAGEMENT HANDBOOK

THE CENTER
CENTER FOR EFFECTIVE PUBLIC POLICY

BJA Bureau of Justice Assistance

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Preface

In the United States, approximately 650,000 adults and nearly 100,000 juveniles are released from incarceration each year (Harrison & Beck, 2006; Glaze & Bonczar, 2006; Glaze & Palla, 2005; Snyder & Sickmund, 2006). They return to communities with critical needs around housing, employment, mental health, substance abuse issues, et cetera. Often these offenders return to communities that are unprepared to address these issues. Outcome measures indicate that most offenders released from correctional institutions do not reintegrate back into the community successfully and instead return to the criminal justice system because of new crimes or parole violations.

In response to the rising costs of incarceration and public safety concerns, the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) and its federal partners funded the Serious and Violent Offender Reentry Initiative (SVORI) as a comprehensive federal effort designed to facilitate improved outcomes for adult and juvenile offenders as they reenter the community from incarceration. This initiative provided guidance and support on a national level to many public and private agencies in the pursuit of reduced offender recidivism and enhanced public safety. Although institutional corrections and community supervision agencies certainly are not alone in their efforts to reduce offender recidivism, their critical role and unique position in managing offenders on a day-to-day basis and during their transition from prison to the community require them to serve as the initiating forces in broad-based efforts toward increased offender success and public safety.

In 2004, the Center for Effective Public Policy (the Center) received funds under SVORI to develop materials for institutional corrections and community supervision staff that would define clearly and specifically their changing role in promoting successful offender reentry. The Center developed and piloted two training curricula for institutional corrections and community supervision personnel, including policymakers, mid-level supervisors, and line officers. These curricula, developed from the trainings conducted in five States, provide policymakers and practitioners with the information and tools they need to serve as agents of change by reorienting their respective institutional offender management and supervision functions toward the enhancement of public safety through successful offender reentry. The *Community Safety Through Successful Offender Reentry* curricula include:

- *A Training Curriculum for Corrections Policymakers*, which provides institutional corrections and community supervision agency leadership staff with the basic information and resources they need to begin changing their agency's vision, mission, policies, and practices to align with effective offender reentry strategies.

- *An Agencywide Training Curriculum for Corrections*, which provides institutional corrections and community supervision agency policymakers and practitioners with training materials for staff at all levels on critical issues related to offender reentry. These materials are designed to enhance knowledge among training participants and engage staff in the culture change necessary to establish successful offender reentry as a fundamental organizational philosophy.

In addition to these training curricula, the Center developed this handbook, which builds upon the experience of delivering training and technical assistance to States that participated in this project. The handbook serves as a supplement to the curricula or as a stand-alone reference for institutional corrections and community supervision agency staff interested in achieving successful offender reentry as a means to public safety. Collectively, these products provide institutional corrections and community supervision agencies with materials to better inform the development of effective policy and build the capacity of staff to achieve more successful outcomes with offenders.

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Introduction

PURPOSE OF THIS HANDBOOK

This handbook is intended to inform, illustrate, and provide guidance to readers regarding a new vision for corrections that has, as its hallmark, promoting offender success as a key element for increasing public safety. Not only does this handbook explore the reasons *why* institutional corrections and community supervision agencies should realign their policies and practices to support this vision, but it also provides a framework for *how* to engage in this work. This framework, upon which the organization of this document is based, includes four components to consider when implementing an effective offender reentry strategy:

· Leadership and Organizational Change
· Rational Planning Process
· Collaboration
· Effective Offender Management Practices

Within this framework, this handbook will outline how institutional corrections and community supervision agency leadership can realign their vision and mission to produce more successful outcomes with offenders while changing the organizational culture, increasing agency effectiveness through enhanced partnerships with others, and engaging staff in effective offender management practices that will help them to be more successful in their work with offenders.

This handbook provides these agencies with information, tools, and resources as they work to increase the likelihood that offenders will be released from their care prepared to assume their active, vital, and law-abiding roles in the community.

INTENDED AUDIENCE

Enhancing public safety through successful offender reentry requires those responsible for *preparing the offender to reenter the community* and those responsible for *supervising the offender in the community* to work together to provide the offender with access to the services and resources necessary to succeed. Therefore, this handbook is intended to engage institutional corrections and community supervision agencies at the state and local levels in embracing both the vision of offender success as a means to public safety and the necessary activities to be undertaken to achieve this goal. For simplicity, throughout this handbook the language "institutional corrections and community supervision agencies" is used to encompass prisons, jails, and community-based supervision entities at all levels whose staff may benefit from the broad-based material presented.

As institutional corrections and community supervision agencies broaden their missions, agency leaders must clearly articulate this new direction in policy and strategy to their staff and engage their employees in the process of change. To do this, they must also share the reasons for this change in direction. Only with the support of and enthusiasm from staff at all levels can agencies respond successfully to the complex needs of incarcerated and released offenders, and ensure that appropriate policy and practice changes are made that can positively impact public safety. For this reason, this handbook is directed to institutional corrections and community supervision agency policymakers, top managers, and mid-level managers who have the authority to create the necessary organizational changes that can ultimately enhance public safety.

This handbook was developed based on the Center's experiences working with agencies primarily concerned with the majority of offenders under their supervision: adult, male offenders transitioning from prison to the community. Therefore, its language and content are consistent with this population. However, much of the material (e.g., on leadership and organizational change, collaboration, and rational planning) is broadly applicable to the challenges faced as a whole, and may indeed be useful to practitioners working with juveniles, females, or other special offender populations. Although it is beyond the scope of this document to attend fully to the reentry issues facing these populations, information that is particularly germane for juvenile offenders is referenced throughout the handbook, and a separate section (Section 7) is devoted to female offenders.

HANDBOOK STRUCTURE

The handbook is constructed of several sections, each providing important information regarding a specific topic. Section One, Offender Reentry from a National Perspective, reviews the scope of the problems facing institutional corrections and community supervision agencies and describes the response at the national level to address the complex issues around offender reentry.

In Section Two, A Framework for Offender Reentry, a common language and model for offender reentry is introduced along with some guiding principles for this work.

The remaining sections of the handbook delve into each component of the model in more detail. Section Three discusses the importance of leadership and organizational change to offender reentry efforts. Section Four outlines a rational planning process, and Section Five demonstrates the importance of internal and external collaboration to undertaking this work. Effective

offender management strategies, including the most up-to-date research on evidence-based practices, are presented in Section Six.

Key steps are summarized at the conclusion of each section. An inventory of questions for users to begin to assess their current policies and practices as they relate to each component described is also included. The questions for all components are presented in full in the Offender Reentry Policy and Practice Inventory within the Appendix.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

This handbook is intended to provide a framework for institutional corrections and community supervision agency leaders who are interested in implementing more effective offender reentry strategies. While collaboration with state, local, and private agencies is crucial to implementing such strategies, this document is, for the most part, more narrowly focused on the critical role institutional corrections and community supervision agencies play in offender reentry. However, because multidisciplinary collaboration is essential to their success, the role and structure of these external partnerships are addressed briefly in Section Five, The Essential Role of Collaboration.

Two companion documents to this handbook are currently under development and are funded under the Transition from Prison to Community (TPC) initiative.[1] One of these documents will address broader, multiagency issues much more specifically. The other handbook will focus on a very critical but specific issue: offender case management. Together, these three documents will serve as a series on offender reentry.

- *The Transition from Prison to Community (TPC) Reentry Handbook* will describe the TPC model and provide hands-on guidance on how to form multidisciplinary teams to address the broad, policy-level changes across systems to support offender success. Although the *TPC Reentry Handbook* will focus on the changes institutional corrections and community supervision agencies are undertaking, it will primarily speak to those changes necessary at a policy level, with particular attention paid to how multiagency operations are reshaped by partnerships.

- *The Transition from Prison to Community (TPC) Case Management Handbook* will address case management in great detail (this topic will be discussed in general in this handbook as well as in the *TPC Reentry Handbook*). Its purpose will be to assist managers, first line supervisors, and line staff in bringing about changes in policy, practice, functional definitions, and skill sets. The changes will result in a new approach to dealing with individual offenders utilizing interactions with offenders as interventions in themselves, engaging offenders in the process of change, and redefining success as the desired outcome of case management. The handbook will speak to the notion of interdisciplinary case management, as well as case management mechanisms that can bridge the gap between institutions and community supervision agencies. While the previously described handbooks will likely touch on many of the same topics, the *TPC Case Management Handbook* will explore the cross-system change process in greater depth, and will include tools, examples, and strategies for use by leadership, mid-level management, and line staff.
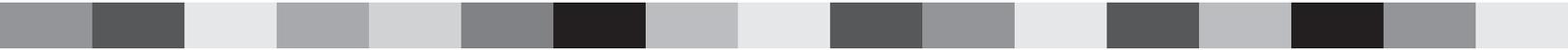
Section One:

Offender Reentry from a
National Perspective

Madeline M. Carter

INTRODUCTION

Institutional corrections and community supervision agencies have historically defined their primary missions as providing custody and control of incarcerated offenders, assuring compliance with the conditions of release, and returning post-release condition violators to the appropriate authority for revocation. In recent years, however, momentum nationally has shifted away from a heavy reliance on incarceration as the solution to crime to a new focus on successful offender reentry as a means to enhance public safety.

The nation's traditional reliance on incarceration has resulted not only in a record number of incarcerated Americans, but has also had the concomitant result of a significant increase in the sheer number of offenders returning to communities. Outcome measures indicate that most offenders released from prison do not successfully reintegrate back into the community. Most end up back in jail or prison, either as a result of technical violations or because of the commission of new crimes.

In response to these high rates of recidivism and the growing impact of revocations on prison beds, many states are examining and redefining the mission and function of their institutional corrections and community supervision agencies. They are exploring how their institutional, releasing, and community supervision policies, practices, and resources can be integrated into a more coherent and purposeful effort that produces the outcomes they seek: reductions in criminal behavior and enhanced public safety.

In this section, Chapter 1 will outline the scope of the problems facing the nation, including the number of individuals incarcerated and under community supervision, the high costs of corrections and crime to the nation, and the multiple and complex barriers facing offenders as they transition to the community. Chapter 2 will outline the national response to these issues and describe the shift in approach to the way institutional corrections and community supervision agencies are working with offenders.

CHAPTER 1: SCOPE OF THE PROBLEM

Incarceration Rates in America

The United States leads the world in incarceration rates, with more than two million adults confined in prisons and jails. This translates to one in every 136 individuals in the U.S. confined in the nation's correctional institutions (Harrison & Beck, 2006). In addition, over 96,000 youth (ages ten through eighteen years of age) were in some form of public or private residential custody in 2003 (Snyder & Sickmund, 2006).

These figures represent a 700 percent increase in incarcerated persons in the past three and a half decades[2] (Public Safety Performance Project, 2007). The increase is generally attributed to public policy changes such as "get tough" sentencing and correctional reforms including "three-strikes" laws, "truth-in-sentencing" laws, drug laws, the decline of discretionary release options, the emergence of surveillance and control activities and programs, and rising revocation rates. Collectively, these policies increase the number of individuals coming into the corrections system while simultaneously increasing their length of stay.

> While prison is still a relatively rare experience for many Americans, it is becoming a more common event, especially for certain segments of our society—in particular, young black and Hispanic males.
>
> *- Austin & Fabelo, 2004*

The Significant Number of Individuals under Probation and Parole Supervision in the Community

The magnitude of the correctional problem increases substantially when considering the number of adults under some form of correctional supervision in the community, nearly 5 million persons in calendar year 2005 (Glaze & Bonczar, 2006).

In combination, these numbers represent a tripling of the correctional population in twenty-five years. In 1980, one in every ninety adults was under some form of correctional supervision (incarcerated in jail or prison, or in the community under parole or probation supervision). By 2005, this number grew to one in every thirty-two adults (Glaze & Bonczar, 2006). Further, in 2001, it was estimated that 4.3 million adults had previously served time in state or federal prison (Bonczar, 2003), with substantially more who at one time had been under some form of community supervision.

The Increasing Numbers of Offenders Returning to Communities

This reliance on incarceration has resulted not only in a record number of incarcerated Americans but also in an increased number of offenders returning to communities. It is estimated that of the 2.1 million Americans in prison or jail in 2005 (Harrison & Beck, 2006), ninety-five percent of these prisoners will eventually be released into the community (Hughes & Wilson, 2005). In fact, of the approximately 650,000 people released from prison each year, approximately 500,000 are released under parole supervision (see Harrison & Beck, 2006; Glaze & Bonczar, 2006; Glaze & Palla 2005).

Rates of Victimization

Examination of this problem through arguably the most important lens, the rate of victimization in the United States, underscores the importance of taking steps necessary to reduce the likelihood that offenders will commit additional crimes. It is estimated that, in the year 2005, one in every 574 individuals was the victim of a reported property or personal crime (excluding murder) (Catalano, 2006), with youths aged twelve to seventeen much more likely to become a victim of violent crime than adults (Snyder & Sickmund, 2006). These numbers presumably represent only a

portion of true victimizations, given the prevalence of underreported crimes, particularly in some crime categories.

Beyond the psychological and emotional costs of victimization is the cost impact of crime on victims. In 2002, economic costs alone were estimated at $15.6 billion for property theft or damage, stolen cash, medical expenses, and lost wages due to injury (Austin & Fabelo, 2004).

> Keeping dangerous people away from their potential victims remains an effective, yet limited, means for public safety. As a society though, we are not in a position to keep every offender locked up indefinitely. Not only is it not cost-effective, it's not viable. We cannot build enough prisons to permanently hold every person incarcerated today. Nor would the public allow that.
>
> *- Roger Werholtz, Secretary, Kansas Department of Corrections, KDOC July 2006 Newsletter*

Resource Investment and Fiscal Consequences

Costs to victims are not the only economic costs resulting from high crime, incarceration, and community supervision rates. The enormous growth in the number of offenders under correctional control has fiscal consequence. Despite the fact that States have been facing fiscal constraints in recent years (in 2004, States faced a total of $78 billion in deficit [Austin & Fabelo, 2004]), corrections spending has increased. In 1980, the United States spent $9 billion on corrections; today correctional spending surpasses $60 billion (Public Safety Performance Project, 2007; BJS, 2007). The average annual cost to incarcerate an adult offender is $23,876 (Public Safety Performance Project, 2007) and a juvenile offender is $43,000 (CASA, 2004). Aggregate costs are projected to rise to $2.5–$5 billion per year due to prison expansion and

operational costs in the foreseeable future (Public Safety Performance Project, 2007).

This increased spending for corrections comes at a price of reduced spending for other needed public services. For example, between 1977 and 2001, total state and local expenditures for corrections increased 1,001 percent, compared to 448 percent for education, 482 percent for hospitals and healthcare, and 617 percent for public welfare (Lotke, Stromberg, & Schiraldi, 2004).

> The key is for policymakers to base their decisions on a clear understanding of the costs and benefits of incarceration—and of data-driven, evidence-based alternatives that can preserve public safety while saving much needed tax dollars.
>
> *- Public Safety Performance Project, 2007*

The Social Costs on Future Generations

It is important to recognize the impact of crime and increasing offender populations, not only on public budgets and the safety of communities but also on the next generation. Fifty-five percent of all inmates have children under the age of eighteen (Travis, Cincotta, & Solomon, 2003). This is enormously important given that the research indicates that having an incarcerated parent is a significant risk factor for delinquency (Waul, Travis, & Solomon, 2002).

Failure Abounds

More than half of released offenders fail in the community and ultimately are returned to prison for either a technical violation of the conditions of their supervision or commission of a new crime (Langan & Levin, 2002; Brown, Maxwell, DeJesus, & Schiraldi, 2002). Thirty percent of adult offenders released from state prisons are rearrested within the first six months following their release. Within three years of release, this number increases to two-thirds rearrested (Langan & Levin, 2002). Failed offenders make up a substantial proportion

of state prison admissions each year. Over the last decade, for example, approximately one-third of state prison admissions included offenders who violated their parole conditions (Harrison & Beck, 2006). In contrast, in 1980, revocations accounted for only seventeen percent of prison admissions (Travis & Lawrence, 2002).

The situation is no better for juvenile offenders. Between fifty and seventy percent of young offenders released from institutional custody are rearrested within two years (Austin, Dedel Johnson, & Weitzer, 2005). A majority of youth (sixty-two percent) in custody in 2003 had been in custody before, most on at least two prior occasions (Snyder & Sickmund, 2006).

Failure is Predictable

The reasons that cause offenders to fail are not surprising. Most offenders enter the criminal justice system with myriad problems, and many leave with these same issues.

- *Mental Health Disorders*. Up to one-third of all incarcerated adults have a diagnosable mental disorder, yet appropriate in-prison services are lacking. Forty to sixty percent of prison and jail inmates with mental illness do not receive treatment (Ditton, 1999; Harlow, 1998). Similarly, approximately sixty to eighty percent of youth in the juvenile justice system have mental health difficulties, yet each day only one-third of all youth in need of mental health services actually receive the necessary interventions (NMHA, 2004).

- *Substance Abuse Problems*. Roughly three-fourths of adult inmates, and an estimated forty to seventy percent of detained youth (NIJ, 2002), have substance abuse problems. Yet only about ten percent of adults receive formal treatment while incarcerated (Hammett, 2000; Mumola, 1999) and only sixteen percent of youth in juvenile correctional facilities receive substance abuse treatment (CASA, 2004).

- *Co-Occurring Disorders*. Of the incarcerated adults and juveniles with mental health difficulties, between sixty and seventy-five percent have co-occurring substance abuse issues (The National GAINS Center, 2001; 2002).

- *Lack of Education and Vocational Skills*. Forty percent of adults released from correctional institutions do not have a high school diploma or GED. Only one-third of inmates receive vocational training while incarcerated (Harlow, 2003). Roughly thirty to fifty percent of detained youth have special education needs; when disorders that interfere with educational performance and achievement are taken into account, the percentage increases to approximately seventy-five to eighty percent (Rutherford, Bullis, Anderson & Griller-Clark, 2002). However, many youth placed in these facilities are not adequately screened and assessed for academic or other special needs, and large numbers of these youth are released without having received appropriate or sufficient educational or vocational skills to ensure their success (Altschuler & Brash, 2004; Rutherford et al., 2002).

- *Employment Barriers*. Most adult and juvenile offenders leave prison facing significant barriers to employment, including low educational attainment, literacy problems, and a lack of employment history. The effect of these barriers is compounded by laws limiting access to some career positions, social stigma, and lingering substance abuse problems (Altschuler & Brash, 2004; Mears & Travis, 2004; Rubinstein, 2001).

Through a national lens, the enormity of this problem is clear. The majority of offenders released from correctional institutions will return unsuccessfully to the community, with the public safety and fiscal impact this implies. But the future holds the promise of change, as institutional corrections and community supervision agencies continue to advance new approaches and practices that are proving to be effective in promoting successful offender outcomes that will ultimately enhance public safety.

CHAPTER 2: A NATIONAL SHIFT TOWARD REENTRY

The Emergence of a New Philosophy of Offender Management

Given the increasing rate of incarceration, the sheer fiscal impact of correctional allocations on state budgets, and offender reentry failure rates exceeding 50 percent, it is not surprising that a call for a greater emphasis on strategies that will result in more successful outcomes with offenders can be heard from all corridors.

> This year, some 600,000 inmates will be released from prison back into society. We know from long experience that if they can't find work, or a home, or help, they are much more likely to commit more crimes and return to prison. So tonight, I propose a four-year, 300 million dollar Prisoner Reentry Initiative to expand job training and placement services, to provide transitional housing, and to help newly released prisoners get mentoring, including from faith-based groups. America is the land of the second chance— and when the gates of the prison open, the path ahead should lead to a better life.
>
> *- President George W. Bush, 2004 State of the Union Address*

Correctional agencies have released offenders to the community since the first penitentiary in the U.S. was opened in 1790 and have provided preparatory service and reintegration support for decades. While performance of correctional agencies was once assessed on the basis of provision of service and accomplishment of activities (e.g., number of offenders confined without incident, number of offenders successfully meeting restitution requirements), today's focus on effective offender reentry is

sharply distinct, more squarely directed at the achievement of public safety through successful offender outcomes.

A focus on successful offender outcomes brings with it new responsibilities to understand the factors that contribute to risk (or, in the converse, the factors that can mitigate or reduce risk) and to realign correctional policy and practice with the specific purpose of supporting successful outcomes.

The emergence of this new approach has resulted from a confluence of factors, including a growing body of knowledge about effective interventions, a shift in public sentiment towards crime and offenders, and a number of national initiatives on offender reentry.

Effective Correctional Interventions

Over the past two decades, a considerable body of knowledge, first termed the "what works" movement and more recently "evidence-based policy and practice," has emerged to guide correctional practice. Today's correctional practitioner has the benefit of scientific knowledge to guide and direct recidivism reduction efforts with both adult and juvenile offenders. This body of work has had tremendous impact on the corrections field, arguably providing, for the first time, explicit guidance around outcome-driven work with offenders. Not only has the emergence of evidence-based policy and practice provided enhanced knowledge and tools for day-to-day offender management work, it has also captured the interest and support of policymakers and funders interested in investing in change efforts that will produce the desired results.

Changing Public Sentiment

Recent understanding of the attitudes of Americans towards crime and offenders is also fueling the engines of change. The perception that the public's interest is to get tough on crime has been refuted by public opinion research. Recent surveys suggest that the public sentiment is "get smarter, not tougher." A recent survey (Krisberg & Marchionna, 2006) found that U.S. voters:

- Support (by an almost 8:1 margin) rehabilitative services for prisoners, as opposed to a punishment-only system, favoring services both during incarceration and after release from prison.

- Believe a lack of life skills (66 percent), the experience of being in prison (58 percent), and barriers to reentry (57 percent) are major factors in the rearrest of prisoners after release.
- Believe a lack of job training is a significant barrier to releasing prisoners.
- Consider medical care (86 percent), the availability of public housing (84 percent), and student loans (83 percent) to be important tools for offender reintegration.
- Support offering services such as job training, drug treatment, mental health services, family support, mentoring, and housing assistance to prisoners.

Second Chance Act of 2007:
Community Safety Through Recidivism Prevention

To reauthorize the grant program for reentry of offenders into the community in the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968, to improve reentry planning and implementation, and for other purposes including:

- Providing offenders in prisons, jails, or juvenile facilities with educational, literacy, vocational, and job placement services to facilitate reentry into the community;
- Providing substance abuse treatment and services (including providing a full continuum of substance abuse treatment services that encompasses outpatient and comprehensive residential services and recovery);
- Providing coordinated supervision and comprehensive services for offenders upon release from prison, jail, or a juvenile facility, including housing and mental and physical health care to facilitate reentry into the community, and which, to the extent applicable, are provided by community-based entities (including coordinated reentry veteran-specific services for eligible veterans);
- Providing programs that encourage offenders to develop safe, healthy, and responsible family relationships and parent-child relationships; and involve the entire family unit in comprehensive reentry services (as appropriate to the safety, security, and well-being of the family and child);
- Encouraging the involvement of prison, jail, or juvenile facility mentors in the reentry process and enabling those mentors to remain in contact with offenders while in custody and after reentry into the community;
- Providing victim-appropriate services, encouraging the timely and complete payment of restitution and fines by offenders to victims, and providing services such as security and counseling to victims upon release of offenders; and
- Protecting communities against dangerous offenders by using validated assessment tools to assess the risk factors of returning inmates and developing or adopting procedures to ensure that dangerous felons are not released from prison prematurely.

- 110th Congress, 1st Session, H.R. 1593, November 14, 2007

- Believe that planning for reentry should begin at sentencing (44 percent). Another 27 percent believe that it should begin twelve months prior to release.
- Support or strongly support (78 percent) pending legislation to allocate federal dollars to prisoner reentry (The Second Chance Act).

National Initiatives

Given the importance and complexity of reentry, and in light of recent data and information regarding the high rate of offender failures after release from incarceration, the need for a new strategy is evident. It is not surprising, then, that a number of national initiatives have been undertaken by a variety of entities in recent years to support advancement of this new approach to offender management.[3]

The Serious and Violent Offender Reentry Initiative

In an effort to support focused work on the topic of offender reentry at the State level, and encourage State agencies to engage in multidisciplinary, collaborative policy work, the U.S. Department of Justice and its federal partners (the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, U.S. Department of Labor, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, U.S. Department of Education, U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs, and U.S. Social Security Administration) sponsored the Serious and Violent Offender Reentry Initiative (SVORI). This multi-year initiative provided seed money for programming, as well as training and technical assistance on a variety of topics related to reentry, to all States and U.S. territories. There is no doubt that, in addition to the many successes at the operational level in terms of spawning new initiatives, programs, and partnerships, the SVORI project contributed to a national dialogue on the topic of reentry and brought to the conversation stakeholders from non-criminal justice agencies.

This initiative continues today under the name President's Prisoner Reentry Initiative (PRI) with support from the Office of Justice Program's Bureau of Justice Assistance and the U.S. Department of Labor.

The National Governors Association Prisoner Reentry Policy Academy

The National Governors Association (NGA) Prisoner Reentry Policy Academy assembled interdisciplinary policy teams, led by each State governor's office, to include state agency representatives from housing, public safety and corrections, health and human services, labor, and welfare, as well as others in a number of states. These state policy teams collected and analyzed data regarding their offender populations and assessed service gaps and barriers to reentry. The initiative is credited in many states with drawing the attention of key non-public safety stakeholders to the issue of offender reentry.

The Transition from Prison to Community Initiative

Likewise, the Transition from Prison to Community Initiative (TPC), sponsored by the National Institute of Corrections, advocates a comprehensive, system-wide approach to offender reentry. The TPC model is a framework that guides jurisdictions to:

- Mobilize interdisciplinary, collaborative leadership teams (often convened by corrections agencies) to guide reentry efforts at the state and local levels.
- Deliberately involve non-correctional stakeholders (public, private, and community agencies) who can provide services and support as reentry initiatives are planned and implemented.
- Engage in a multidisciplinary rational planning process that includes a careful definition of goals as well as the development of a clear understanding of the reentering population and rates of recidivism, and a thoughtful review of existing policies, procedures, and resources for reentry.
- Implement validated offender assessments at various stages of an offender's movement through the system.

- Target effective interventions as demonstrated by good research to offenders on the basis of risk and criminogenic needs identified by assessments.
- Expand the traditional roles of correctional staff beyond custody, security, accountability, and monitoring to include an integrated approach to offender management that engages offenders in a process of change.
- Integrate the typically isolated stages of an offender's involvement in the criminal justice system (beginning at admission to incarceration (or earlier), and continuing through assessment, programming during incarceration, preparation for release, release, and supervision in the community), into a carefully managed process with close communication and collaboration among prisons, releasing authorities, and post-prison supervision staff.
- Assure that all transitioning offenders are equipped with basic survival resources such as identification, housing, appropriate medications, and linkages to community services and informal networks of support before, during, and after they are released and move into the community.

- Develop the capacity to measure progress toward specific outcomes, and to track progress continually, using such information for further improvement.

The TPC model encourages these strategic system changes in order to reduce recidivism among transitioning offenders, reduce future victimization, enhance public safety, and improve both the quality of life in communities and the lives of victims and offenders.

The Council of State Governments
Equally influential is the Report of the Re-Entry Policy Council: *Charting the Safe and Successful Return of Prisoners to the Community* (2005; www.reentrypolicy.org), an initiative and document that has synthesized knowledge, documented change efforts, and provided specific guidance to States in their efforts to enhance prisoner reentry efforts.

Each of these initiatives underscores the inextricable link between offender success and public safety, and supports, in varying ways, the work of corrections professionals to realign their agencies in service of this goal.

President's Prisoner Reentry Initiative

The President's Prisoner Reentry Initiative (PRI) is designed to provide funding to state units of government to develop and implement institutional and community corrections-based offender reentry programs. PRI strengthens urban communities characterized by large numbers of returning, nonviolent prisoners. PRI is designed to reduce recidivism by helping returning inmates find work and assess other critical services in their communities. PRI supports strategies to deliver prerelease assessments and services and to develop transition plans in collaboration with other justice- and community-based agencies and providers for supervised and nonsupervised, nonviolent offenders.

PRI envisions the development of model reentry programs that begin in correctional institutions and continue throughout an offender's transition to and stabilization in the community. The Office of Justice Programs' (OJP) Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) has partnered with the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) to administer PRI grants. These programs provide for individual reentry plans that address issues confronting offenders as they return to the community.

- U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, http://www.reentry.gov.learn.html, last accessed December 11, 2007

Moving Forward with a Focus on Public Safety through Successful Offender Reentry

For these goals to be realized, substantial barriers must be overcome. Among the most significant of these barriers are the fragmentation within and across agencies and systems, correctional cultures that focus more heavily on custody and control measures, sometimes to the exclusion of rehabilitative approaches, and a gap in knowledge, skills, policies, programs, and services that align with an evidence-based approach to offender management.

> Our resources are misspent, our punishments too severe, our sentences too long.
>
> - *Justice Anthony M. Kennedy, August 9, 2003, in a speech to the American Bar Association*

The remainder of this handbook provides a framework for addressing these barriers that is consistent with this new approach to offender management. The following section will introduce the framework and some guiding principles for undertaking this work.

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Section Two:
A Framework for Offender Reentry

Madeline M. Carter

Never before have the conditions for change in correctional practice been as promising as they are today. Correctional agencies across the country are embracing a new approach to their work, fueled by a number of factors. On one hand these factors include increasing incarceration rates, the rate of offender failure, escalating costs for prison construction and operations, and the diminishing public dollar. On the other they include a virtual explosion of knowledge about what works (and, perhaps more importantly, what does not work) with adult and juvenile offenders, public sentiment supporting reentry initiatives, and substantive and fiscal support from a variety of sources.

However, understanding the need for and being committed to a new strategy for offender reentry is only the initial step. Given the complex factors that must be considered when undertaking the work of realigning correctional policy and practice, agencies will need the appropriate tools, information, and guidance to develop an effective strategy for offender reentry.

This section will outline some guiding principles and propose a framework for approaching this work.

Philosophy and Guiding Principles of this Handbook

Over the past several years, the Bureau of Justice Assistance has worked with numerous jurisdictions on the topic of offender reentry. That experience has underscored the importance of having clarity of focus and a common language regarding critical concepts. The philosophy and general principles that guided the development of the framework are presented here.

What is the Principal Objective of Offender Reentry?

The principal objective of offender reentry is to promote successful offender outcomes. Offenders are successful when they lead law-abiding lives, support their dependents, pay their taxes, engage in pro-social activities, and are positive and contributing members of their communities.

Why Should Institutional Corrections and Community Supervision Agencies Invest in Promoting Successful Offender Outcomes?

First, promoting successful offender outcomes enhances public safety. Offenders who engage in lawful conduct are improving the safety of their communities. Criminal acts avoided represent a positive outcome for all persons in that community, especially those who may have been victimized by these crimes.

Second, promoting successful offender outcomes allows for a better allocation of (often limited) resources. There are a variety of fiscal costs associated with any crime. When crimes do not occur, these monetary consequences are avoided. Further, many offenders are returned to prison for violations that do not include the commission of new crimes. Occupying a prison bed has significant cost implications and other repercussions for any jurisdiction. Offenders who abide by conditions, engage in appropriate behaviors, and attend to their responsibilities are unlikely to be returned to prison. Avoiding reincarceration allows funds to be invested elsewhere.

Third, promoting successful offender outcomes provides a focus for positive action that is consistent with both public expectations and the central responsibilities of institutional corrections and community supervision agencies. It is a primary responsibility of institutional corrections and community supervision agencies to correct the attitudes, behaviors, and actions of offenders and address other critical factors that are related directly to an offender's criminal propensities. Research over the past twenty years has demonstrated that specific types of interventions can impact the future conduct of adult and juvenile offenders by reducing their risk to reoffend. The public expects corrections agencies to encourage appropriate behavior during incarceration and to utilize these interventions to impact an offender's ability to engage in appropriate conduct in the community after release from prison.

> Promoting successful offender outcomes is an appropriate and perhaps fundamental corrections goal because it enhances public safety, encourages the best use of limited resources, and creates a focus for positive action that is consistent with public expectations and the responsibilities of institutional corrections and community supervision agencies.

How Should Agencies Approach the Planning and Implementation of Offender Reentry Efforts in Order to Best Accomplish These Outcomes?

The remaining sections of this handbook provide a framework for action, general information about pertinent topics and research, specific examples from particular jurisdictions, and practical tips to help institutional corrections and community supervision agencies identify the policies and practices that can be modified to improve their approach to offender reentry. The following activities have been found to have

particular significance to jurisdictions working to accomplish more successful outcomes with offenders:

- Understanding the principles that underlie offender reentry efforts and the direction of this work from a national perspective.
- Establishing a clear vision for the work and promoting the acceptance of this vision within institutional corrections and community supervision agencies.
- Appreciating the leadership that will be required to move institutional corrections and community supervision agencies in new directions.
- Developing collaborative approaches within institutional corrections and community supervision agencies and with other agencies and individuals around offender reentry efforts.
- Taking a rational approach to planning.
- Employing evidence-based practices to achieve these successful outcomes.

The Framework for an Effective Offender Reentry Strategy

The vision of successful offender outcomes represents a shift for both institutional corrections and community supervision agencies from the sole focus on punishment, incapacitation, monitoring, and accountability toward a more balanced approach of also focusing on offender success as a means to enhance public safety. To realize this vision, an alignment of mission, a rethinking of the systems, actions, and methods currently in use, must also occur.

The framework for an effective offender reentry strategy described in this handbook provides institutional corrections and community supervision agency leaders and their staffs with a way to organize their thinking and activities as they work to build more effective offender management practices. This framework includes four key components:

- Leadership and Organizational Change
- Rational Planning Process
- Collaboration
- Effective Offender Management Practices

Leadership and Organizational Change

Adopting a new vision for institutional corrections and community supervision agencies requires committed leaders at the highest levels of the organization. Leaders must agree that successful offender reentry is a primary goal of the agency, not just a program or service. Committed leaders understand the power and importance of this new vision for institutional corrections and community supervision agencies, as well as the enormity of the work that must take place for this vision to be realized. While some make the false assumption that effective offender reentry, transition, and evidence-based practices translate into the adoption of a few new tools and approaches or the modification of work activities of a select number of staff members, committed and visionary leaders understand that the work is much more fundamental than this. A thorough examination of, and modification to, the organization's culture, addressing such issues as the manner in which the agency is organized; how staff is hired, trained, and promoted; the ways in which functions are integrated; and staff's

understanding of its role in achieving the agency's vision, is central to achieving successful outcomes with offenders. In other words, this part of the framework addresses why the agency adopts a particular focus and accompanying change strategies. Section Three of this handbook will address this issue.

Rational Planning Process

As leaders consider the best methods to advance their agencies by embracing a new vision and undertaking a change in organizational culture, they should also put into place a system or method that will assist them to rationally consider where the agency is in relation to its vision and how best to get it to where it wants to be. The objective identification of issues, gaps, problems, and opportunities will give the agency the ability to move deliberately in the desired direction. Once the agency's needs for moving forward are identified and prioritized, leaders can develop the specific strategies that will be most powerful and have the greatest impact on achieving the results they seek. This part of the framework, then, addresses how to undertake the change process. Section Four of this handbook will describe the rational planning process in greater detail.

Collaboration

Since the barriers to successful reentry are multi-faceted, building collaborative partnerships is essential at both the policy and case management levels. Institutional corrections and community supervision agency leaders must identify and collaborate with their external partners. Similarly, internal collaboration among staff members working within institutions, between institutional and community supervision staff and between those working in the community is equally important. This part of the framework addresses with whom institutional corrections and community supervision agencies should be working and how these partners should work together. Section Five of this handbook will identify the various forms of collaboration at the State, regional, and local levels, and at the policy and case management

levels. It will describe the ways in which these collaboratives are structured, the benefits of collaboration, and the research that defines highly functioning teams.

Effective Offender Management Practices

Enhancing outcomes with adult and juvenile offenders requires the adoption of specific principles and practices empirically demonstrated to be effective in reducing recidivism. These principles and practices translate into very specific activities and are a cornerstone of effective correctional practice. In isolation of the other elements of the framework, these evidence-based practices will likely

Kansas Risk Reduction Initiative: A Multilayered, Multiagency Statewide Change Initiative

The Kansas Department of Corrections (DOC) has demonstrated a long-standing commitment to enhancing public safety through the establishment of successful offender reentry initiatives. These initiatives have focused on building bridges to agencies external to corrections, and within corrections, building the capacity of staff, changing the culture of the Department of Corrections, and realigning responsibilities and resources to achieve the State's risk reduction goals.

The DOC developed a long-range, wide-reaching strategic plan detailing the establishment of external partnerships and the restructuring of its internal organization. A Statewide, multidisciplinary Reentry Policy Council has been established and a steering committee formed to execute the strategies laid out in the plan.

Statewide data has been collected to identify barriers to offender success and has been used to support key legislative changes. Among other things, the data resulted in the passage of Senate Bill 14, which appropriates funds to support the enhancement of risk reduction efforts at the community corrections level.

Within the State's correctional institutions, a strategic effort to align programs to deliver services based upon assessed criminogenic needs was undertaken. Staff from all parts of the correctional institution have been involved in training and change management initiatives.

The parole division has undertaken a deliberate review of policies and practices to identify ways to reduce the number of revocations as a result of conditions violations, and to determine the extent to which policy and practice support risk reduction and reentry. The number of failing parolees dropped twenty-six percent from 2004 to 2006 as a result (KDOC, 2006). Efforts continue to reduce the failure rate further.

At the local level, in 2003, the Shawnee County Reentry Program was started; later the program was expanded to Sedgwick County. Both serve as models for the implementation of evidence-based practices.

Beginning in the fall of 2007, all thirty-three community corrections districts in the state will begin a partnership program with the DOC to align community corrections with DOC reentry initiatives and evidence-based policy and practice.

demonstrate limited utility. By adopting and implementing them effectively in the context of clear vision, leadership, and a realigned organizational culture, supported by a strategic planning and implementation process and enhanced through collaborative partnerships, agencies can realize the maximum potential of these evidence-based practices. This aspect of the framework therefore addresses in what offender management activities agencies should engage. Section Six of this handbook details these principles and practices.

Assessing Offender Reentry Efforts

An *Offender Reentry Policy and Practice Inventory* is included in this handbook to assist institutional corrections and community supervision agencies to examine their activities along each of these four dimensions. Each of the subsequent chapters in this handbook provides a set of key steps for readers to consider with regard to their own agency's efforts.

In addition, each section concludes with a set of questions designed to assist the agency in conducting a self-assessment to determine the extent to which the effective offender reentry framework is being implemented. (The complete inventory is included in the Appendix.) Agency leaders are encouraged to bring together a group of staff members to consider and discuss the questions in the inventory. This process will unveil successful activities already underway within the agency, knowledge gaps and perception differences among staff, and most importantly, specific opportunities for advancement towards successful offender reentry.

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Public safety through effective offender management in institutions and in the community has always been the cornerstone of our mission at the Department. However, the concept of public safety through successful prisoner reentry requires us to reexamine what we do in our agency. We should be evaluating, from the moment an offender enters our probation or prison system, what will help that offender succeed upon return to the community. This shift in philosophy touches virtually every aspect of offender management, from the way supervision levels are determined to the type of programming that is provided both in prison and in the community.

Our focus on prisoner reentry means that we not only examine how we manage offenders, but also how we engage and motivate offenders. Offenders in our custody are personally accountable for making their own choices about the life they will lead when they are released from prison. Taking personal responsibility for one's actions is the foundation of our criminal justice system. Prisoner reentry is about encouraging, motivating and challenging offenders to take responsibility for their lives from the day they enter prison.

- Matt Frank, Former Secretary, Wisconsin Department of Corrections

Leadership and Organizational Change

Rational Planning Process

Collaboration

Effective Offender Management

Section Three:
Leadership and Organizational Change

Richard Stroker

INTRODUCTION

> Life is change, growth is optional. Choose wisely.
>
> *- Clark & Anderson, 1995*

Change is a common occurrence in both institutional corrections and community supervision agencies. Sometimes changes are created or developed from within an agency in response to problems, opportunities, or new information, and at other times they may be imposed by individuals outside an agency. The issue is not so much whether an agency should or will change its direction, focus, policies, or methods but how it will change them, who will be directing these changes, and how changes can best be implemented.

Substantial research findings, conclusions about the effectiveness of various approaches to offender management, reflections on individual and collective values, budget considerations, and many other factors have caused leaders in jurisdictions across the country to question some of the basic approaches that have been taken to the preparation of offenders for release. Most of these adult and juvenile offenders are returning to institutions within three years after their release, bringing with them the enormous costs (fiscal and social) associated with failure. A growing body of literature has helped to focus attention on some of the critical steps that could be taken to decrease the likelihood of these failures occurring. In light of these developments, institutional

corrections and community supervision agency leaders in many jurisdictions have become interested in taking actions that will improve their overall offender management strategies and offender reentry practices in particular.

The types of changes that must be made to improve offender reentry practices touch on nearly every aspect of institutional corrections and community supervision agencies' work, and clearly involve the work of other agencies as well. To successfully orchestrate and implement new approaches to offender reentry, individuals within these agencies must be willing to demonstrate specific leadership qualities, understand the underlying forces that form the basis of the agency's culture, and appreciate the implications that new work requirements or expectations have on employees. Chapter 1 will focus on these important considerations. Chapter 2 will provide guidance on understanding current agency culture and creating a vision statement for offender reentry in order to prepare for organizational change. Finally, Chapter 3 will discuss how to prepare staff for this change.

CHAPTER 1: DEMONSTRATING LEADERSHIP

Leadership Defined

Numerous authors have provided a multitude of words to convey what they believe the word leadership truly means. Many of these definitions focus on particular actions, methods, and attitudes that can be displayed by individuals. For instance, Kouzes and Posner (2002) in their work have indicated that:

> Leadership is not a place, it's not a position, and it's not a secret code that can't be deciphered by ordinary people. Leadership is an observable set of skills and abilities.

Utilizing this definition, the particular traits, characteristics, skills, and methods used by individuals who demonstrate the essential qualities of leadership can be examined.

Leadership Distinguished from Management

The terms leadership and management are sometimes used interchangeably; however, several authors on the topic of leadership point out the important differences between these two notions. For example, Peter Drucker (1999) and Warren Bennis (1989) have indicated that leadership is *doing the right things*, while management is *doing things right*.

Authors Stephen Covey, Roger Merrill, and Rebecca Merrill (1996) express it in the following way: leadership is making sure that the agency's "ladder is against the right wall" and that you "do the right thing for the right reason in the right way." In other words, leaders must make certain that agencies are focused on the right things and are moving in the proper direction or towards the correct overall goals. Determining the right direction is an exercise that involves an individual's principles and values and an appreciation and application of pertinent facts and information.

By contrast, managers are responsible in their day-to-day work for ensuring that specific tasks are discharged properly and effectively. Their daily focus is on the execution of work responsibilities and making certain that the best methods are used to move in the direction that has been indicated. Warren Bennis (1997) indicates some of the fundamental distinctions between the focus or actions of leaders and managers. He notes that:

- Leaders ask what and why. Managers ask how and when.
- Leaders focus on the horizon. Managers focus on the bottom line.
- Leaders are willing to challenge the status quo. Managers accept the status quo.

The degree to which top and mid-level managers of an agency are able to work in harmony can have enormous implications for the overall effectiveness of the agency in reaching particular goals. In the offender reentry arena, leadership and management can be viewed in the following way: leadership is choosing to pursue a course of action to develop new strategies and partnerships in order to reduce the likelihood of released offenders returning to institutions, while good management is finding and employing on a daily basis the best methods and practices that will enable the agency to reduce the likelihood of an offender's return to prison.

Leadership Can Occur at Any Level of an Agency

One of the most misunderstood notions of leadership is that it can only be exercised by the top management of an agency. However, just because a certain individual holds positional

leadership does not necessarily mean that a person exhibits leadership qualities. Since leadership is about a way of behaving and not about holding any particular position, leadership qualities can be demonstrated by anyone at any time. R.J. House (2004) writes that: "Leadership is the ability of an individual to influence, motivate, and enable others to contribute toward the effectiveness of an agency."

Within any agency, office, or unit, there are individuals at various levels considered to be leaders by their coworkers. This might be based on their experience and credibility, their ability to see the broader landscape and not be unduly influenced by some particular event, or their willingness to be innovative and to try new methods or approaches. Some individuals are so adept at demonstrating leadership qualities that their leadership is almost invisible until you step back and see the influence that they have on the actions of others.

If anyone can demonstrate leadership qualities, then institutional corrections and community supervision agencies are likely filled with individuals who act like leaders. The potentially significant impact that these individuals can have on an agency, or on the goals or objectives of the top managers of an agency, will be discussed more fully in the chapter on organizational change. For the purposes of this section, however, it is assumed that leadership is largely about demonstrating certain skills and abilities, and that anyone at any level in an agency can demonstrate these traits.

Key Leadership Characteristics

If leadership is a way of behaving and not the holding of a particular position, then it is helpful to outline some of the key elements of good leadership in a way that is clear to anyone who might be interested in becoming a leader.

Maintaining a Focus on the Future

Leaders are willing to imagine things as they could be and are willing to make the necessary changes to help an agency modify its course. As noted above, leaders are willing to question the status quo. Leaders might ask, "Why are we doing the things that we do?" or "What are our overall objectives?" These questions go to the heart of an agency's purpose and direction. It is interesting to ask people who are engaged in a variety of correctional tasks why they are doing what they do. Answers are sometimes provided along the lines of "This is how we always do it" or "This is what I was told to do." Leaders are unwilling to stop their inquiries based on these answers.

> Leadership is a means. Leadership to what end is the crucial question.
>
> *- Drucker, 1999*

When a person thinks about what an agency could be accomplishing, the direction that it could be following, or the outcomes that it could be striving to achieve, then that person is thinking like a leader. A focus on a preferred future often helps to identify the types of changes that an agency must make in order to be successful at moving in a new direction.

Being Proactive and Having a Passionate Purpose

Author Eudora Welty (1995) once stated that all significant change starts from within. Before leaders in institutional corrections and community supervision agencies can effectively initiate change, they must first be convinced of the value of pursuing a new course. The growing body of literature demonstrating the positive impacts of offender reentry as a corrections philosophy stands as one powerful argument for the benefits of undertaking particular actions or engaging in necessary modifications in order to improve offender outcomes. Once convinced, effective leaders embrace the need for change and become advocates for modifying an agency's direction or methods.

Initiating necessary change, rather than waiting for circumstances to require action, is an

example of proactive behavior. Stephen Covey (1989) writes that being proactive is "…more than being aggressive or assertive. It is both taking initiative and responding to outside stimuli based on one's principles."

When individuals are convinced of the need to pursue or implement change, they can act with a passionate purpose. In the absence of a belief in particular goals, it is easy to be distracted or deterred from objectives. Changing the goals, direction, or activities of an institutional corrections or community supervision agency regarding offender reentry will require a long-term approach. Leaders who are persuasive that achieving certain offender reentry goals is both consistent with the agency's values and beliefs and in the best interests of the agency and the public will be more successful at helping their agency engage in long-term change.

Demonstrating a Willingness to Listen and Learn

Good leaders demonstrate the ability to listen to and appreciate the perspectives of others, whether these include formulating ideas about the best direction or goals for the agency, or trying to understand and identify the best ways of solving existing problems or meeting the needs of the agency.

Leaders understand that, in order to bring about positive change, they must understand where their agency currently is, as well as where they would like it to be. Albert Einstein once remarked that "the significant problems we face cannot be solved at the same level of thinking we were at when we created them." Leaders are willing to apply new information, ideas, or methods to overcome present challenges. Leaders are also willing to spend the time necessary to understand the fundamental nature of important issues. The causes of problems are oftentimes complex, and the ability to listen and learn will help leaders determine the true root of an issue.

Putting Egos Aside and Developing Partnerships

While some leaders prefer a high profile existence, many of the best agency leaders operate in a low-key manner. This may reflect a personal choice or the realization that what truly matters is not their personal recognition but the advancement of their agency towards particular goals. Effective work in the offender reentry area requires the development of key partnerships between institutional corrections and community supervision agencies as well as numerous other entities. The ability to develop a close working relationship with the leaders of these agencies is likely to be essential to the long-term success of offender reentry efforts. Partnerships, both inside and outside of an agency, require consideration and respect. It is easier to formulate partnerships when individual egos are not placed front and center.

Leaders know when to step up and be heard, when to be held accountable, and when to step back and let others receive attention or acclaim. Individuals who are prepared to accept the blame for mistakes made by others in their agency and to deflect credit to those who are more deserving of recognition are demonstrating key leadership attributes. As Lao-Tsu once explained, "To lead people, walk beside them. As for the best leaders, the people do not notice their existence."

Providing Clear and Consistent Statements about the Intended Destination

In order for the staff of an agency to be able to follow the direction or goals of a leader or for others to understand what is intended in the future, it is imperative that these goals be expressed in a clear and consistent way. Management expert W. Edwards Deming (1993) expressed this notion in the following way: "The aim of the system must be clear to everyone in the system. The aim must involve the plans for the future."

There are many ways that individuals can announce, reinforce, or promote their vision regarding offender reentry. Presentations to groups, speeches to staff, training events, and articles in publications or newsletters can help deliver messages about new goals or methods. Every interaction between a supervisor and a subordinate is also a training opportunity. What individuals say to one another on a personal level can be more powerful than a presentation made to an audience. In order to impact the perspective of others, individuals must consistently indicate the value to the agency of moving in a particular direction.

> The Reentry Director has convened a [committee of] Cross Divisional Reentry Executive Team Leaders to identify more clearly staff roles and responsibilities as they relate to reentry. It is the job of the Executive Team Leaders to promote Department culture change by introducing new and substantially different ways of doing business that demonstrate the outcomes as benefits, i.e., greater community safety, fewer victims, and a more effective and efficient way of doing business.
>
> *- Matthew Frank, Former Secretary, Wisconsin Department of Corrections*

Remaining Flexible in Their Methods of Achieving Objectives

While it is important to remain steadfast regarding the overall objective, leaders know that they must be flexible in creating the best methods to get there. Line staff, front line supervisors, responsible managers, and others often have excellent ideas on how best to modify current methods or implement new changes in work requirements. Leaders must promote the overall objectives so that the direction of the agency can be fully understood and appreciated, yet they must also involve others in determining

the most appropriate or effective means for reaching particular goals. General George S. Patton put it this way: "Don't tell people how to do things. Tell them what to do, and let them surprise you with the results."

Some people are excellent at indicating what cannot be done. They can identify a significant number of obstacles that would prevent the agency from achieving a particular outcome. The *negative prophecy* (e.g., "This can't be done; I can't do it") is encouraged when leaders try to tell employees exactly how to do something. Effective leaders appreciate the value of expressing what must be done, consistently and continually reinforce the intended goal, and then invite discussion from various individuals about the best way to achieve it.

Displaying a Positive Attitude

Leaders must decide for themselves the attitudes that they will display. Leaders are best positioned to influence, motivate, and enable others when they supply an uplifting message and convey a positive outlook. Napoleon Bonaparte once indicated that "a leader is a dealer in hope."

Most individuals who work in institutional corrections and community supervision agencies want to be successful at what they do, and they want to make a difference in their communities or their work place. Leaders understand that, while the work is often difficult, employees can be inspired by ideas and the belief that their efforts are contributing towards a greater good. This message is most effectively communicated when the speaker is able to articulate an optimistic view about the future of the agency and to demonstrate a positive personal attitude regarding the intended direction, policies, or methods of that agency.

Doing Things in Ways that Build Trust

Every partnership, collaboration, or work enterprise depends upon individuals demonstrating a certain level of trust in each other. In many situations, actions could be taken that would be harmful to coworkers or partners

and could destroy or erode trust. Working in the public sector, it is often easy to blame others, point fingers, or take other actions that attempt to shield an individual or an agency from blame because of the interconnected nature of many activities. Leaders recognize the importance of resolving issues without attempting to establish fault. Some agencies have a long history of blaming others or operating in a distrustful or fearful environment. In such situations, it is difficult to listen to new messages, modify work methods, or embrace change.

Empowering others to act and delegating authority appropriately can also be meaningful ways to build trust. Theodore Roosevelt remarked: "The best executive is the one who has sense enough to pick good people to do what must be done and self-restraint to keep from meddling with them while they do it." Trust is something that is built over time and can be significantly damaged by a single incident. Individuals who are skilled leaders are vigilant in their efforts to demonstrate their trust in others.

Being Willing to Take Some Calculated Risks

Every action or decision in the corrections environment carries with it some risk. While institutional corrections and community supervision agencies seek to minimize the personal risks involved for everyone, policies must still be created. Decisions and actions based on those policies occur every day. A question to consider is whether the policies effectively assist the agency in realizing its most important or significant goals.

Decisions must be made in light of the information that is available. In the corrections world, a significant amount of information is generated. Ruth Stanat (1990), the president of an international research agency, once remarked that many managers are "drowning in data, but starved for information." When the true goals or objectives of an agency are clear, it is easier to determine the kind of information that would be helpful for managers to know in order to make

decisions. Institutional corrections and community supervision agencies move forward or backward or stand still based on the decisions that are made every day by agency staff. Commitment to a new course of action will require that difficult decisions be made about the utilization of personnel, the allocation of resources, and many other issues. Progress will depend on the willingness of leaders to make these often-difficult decisions. British Prime Minister David Lloyd George once expressed the need to take certain risks in this way: "Don't be afraid to take a big step when one is indicated. You can't cross a chasm in two small steps."

Taking Steps to Cultivate Team Spirit

When employees embrace ideas and work together to realize particular outcomes, the greatest possible gains can be realized. Many of the leadership skills mentioned above are critical to the development of team spirit, but a few additional ones can be mentioned here.

First, it can be important for others to see a leader who is willing to do some of the hard work that must be done and not always leaving it for others to complete. Second, decisions regarding recognition and rewards, or punishment, must be objective and appropriate. Finally, prioritizing critical work activities and eliminating less productive tasks can boost morale and demonstrate a commitment to particular objectives. Some of these elements will receive additional attention in the next chapter.

Conclusion

As the above information demonstrates, leadership is about identifying the proper course or direction for an agency and demonstrating particular characteristics that can help influence, motivate, and enable others to help the agency move in the intended direction. In order to further explore some of the dynamics associated with change, attention will now be given to the impact that an agency's culture can have on the ability of a leader to move an agency in a particular direction.

KEY STEPS

- **Envision a preferred future; express this vision clearly and consistently to staff and partners.**
- **Embrace and advocate for change.**
- **Recognize leaders at every level of the agency and their important role in carrying out change.**
- **Consider the perspectives, findings, and opinions of staff at all levels.**
- **Be flexible in the methods employed to reach your vision.**
- **Develop and maintain partnerships with others inside and outside of the agency.**
- **Motivate others by communicating in a positive manner.**
- **Demonstrate trust in staff by providing them with leadership opportunities.**
- **Judiciously use information to take calculated risks towards accomplishing your goals.**

CHAPTER 2: PREPARING FOR ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE

Understanding An Agency's Existing Culture Relative to Offender Reentry

When new employees join an agency, they almost immediately see and hear things that convey information about how work is done in that office or institution. Do people seem to enjoy working together or do they ignore each other? What do employees say to each other in casual conversation about coworkers, supervisors, or offenders? Is chaos and panic fairly evident, or is work done in a calm, rational way? The initial impressions gathered by a new employee may largely be observations about the culture in a work location.

In either an institutional corrections or community supervision environment, two factors are ever-present: (1) rules exist, and (2) staff must interpret and carry out rules in order to meet job responsibilities. Yet the nature and spirit with which certain tasks are carried out are driven largely by the attitudes of the employees of an institution or office. Attempting to understand the nature of the beliefs that shape employee behavior can have tremendous value for leaders who are attempting to introduce significant changes in work requirements or outlining a new vision for the agency.

Recognizing Organizational Culture

Organizational culture refers to the accepted norms, practices, values, customs, traditions, or behavior patterns of employees. Organizational management author Edgar H. Schein (1992) has written that an organization or office culture is developed over time in response to work situations, external pressures or forces, and the need to solve particular problems.

Once certain attitudes, behaviors, or methods are embraced by a majority of the employees in an area, then they can be passed along to new employees, who in turn are expected to pattern their behaviors in accordance with these accepted norms. The culture of a workplace can shape the initial reaction of employees to complex matters. If the majority of employees in an office have concluded that most new policies make their work more difficult, then all new policies may be initially treated with suspicion. If a supervisor is thought to be capable and interested in the welfare of subordinates, then instructions by this person will be carried out without much discussion or delay. These types of reactions are reflections of the norms of a workplace.

Some writers have noted that the best way to understand the culture of a workplace is to try to change something that impacts the day-to-day work of its employees. Some offices or areas respond with enthusiasm for particular changes. These may be changes that reinforce the values of that workplace or are consistent with the behavior patterns of the employees. Staff members who volunteer to participate in particular efforts may be demonstrating that harmony exists between the culture of that office and the new work being contemplated. Most managers have probably experienced situations where proposed changes were resisted by some employees at every turn, perhaps because the changes envisioned would create friction or were inconsistent with the accepted norms or practices of that office.

The largest single resource that institutional corrections and community supervision agencies can utilize to solve any issue is their own personnel. Understanding the norms and values of staff can help institutional corrections and community supervision agency administrators and top managers understand the expectations, needs, and requirements of their employees, including those that must be reconciled or addressed in order to realize the intended benefits of proposed changes.

Examining Current Practices

Tasks can be accomplished in many different ways, while still being in compliance with most policies or rules. For instance, information at intake could be gathered in a sterile, formal way by asking offenders to respond to specific, predetermined questions with largely yes or no answers. Alternatively, it can be assembled through a more extensive dialogue with offenders, where open-ended questions are the norm. While both of these approaches indeed accomplish the requirements of a policy, they actually reflect very different ways of doing business. Managers who engage in a comprehensive review of work activities may find a rich compilation of employee practices. For example, before making changes to the types of questions posed to an offender at intake, a manager first might determine which approach is the norm in a particular institution, office, or other setting.

Offender reentry touches on essentially every aspect of offender management, from intake to community supervision and beyond. Discussions about reentry necessarily involve employees who perform nearly every type of job within an institutional corrections or community supervision environment. A comprehensive review of existing policies, training opportunities, skill levels, job descriptions, and the basis for hiring or promotion decisions may be an appropriate way to begin the examination of current practices. What do the types of rewards or recognitions given to the agency's employees indicate about the agency's preferences, expectations, and direction regarding offender reentry? What recognition is given to staff members who do excellent work in helping the agency reach its offender reentry objectives? Considered collectively, this information can provide valuable insight into what these practices indicate about the focus of the agency's efforts.

The notion, and related practices, that supporting successful reentry is everyone's business takes a while to filter throughout the agency as previously defined job descriptions may not have included an investment in offenders' transition to the community. By prioritizing successful reentry as a part of the agency's public safety mission, strategies that may have previously applied only to specific segments of the agency's workforce are now a concern for everyone.

- Maureen Walsh, Chairman,
Massachusetts Parole Board

Gaining a Clear Perspective

It is certainly possible for different offices or areas within an agency to display varying norms and cultures. These different cultures may become more evident when a broad topic, such as offender reentry, is discussed. To gain more insight into the culture of a particular office or area, it is helpful for a manager to create opportunities for staff to talk about their beliefs and values. Individual interviews, focus groups, or other forums allow for employees to demonstrate or indicate some of the accepted elements of their office culture. Stephen Covey (1991) has noted in his work that, in general, it might be helpful to leaders to spend less time talking at, and more time listening to, their employees. By listening to employees, leaders can gain new insights about the forces or beliefs that drive employee performance.

A careful review of certain types of data or pertinent information may also yield some interesting findings. For instance, if one institution has the most (or the least) disciplinary infractions each month (compared to institutions of similar security level and size), a manager might want to understand better how disciplinary matters are addressed at that facility. Institutions with the most inmates at sick call, supervision offices with the most absconders, or offices with the lowest (or highest) percentage of

staff taking sick leave might be indications of some larger truth. Identifying the types of information that is meaningful, and determining how best to examine or use this information, is an important part of examining culture.

Examining critical policies and compliance levels is another way of examining the norms of a workplace. Given limited resources and a set number of available hours and staff, which policies are routinely followed and which are often ignored? By considering the language of these policies, the messages transmitted by leaders of the agency about particular work expectations, external pressures, or other factors, a manager can develop an understanding of why some policies appear to be more important than others to particular employees.

Appreciating the Difficulties Associated with Changing an Agency's Culture

Every practitioner has seen how the attention of agency heads and top management can shift from one concern to another depending upon events of the moment. Many practitioners have also seen positional leaders say different things about the nature, purpose, or direction of work depending upon the identification of some new objective, or the audience involved, or the presence of a troubling issue or circumstance. When these individuals at the top of the agency express ideas in inconsistent ways or announce changes to long-standing practices or goals, it can create confusion within the workplace. To temper this confusion, employees fall back upon their own accepted norms, values, and beliefs, i.e., their agency culture. Further, employees who have seen many changes come and go over time develop a certain resistance to any change that is not consistent with the values of their office; employees with more experience may be the most deeply rooted in the culture of their work environment.

> When the formula "successful reentry = community safety" was presented to the agency, a place for everyone became apparent.
>
> *- Maureen Walsh, Chairman, Massachusetts Parole Board*

To embrace change, employees must understand why the change is necessary, how it will impact them, and why it is beneficial for the agency and others. As noted in the section on leadership, having a clear, consistent message that articulates the personal and agency values represented in the new way of doing business is critical. It is also imperative that employees be involved in determining the best methods to be used in accomplishing the desired goals. It might not be possible to force the employees of an agency to accept a leader's vision; however, employees who can appreciate the importance of the agency's new direction and who are involved in formulating strategies and methods to realize new outcomes will be much more likely to embrace change.

Preparing Yourself for Change

Creating the proper goals and objectives for an agency requires leaders to have an appreciation for the empirical information relative to the topic involved, as well as an understanding of their own jurisdiction. In other words, a leader must be adequately prepared to engage in the right types of change.

Reviewing the Research and Information on Offender Reentry

The past fifteen years have seen tremendous activity concerning offender-focused research. The "what works" literature, evidence-based practices, and meta-analysis of programming interventions have led practitioners to conclude that specific types of activities and interventions can have a significant impact on the likelihood of an adult or juvenile offender returning to custody. Individuals who are interested in exploring

changes in the offender reentry realm should become fully versed in this information and consider the implications of this research for their agency and other potential partner agencies in this effort. For a review of these practices, see Section Six of this handbook.

Research within the jurisdiction may also highlight some particular ingredients or elements of a potentially successful approach. For instance, improvements in the use of risk assessment tools, institutional programming efforts, prerelease activities, or partnerships with other agencies may produce some interesting data or results. In one jurisdiction, it was found that during an offender's first two months after release, the likelihood of return to prison was reduced by one percent for every day of employment (Meredith, 2003). This type of information provides a powerful impetus to change efforts.

Sharing Key Offender Reentry Concepts with Others

Within any institutional corrections or community supervision agency, responsibilities in key areas are often divided among numerous personnel. Creating opportunities for these personnel to learn about critical local or national research findings, examine relative data, and develop strategies can be critical to the ultimate development of a particular vision for the agency. In the final analysis, securing internal consensus among top management will be essential to the creation and execution of new policies and methods. Involving these individuals early in the discussion affords them the opportunity to frame issues, explore possibilities, and develop ownership of future products.

Other agencies may also be interested in partnering with an institutional corrections or community supervision agency once certain data or information is shared. In some jurisdictions, state entities responsible for mental health or substance abuse services have been surprised to learn about the percentage of their community clients who are under criminal justice supervision. In some states, this information has

helped to break down traditional agency barriers and create a sense of shared responsibility. Developing key partnerships is one of the essential elements of a sound long-term offender reentry strategy. As with internal staff, the sooner that leaders from other agencies can see the data and be involved in discussions regarding offender reentry, the earlier they can begin to identify the potential for mutual undertakings.

Creating a Vision Statement for Successful Offender Reentry Efforts

In order for an agency to move forward with modifying its goals, practices, methods, or approaches to offender reentry, it must formulate a vision statement that reflects the intended direction of the agency and the values of its leaders and staff.

There is perhaps no tool more powerful than a clear vision. A clear vision, or focus, harnesses our energy and directs it with precision on our desired goals. Consider this: The sun is a powerful source of energy with billions of kilowatts of energy. But, with sunscreen and a hat a person can shield themselves from its effects. A laser is a relatively weak source of energy by comparison. It represents only a few watts of energy but, when focused in a coherent stream of light, it can drill a hole in a diamond.

- Ries, 1997

Considering the Elements of a Vision Statement

A vision statement should indicate a preferred future and the desired outcomes toward which an agency seeks to work. The ideas and choices identified in a written pronouncement of this preferred future should reflect the values and beliefs of its authors. In addition to indicating where the agency is headed, the vision statement should be positive and uplifting, using words

that will help inspire others to embrace this new direction fully.

While an agency's vision may be focused on lofty ambitions, it should be written in language that can be easily understood by others. When people read or hear a vision statement, they should be able to form a clear idea about what the agency is striving to accomplish. In addition, the vision statement should avoid exact details regarding how the agency will move forward in its efforts. The purpose of the vision statement is to indicate an agency's intended direction and perhaps why the agency is choosing to undertake that particular journey. What precisely the agency will do or how it will advance in the direction of its vision should be left for specific individuals or groups to determine.

Consider, for example, the following vision statement that was drafted for consideration at the Seventh American Forests Congress (1996):

The great American forest, since our nation's founding, has provided the resources to build our homes, our schools, our churches—it has provided the inspiration for our philosophers, our poets, our artists. Working together we can continue to improve, enhance and protect this great natural resource to help insure that we have healthy forests with clean water, clean air, abundant wildlife, wilderness, and working forests in harmony with the needs of all Americans and for the generations yet to come.

This statement indicates a generally desired outcome (improving, enhancing, and protecting forests), reflects some of the values of its authors (forests are a tremendous natural resource, people can work together, needs and interests can work in harmony), explains why the work is important (so that current and future generations can enjoy the benefits of this resource), and is written in a positive, uplifting, and easily understood way. This statement does

not indicate exactly how this vision will be realized, but it paints a vivid picture of a preferred future.

Creating an Agency's Vision Statement

As noted earlier, it is important to have key managers participate in the drafting and consideration of a vision statement concerning offender reentry, as this area impacts so many aspects of institutional corrections and community supervision work. New directions need a tremendous amount of internal support to survive. Failing to include all managers in the work of envisioning the agency's approach to offender reentry may lead to friction or concerns when the full consequences of offender reentry work are realized by all employees.

Further, reentry work necessarily involves the collaboration of numerous partners. Establishing a meaningful dialogue with potential partners before the vision statement is created will allow these agencies the opportunity to consider, embrace, and create language that will form the basis of a comprehensive vision statement. Some corrections agencies have developed their offender reentry efforts internally and then sought to bring other agencies into the discussion after the fact. This leads other agencies to see offender reentry as a corrections issue entirely, with only a minor role or responsibility for external agencies. Effective reentry work requires many agencies and individuals to work together on a significant number of issues; involving these partners early in the process will aid in the development of joint ownership and responsibility concerning the reentry effort.

The preceding page includes examples of vision statements created by collaborative teams of institutional corrections and community supervision agencies working with the National Institute of Corrections on its Transition from Prison to the Community (TPC) initiative. They exemplify how such efforts can clearly reenvision the future toward which corrections agencies and their partners are working.

Announcing and Promoting the Vision Statement

Once the vision statement has been developed, it must be shared with others in a manner that promotes maximum knowledge and understanding of what the vision statement intends to convey about the agency's commitment to reentry.

Some agencies have formal methods for sharing important pronouncements with staff members (e.g., issuing a copy to all staff with their paychecks) while others rely on more informal means (e.g., asking supervisors to brief their subordinates at regular meetings). Whatever methods are employed, the critical question is whether employees understand what is being said, why it matters, and what it will ultimately mean for them and the agency.

Information about a vision statement can be placed in internal publications, listed on a Web site, or be discussed as a special item at regularly scheduled meetings. Most likely, many methods will have to be employed over time, and a consistent message will have to be provided concerning the reason for and meaning of the vision statement in order to persuade staff of the agency's commitment. Most managers have seen vision statements on a variety of topics during their careers. While communicating the vision statement is an important first step, staff members may wait to see if the vision is incorporated into the routine business of the agency, is reflected in the agency's policies and training events, is referenced by the agency's leaders during presentations or meetings, and is highlighted in public statements. A consistent reinforcement of the vision is important to promoting investment in the agency's new direction.

Conclusion

Leaders who seek to create a new vision of offender reentry for their agencies have the opportunity to initiate and foster meaningful modifications to the agency's direction and operation. In moving forward, leaders can

prepare themselves by becoming fully versed on the growing body of information regarding offender reentry and by considering the cultures of their own agencies and how the cultures will impact efforts toward change. Being informed on these matters will help agency leaders move forward with the greatest possibility of success for their intended changes.

KEY STEPS

- **Gain a fuller perspective of the agency's culture by listening to employees and collecting information from different offices or areas within the agency.**
- **Review existing policies and practices in the agency and determine what messages regarding the importance of offender reentry these policies and practices convey to staff and offenders.**
- **Examine, recognize, and understand the accepted practices, behaviors, norms, and attitudes present in all levels of the agency.**
- **Review the research and literature on offender reentry and share it with others.**
- **Create a vision for offender reentry with the help of a diverse group of key staff.**
- **Promote the vision consistently through publications, presentations, and public statements.**

CHAPTER 3: PREPARING STAFF FOR ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE

The Different Situations, Circumstances, and Limitations Faced by Staff

In carrying out the responsibilities of institutional corrections and community supervision agencies, staff members are tasked with performing wide-ranging activities. What nearly all of these activities have in common, whether it is interacting with offenders, performing administrative tasks, dealing with external forces, or managing employees, is that there seems to be more to do than can be done in the time allotted. Expanding populations, increased paperwork, stagnant or shrinking budgets, or specific public expectations can create some long and difficult days for employees. It is within this context that institutional corrections and community supervision agencies attempt to engage in implementing new directions, goals, or work methods.

Recognizing the Importance of Prioritization

Work activities should reflect the most important priorities of an agency. As Stephen Covey (1991) notes:

> Most people and organizations approach time management within the context of prioritizing one's schedules. It is much more effective to schedule one's priorities that have been identified in conjunction with key roles and goals and determined through assessment of personal and organizational missions.

In other words, once an agency is clear about what it wants to do, it should prioritize the time employees spend performing different types of work so that the tasks performed more accurately reflect overall priorities. Covey refers to this as "putting first things first." The reason that many people have no time to tackle new assignments is because there are so many old assignments still being performed that do not align with the current agency vision. Many agencies suffer from the weight of work activities that are performed or carried out in some particular way for reasons that no one can recall. One key to making changes in the workplace is to prioritize work activities in ways that are consistent with the agency's broader goals and eliminate work that holds a low priority.

When agencies take a look at how security staff or community supervision employees spend their time, they may be surprised to learn how little time is actually spent performing the functions that constitute the reason for the creation of the position. When these employees indicate that they have "no time to spend with offenders because they are busy doing other things," it means that other priorities have been imposed on their schedule. If an agency wants security staff to spend more time with offenders in a housing unit or supervision staff to spend more time with offenders during home visits, then other duties will have to be eliminated, reassigned, or combined in ways that will allow these employees the time that they need to do the work that matters most.

Institutional corrections and community supervision agencies can benefit greatly by engaging in a thorough review of how employees spend their time, identifying tasks or activities that reflect a low priority (or that no longer need to be done at all) and eliminating these tasks. Eliminating certain tasks can concern some employees because, even though they see that there is little value in doing that particular activity, they may be reluctant to give up doing work that they understand and perform well, particularly if they are concerned that the new tasks will be hard to understand.

Helping Staff Overcome Barriers

Front line staff and first line supervisors have the best understanding of the challenges that they face in meeting everyday job requirements or expectations. In creating a new direction or focus concerning offender reentry, institutional corrections and community supervision agencies also have the opportunity to consider and address a variety of traditional problems and generate new solutions to help staff overcome these issues. For instance, intra-agency communication is often an issue in large agencies. Offender reentry work, because it touches so many areas of the agency's operation, can present a new opportunity to work on this problem. Similarly, long-standing issues with other agencies (e.g., lack of responsiveness to particular matters) can receive new attention if an interagency offender reentry team is established.

Managers often see certain problems, whether internally or externally driven, as intractable. Rather than spending time solving such problems, managers or other staff may devise ways to get around the issue. While some positive results can come from such actions, it is usually better to find productive ways of identifying and resolving the underlying issues. Arguably it is the fundamental responsibility of supervisors and managers to identify and resolve problems for their employees, but, like front line staff, supervisors and managers are often busy with other work and satisfying other priorities. Allowing time for supervisors and managers to learn about the actual factors causing these problems and encouraging them to work with interdivisional or interagency teams to resolve difficulties is critical for a healthy agency.

A focus on offender reentry activities provides the opportunity, and possibly a framework, for the identification and elimination of various problems. While most agencies approach problems in a win/lose frame of mind (i.e., you can win, or I can win, but we can't both win), offender reentry activities offer various agencies the opportunity to develop mutually beneficial

solutions to a variety of matters (i.e., if we do this in a particular way, we can both gain something of value). Stephen Covey (1989) refers to this as the "win/win principle." Once staff members see that offender reentry work is a vehicle for eliminating or overcoming various problems, acceptance of the direction and goals of the effort will be more easily obtained.

> One of our greatest challenges today is engaging staff at all levels of the organization in that part of our agency mission that speaks to successful offender reentry. Most corrections leaders now recognize the importance of a successful transition from prison to community living, both because the numbers of inmates leaving prison have been growing and because failure during this high risk time creates new crime victims. Our public safety role demands that we do a good job with transition. While leadership may be firmly committed to this goal, true change depends on involving line staff and, probably most important, the mid-level manager.
>
> *- Max Williams, Director, Oregon Department of Corrections*

Training, Job Qualifications, and Hiring/Promotional Decisions

Seeking Employees with the Necessary Skills and Abilities for the Agency

In order for employees to have the critical skills and abilities that will be required to perform necessary tasks associated with effective offender reentry work, employees will either have to possess these skills already, or they will have to receive adequate training so that they can develop the ability to successfully do the work. If offender reentry work is largely about preparing offenders to be successful in communities after their release from confinement, then one responsibility of institutional corrections and community

supervision agencies is to prepare their staff members to be successful at performing the tasks necessary to achieve this goal.

It is possible to identify some of the skills and abilities institutional corrections and community supervision agencies want to keep in mind when making hiring or promotional decisions for positions that will have some specific responsibility concerning future offender reentry work. If agencies seek to promote effective offender reentry practices by front line staff, they might be interested in individuals who can utilize motivational interviewing techniques, imagine or create incentives for offenders, employ particular communication skills, and build partnerships with other individuals. If the agency determines that some of these skills or abilities are desirable, interest in these skills can be included in job announcements, interview questions, or hiring or promotional decision making. Such efforts not only help the agency identify those who are capable of meeting the demands of the position, they also contribute to efforts to communicate the agency's commitment to reentry and to impact the agency culture.

Committing to Staff Training
In order to prepare employees to be skillful at promoting offender success, various types of training classes should be required. Agencies should examine the types of training classes that are currently being offered. Training represents a specific resource allocation, but (as mentioned earlier in the discussion on agency culture) it also reflects the general goals and objectives of the agency. Since training opportunities and staff time are valuable resources, training classes demonstrate the agency's priorities and values. What kinds of training activities are currently being offered to front line and supervisory personnel? A commitment to developing effective offender reentry practices will require a dedication of necessary training resources and opportunities. As was discussed above concerning work activities, training should reflect the overall goals and priorities of an agency: areas with a low priority should receive less

training attention, whereas those areas of greatest importance to the achievement of the agency's vision should account for the greatest proportion of training time.

Training is an essential component in helping staff to see the agency's commitment to offender reentry and to prepare them to carry out new or modified job tasks. Providing employees with a clear understanding of how they will be trained and prepared to carry out different or new types of job duties, or use new tools, will ease concerns about how the agency's vision and goals regarding reentry will impact individual staff members.

Staff Incentives

Considering the Value of Staff Incentives
Research and practical experience indicate that positive reinforcement and incentives are more effective at encouraging behavior modification than negative reinforcement (Andrews & Bonta, 1994)[4]. This has had some impact on offender management, as institutional corrections and community supervision agencies have begun to reconsider the types or nature of incentives that can be offered to offenders to encourage and sustain appropriate behaviors. Institutional corrections and community supervision agencies might also consider the power and value of using positive incentives with employees who are asked to change their work activities or behaviors, rather than primarily relying on negative consequences for noncompliance with requirements.

An examination of the types of things that employees are looking for in their work can produce some interesting results. In a recent survey of over 4,000 job seekers from twenty-one countries, the Accenture Corporation (2006) asked the following question: "What are you looking for in your work?" The top three answers included:

- Challenging and interesting work.
- Recognition and rewards.
- Opportunities for career growth.

If this example is indicative of employees in institutional corrections and community supervision agencies, then perhaps positive incentives can in fact be a powerful influence on job satisfaction and employee behavior.

Developing New Incentives

The above survey appears to indicate that many employees want to do work that is worth doing; they want to be recognized when they do it well; and they want the opportunity to build a career in a place that offers them the first two things. This leads to a simple question: What types of rewards or recognitions do institutional corrections and community supervision agencies currently give their employees? What additional types of recognition could be given to staff members who do excellent work in helping the agency to reach its offender reentry objectives?

In some agencies, examples of good offender reentry work are regularly featured in internal publications. Providing employees with this type of information has two potential benefits: it conveys appreciation to the individual who deserves it, and it encourages other employees to undertake similar types of work. Some agencies offer employees who have done good work the opportunity to be featured in a local newspaper; others will simply send a letter of appreciation. Whatever vehicles are employed, personal recognition can provide a powerful incentive for staff.

Consider the impact that performance evaluations or quality assurance measures can have on employees. Are the most appropriate responsibilities being adequately measured? Is reasonable feedback provided to employees to help them understand what they are doing well and what they could improve upon? Do agencies seek opportunities to recognize good work as a way of promoting more good work?

Agencies should look beyond the incentives being offered to consider whether certain disincentives are at work as well. When deserving employees are overlooked for promotion, when issues with employees who are not doing good work are ignored, when work requirements are continuously altered, and when priorities seem to be ill defined, it is easy for staff to become discouraged. Eliminating disincentives may be just as important to a productive agency as developing appropriate incentives.

Mobilizing Staff to Undertake a Change Process

Beyond the specific elements discussed above, preparing employees for change requires creating a process that anticipates and is prepared to respond to employees' concerns. As noted above, many people are uncomfortable, at least to some degree, with change. While some will respond to the implementation of new philosophies, policies, and procedures as an opportunity for positive change, others will need to be drawn into the change process in ways that can evoke their enthusiasm and commitment.

In determining strategies for engaging staff in the change process, the following elements should be taken into consideration:

- *Communicate.* Resistance to change is more likely to occur when information about the proposed change has not been adequately communicated. Information should be provided in an accurate and timely manner to employees, particularly those most directly affected by the changes (Carol Flaherty-Zonis Associates, 2007).

- *Clarify the Impact of Change.* When confronted by change, many people will respond more positively when they understand how exactly the change will impact them in the performance of their job. While it is important to convey the agency's vision for successful offender reentry to staff, care must also be taken to clarify for each position within the agency the impact of the proposed changes (Carol Flaherty-Zonis Associates, 2007).

- *Encourage Feedback and Response.* Resistance is often fueled by lack of ownership in the changes occurring, and a mindset, accurate or otherwise, that those making the decisions do not comprehend fully the factors affected by the change. While not all staff can be included effectively in the change process, creating systems that encourage feedback on proposed and implemented changes can encourage participation and buy-in. Equally important, while not all suggestions must be incorporated into the agency's plan for change, feedback must be considered and staff members' concerns responded to in a way that makes them feel heard (Carol Flaherty-Zonis Associates, 2007).

- *Understand Resistance.* It is practical to expect resistance whenever a change process is implemented; however, planning to respond effectively to resistance can only occur when the reasons behind the resistance are fully understood. Resistance can be in response to feelings of loss of control, loss of power or influence, concerns regarding whether new skills will be necessary and whether those skills can be learned along with myriad other factors. Care should be taken to understand fully the reasons for resistance before deciding on a strategy to confront them (Carol Flaherty-Zonis Associates, 2007).

- *Make Use of Informal Leadership.* As noted earlier, leaders are present at all levels within the agency. While the commitment and enthusiasm of those with positional leadership in the agency is important, it is equally important to recognize the contribution toward the change process that informal leaders within the agency can make. Care should be taken to identify and engage these leaders; they will in turn serve to help carry the message of reentry to those with whom they come into contact.

- *Mentor/Model New Behaviors.* Employees will not be persuaded of the value of change unless they see it modeled in the behaviors of those in leadership positions. They will want to see leadership walk the talk. Leaders should create opportunities to demonstrate the agency's new way of conducting business and role model accordingly (Carol Flaherty-Zonis Associates, 2007).

- *Focus on the Middle.* Not all employees can be persuaded of the positive aspects of change; some employees will always embrace change with enthusiasm, while others will always be obstructionists. The agency's plan for change should recognize this and allocate resources (for example, training opportunities) accordingly, investing in those employees who are in the middle and capable of persuasion, rather than a small subset of intractable individuals.

- *Remember that Change is a Long-Term Process.* Finally, it is important to recognize that each individual's timeline for accepting change is different, and that the process of changing minds is a long-term investment. The payoff is not always readily apparent, and may take months or years to manifest itself fully (Carol Flaherty-Zonis Associates, 2007).

Conclusion

Agency leaders planning to develop new strategies or goals in the offender reentry area must appreciate not only the importance of establishing and announcing a new vision, they must also consider the context in which these new goals will be received by staff. Many concrete steps can be taken to appreciate the culture, requirements, needs, and circumstances of agency staff who must find ways to implement the tasks associated with this vision. An interest in encouraging employee success, as well as promoting offender success, is an essential ingredient to effectively implementing new offender reentry strategies.

- Reinforce the agency's vision by promoting and hiring staff members who possess the attitudes, skills, and abilities to carry it out.
- Prioritize the work tasks of employees to support the agency's vision, and eliminate those activities that do not help the agency achieve its vision.
- Place training emphasis on those aspects of the agency's work that are most fundamental to achieving its vision.
- Encourage supervisors and managers to understand thoroughly and creatively problem-solve barriers to change.
- Consider staff concerns and encourage their feedback.
- Use incentives to underscore the agency's values and reinforce staff efforts to be supportive of the vision.
- Mobilize employees for the change process by communicating regularly and often with employees regarding the changes to be made, clarifying the impact of changes on them, and encouraging feedback.
- Utilize informal leaders; mentor and model the behaviors desired in the staff.
- Focus your efforts on staff within the "persuadable middle."

Assess Your Agency: Leadership and Organizational Change			
	Yes	No	Not Clear
1. Are the institutional and post-release supervision agencies committed to promoting offender success?			
2. Does agency policy clearly indicate that offenders' successful completion of supervision following release from confinement is a primary goal?			
3. Are agency managers routinely involved in discussions about the purpose or focus of offender management activities (i.e., to promote successful outcomes)?			
4. Have special means or strategies been used (e.g., annual meetings, publications, the distribution of a rewritten vision statement) to communicate to staff the agency's specific vision and expectations regarding offender management and supervision (i.e., to promote successful outcomes)?			
5. Does the agency hire/promote individuals who support the agency's vision and who have the necessary qualities to assist in carrying out the vision?			
6. Is training provided to facilitate the development of the specific types of skills necessary to intervene with offenders in ways that will promote successful case outcomes?			
7. Does the agency routinely involve staff at all levels in discussions regarding the ways in which the agency can most effectively carry out its mission?			
8. Does the agency value and measure those activities that promote offender success?			
9. Does the agency prioritize work activities that promote successful offender outcomes (in contrast to focusing exclusively on custody and control, and surveillance and punishment-oriented activities)?			
10. Are incentives offered to reward and recognize staff members who support the agency's vision for offender reentry?			
11. Do line staff members understand that they play a significant role in providing offenders with opportunities to be successful?			

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A Rational Planning Process for a Learning Organization

Susan Gibel and Leilah Gilligan

INTRODUCTION

For many institutional corrections and community supervision agencies, creating public safety through the successful reintegration of adult and juvenile offenders is a significant shift in organizational focus. Adopting successful offender reentry strategies as a method for achieving greater public safety represents a revisioning of how these agencies approach their work with offenders and a better understanding of how increasing opportunities for offenders to be successful in the community enhances public safety. It is not necessarily second nature for institutional corrections and community supervision agencies to think primarily in terms of offender success; the tradition as a profession has been to concentrate on punishment, incapacitation, monitoring, and accountability. While these remain important goals, a growing body of research on effective offender practices indicates that to impact public safety, institutional corrections and community supervision agencies will have to think differently about many aspects of their work, about offenders, and about the nature and impact of their work on offenders and communities.

Shifting the agency's focus to successful offender reentry may require a reevaluation of the agency's vision, mission, goals, and objectives. As the preceding section on organizational change indicates, the agency's policies, practices, and organizational culture may need to be reexamined through a new lens of offender reentry. As offender reentry becomes the operating principle underlying all the agency's efforts, it becomes the perspective through which the department's policies, procedures, and activities must be evaluated. The challenge for institutional corrections and community supervision agencies seeking to implement successful offender reentry strategies is to ask of every policy or procedure: How does this impact the opportunity for offenders to be successful in the community?

Rational planning offers a structured, collaborative process through which institutional corrections and community supervision agencies can organize themselves to approach a change process that will result in a successful offender reentry strategy. This section will highlight the critical elements of a rational planning process and provide references to resources for institutional corrections and community supervision agencies seeking to engage in that process as part of a successful offender reentry effort. In Chapter 1, an overview of the rational planning process will be provided. Chapter 2 will explore in more detail the process of data collection, essential to an effective planning process.

CHAPTER 1: CONDUCTING A RATIONAL PLANNING PROCESS

Why a Rational Planning Process?

> He who fails to plan, plans to fail.
>
> *- Anonymous Proverb*

The "how" of a rational planning process could fill a book (Carol Flaherty-Zonis Associates, 2007; CSOM, 2002, 2007; McGarry & Ney, 2006) and will be covered only briefly in this section. Because more information is currently available[5] to assist institutional corrections and community supervision agencies in conducting a rational planning process, the remainder of this handbook will focus instead on why a rational planning process is critical to the success of institutional corrections and community supervision agencies seeking to implement a plan for offender reentry.

As institutional corrections and community supervision agencies consider moving forward with the development and implementation of a strategic plan for successful offender reentry, it is important to have a system or method to assist in the rational consideration of the factors involved: What is the agency's vision for reentry, where does the agency currently stand in relation to that vision, what critical problems, needs, or gaps must be addressed to achieve the vision, and what strategies will be most effective in addressing the identified problems, needs, or gaps? The consideration and implementation of a strategic plan for offender reentry is a tremendous undertaking, involving complex activities such as data collection and analysis, setting priorities for tasks, and developing an understanding of system workings, gaps, and challenges. Participants in the process must develop an understanding of evidence-based and emerging practices in order to prioritize the issues to be addressed and to craft viable and effective solutions to the problems identified. It is an undertaking that involves, at various times, numerous staff members from many departments within the agency, and one that requires careful coordination to ensure that key stakeholders are involved and that duplicative and inefficient efforts are avoided.

A rational planning process helps to identify issues, gaps, problems, and opportunities for change objectively, thus enhancing the agency's ability to move forward constructively. Without a rational planning process, there is a danger that decisions will be made and policies and procedures instituted before problems are identified and analyzed properly. This can result in a great deal of effort being put into developing and implementing a strategic plan for offender reentry that ultimately fails to improve offender success, an essential measure of effective reentry initiatives.

Unless institutional corrections and community supervision agencies invest in a rational planning process, they run the risk of prematurely adopting solutions in an attempt to achieve a specific goal or outcome. Even with the best intentions, wide-reaching changes in policies and procedures may be implemented that ultimately have no effect (or worse, a negative effect) on the very problems they were designed to address. There may be many reasons for this. For example, agencies may be under pressure to respond to a problematic event or subject to external pressures to make changes quickly; they may be seeking to take advantage of new funding streams or staff enthusiasm regarding new and promising ideas. Regardless of the reason, these attempts to promote system change, although based on the best of intentions, may not produce the desired results.

Rather, reasonable, effective, and lasting change is most likely to occur when those involved understand and agree upon:

- What is to be accomplished (a vision for offender reentry).
- Where the agency is in relation to that vision.
- The critical problems, needs, or gaps to be addressed between where the agency is now and what it wants to accomplish.
- The strategies that will be most effective in addressing these problems, needs, and gaps.

Put another way, the agency will be most successful in reaching its vision for successful offender reentry if it knows where it is, where it wants to go, the obstacles in its way, and the best methods for overcoming those obstacles. Conducting a deliberate, thorough, and critical self-assessment, and planning for change accordingly, greatly increases the agency's chances for successfully implementing change.

What is a Learning Organization?

The title of this section is "A Rational Planning Process for a Learning Organization." While the meaning of the term "learning organization" may seem very straightforward, it in fact refers to a host of activities that together create the basis for a dynamic learning process. In a learning organization, "people continually expand their capacity to create the results they truly desire, ...new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, ...collective aspiration is set free, and...people are continually learning to see the whole together" (Senge, 1990).

In the National Institute of Corrections' guide to *Building Culture Strategically: A Team Approach for Corrections* (2007), a learning organization is described as one based on five disciplines:

- *Personal Mastery.* Achieving personal excellence both within the context of the agency and one's individual goals.
- *Mental Models.* Understanding the differences in personal perspectives and those of other staff and colleagues.

- *Team Learning.* Understanding how others learn, and how to use those skills to engage in group learning.
- *Sharing a Vision.* Sharing a common understanding of the agency's vision.
- *Systems Thinking.* Understanding the interrelatedness and interdependence of systems, and the "ripple effect" of changes in any one part of the system on others.

All of these disciplines are crucial to an effective rational planning process. Together, they represent a set of skills and shared knowledge that is critical to the process of understanding the current environment, determining what needs to be changed, identifying the barriers that impede change, strategizing to overcome them, and establishing desired outcomes. When selecting individuals to participate in the rational planning process, agencies should take care to include individuals that demonstrate competence in these various arenas.

Steps in a Rational Planning Process

The goal of rational planning is to engage in a process through which reasonable, effective, and lasting change can be achieved. That process includes creating a vision, setting goals, educating those involved on key topics related to reentry, gathering and assessing information, setting priorities and developing a strategic plan, and monitoring the strategic plan for its effectiveness (McGarry & Carter, 1993; McGarry & Ney, 2006). The following is an overview of the steps involved in conducting a rational planning process (adapted from McGarry & Carter, 1993, and McGarry & Ney, 2006).

Step One: Articulate a Vision

> If you don't know where you're going, then any road will do.
>
> *- Lewis Carroll,*
> *Through the Looking Glass, 1871*

The first step in the rational planning process is the articulation of a vision for offender reentry. The need to develop a vision (as well as the important elements of an effective vision statement) is covered in the previous section on organizational change. It bears repeating, however, that it is impossible to plan effectively without a clear statement of what the agency hopes to achieve, if for no other reason than there would be no way to measure when success has indeed occurred. Articulating a clear and uplifting vision is a function of strong leadership and effective collaboration. It is critical that institutional and community corrections leaders communicate clearly to those involved in the rational planning process where they want their agencies to go, and provide direction, focus, and purpose for offender reentry activities.

The agency's vision statement should express a preferred future and the outcomes desired by the agency. This information will guide the rational planning process as a strategic plan is developed and goals are set. The vision should reflect the values and beliefs of the agency's leaders. These will be important considerations for staff, who will want to understand the principles underlying the changes in policy and practice (especially if the changes reflect a reconsideration of the function of institutional corrections and community supervision agencies away from the sole focus on punishment, incapacitation, monitoring, and accountability toward a more balanced approach that includes a focus on offender success). The vision should be clear and easily understood. The communication of the vision to employees and external partners is an important part of the rational planning process, and one designed to garner support and enthusiasm for the agency's offender reentry effort. As such, the vision should be communicated regularly and consistently as part of the rational planning process.

Step Two: Create a Steering Committee

Before the particulars of creating a steering committee and its subcommittees are discussed, it is important to begin by emphasizing the role of collaboration in the rational planning process.

The implementation of a successful offender reentry strategy is a long-term commitment that requires collaboration as a critical element. Over the course of both the rational planning process and the development and implementation of the strategic plan, many disciplines, many substantive areas, and critical community and state agency partners may be involved in the effort. Yet, even within the nucleus of the rational planning process, the steering committee itself, effective collaboration is essential, and a lack of collaboration can undermine all of the agency's efforts.

The steering committee is tasked with bringing together myriad executive and management level leaders and possibly staff from other levels within and outside of the agency, each of whom will bring a unique perspective to the table. In order for the work of the steering committee to succeed, these team members must be able to set aside their individual agendas and engage each other collaboratively in order to seek out solutions to the complex issues to be investigated and resolved. When appointing members to the steering committees, care should be taken to ensure that the individuals selected possess the necessary collaborative skills.[6]

The Benefits of a Committee

Engaging in a rational planning process is an activity that requires an investment of time and resources on the part of the many individuals involved in offender reentry, from leadership and management, to employees working with offenders in the institutions and in the field, to administrative staff tasked with gathering and synthesizing information. Moreover, it can be a lengthy process that requires oversight to ensure that activities remain focused on the strategic plan. Such an enterprise is beyond the efforts of any single individual. A steering committee, on the other hand, has not only the ability to create and carry out a rational planning process, but also more resources, diverse perspectives, and the enhanced capacity a broader group of individuals can bring to the table.

What is the Role of the Steering Committee and Subcommittees?

The role of the steering committee is to provide executive level oversight to the rational planning process and to serve as the decision making body responsible for authorizing the implementation of a strategic plan for offender reentry. It is likely that the functions of the steering committee will be supported by subcommittees (which may be larger or smaller than the steering committee) charged with gathering, analyzing, and synthesizing data into recommendations for action to be acted upon by the steering committee. Subcommittees generally are charged with providing support to the steering committee in its efforts to develop a detailed and thorough understanding of the:

- Research on evidence-based and emerging practices.
- Process of an offender's case through the system, beginning with intake at the institution and proceeding through discharge from community supervision.
- Offender population being served, in terms of level of risk, sentence length and conditions, criminogenic needs, and responsivity factors.
- Policies (formal and informal) that guide the management of offenders and the agency's operations.
- Practices (formal and informal) that guide the management of offenders and the agency's operations.
- Available resources and services to assist offenders to be successful (e.g., issues of treatment, housing, family, employment, education, and health).
- Staff attitudes, knowledge, and skills regarding offenders and offender reentry.

This information provides a foundation for the rational planning process. Without a thorough understanding of the characteristics of the population it hopes to impact (offenders served), the means through which such change can be accomplished (evidence-based and emerging practices), and the tools available for accomplishing change (resources, services, agency policies and procedures, and staff

attitudes, knowledge, and skills), the steering committee will be unable to fulfill its purpose.

While subcommittees may provide information and make recommendations, it is the steering committee's responsibility to:

- Direct and oversee the data and information gathering and analysis process.
- Review data and information, and seek additional information as needed.
- Prioritize gaps and challenges, targeting those issues most likely to have the greatest impact if addressed.
- Identify detailed and specific strategies to address the prioritized gaps.
- Oversee the implementation of these strategies.
- Evaluate the impact of the change strategies.

What Should Be the Composition and Size of the Steering Committee?

The composition and size of the steering committee will differ from agency to agency, depending on agency size, current reentry partners, and offender population served (e.g., adults, juveniles, or both). An effective committee size is generally no more than twenty individuals, exclusive of members of subcommittees or other groups tasked with performing assignments for the steering committee. The steering committee should include such key leaders as the director or secretary of the agency (or other equivalent position) and deputy directors for facilities, programming, transition, community supervision, and research. Representatives from staff that will be closer to the implementation process, such as wardens, district managers for parole offices, and other employees in charge of classification policies and procedures and training, may also be appropriate members of a steering committee. Additional members may include employees directly involved in the management of offenders, such as parole officers, corrections officers, case managers, and treatment and programming staff (although line staff may be best utilized as members of subcommittees). Each agency will also need to balance the benefits of including multiple perspectives against the need for a

manageable and effective committee size. Even when the number of employees involved in the steering committee must be limited for this reason, the committee is encouraged to seek input from all levels of staff in some fashion (through focus groups, subcommittee work, staff surveys, et cetera).

Step Three: Understand the Research on Evidence-Based Practices

The application of evidence-based principles and practices, the objective, balanced, and responsible use of the current scientific evidence to guide and inform efficient and effective institutional corrections and community supervision agency practices in a manner that will facilitate the most effective outcomes, is a key element in the rational planning process. The adoption of evidence-based principles and practices enables the agency to operate outside the unpredictable framework of "good ideas" and with reliance on the empirical basis of the strategies they craft.

Once the steering committee has been formed, there may be some temptation to move quickly to problem solving to take advantage of the enthusiasm of the newly organized committee. However, in order for the principles of evidence-based practice to best inform and guide the work of the agency, it is necessary at this stage for the steering committee to take the time to educate themselves fully on the principles of evidence-based practice and how these principles relate to effective offender interventions. In order to do so, steering committee members may be charged with reviewing published information on these principles, they may engage in cross-training activities, or outside expertise may be brought in to provide information to the committee. A combination of these is likely to be the most effective approach to enhancing the knowledge of steering committee members.

Step Four: Collect Baseline Data and Information

The collection and evaluation of information is among the most critical of the steering committee's responsibilities. The rational planning process is a method of implementing change that relies on the objective collection and evaluation of information in order to assess the agency's effectiveness in achieving its vision.

As with all steps in the rational planning process, the collection of data should be carefully considered. What data will be collected, by whom, and how, are only some of the questions the steering committee will need to consider. The committee should take into account the questions it wants answered, and then task the appropriate departments and/or subcommittees with the collection and analysis of that data. As mentioned above, the committee should collect data regarding the characteristics of the offender population, the system and community resources available to that population, the agency's current policies and practices (both formal and informal), and staff attitudes, knowledge, and skills regarding offender reentry. The committee's requests for information should be detailed and specific, so that the committee receives the kind of information it needs to set priorities and determine strategies for intervention.

The steering committee must also consider how the data it needs will be collected. Data may be stored electronically in databases or it may need to be collected from paper files. Some information may only be available through focus groups or interviews (e.g., this kind of inquiry may be the only method of determining informal agency practices, staff attitudes regarding offenders, and staff knowledge of evidence-based practice). Data collection may require accessing case files and interviewing offenders and ex-offenders regarding their experiences. Outside agencies may be the repositories for some of the data identified by the steering committee; this may necessitate negotiations concerning access and confidentiality issues.

The Principles of Evidence-Based Practices

Developing a thorough understanding of the principles of evidence-based practices is a central element in the rational planning process. Understanding these principles will help the steering committee determine the type of data to be collected and how that data should be interpreted, and inform the development of the agency's strategic plan for offender reentry.

The eight principles of evidence-based practices are (NIC & CJI, 2004):

1. **Assessment:** Assess dynamic and static risks factors. Risks and needs must be assessed regularly, using a validated risk assessment tool, in order to determine appropriate interventions and services.

2. **Enhance Intrinsic Motivation:** Use Motivational Interviewing and other motivation enhancement techniques to encourage changes in offender behavior.

3. **Target Interventions:**
    a. *Risk Principle*: Prioritize supervision and treatment resources for higher risk offenders.
    b. *Need Principle*: Target interventions to criminogenic needs.
    c. *Responsivity Principle*: Be responsive to temperament, learning style, motivation, culture, and gender.
    d. *Dosage*: Structure 40-70 percent of high-risk offenders' time for three to nine months.
    e. *Treatment*: Integrate treatment into the full sentence/sanction requirements.

4. **Skill Train with Directed Practice:** Use cognitive-behavioral strategies in programming delivered by well-trained staff.

5. **Increase Positive Reinforcement:** Research suggests a ratio of four positive reinforcements to one negative reinforcement will encourage progress in learning new skills and behaviors.

6. **Engage in Ongoing Support in Natural Communities:** Realign offenders with prosocial support systems in their communities (e.g., spouses, friends, employers).

7. **Measure Relevant Process and Practice:** Maintain accurate and detailed documentation of changes in offender cognitive and skill development, and evaluate offender recidivism to determine effective practice.

8. **Provide Measurement Feedback:** Monitor delivery of services for quality assurance and maintain and enhance program fidelity and integrity. Provide offenders with feedback to build accountability and enhance motivation for change.

> **Six Dimensions of Baseline Data**
>
> To develop a complete understanding of the agency's current offender management practices, the steering committee will want to collect information on each of the following six dimensions (adapted from CSOM, 2002 & 2007):
>
> - **The System Dimension**: Analysis of the processing of a case from intake through discharge from community supervision.
> - **The Offender Population Dimension**: Analysis of the offender population, particularly in terms of sentence length, level of risk, criminogenic needs, and responsivity factors.
> - **The Policy Dimension**: Analysis of the policies that guide the management of offenders in the institution and community.
> - **The Practice Dimension**: Analysis of the practices employed, not codified in written policy, that guide the management of offenders.
> - **The Resource Dimension**: Analysis of the resources available to manage and serve offenders in the jurisdiction, both within institutions and in the community.
> - **The Staff Dimension**: Analysis of staff attitudes, knowledge, and skills related to evidence-based practices and offender reentry.

Finally, the committee must determine who will collect the data and who will analyze it, recognizing that these two functions may require a different set of skills.

A timetable should be created to track the data collection process. Given the complexity of the task, the process of gathering data is one that may involve numerous concurrent activities, different groups of people, and perhaps varying data collection or analysis methodologies. It may span months or longer; as a result, it will be important for the steering committee to have a tool that will help it oversee and manage this process. In developing a work plan and timeline, the committee should take into account the timing of its goals and objectives for considering the data and identifying change strategies.

It is important to distinguish here between the steering committee's work plan (the committee's plan for accomplishing the work with which it has been tasked) and the agency's strategic plan for reentry, which will be developed during the rational planning process. The steering committee's work plan will establish benchmarks for educating members about evidence-based practices, collecting and analyzing data, and conducting a gap analysis. The agency's strategic plan will set out a plan and benchmarks for implementing the recommendations of the steering committee, such as modifying personnel promotion criteria, establishing new institutional programming, or setting up parameters for evaluating community resources.

Step Five: Determine the Strengths and Gaps in the Agency's Reentry Efforts

By this stage in the process, the agency has articulated a vision for successful offender reentry, created a steering committee (and possibly subcommittees), and charged the steering committee with developing a strategic plan. The steering committee has educated itself about the principles of evidence-based practices and collected information on a wide range of issues (such as the offender population, the resources and services available to intervene effectively with this population, current policies and practice regarding the management of offenders, and staff attitudes, knowledge, and skills).

The next step in the rational planning process is to conduct a gap analysis to determine the strengths and weaknesses of the jurisdiction's current reentry efforts; this assessment will guide the steering committee's efforts through the remainder of the rational planning process.

> Because we began our formal efforts to improve transition many years ago, we have made much progress on our original goals. It is now time to create a new roadmap for our future. It is time to review our current gaps and barriers. After the analysis, the next steps in our improvement process should become clear and a plan can be developed.
>
> *- Max Williams, Director, Oregon Department of Corrections*

The steering committee should focus as much effort on identifying strengths of the current reentry efforts as it does on identifying gaps. Knowing what is working allows the committee to build upon those strengths in crafting a strategic plan. It allows the committee to make use of existing resources and recognize the practices that are supportive of the vision. Good work and effective policies need to be recognized, and the reasons for their success understood.

> By three methods we may learn wisdom. First by reflection, which is noblest. Second by imitation, which is easiest, and third by experience, which is the bitterest.
>
> *- Confucius*

It is equally important that the committee identify the current gaps in the system. A systematic assessment of the information gathered by the committee ensures that problems and areas of need are identified correctly so that the committee's efforts are focused effectively. Understanding the gaps in the system will assist the committee in the next step of the rational planning process: setting priorities for action. The committee must understand the gaps that exist, the underlying reason for these gaps (e.g., lack of resources, staff attitudes, inconsistent or contradictory

policies and procedures), and their impact on offender reentry.

Step Six: Develop and Prioritize Goals

Once the gaps in the agency's current practice are identified through the data collection and analysis process, the committee must proceed with prioritizing the problems and areas of need identified, and crafting a set of goals and accompanying objectives to address each issue. The criteria for prioritization may vary from agency to agency, and may include such considerations as the urgency of the identified problems, the resources available to address the issues, or the need for legislation.

One of the overriding criteria for prioritization should be the potential for impact of any given change. Experience demonstrates that agencies are likely to identify many change opportunities during the rational planning process. The temptation will be great to craft solutions to many or all of them at once. However, change is difficult, and agencies should be strategic about staging change in manageable phases, and prioritizing change opportunities based on the degree of impact the change will have on the outcomes they are striving to achieve.

It is therefore important that careful thought be given to each of the presented opportunities for change, and that they are prioritized for action based on a set of objective criteria. In this way, the steering committee can be confident in their decisions and will also have the ability to explain and justify those decisions to stakeholders outside of the process. These decisions are made easier by the rational planning process, which has helped the committee gather data to support the problem analysis, identify specific gaps, and understand the impact of proposed change strategies on those issues.

Step Seven: Create a Strategic Plan to Implement Prioritized Goals

Once targets of change have been selected and prioritized by the committee, the next step in the rational planning process is the creation of a

The reentry policy team in Georgia determined that a significant number of offenders who were eligible for release on parole were not being released because of the absence of an appropriate housing plan. In some cases, offenders were not able to identify a suitable location and efforts by staff had been unproductive. Select members of the policy team from several individual agencies formed a special group—the Reentry Partnership Housing team—and began to develop a variety of innovative solutions to these housing issues. First, data was gathered to determine the extent of the problem. To date, over 500 cases of offenders who are eligible for release but who have significant difficulties finding suitable housing have been identified. Second, a grant funding source was identified that could be used to pay for short-term housing in particular cases (Re-Entry Partnership Housing Program, 2006). Third, suitable housing locations were identified, and compensation rates were determined. As a result of these efforts, over 240 inmates have now been placed in housing under the Reentry Partnership Housing effort, which has resulted in net cost savings to the state of over $3.8 million.

strategic plan. Creating a strategic plan involves crafting a set of goals and objectives that map out the change process.

Goals should be stated clearly and concisely, and should focus on measurable outcomes. Unlike the agency's vision (which is a statement of a preferred future) and mission (which lays out the work of the agency in service of that vision), goals are concrete, measurable steps that the agency can take to realize its mission. For example, if the agency's mission statement is to assure that every offender is prepared for release and has a reentry plan that includes suitable housing, treatment, and employment placements, then one of the goals of the agency's strategic plan may be to increase the availability of suitable housing resources for offenders by ten percent within the next eighteen months.

Objectives are a series of action steps in support of the desired goal. Like goals, objectives should have time limits and measurable outcomes. In the example above, if the goal is to increase the availability of suitable housing resources for offenders by ten percent within eighteen months, then one objective in service of that goal may be to meet with all the community agencies that provide housing to provide education on offender reentry needs by a specific date.

Stating goals and objectives in measurable terms is important to the committee's ability to monitor success. Having made the effort to gather information and determine objectively the next steps necessary in the process for change, it is important that the committee be able to measure its success in quantifiable terms. This not only serves as a measure of whether the committee's actions have achieved their stated goals, but also as a method of demonstrating the effectiveness of the process to other stakeholders.

For greater ease in monitoring the results, the strategic plan should include a timeline that details deadlines and outcome measures. Some goals may be targeted for immediate action, while the implementation of others may be dependent on the prior achievement of other goals. The final plan will likely be complex and involve individuals throughout the agency and from other stakeholder agencies. The strategic plan should be a dynamic document, regularly updated based upon routine performance reviews.

Step Eight: Monitor the Impact of the Strategic Plan
Once the strategic plan has been developed by the steering committee, it must be implemented and the impact of the plan monitored. Despite the time and careful effort that the committee

Illinois Evidence-Based Practices Coordinating Council

Goal 1: Apply actuarial and dynamic risk/need tools to determine the best method of offender intervention.

Effectiveness in risk reduction requires the use of targeted interventions that are proven to be effective by research. The first step toward this end is to fully understand the characteristics of the individual offender that lead to criminal behavior and corresponding application of techniques that lead to a reduction in criminal behavior. This goal is designed to ensure that actuarial tools that effectively and efficiently allow agency staff to determine the best course of action toward risk reduction are put in place.

What should be done? (Objectives)	How will it be done? (Strategies or Activities)	Who will take the lead?	Date objective will be done?	How will we know it's done? (Outcome Measures)
1. All caseworkers will use a generic, validated, actuarial risk/need tool for all targeted adult offenders under supervision.	A. Determine what tool to use statewide.	Assessment Committee	Done	Percent of new intake medium/high risk offenders under supervision with LSR-R completed within 60 days of intake.
	B. Find funding to train all PO's.	AOIC	Done	
	C. Develop an LSI-R rollout plan.	AOIC	Done	By Sept 30, 2005, 75 percent of new intakes will have LSI-R completed.
	D. Train all staff who have supervision or intake role.	Counties	August 30	Target: 95 percent
	E. A screening tool of the Wisconsin model or the brief LSI will be applied on select cases to determine further assessment.	Counties	August 30	Percent of offenders with completed LSI-R or previous tool reassessed with the LSI-R no less than every twelve months.
				By Sept 30, 2006, 75 percent of previously assessed offenders will be reassessed with the LSI-R.
				Target: 95 percent

Adapted from the Illinois Action Plan for Implementing Evidence-Based Practices

has invested in the rational planning process, its work is not over. As important as these earlier steps are, all the work of the committee could be confounded if the impact of the strategic plan is not monitored and needed mid-course corrections in the plan are not made. Therefore, performance measures must be included as an integral part of the strategic plan; ideally, data will be collected throughout the implementation process to ensure that difficulties or unintended consequences are recognized as quickly as possible.

The committee will be monitoring for two different results: 1) is the strategic plan being implemented in a timely fashion and according to the committee's direction and 2) are the results of the actions taken consistent with the committee's

Offender Programming: Targeting Criminogenic Needs

Recommendation #10: *New programs that are developed shall incorporate the principles that drive effective correctional programming, provide staff training prior to their adoption, and be guided by a training manual that directs all work relevant to the program. They shall be reviewed and approved subject to their compliance with a standardized protocol to be established in Departmental policy.*

Recommendation #11: *Existing programs shall be reviewed and maintained or eliminated based on the extent to which they address the dynamic domains used to assess offender needs as part of reentry planning. Departmental resources will be allocated over time to support existing programs that effectively address these areas, as well as to create treatment interventions in offender need areas where additional programming is necessary.*

In the past ten or fifteen years, a great deal of material regarding the characteristics of effective correctional programs has appeared in the professional literature. This now well-established literature speaks to "what works" in terms of rehabilitative programming. Even more significantly, it has identified a number of principles that drive effective correctional programming. These principles state that interventions should target the known predictors of crime and recidivism for change; provide treatment services that are behavioral in nature; and ensure that treatment interventions target the criminogenic needs of high-risk offenders for change (that is, the dynamic risk factors or domains to be used in reentry planning). The effectiveness of treatment is also enhanced to the extent that the interventions are reinforced and continued in the community; using well-trained, adequately supervised staff; providing structured "relapse prevention" aftercare services; and matching styles of treatment services to the specific learning styles of offenders.

A crucial element of this literature is the importance it attaches to understanding "criminogenic needs." These are dynamic risk factors—characteristics of offenders that can change (in contrast to static risk factors, which cannot change). These dynamic risk factors, identified by an objective assessment instrument, help predict an offender's likelihood or risk of reoffending. Such factors include anti-social attitudes, values, and beliefs; anti-social peers and associates; substance abuse; educational deficiencies; vocational deficiencies; mental health; and anti-social personality factors (e.g., risk-taking, aggression, impulsivity, low self-control). Programming that targets these dynamic risk factors may reduce the probability that an offender will reoffend.

expectations? The first is a matter of determining if the steps laid out by the committee are being implemented in the fashion and on the schedule determined by the committee. The second is more complicated: Is the strategic plan successful? Are the actions being implemented resulting in the desired change?

In many ways, the monitoring process will resemble the data collection process; the collection of data during the monitoring process is intended both to determine success and to inform and drive future changes to the strategic plan. The elements of effective performance measurement are consistent, therefore, with the

Monitoring New Release Practices

In Missouri, the Department of Corrections (DOC) changed its release practices to require all offenders to move to a Transitional Housing Unit (THU) within 180 days of their release to the community. While in the THU, offenders receive intense release preparation and are connected with services and resources from the community to ensure continuity of care upon release.

Critical Outcome Information Identified

As part of the implementation of this new policy, the DOC conducted a study evaluating the outcomes of offenders leaving transitional housing units prior to release after sixty days and again at twelve months (Oldfield, 2007). The department found that offenders who stayed in a THU for five months or more were more successful (with less recidivism and lower technical violations) than offenders who either stayed in a THU for less than five months or were released directly from an institution. This data reinforced the department's commitment to its plan to require that all offenders release from a THU to the community.

New Questions Raised

Other interesting findings have emerged from this study. The results indicated little difference in the effect of THU participation on gaining employment after release. Why would this occur? Are THU programs not focused enough on employment issues? Are gaining and securing employment after release more a result of the quality of community supervision than the services provided during incarceration? Given this evaluative data, the DOC is probing this issue further to determine the steps necessary to both reduce recidivism and technical violations and ensure that offenders are better prepared for gainful employment after their release from incarceration.

elements of effective data collection: a consensus on what kind of information should be collected (recall that outcome measurements should be clearly defined within the strategic plan's goals and objectives), and the objective and thorough collection and analysis of that data. If monitoring demonstrates that efforts have been unsuccessful, or have created unintended consequences, a gaps analysis should be performed to determine why the efforts made under the strategic plan were unsuccessful and what new priorities and goals should be crafted.

Conclusion

Effective efforts to design and implement a successful offender reentry strategy require the use of a rational planning process. Such a process ensures that system strengths and gaps are analyzed objectively and that solutions are based upon a careful consideration of the agency's greatest needs and available resources. Rational planning is an endeavor in which the agency should involve staff representing a variety of perspectives. It is a long-term process requiring the investment of often-limited time and resources; however, its benefits are many, including the design of a strategic plan grounded in objective decision making and demonstrable results that will organize and guide the agency's efforts to achieve its vision.

KEY STEPS

- **Create a steering committee of diverse individuals who represent key sectors of the organization.**
- **Collect information about the offender population (sentence length and conditions, level of risk, criminogenic needs, and responsivity factors).**
- **Develop an understanding of the resources currently available to address the risk/needs of offenders, in terms of both quality and capacity.**
- **Conduct a thorough review of the agency's policies and practices related to offender reentry.**
- **Identify the strengths and gaps in the agency's current work.**
- **Identify priority change strategies.**
- **Create a strategic plan to implement priority change strategies and establish specific goals, objectives, timetables, and measurable outcomes.**
- **Monitor and revise the strategic plan.**

CHAPTER 2: DATA COLLECTION AND MONITORING: THE FOUNDATION OF RATIONAL PLANNING

> Give me six hours to chop down a tree, and I will spend the first four hours sharpening the axe.
>
> *- Abraham Lincoln*

Perhaps the most time-consuming and yet vital step in the rational planning process is the collection of data: the collection of baseline data and information at the start of the planning process, and the collection of data used to determine the impact of changes implemented as a result of that process. The rational planning process relies on the objective consideration of this data, and the subsequent prioritization and implementation of strategies based on that careful consideration.

The following provides further detail regarding the data collection process: the information to be gathered and the uses for such information (adapted from McGarry & Ney, 2006).

Narrowing the Focus

The task of data collection may initially seem daunting, and it will be important that the steering committee invest time in the thoughtful clarification of the focus of its inquiry to decide what the committee is attempting to learn from its efforts, and what data will help them accomplish these goals. This will prevent the committee from engaging in a protracted information gathering process that yields unnecessary data. At the same time, the committee must not be limited in its thinking and must consider all of the factors that contribute to a successful offender reentry strategy.

In determining the focus of the data collection process, the steering committee may want to ask itself *who, what, when, where, why, and how*.

Why Should Data Be Collected?

As indicated above, the steering committee should first address the question of why data needs to be collected. A thorough understanding of the role of data collection in an effective rational planning process is important; without an understanding of and commitment to this vital component, steering committee members may become impatient with the data collection process or may assume that the knowledge at the table is sufficient to guide their planning work. Committee members must be committed to and engaged in this line of inquiry in order to achieve the greatest degree of success.

What Data Should Be Collected?

As indicated in Chapter 1, what data should be collected is a question requiring careful consideration by the steering committee. At a minimum, the following list of topics should be considered by the committee as necessary targets for information collection:

- Research on evidence-based and emerging practices
- Offender population
- Understanding the system
- Resources
- Policies and practices
- Resources
- Staff attitudes, knowledge, and skills

Research on Evidence-Based and Emerging Practices

It is important that the steering committee dedicate itself to educating its members on the current research on evidence-based and

emerging practices at the very beginning of the process. The reason for engaging in a rational planning process is to avoid decision making based on intuition or conventional wisdom and to engage instead in a decision making process based on a thorough understanding of what contributes to offender success. An understanding of evidence-based and emerging practices will prepare the steering committee to engage in this kind of analysis.

Committee members will have many different avenues through which to inform and educate themselves on evidence-based and emerging practices. A growing body of literature is available regarding evidence-based practices; steering committee members may be charged with reviewing and discussing this literature as part of the steering committee's regular meetings.

The committee may also seek the assistance of experts on evidence-based and emerging practices, bringing these individuals to committee meetings to provide information and training to committee members. Subcommittees may also be charged with gathering information and presenting it to the committee to expedite the learning process.

Offender Population

At its core, reentry is an approach that seeks to increase public safety by improving the likelihood for offenders to succeed following release from confinement. It only makes sense, then, that any reentry strategy should be based on a thorough understanding of offenders and the barriers these individuals face in becoming lawful and productive citizens.

Data should be gathered regarding key aspects of the offender population. Committee members should develop a clear understanding of the range of offenders served by the agency, including offenses of conviction, criminal histories, length of sentences, risk levels, treatment and service needs, programming received, length of supervision, locations to which they return, and recidivism rates. The demographics of the offender population are equally important: age, race/ethnicity, sex/gender, socioeconomic status, cultural background, marital or family status, and the primary languages spoken and understood. It is only with a thorough understanding of the population to be served that the steering committee can craft reentry approaches and policies that can improve an offender's opportunities for success.

Understanding the System

As part of the data collection process, the steering committee should invest time and effort in the development of a system map. This should

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Collecting Data for the Rational Planning Process: Baseline Data Questions

The following provides a few examples of baseline data questions a steering committee might ask to understand better their offender population:

What are the characteristics of our offender population?
- What are their criminal, social, employment, and educational histories?
- What percentage of the offender population is high risk? Medium risk? Low risk?
- What are the criminogenic need breakdowns among these population groups?
- What responsivity factors are present for these groups (e.g., functional level, mental health condition, level of motivation, cultural background)?
- What is the average length of supervision for the offender population?
- To which communities are offenders released?
- How many offenders are revoked for technical violations? Which violations?

include a visual depiction and description of how an offender's case is processed through the system, beginning with the offender's intake at the institution and proceeding through discharge following community supervision, and should emphasize the decision points throughout the process. It is important for the committee to understand fully these critical decision points and who is responsible for decision making at each stage, as these decision points may be the impetus for changes to the strategic plan.

The information necessary to develop a system map can be found in a variety of places, including agency policies and practices (see below) and State statutes regulating procedures, as well as information gathered in interviews and focus groups. The steering committee (or subcommittee assigned to the task) may engage in the process of system mapping over several meetings, concentrating on a particular piece of the process at each meeting. System mapping may involve touring offices and institutions to observe the process in action (McGarry & Ney, 2006).

The most effective system maps have both a visual and a descriptive aspect. A flowchart may best represent a visual picture of the process, but should be supplemented by a narrative that explains the flow of offenders through the system and critical decision making points. The system map should include information on (CSOM, 2002, 2007; McGarry & Ney, 2006):

- Major steps and key decision points.
- Decision options and key decision makers at each point.
- Sources of influence on each decision.
- Amount of time necessary to move a case from one point in the system to the next.
- Norms and assumptions (formal or informal) at various steps and decision points.

Policies and Practices
It is important that the steering committee develop an understanding of the agency's current policies and practices, both formal and informal. Only a thorough understanding of these issues

can enable the steering committee to determine how current policy and practice may either contribute to or hinder successful offender reentry efforts. Furthermore, the comparison of formal policy to informal practice is important in demonstrating to the steering committee the gap between where the agency stands in regards to its vision and where it wants to be, and what efforts must be made to change the organizational culture.

The steering committee will want to gather information on policies and practices that directly affect offenders (e.g., disciplinary actions for infractions, standard supervision conditions) and those that directly affect staff working with offenders (e.g., evaluation and promotion policies and practices). The impact of policies and practices on reentry efforts should be evaluated (i.e., are inmates denied visitation rights as a disciplinary measure, and what impact does that policy have on efforts to promote pro-social behaviors?).

Policies and practices should be mapped to determine if the actions of one agency have a significant impact on the efforts of another (i.e., are excessive conditions being set for the supervision of offenders, thereby impairing the ability of a parole agent to establish an individually tailored case management plan?). Information on policies and practices that determine the programming an offender receives (e.g., job training, education, treatment) and the impact of other policies and practices on the offender's eligibility for those services (e.g., classification policies that prohibit offenders from participating in needed services as a result of their classification level) are just a few examples of the data that should be collected and analyzed.

Resources
In addition to identifying the needs and characteristics of the offender population, the steering committee must also develop a thorough understanding of the current internal and external resources available to provide services to this population. Data must be collected on resources

available to serve offender needs such as treatment (drug, mental and other health needs), education, employment, housing, and transportation, among others. Information should also be gathered pertaining to resources for offenders' families, such as family or couples therapy, parenting skills training, and services for children of incarcerated individuals. As data is collected on the offender population and specific needs are identified, inquiries regarding resources to meet those needs should be explored.

In gathering data on available resources, care should be taken to document such information as program requirements, eligibility, cost, capacity, and demographics served.[7]

Staff Attitudes, Knowledge, and Skills

While a strong commitment from leadership within institutional corrections and community supervision agencies is integral to the success of offender reentry, there is little question that much of the hands-on work of reentry will be performed by line staff, who have ongoing and direct contact with offenders. It is important that the steering committee, as part of the data collection process, gather information to help it understand current staff attitudes, knowledge, and skills regarding reentry. It is likely that part of the strategic plan developed for the agency will include some aspect of staff training and education regarding reentry, to prepare staff members to assist offenders in successfully reintegrating into the community.

Staff attitudes are particularly important to determine; staff members who do not believe reentry is a legitimate goal may resist efforts to implement reentry strategies. Attitudes toward offender reentry may also reflect a disbelief in the effectiveness of reentry as a means of achieving public safety, a simple resistance toward change, or a belief that offenders are incapable of being rehabilitated. The steering committee should make efforts to understand not only the prevailing attitudes among staff but also the reasons driving them.

Staff knowledge may be a more straightforward matter with regards to gathering information, but the steering committee should be aware that the act of gathering information might raise concerns and fears among staff. As discussed in Section Three on leadership and organizational change, staff members may resist change when they believe that the changes will require skills they do not possess, thus endangering their positions or chances of promotion. The steering committee will be interested in gathering information regarding what the staff knows and understands about reentry (e.g., what are the important components of reentry; what is evidence-based practice; what are the principles of risk, need, and responsivity; how do their interactions contribute to an offender's chances of success).

Finally, staff skills should be measured. Specific skills are important to the success of offender reentry strategies, such as Motivational Interviewing, the ability to construct an effective case management plan, and the effective assessment of offenders at various stages in the reentry process. An important source of information for the steering committee on this issue will be the agency's training department, which should be able to provide information about the types of training made available to staff, the agency's training requirements, and staff utilization of its programs. A review of the results of quality assurance efforts also will provide important information about staff skills and competency levels.

The steering committee also may want to recognize the opportunities for education in these data collection activities (e.g., sharing information about the agency's vision prior to engaging staff in discussions about attitudes toward reentry, making staff more aware of training opportunities within the agency, et cetera).

Who Should Collect the Data?

Each steering committee will have different resources available for data collection. It is unlikely that steering committee members, who will often be executive level staff, will be involved directly in the data collection itself. Rather, the

steering committee will be responsible for directing the data collection process by determining what data should be collected and delegating the actual data collection process to agency staff (such as the agency's research department) or to members of a subcommittee who are uniquely qualified to collect and analyze data. The steering committee may even delegate oversight of the data collection process to a subcommittee that, working under the direction of the steering committee, will be responsible for crafting or refining avenues of inquiry, facilitating access to data among departments and agencies with different data collection systems or confidentiality requirements, and supervising the staff charged with the data collection.

Where is the Data to Be Collected?

Unless the agency has already developed a sophisticated and integrated technology system,

it is likely that the data required by the committee will be stored in a variety of locations and in a variety of forms, both electronic and paper. Even if the agency has such a system, the range of data necessary for collection will require outreach to other agencies, each of which will have its own data collection system and its unique requirements regarding the sharing of information. Those charged with collecting data for the steering committee will need to navigate these various systems and obstacles in order to provide the committee with the most complete information possible.

How Will the Data Be Collected?

How the data will be collected will depend to a great extent on the form that the data takes. Data stored in database systems may be easily acquired through programmed or specially crafted searches. Other data may require careful examination of paper files and reviews of case

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Collecting Data for the Monitoring Process: Sample Data Questions

In follow-up to the implementation of their strategic plan, the steering committee should monitor the impact of the changes made as a result of the rational planning process.

- How many offenders experience technical violations/new crimes within 3 months, 6 months, 1 year, 3 years?
- How does the technical/new crime population compare with those in compliance in terms of level of risk, needs addressed, and other key factors?
- What percentage of adult offenders released from prison secured employment within 30 days of release? 60 days? What is the length of employment?
- What percentage of juvenile offenders returned to school following release from custody? What percentage received a high school diploma or GED?
- Are offenders who receive transitional services more successful once released into the community than those released without these services?
- Of those individuals released from prison, is the recidivism rate lower the earlier the offender obtains employment? Is the rate affected by the length of employment?
- Did juvenile offenders whose families were actively involved in the intervention process recidivate at lower rates than juveniles for whom family involvement was absent?
- Do the offenders who receive vocational training exhibit lower recidivism rates than those who do not receive such training?
- What percentage of offenders with a substance abuse problem received treatment while under supervision?
- What percentage of juvenile offenders receiving services for co-occurring mental health difficulties continued to receive those services once released into the community?

management plans. Data to be collected from external sources will require consultation to determine what is possible, from both a human resource and information sharing perspective. For example, the steering committee may want data from an outside agency (e.g., wage progression for released offenders, success rates for treatment programs, offender utilization of community services, educational attainment). While the committee may be able to supply personnel to conduct the data collection, confidentiality concerns (e.g., HIPAA) may prohibit outside personnel from accessing those records. If resources are an issue, the committee may have to consider providing funds to the outside agency to finance the collection of data or determine alternate sources of data that may be useful.

Additionally, some information will be anecdotal in nature (such as the description of informal staff practice); this kind of information will have to be gathered through interviews, focus groups, or other survey methods. Finally, the agency's policies and practices, contained in employee manuals, agency directives, procedural manuals, logbooks, announcements, newsletters, and memos, must also be reviewed in order for the steering committee to develop a thorough understanding of this material.

Data collection can shed an unflattering light by revealing unfavorable facts or characteristics about the agency and its success in addressing aspects of offender reentry. It is important that the steering committee support the collection of all necessary information, including data that is uncomplimentary to the agency, so that the committee can understand fully the current status of the agency's reentry efforts and base its decisions on objective information.

Monitoring the Impact of the Steering Committee's Decisions

As McGarry and Ney note in *Getting It Right: Collaborative Problem Solving for Criminal Justice*, "the cornerstone of good planning is that it never ends." It cannot be emphasized enough that data collection is a process that the steering committee

should approach as ongoing and cumulative. As important as it is to gather baseline data at the start of the rational planning process, it is equally important that the committee require that data collection continue. The collection of data to monitor the impact of the steering committee's decision fulfills two functions:

- Monitoring data assists the steering committee in determining whether the actions taken to implement the agency's strategic plan have had the intended result. Monitoring data helps determine whether targeted outcomes were achieved and assists in identifying any unintended consequences that may need to be addressed.

- Monitoring data also provides information for new avenues of inquiry and the continued refinement of the agency's strategic plan. Monitoring data establishes whether the current goals and objectives of the agency's strategic plan have been met and opens up new opportunities to proceed with additional activities that will advance the agency's vision and mission.

Unless the changes put into place by the steering committee are monitored, the committee cannot be assured that the decisions it made actually resulted in the committee's intended outcomes. Furthermore, without conducting performance measurements (set during the crafting of the strategic plan), the steering committee will be unable to demonstrate to key stakeholders the impact of the agency's efforts.

Monitoring the impact of the agency's strategic plan also provides opportunities for the committee to continue the process of identifying and responding to gaps and challenges, which allows for ongoing development and refinement of the agency's strategic plan for offender reentry.

Conclusion

Data collection is the foundation of an effective rational planning process. The data collected regarding the characteristics of the agency's

offender population; the resources available to respond to offender needs; the agency's current policies and practices; agency staff attitudes, knowledge, and skills regarding reentry; and evidence-based and emerging practices are the underpinnings of the steering committee's efforts to consider the gaps and challenges confronting the agency in its reentry efforts and inform the development of a strategic plan for enhancing outcomes with offenders. The data collected should guide and inform the work of the committee throughout the rational planning process.

In approaching data collection, the steering committee should consider established methods of inquiry: *who, what, when, where, why, and how*. Considering these questions will assist the committee in creating a thorough approach to data collection and ensure that all of the data necessary to its deliberations is gathered.

Data collection should be approached as an ongoing and cumulative process that continues beyond the initial stage of establishing baseline data and extends not only to monitoring the impact of the agency's strategic plan but also to creating new avenues of inquiry and action.

KEY STEPS

- **Narrow the focus of the steering committee's inquiry to ensure that necessary data is collected without engaging the committee in a protracted process that impedes progress.**
- **Prioritize the committee's data collection requests to ensure a quick response.**
- **Become conversant in the research on evidence-based practices.**
- **Collect baseline data on the offender population, the intervention resources available, policies and practices that guide the agency's offender management work, and staff attitudes, knowledge, and skills.**
- **Make sure that the process extends beyond initial baseline data collection and that data collection is tied to performance measures established as part of the strategic plan.**
- **Ensure that data collection is ongoing and cumulative, designed not only to substantiate the success of implementation measures, but also to open up new avenues of inquiry and action.**

Assess Your Agency: Rational Planning			
	Yes	No	Not Clear
1. Has the agency developed a clear, data-supported understanding of the offenders who are under their control and supervision (e.g., critical information about the offender population that includes: offenses of conviction, length of sentences, risk levels, treatment and service needs, responsivity issues, programming received, length of supervision, locations to which they return, recidivism rates)?			
2. Has the agency developed a clear understanding of current reentry policies and practices from intake to community release, supervision, and aftercare?			
3. Has the agency developed a detailed understanding of the services and resources currently available for this population (both institutional and community-based)?			
4. Has the agency developed a working knowledge of evidence-based practices and promising approaches in the area of offender management and reentry?			
5. Has the agency gathered information on the attitudes, knowledge, and skills of staff to assess their ability to work effectively with offenders?			
6. Has the agency identified its offender management and reentry gaps and need areas based on these analyses?			
7. Has the agency prioritized for implementation key strategies specifically designed to address the most significant need/gap areas?			
8. Has the agency developed a strategic plan to organize and guide the implementation of change strategies?			
9. Has the agency established goals and objectives to implement prioritized change strategies?			
10. Has the agency established a monitoring plan to assess the impact of these change strategies?			

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Leadership and Organizational Change

Rational Planning Process

Effective Offender Management

Collaboration

Section Five:

The Essential Role of Collaboration

Susan Gibel and Leilah Gilligan

INTRODUCTION

Daunting problems face adult and juvenile offenders upon their return to the community. A criminal history alone is a significant challenge to addressing the basic necessities of life (e.g., housing, employment); however, these individuals often have additional problems that create other challenges to their ability to succeed. These problems, including drug or alcohol abuse, mental health difficulties, problematic family environments, and a lack of education, will likely continue to challenge their opportunities for success when they are released from prison back into the community. Because of the complex difficulties faced by many offenders, the stigma they face upon release, and the lack of support they will likely encounter in their attempts to successfully reintegrate into the community, no one agency can address these myriad issues. Therefore, collaboration, both internal and external, is a critical element of any successful reentry effort.

> Convicted felons may lose many essential rights of citizenship, such as the right to vote and to hold public office, and are often restricted in their ability to obtain occupational and professional licenses. Their criminal record may also preclude their receiving government benefits and retaining parental rights, [and] be grounds for divorce.... The restrictions on employment and housing create formidable obstacles to law-abidingness. One has to question whether we are jeopardizing public safety by making it so difficult for prison releasees to succeed.
>
> *- Petersilia, 2003*

In some important ways, collaboration provides a foundation for successful offender reentry strategies because it brings together a multitude of stakeholders, including institutional corrections and community supervision agencies, other criminal justice and public agencies, the community, and the offender's own support system, to create opportunities for the offender to achieve success upon release.

Internal collaboration is equally as important, however. Many institutional corrections and community supervision agencies have a history of working in isolation of one another. In this way, agencies operated in an "in or out" orientation, with little or no information exchange or partnership evident. For offender management efforts to be successful, however, it is more apparent than ever that correctional staff must work collaboratively with their own colleagues as well, whether that be correctional officers, counselors, and institutional employers sharing information and working with the offender as a team, or institutional corrections and community supervision staff exchanging information and working closely together to build an informed transition and community supervision plan.

In this section, collaboration as a necessary component of successful offender reentry will be explored. In Chapter 1, collaboration will be defined and its importance to offender reentry discussed. Chapter 2 will focus specifically on the unique and important relationship between institutional corrections and community supervision, the target audience for this handbook, in the area of offender reentry. An overview of multidisciplinary collaborative teams will be covered in Chapter 3. Finally, in Chapter 4, the elements of successful teams will be examined and the steps to establish an effective collaborative team will be discussed.

CHAPTER 1: COLLABORATION: WHAT IS IT AND WHY IS IT SO IMPORTANT?

The corrections system can—and should—achieve better results in reducing the reoffending that creates new crime victims and results in enormous costs to Oregon. However, our corrections professionals cannot do this alone... the success of prison-to-community transition is complex. Many public and private agencies have responsibility for parts of it, yet no agency has responsibility for all of it. Improving our system will require the commitment, dedication, and persistence of many, working together.

- Remarks made by Joe O'Leary, Policy Advisor to Governor Kulongoski, on behalf of Governor Kulongoski, to the Oregon Department of Corrections and their community corrections partners on May 1, 2007.

What is Collaboration?

Collaboration—diverse agencies and individuals working together to achieve goals that an individual or agency cannot achieve alone—is the most effective way to respond to the challenges of reentry. Many agencies may already be engaged in activities that require working with others, such as:

- Networking (exchanging information for mutual benefit).
- Coordinating (exchanging information for mutual benefit and to achieve a shared goal).
- Cooperating (exchanging information, altering activities, and sharing resources for mutual benefit and to achieve a common goal) (Huxham, 1996).

True collaboration, however, requires institutional corrections and community supervision agencies to do more than talk, or exchange and share information and resources. Rather, it requires

them to work together within their own agencies and with other justice and public sector system and community-based partners to achieve a goal that would be beyond the reach of any individual partner to the effort. Collaboration, in other words, can help teams and agencies solve problems that would otherwise be unsolvable.

Collaboration is working together to achieve a common goal that cannot be achieved without partners.

Historically, collaboration has not been a cornerstone of the justice system. In fact, legal constructs can and have posed significant barriers to collaboration. Some of those challenges include (Carter, 2005; CEPP, 2005a):

- The adversarial nature of the legal system.
- A competition for limited resources.
- Political and public pressure faced by elected officials.
- The creation or existence of agencies that have overlapping or duplicative responsibilities.
- The creation or existence of agencies that have missions that are at odds with one another.

Increasingly, however, institutional corrections and community supervision agencies are finding new ways to collaborate more effectively internally and with other parts of the justice system, as well as with external stakeholders, in an effort to surmount very complex problems, including the challenges associated with offender reentry.

In order for these collaborative efforts to be successful, participants must be willing to engage fully in the process. While strong and committed leaders are critical to successful offender reentry efforts, long lasting and sustainable change requires the commitment of many individuals working together toward a

common cause. Collaborative partners must set aside individual agendas, coalesce around a shared vision, and commit to working together until the desired outcomes are achieved. These collaborative partnerships can have a significant effect, including enhancing relationships within and between institutional corrections and community supervision agencies and producing longstanding connections between allied justice system and community agencies.

Why Collaborate?

> No individual is wise enough by themselves.
>
> *- Titus Maccius Plautus (254 BC-184 BC)*

Collaboratives draw from the experience, perspective, and diversity of their team members in an effort to work toward a more purposeful and reasoned approach to problem solving. Instead of assuming that any one agency has the ability, authority, or capacity to resolve a problem as complex as reentry, successful collaborative partnerships recognize that it takes the combined efforts of many committed individuals and agencies to resolve these issues.

In recent decades, the public, elected officials, and other system stakeholders have heightened their expectations of institutional corrections and community supervision agencies. In addition to incapacitation, they also expect corrections interventions to cost less and to enhance public safety by reducing recidivism. This is a tall order, and one that cannot be easily filled by any single agency. For this reason, collaborative problem solving teams are increasingly recognized as a valuable entity through which the effective resolution of complex criminal justice problems, such as those associated with reentry, might be achieved.

> The criminal justice system is addressing problems that have become increasingly complex and rooted in difficult and complicated social issues. Court, community, and criminal justice professionals join forces to analyze problems and create responsive solutions; and judges, court administrators, prosecutors, defense attorneys, probation and parole representatives, corrections personnel, victim advocates, law enforcement officers, and public and private treatment providers reach out to one another to forge partnerships that will enable them to address complex medical, social, fiscal, and behavioral problems that pose significant threats to the safety and well-being of our communities.
>
> *- CEPP, 2005a*

Conclusion

Collaboration is the process of working together to achieve a common goal that cannot be achieved by any single individual or agency. Given the myriad and complex barriers offenders face in transitioning to the community, collaboration, although sometimes difficult and time-consuming, has tremendous potential for addressing the problems associated with offender reentry.

Collaboration offers the best method of seeking out and finding solutions to the challenges posed by offender reentry. It has the potential both to coalesce the efforts of institutional corrections and community supervision agencies, and to bring to the table the many stakeholders who have an interest in safer communities and successful offenders. It is only through effective collaboration that the ultimate goal of safer communities through successful offender reentry can be achieved, for it is indeed a goal that cannot be achieved by any single agency or individual acting alone.

CHAPTER 2: COLLABORATION BETWEEN INSTITUTIONAL CORRECTIONS AND COMMUNITY SUPERVISION AGENCIES

Institutional corrections and community supervision agencies are the linchpin to successful offender reentry. They are responsible for determining and providing for the offender's needs while incarcerated and for transitioning and monitoring the offender's return to the community. Traditionally, institutional corrections and community supervision agencies have viewed themselves as, if not mutually exclusive, at least independent efforts. In some jurisdictions, this division may in fact be organizationally structured with the separation of institutional corrections and community supervision agency functions into distinct agencies. In actuality, institutional corrections and community supervision agencies represent two parts that form a whole in the important work of offender management. As a result, these agencies might do well to adopt an "in to out" philosophy, rather than continuing to subscribe to an "in or out" mentality. An "in to out" framework means that all professionals, whether based in institutions or in the community, assume a shared responsibility for encouraging success as adult and juvenile offenders move from institutional corrections to community supervision agencies (Bumby, Talbot, & Carter, 2007).

How institutional corrections and community supervision agency systems approach these responsibilities, and how they partner with each other in their efforts, are crucial questions. If the collective goal of institutional corrections and community supervision agencies is community safety, then they must be willing to collaborate to provide the offender with the best possible opportunities for success. Furthermore, to ensure the continued safety of the community, these agencies must develop policies and practices that support and institutionalize

collaborative problem solving between their divisions or agencies.

It is important to emphasize that much of the discussion that follows also applies to multidisciplinary collaborations; however, in this chapter the emphasis is on collaboration between institutional corrections and community supervision agencies. In addition, although the text below will refer to institutional corrections and community supervision agencies as if these are a single agency, whether they are in fact structurally divided within the same agency or separate, independent agencies, the need for greater collaboration remains the same.

Most institutional corrections and community supervision agencies assume that internal collaboration, collaboration within the ranks of their own agency, happens effortlessly and on an ongoing basis. In many jurisdictions, however, this is not the case. During the rational planning process, it is not uncommon for institutional corrections and community supervision agencies to discover contradictory policies and procedures, policies and procedures that create silos among the agencies' various divisions, or policies and procedures that actually impede efforts to collaborate among divisions.

In order to overcome these barriers to effective collaboration, agencies will need to concentrate their efforts at two levels: collaboration among policymakers, and collaboration among line staff operating at the case management level.

- *Policymaking Level*. Collaboration at this level should involve individuals that have policymaking or decision making authority for their respective agencies, departments, or divisions. This level of collaboration includes

the directors or deputy directors, district office managers, regional managers, and wardens, to suggest just a few. Individuals that have policy and decision making authority can open access to new resources or services previously unavailable to offenders returning from confinement, promote joint efforts in public and policymaking discussions, and assure access to line staff so that they are able to serve as members of case management teams.

- *Case Management Level*. The other type of collaboration is at the case management level, involving individuals at the line level (e.g., correctional officers, counselors, teachers, job supervisors, transition coordinators, parole officers, trackers) responsible for the direct supervision of offenders. These are individuals

who can provide additional information or perspective about offender needs, assist in the development of appropriate intervention strategies, provide access to services and supports to supplement those available within institutional corrections and community supervision agencies, and support ongoing monitoring and follow up activities.

Policymaking Level

Perhaps the best example of an institutional corrections and community supervision agency team at the policymaking level is the steering committee. The steering committee is designed to bring together executive and management level leaders from within the agency to design and conduct an investigation into the agency's current policies, procedures, and reentry efforts, with the purpose of developing a strategic plan

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Oregon: Collaboration within the Agency

Oregon has sustained a system-wide focus on improving transition since 1999, and much progress has been made. We have had success in our change efforts, yet many challenges remain if we are to live up to our goals.

One of our greatest challenges today is engaging staff at all levels of the organization in that part of our agency mission that speaks to successful offender reentry. Most corrections leaders now recognize the importance of a successful transition from prison to community living, both because the numbers of inmates leaving prison have been growing and because failure during this high risk time creates new crime victims. Our public safety role demands that we do a good job with transition. While leadership may be firmly committed to this goal, true change depends on involving line staff and, probably most important, the mid-level manager.

It is important to continue improving transition without waiting for additional resources to do this work. Many improvements can be made to the transition process by reprioritizing staff duties [and] reducing bureaucratic barriers.

In 2004, [the Oregon Department of Corrections] reorganized to better align agency operations with its vision and mission. A new Transitional Services Division was created, tying together the services that directly affect the ability of an offender to transition successfully back to the community. The programs within the prisons that reduce the risk of criminal behavior, such as education, vocational programs, cognitive programs, addictions treatment programs, parenting programs, and religious services are in this division. Community corrections, including supervision, community-based services, and community-based sanctions are also in this division.

- Max Williams, Director, Oregon Department of Corrections

for reentry for the agency and a work plan for the implementation of the strategic plan.

As was noted in Section Four, effective collaboration is critical to the rational planning process. The effort of developing the agency's strategic plan, and the implementation of that plan, is a long-term commitment that requires the application of complex solutions. Throughout this process, the steering committee must remain committed to a single vision of reentry and focused on its collective efforts. Maintaining this kind of commitment over many months or years requires a commitment to working together, to collaborating, in order to achieve the full realization of the strategic plan. This endeavor is impossible without the dedication of all key stakeholders within the agency.

Case Management Level

As important as it is to the change process, collaboration at the policymaking level alone is insufficient to bring about an effective offender reentry strategy. As mentioned in Section Three on leadership and organizational change, a new strategy toward offender reentry must reach down to all levels of staff and actively bring them into the change process.

Barriers to collaboration often exist at the staff level. Collaboration requires a shared vision that moves individuals beyond their personal ideas of how to fulfill their job requirements and places their individual efforts within the framework of a larger vision. Given the time and resource constraints facing an overwhelming majority of institutional corrections and community supervision agencies, many employees (perhaps without even being aware of it) may view their roles so individually that they fail to consider how they fit into the larger process of achieving the agency's vision and carrying out its mission. For example, corrections officers may view their job as purely custodial and have little interest in or opportunity for talking with case counselors about an offender's daily behavior, visitors, or other issues; case counselors may have information that could be useful to institutional

treatment providers but have no organized method to share this information; and parole officers may not receive offenders' institutional records, let alone have the ability to communicate with those who have been working with the offenders throughout their confinements. Without a specific and articulated vision of how each of these individuals fit into a larger mission, there is no way to ensure a collective, overarching perspective on how the offender, the offender's particular level of risk and needs, and the offender's transition to the community should and will be managed.

Instituting new reentry programs and policies has led to increased internal communication and coordination between units previously separated by job function. The initiative has also led to formalized relationships and an articulation of shared commitment with other state entities.

When collaboration happens in this context, individuals begin to understand and share a vision of reentry. Parole agents recognize the benefits of working with institutional staff to develop a transitional plan for the offender that begins several months prior to the offender's release, while correctional officers recognize that engagement in the appropriate treatment and institutional programs may increase an offender's opportunities for success in the community. Each individual begins to understand and appreciate the ways in which they can engage with and encourage offenders in the course of their day-to-day interactions.

- Maureen Walsh, Chairman, Massachusetts Parole Board

The problems created by the lack of a common vision for offender reentry, and effective

information sharing to support this outcome, often are exacerbated at the point when offenders are released from a correctional institution under community supervision. Community supervision officers may not be provided with detailed information regarding an offender's experience while incarcerated, beyond a cursory report or case file notes. A number of important questions may remain unanswered: Did the offender have visitors while incarcerated? If so, how might those visits trigger certain concerns around community supervision? Did the juvenile offender's parent(s) participate in family interventions prior to the juvenile's release? If the offender is incarcerated on a domestic violence charge, did the victim—or potential new or additional victims—have acrimonious visits with the offender? Did the offender participate meaningfully in treatment or life skills programs (e.g., did the offender sign up and attend faithfully)? Should treatment be continued in the community to capitalize on progress made? Without this kind of knowledge, community supervision officers lack the essential information about an offender's background and institutional history to monitor, supervise, and refer offenders to appropriate treatment and successfully transition them into the community.

In order to facilitate collaboration between these correctional functions, the leaders of institutional corrections and community supervision agencies must institutionalize policy and practice that promotes intra-agency information sharing. They must also promote case staffings and organize all staff around the collective goal of reducing recidivism and enhancing community safety. Just as no one agency can solve the problems associated with reentry, no one staff member has the full picture of any offender. Each is charged with a different aspect of working with offenders (e.g., supervision or security, overseeing a work assignment, or conducting case management) and each has some critical pieces of information and insight essential to the overarching goal of offender success.

Conclusion

Despite the best collaborative efforts of outside stakeholders, a successful offender reentry strategy has little hope of succeeding without strong collaboration between institutional corrections and community supervision agencies. Although many corrections agencies consider internal collaboration to be occurring effortlessly and on an ongoing basis, employees working within institutions may see their responsibility as custody and control, having little if anything to do with preparing offenders for return to the community. Likewise, community supervision staff members may consider their jobs as unrelated to the confinement of the offender. Effective offender reentry efforts will require institutional corrections and community supervision agencies to consider themselves as two parts that form a whole in the important work of offender management.

KEY STEPS

- **Assess the state of current collaboration between institutional corrections and community supervision staff, including investigating policies and procedures that may impede collaborative efforts.**
- **Form teams at the policymaking level to promote collaboration between institutional corrections and community supervision agencies and to create a collaborative strategic plan.**
- **Form teams at the case management level to facilitate collaboration among institutional corrections and community supervision staff, and to assure the more effective management of offenders as they transition to the community.**
- **Devote at least as much time and resources to enhancing internal collaboration as is devoted to building**

CHAPTER 3: MULTIDISCIPLINARY COLLABORATION

External collaboration with multidisciplinary stakeholders is also important to successful offender reentry. As stated in the introduction to this chapter, significant and sometimes overwhelming problems confront offenders returning to their communities. Basic necessities such as housing, employment, and sustenance may be difficult to obtain. Additional problems may plague their efforts to reintegrate into society: the availability of treatment (e.g., substance, mental health), access to education, family dysfunction, and the lack of pro-social networks. These are complicated problems, requiring complex solutions, and no single agency, organization, or community service provider can provide adequately for all of these.

Institutional corrections and community supervision agencies must work with a multitude of stakeholders to resolve these difficult challenges and provide opportunities for offenders to be successful.

Striving Toward a Common Vision

Obviously, external stakeholders such as community-based treatment or service providers are likely to have a different focus or vision than institutional corrections and community supervision agencies. Their ultimate goal might be defined as providing the best quality care or services to individuals in need, rather than being defined as reducing recidivism or improving public safety. However, the vision of community-based stakeholders is, in all likelihood, compatible with corrections' public safety goals, as successful offender outcomes ultimately translate into community safety and wellness. Recognizing this and moving toward a shared vision across agencies and disciplines is key to forming collaborative external partnerships that will help overcome common barriers to successful offender reentry.

> Through a shared vision, key stakeholders are able to find common ground that can serve as a catalyst for promoting offender success and ensuring public safety: each stakeholder begins to recognize their unique role, and the cumulative energy and effort becomes powerful.
>
> *- CEPP, 2007*

Two Levels of Multiagency Collaboration

Just as with collaboration between institutional corrections and community supervision agencies, there are two levels of collaboration that are necessary to offender reentry efforts for external collaboratives:

- *Policymaking Level.* Collaboration is critical at the State, regional, or local level and should involve individuals that have policymaking or decision making ability for their respective agencies. This level of collaboration would include the directors or deputy directors or other key leadership of stakeholder agencies. Individuals that have policy and decision making authority can open access to new resources or services previously unavailable to offenders returning from confinement, promote joint efforts in public and policymaking discussions, and assure access to line staff so that they are able to serve as members of case management teams.

- *Case Management Level.* The other type of collaboration is at the case management level, involving individuals who provide direct services to offenders and their families. These individuals can assist with additional information/perspectives on offender needs, the development of appropriate intervention strategies, access to services and supports to

supplement those available within institutional corrections and community supervision agencies, and support of ongoing monitoring and follow up activities. Case management plans that are developed with input from all of the key individuals involved in the management of the case will be broader and more comprehensive and provide for greater coordination and continuity in care.

Policy Level Collaboration
(Typical structural relationship)

Tier 1
Statewide Multidisciplinary
Policymaking Team

Tier II
Statewide Multidisciplinary
Implementation Team

Institutional and
Community Corrections
Steering Committee

Other Multidisciplinary
Action-Oriented
Subcommittees

Case Management Level Collaboration
(Case management collaboration occurs in a variety of settings)

Institutional Corrections/Community Supervision

Institutionally-Based
Case Management
Teams

Institutionally- and
Community-Based
Case Management Teams

Community-Based
Case Management
Teams

External Collaboration

Institutional corrections and community supervision agencies must partner with other public sector agencies, community-based service and treatment agencies, faith and community-based organizations, members of the public, and others, including employers and educational/vocational institutions, victim advocates, and housing authorities, in an effort to bring all necessary community input and resources to bear on the issue of offender reentry.

As indicated above, multidisciplinary partnerships must be organized at both the policymaking and case management level. Often the policymaking team will take the form of a statewide policy team on reentry, established or supported by the governor or legislature, consisting of cabinet level officials from the State's various institutional corrections and community supervision, justice, and public sector agencies, and community partners. Members of such a policy team would include representatives from agencies responsible for education, social services, healthcare, mental health, workforce, and housing, to name just a few. A policy team such as this will consider and make decisions on statewide reentry efforts and may influence funding or provide oversight for reentry initiatives. The policy team may consider and put into place policies and practices to encourage and facilitate collaboration at the case management level.

Staff members who work directly with adult or juvenile offenders are more likely to be involved in more localized, case management level collaboratives. The purpose of these collaboratives is not to create or implement policy (although the efforts of these teams will likely inform and influence policy). Rather, it is to bring together those individuals and agencies that can enhance the likelihood of a seamless transition from the institution to the community for the offender, and offer support by providing the resources and opportunities needed to prevent reoffense (e.g., education, housing,

workforce, health, and treatment). Each member of the collaborative will bring a unique perspective and unique solutions to problems associated with offender transition and reentry. A workforce development representative, for example, might be able to support a job placement. An individual who represents the educational system can be helpful for addressing barriers to a juvenile's return to a public school or may have important information about alternative educational settings. A housing representative might offer creative solutions to finding a place for the offender to live. Members of community boards or victim advocate groups might offer guidance about how best to notify the community that a violent offender is returning in a way that promotes information sharing and support rather than inciting fear and hostility.

Who Are the External Stakeholders that Should Be Involved?

As has been suggested throughout this handbook, adult and juvenile offenders encounter a variety of challenges in their efforts to resume their lives productively in the community. It is common for returning offenders to face barriers, including limited affordable or available housing, problems with securing or maintaining employment or education, the presence of physical or mental health problems, financial instability, family problems, and outcry from the public about their presence in the community. Clearly, no single agency can address all these issues alone. In an effort to overcome these problems, and support offenders as they transition in an effort to prevent reoffense, a combination of traditional and non-traditional partnerships is essential.

In addition to the involvement of the criminal justice system and other public sector agencies that in some capacity serve the offender population (such as labor, housing, education, transportation, health, et cetera), community, service, and faith-based providers should also be active participants in the collaboration in order

for it to effectively address the complex social, behavioral, and health issues that are linked inextricably to offender success. Community-based partners will undoubtedly bring different resources to the resolution of offender behavioral issues, as well as a wealth of knowledge about the community (CEPP, 2005c).

Those stakeholders who should be involved in policymaking and case management level reentry collaboratives include individuals and agencies who:

- Have a vested interest in community safety.
- Are directly or indirectly responsible for sex offender management.
- Work closely with or advocate for victims.
- Can provide mentoring or positive social supports.
- Offer educational and vocational services.

- Can promote access to appropriate and affordable housing.
- Deliver healthcare services.
- Provide mental health services.
- Have the ability to facilitate access to employment.
- Can provide support and assistance to children and families of offenders.

Specifically, these stakeholders might include:

For juvenile offenders:
- Juvenile and family courts
- Juvenile institutional corrections and community supervision or youth services agencies
- Social services agencies
- Child welfare and family services agencies
- Victim advocates
- Education partners

Executive Order to Form a Committee on Prisoner Reentry In Rhode Island

In 2004, Rhode Island Governor Donald Carcieri established a committee to create a systematic, statewide approach to increasing public safety through more effective offender reentry. The executive order explicates that since recidivism rates top over 50 percent in the state and that "all offenders, with the exception of 21 men serving life without parole, will eventually return to the community," additional steps are necessary to ensure public safety. Executive Order 04-02 (State of Rhode Island, 2004) states:

I, Donald L. Carcieri, by virtue of the power vested in me as Governor of the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations, do hereby order as follows:

1. The Governor's Committee on Prisoner Reentry is hereby established to create a comprehensive plan and systematic approach to promoting reentry strategies for all offenders prior to release from incarceration with continued support from probation, parole, and community-based agencies after release.
2. The Committee on Prisoner Reentry shall:
   a. Provide ongoing coordination at the executive level of reentry initiatives across the state;
   b. Ensure agreement on overall policy direction;
   c. Resolve policies and practices that impede successful reintegration;
   d. Assign senior staff from the departments and offices involved to implement established priorities.
3. The Committee on Prisoner Reentry shall be comprised of at least fifteen members. All members shall be appointed by the Governor, and shall serve at the pleasure of the Governor. The Governor shall select a chairperson.
4. All executive state departments and agencies shall support the efforts and goals of the Committee.

- Employment officials
- Releasing authorities
- Health and behavioral health representatives
- Mentors
- Faith and community-based partners

For adult offenders:
- Criminal courts
- Adult institutional corrections
- Community supervision agencies
- Paroling authorities
- Victim advocates
- Mental health agencies
- Public health departments and other healthcare agencies
- Veterans' affairs officials
- Housing authorities
- Employment agencies
- Social services agencies
- Faith and community-based partners

Representation by offenders, ex-offenders, or offender rights organizations can also be appropriate and may impact the effectiveness of a collaborative team because of the unique perspectives they are able to offer.

Policymaking Collaboratives

At the policymaking level, two tiers of teams are often established: one that will function as the decision making body on reentry policy issues, and one that will serve to implement those decisions. Case management teams are localized in nature, involving individuals generally responsible for providing direct services to offenders. These teams are all multidisciplinary in nature, involving justice system, public sector, and community service agencies in addition to institutional corrections and community supervision agencies.

Policymaking Teams: Tier I

Policymaking teams often take two forms: a decision making body authorized to review and set policy for the state on reentry issues (Tier I), and a Tier II team charged with implementing the decisions of the decision making body.

The Tier I team often is established by executive order of the governor; likewise, members, generally cabinet level executives, are appointed by the governor to serve on the team. In some states the governor or his/her representative will chair the team; in other states, corrections

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Rhode Island: Tier I

In Rhode Island, the Governor's Office and Cabinet form the Tier I reentry group. Part of the group's mission is to ensure that the State implements a collaborative policymaking effort to achieve the vision of effective offender reentry. The group's mission reads:

- Define the State's vision for prisoner reentry;
- Communicate the State's vision for and commitment to prisoner reentry to agency staff and, as appropriate, to those outside of state government;
- Specifically articulate the role each agency in state government does and should play in supporting effective reentry efforts;
- Establish processes to assess the extent to which effective reentry policies and practices are in place;
- Assure communication among agency staff and agency leadership regarding policies and practices currently in place;
- Resolve challenges that arise as a result of coordinating activities among agencies;
- Agree on policy changes that are essential to the achievement of the vision;
- Secure and make effective use of resources, to the extent that additional resources are needed;
- Oversee the implementation of agreed upon policy changes; and
- Monitor change strategies to determine if they are producing the desired results.

> ### *Rhode Island: Tier II*
>
> In Rhode Island, the Governor's Office and Cabinet has established a group of policy level representatives to form a Tier II group responsible for defining change strategies and overseeing their implementation. Specifically, this group has developed five broad goals (with additional objectives within each goal) to organize their offender reentry efforts in the state. These include:
>
> - Implementing a comprehensive offender assessment strategy, including an empirically based offender assessment tool, and a process for designing a single, dynamic case management plan for every offender.
> - Assuring that the interventions available to offenders within the institutions, as well as those provided in the community, meet the criminogenic needs of the offender population, and that offenders are appropriately matched to the needed interventions.
> - Establishing proactive release planning that begins at intake and addresses barriers to reentry.
> - Ensuring that offender supervision policies and practices support successful offender reentry.
> - Developing a unified data and information sharing process.

directors will assume that role. Although, given their critical role in offender reentry, institutional corrections and community supervision agencies play a key role in such policy teams, it is not uncommon for leadership to be situated in the office of the governor.

Tier I members generally include those individuals with decision making authority for their agencies. Tier I team members generally include directors (or equivalent positions) of all of the state's justice system and public sector agencies, such as corrections, workforce/labor, housing, welfare, mental health, economic development, education, public safety, transportation and social services. Community partners are also typically represented. Such partners might include victim advocacy organizations, community groups, faith and community-based organizations and treatment providers. Any statewide agency or organization that can either aid offenders in their successful transition to the community or pose barriers to their successful reintegration should be considered for inclusion on the team. The input and unique lens through which this diverse group of individuals sees the issue of reentry will

help to identify challenges as well as creative solutions to those challenges.

The Tier I team may meet frequently or, as is more likely given the other demands upon the members, only several times each year. Like all collaborative teams, Tier I teams will need to meet more frequently in the beginning to develop a team vision and mission and to determine how the team will do business together.

Policymaking Teams: Tier II

The Tier II team is generally responsible for implementing the decisions of the Tier I team. If the Tier I team is charged with deciding what will happen, the Tier II team is responsible for determining how it will happen. Tier II teams are generally responsible for crafting and implementing strategies for achieving the goals set by the Tier I team.

This team is generally staffed by executives empowered to make changes within their agencies. Membership on the Tier II team will mirror that of Tier I in significant ways, in that the set of agencies and community partners will generally be the same. (The Tier II team may not

A Department Reentry Steering Committee, consisting of representatives from each division in the Department, was appointed to evaluate and coordinate the Department's reentry efforts. Ultimately, the committee identified key targets for change, developed charters with targeted areas of emphasis within the Department, and formed cross divisional teams to address the targeted areas. These include:

- Creating an inmate unified case plan: The unified case plan will be used by staff in both the Division of Community Corrections and Adult Institutions.
- Creating a standardized prerelease program: The program includes a module for transitional preparation which makes communication between Community Corrections and Adult Institutions mandatory.
- Enhancing continuity of services for offenders with alcohol and other drug abuse issues: Addressing the continuum from prison to the community that builds on treatment/relapse prevention that does not duplicate resources and targets needs.
- Establishing employment readiness and placement: Connecting what education is being provided to offenders in institutions to the current community labor market.
- Encouraging mentors and enhancing community support networks.
- Addressing the needs of our special populations, such as female offenders and the mentally ill: Enhanced reentry case planning between the institutions and the field.
- Enhancing staff development and training opportunities: A pilot for field/institution practicum is targeted for rollout in July 2007. The practicum will increase awareness of job duties of counterparts in the field and within institutions, which will increase communication between divisions.

- Matthew Frank, Former Secretary, Wisconsin Department of Corrections

replicate the membership of Tier I completely, given the different purposes of the teams. In both cases, membership should be limited to those individuals who can contribute meaningfully to the team's purpose.)

To accomplish their goals effectively, the Tier II team typically meets more frequently, generally at least monthly, to review progress and make decisions on the implementation process. The Tier II team may have subcommittees of its own, charged with gathering information, crafting recommendations, and performing implementation tasks. The work of these subcommittees will feed into the work of the Tier II team, just as the work of the Tier II team will contribute to and enhance the performance of the Tier I team.

Case Management Teams

As indicated above, case management collaboratives will be localized in nature, and will have the purpose of bringing together individuals providing direct services to offenders and their families in order to enhance an individual offender's opportunities for success. The team will meet on a case-by-case basis to develop appropriate intervention strategies and provide access to services and resources to supplement those available within institutional corrections and community supervision agencies. As part of the case management plan, the team will develop ongoing monitoring and follow up activities and, as a team, share responsibility for making efforts to enhance the successful transition of the offender. As with the policymaking teams, individuals from any agency that can either support offenders in successfully transitioning to

Michigan: Multi-Layered Collaborations

Michigan provides an excellent example of multi-layered, collaborative partnerships working to increase offender success. Each pilot site of the Michigan Prisoner Reentry Initiative (MPRI) (2007) has a Local ReEntry Advisory Council made up of key stakeholders in the community who work to educate the community and build support for the effort and a Steering Team led by the Warden of the community's releasing facility, a representative from the local field operations office, and two representatives from faith-based, human service, or planning community organizations. This Steering Team is mandated by the Governor to include active representatives from all the service agencies necessary for effective prisoner reentry, including employment, vocational training and education, housing, healthcare, mental health, alcohol and drug abuse services, family and child welfare, community-based and faith-based organizations, victim advocates, and ex-offenders.

The Steering Team then appoints service providers to a Transition Team. The Transition Team works with the incarcerated offender, institutional staff, and parole agents (who are provided an office within the institution) to develop a Transition Accountability Plan (TAP) to ensure that the transition of the offender from prison to the community is seamless. These collaborating partners work together and share information to create and update the TAP, which serves as a case management and supervision plan for the offender while incarcerated, preparing for release, and under supervision in the community.

Wisconsin: Collaboration at the Local Level

The Great Lakes Inter-Tribal Council collaborates with the Wisconsin Division of Juvenile Corrections (DJC) (2006) to assist Native American youth as they transition back into the community. A representative of the Council meets with youth during their stay in the institution and serves as a liaison with the community. He provides them with information about their heritage and traditions, and provides skill-building opportunities specific to each child's needs. Upon release from the institution, the representative will escort the youth back into the community to try to reconnect him with his tribe.

the community or pose barriers to success should be included on the team. Memorandums of Understanding that delineate clearly the responsibilities of each partner to the collaborative may be useful in the early stages of collaboration. Such documents formalize the commitment of team members and can assist all team members in understanding not only their role in the process but also the role of other team members.

The case management process, including the composition of effective case management teams, is covered in the *TPC Case Management Handbook*, produced under the Transition from Prison to Community (TPC) initiative sponsored by the National Institute of Corrections.

Conclusion

Effective reentry strategies require those best equipped to assist offenders in becoming successful within the community (in authority, knowledge, or resources) to come together to craft solutions to the complex challenges facing offenders. In order to do this, institutional corrections and community supervision agencies must engage in multidisciplinary collaboratives with external partners who bring those elements to the table.

Collaborating with key external stakeholders will help to ensure that all parties who affect or are affected by offender reentry have a voice in resolving common barriers to transition and can offer unique and effective suggestions about how to resolve common problems. Working as a collaborative unit will enable the team to make the most of limited resources and devise complementary reentry policies and practices that will support the successful transition of offenders back into the community, in an effort to enhance public safety. Key stakeholders include public sector agencies, faith- and community-based service and treatment agencies, members of the public, and others, including employers and educational/vocational representatives, victim advocates, and housing authorities. These stakeholders bring important and necessary perspectives and resources to bear on the issue of offender reentry.

Collaboration can be difficult and can require a substantial investment of time on the part of all agencies involved. However, the payoff is likely to be significant. While it will undoubtedly require an initial investment of time and energy to identify, bring, and keep all key stakeholders at the table, the distribution of responsibilities and discretion that is shared across all agencies involved in offender reentry makes collaboration necessary (McGarry & Ney, 2006). As already noted, no one agency can solve the many challenges associated with offender reentry. In order to reach the collective goal of safer communities through successful offender reentry, agencies must be willing to share information and resources (e.g., through implementing memoranda of understanding), set aside individual agency agendas in consideration of the needs of the larger group, and make a top priority of actively participating in the collaborative for as long as it takes to work toward attainment of the desired goals.

KEY STEPS

- **Promote the establishment of multidisciplinary teams that operate at both a policymaking and case management level.**
- **Identify and bring together key external policymaking stakeholders to the offender reentry process. These include corrections, workforce/labor, housing, welfare, mental health, economic development, education, public safety, transportation, social services, and other community and faith-based service providers.**
- **Create multiple layers of multidisciplinary collaborative teams to address policy issues related to offender reentry (Tier I), implement offender reentry strategies across agencies (Tier II), craft and oversee the implementation of the agency's strategic plan (steering committee), and address the needs of individual offenders in crafting interventions strategies (case management teams).**
- **When appropriate, develop Memorandums of Understanding that delineate clearly the responsibilities of each partner to the collaborative.**

CHAPTER 4: HOW TO COLLABORATE

The simple willingness to collaborate is an important element for any collaborative team. The process of collaboration, however, is one that requires a specific set of skills and tools in order to be successful. This chapter provides a brief overview of the important steps in creating a collaborative and the characteristics of an effective team.

Developing a Shared Vision for the Team's Work

In Section Three, the need to develop a vision for offender reentry for the institutional corrections and community supervision agencies was discussed. The purpose of developing an agency vision is to provide direction for the efforts of the agency and an understanding of the preferred future toward which the agency is striving. The vision articulates the values and beliefs of the agency and serves both to motivate and inform. During the rational planning process (covered in Section Four), the agency's vision for reentry drives the work of the steering committee as it seeks to develop and implement a strategic plan for offender reentry.

For many of the same reasons, a shared vision is necessary for any collaborative team to be successful. Teams must be clear from the onset about what they want to accomplish and how they will work together to achieve it. Although this may seem like a natural first step in the collaborative process, many teams rush to action without first thinking about what they collectively want the ultimate result of their work to be.

Initially, team members may not consider a vision statement to be necessary. Not yet understanding the nature of collaboration and that the team must be striving to accomplish together something they cannot accomplish individually, they may believe that other vision statements crafted outside the collaborative efforts of the team are adequate to guide the team's work. In short, they do not yet understand how the whole can be more than the sum of its parts.

The team should work together to establish a vision statement (or a statement about the preferred future) as one of their first tasks. To establish this vision, teams will need to engage in a process that takes into account the diverse opinions and backgrounds of all the participating individuals, divisions, and/or agencies, and come to consensus on an overarching goal that will drive the team's work. Common vision statements for reentry-focused teams include "Reducing recidivism through seamless and effective reentry practices," or "Enhancing community safety by effectively transitioning offenders to the community."

> Department of Correction staff and Parole Reentry Officers conducted a series of cross-trainings. (Line officers who have talked on the phone for years met face to face!) DOC staff took a field trip to the Parole regional offices and were provided an orientation to field operations. Parole staff were hosted at the institutions to attend triage meetings (case conferences). This was all in service of developing a shared vision of our work.
>
> *- Maureen Walsh, Chairman, Massachusetts Parole Board*

Team members should refer to and reflect upon their vision as they embark on their work together. The vision statement serves as an important anchor for team members as they become involved in the day-to-day and often complex work of implementing changes that will move them in the direction of achieving their vision.[8]

Crafting a Mission Statement

After the team has developed a vision statement for its work, it must also develop a mission statement that clearly delineates the action it will take in service of the vision. An effective mission

statement will lay out the work the collaborative will do in order to work toward progress on the vision. The mission statement should define specifically what the work group's focus will be, and should be measurable, with performance outcomes and deadlines for accomplishment. The mission statement will provide the framework for the work of the team, and goals and objectives (specific action steps to be accomplished in furtherance of the mission) will be developed based on the mission statement.

Characteristics of Effective Teams

Substantial research from disciplines outside of the criminal justice field has shed light on why some teams are successful and others are not. Teams who are just starting out should consider the elements that make teams effective and work to incorporate these elements into their collaborative efforts.

There are eight characteristics that are common among teams that become successful collaboratives. Those characteristics include (Larson & LaFasto, 1989):

- *A clear and elevating goal (or vision)*. High-performing teams have both a clear understanding of the goal to be achieved and a belief that the goal embodies a worthwhile or important result; teams with a clear and elevating goal understand that whether the team succeeds clearly makes a difference. For reentry collaboratives, the vision of enhancing community safety through the successful transition of offenders to the community is a centerpiece of the team's efforts.

- *Results-driven structure*. A team's structure should be designed around the results to be achieved. Teams should have clear roles and accountabilities (e.g., team members know their role on the team and what is expected of them), have an effective communication system (e.g., important decisions and findings are documented, issues are discussed in an open environment), have a method to monitor the team's performance and provide

feedback (to ensure that expectations of all team members are being met), and use fact-based judgments (e.g., objective, factual data form the basis for the team's decision making).

- *Competent team members*. In this context, competency refers not only to the necessary skills and abilities needed to do the work, but also the personal characteristics required to achieve excellence while working well with others. Three common features of competent team members are the essential skills and abilities to conduct the work, a strong desire to contribute, and the capacity to collaborate effectively.

- *Unified commitment*. Unified commitment is best characterized by team spirit, or a sense of loyalty and dedication to the team. It is often exhibited by a sense of excitement and enthusiasm for the team and its work, a willingness to do anything that has to be done to help the team succeed, and an intense identification with the people who are on the team.

- *Collaborative climate*. A collaborative climate is most commonly described in the adage, "The whole is greater than the sum of its parts." Teams operating in a truly collaborative climate work well together, and trust is a mainstay virtue. Trust is bred by honesty (i.e., integrity and truthfulness), consistency (i.e., predictable behavior and responses), and respect (i.e., treating people with dignity and fairness).

- *Standards of excellence*. Standards define those expectations that eventually determine the level of performance a team deems acceptable. Three variables are integral to establishing and sustaining standards of excellence: the extent to which the team's standards are clearly and concretely articulated, the ability of team members to meet those standards, and the team's ability to exert pressure on itself to improve.

- *External support and recognition*. External support and recognition is measured by the extent to which those individuals and agencies outside the team who are capable of contributing to the team's success acknowledge and support the work of the team.

- *Principled leadership*. Leadership is necessary to any collaborative endeavor. Ideally, collaborative teams have more than their fair share of leaders, individuals who demonstrate leadership qualities such as vision, have the willingness to ask "what" and "why" and challenge the status quo, and who stay clearly focused on the team's destination. Effective leaders keep the team results-oriented and focused on their vision. They inspire enthusiasm and encourage action. All of these qualities are important to the work of the collaborative team, to effectuate change.

> Effective leaders establish a vision of the future, enlist others to embrace the vision, create change, and unleash the energy and talent of contributing members.
>
> *- CEPP, 2005b*

Assessing the State of Collaboration

Teams may have worked together on other issues in the past and, as a result, may have a history of working well together. Conversely, they may have faced challenges to their efforts to collaborate effectively in their prior work groups. As a result, one of the first steps of the team should be to assess the state of the collaborative team from the onset. One measure of the team's ability to collaborate is the *Collaboration Survey* (http://www.collaborativejustice.org/assess/survey.htm), a multi-question scoring instrument designed to assess how well teams are truly collaborating. Administering this survey at the beginning of the team's work and then on a periodic basis thereafter will help to ensure that the team is working well together over time.

> The most important single ingredient in the formula of success is knowing how to get along with people.
>
> *- Theodore Roosevelt*

Supporting the Team and the Process

No matter what issue a team undertakes, staff support will be key to its success. Reentry teams will require support in terms of coordination across multiple agencies, as well as data collection and analysis, strategic planning, implementation of change strategies, and monitoring and evaluation. Teams will need to designate members of the team, or in some cases hire a staff member or multiple individuals, to function as the team's staff.

In order to operate effectively, teams should ensure that the following roles are filled:

- A chair (often the team's substantive leader), someone who is well respected by all members of the team, has the capacity to obtain buy-in from the leadership of all relevant agencies and stakeholders, and is able to affect change. (This role should be filled by a stakeholder from one of the participating agencies, e.g., a key individual in the governor's office, the corrections director, et cetera.)

- A facilitator (ideally an objective person who is not a member of the team and therefore has no stake in outcomes of the team's decisions) who can guide the work of the team

- An administrative staff person who is responsible for organizing meetings, developing meeting records, and communicating with all members of the team about meeting dates, work assignments, and deadlines. (This role might be filled by a volunteer from a participating agency.)

These three parties should work together on an ongoing basis to (adapted from Gilligan & Carter, 2006):

• *Establish a system of communication, including setting an appropriate meeting schedule.* Ensuring that the team has a way to communicate and exchange information is crucial. Regular team meetings are a common method of ongoing communication. Facilitators should help the group to decide on a regular meeting schedule and attend to the details of when and where the meetings will be held, how long the meetings will be, and who is expected to attend.

• *Guide the team through the establishment of ground rules.* Very early in the group process, members should have a discussion about their ground rules, which should establish team members' expectations for their conduct with one another.

• *Define meeting goals and the products that will be produced.* Each meeting should be convened with a specific set of goals in mind and should result in one or more products.

• *Develop meeting agendas that will direct the team's work.* Detailed agendas should indicate the tasks to be accomplished; the fulfillment of these should result in the achievement of the meeting's goals and the production of the desired work product(s).

• *Guide the team's discussions during meetings.* The team's facilitator should guide the group's discussions in such a way as to ensure that all members have a voice and have an opportunity to contribute equally.

• *Summarize key points.* Summarizing facilitates a progressive discussion by demonstrating that members have been heard.

• *Note key points and decisions throughout each meeting.* Documenting a meeting's discussions, typically through the use of a flip chart, facilitates progressive dialogues by noting on paper key points and decisions.

• *Determine the team's mode of decision making.* Teams will need to surface critical issues for discussion and come to a resolution of how decisions will be made (e.g., by consensus or majority rule).

• *Identify methods for team members to educate one another about their individual roles and responsibilities.* Reentry teams are composed of individuals who represent a variety of interests, whether they are from the same agency or many. While members typically appreciate the diversity of their colleagues' points of view, they often do not have sufficient background knowledge to appreciate them fully.

• *Surface the values individual members bring to the team process and find common ground among these.* Individual values can be critically important when it comes to making decisions. For this reason, teams should set aside time to air their personal values and then agree upon a set of core values they will use to guide their work together. Doing so will assure that the decisions made are based upon the group's agreed upon values rather than each individual's personal values.

• *Clarify each individual's roles and responsibilities on the team, and clearly articulate the expectations of team members.* Teams should work to articulate the roles and responsibilities of each team member so that each member knows what is expected of him or her.

• *Establish a work plan that includes specific goals and objectives designed to assure the success of the team in achieving its mission.* The identification of specific goals and objectives will serve as the team's road map to achieving its mission. Teams should develop a specific work plan complete with individual assignments and deadlines and

routinely review and update the plan to ensure that work is progressing.

- *Hold team members accountable for their work*. For a collaborative effort to succeed, each individual must commit to do his or her part. Once this is done, the group's norm should be to hold one another accountable to these commitments.

Achieving all of these tasks will not be easy, but is likely to yield significant dividends. The more disciplines and agencies that are involved in examining the hurdles associated with reentry and crafting possible solutions, the more likely the chance that the team will succeed in achieving its vision.

> A shared commitment to realize specified goals and outcomes forms the basis for collaboration; those goals and outcomes are the criteria by which to judge a team's effectiveness, make decisions on change initiatives and the use of resources, and choose among competing problems and solutions.
>
> *- McGarry & Ney, 2006*

Conclusion

Although the process of collaboration can prove difficult, given the many and sometimes conflicting interests of those coming together to address offender reentry, research has provided important tools to assist in the functioning of effective collaborative teams. These tools can be applied across different types of collaborative teams, regardless of their purpose. Whether collaborative teams are formed within institutional corrections and community supervision agencies, or between those agencies and other external stakeholders, it is important that the research on effective teams be applied in the establishment and management of these teams. Attention to process as well as substance is essential to a successful collaborative.

KEY STEPS

- **Develop vision and mission statements for each collaborative, to focus and guide the work of the team.**
- **Identify staff support for the team.**
- **When possible, make use of an outside facilitator to assist the group in its process.**
- **Use the Collaboration Survey or other assessment tool to determine the team's effectiveness.**
- **Value process as much as substance in collaborative efforts.**

Assess Your Agency: Collaboration			
	Yes	**No**	**Not Clear**
1. Has a State-level, multidisciplinary policy team been established to collaboratively direct a comprehensive effort to improve offender management and reentry policies and practices?			
2. Are the leaders of State agencies that are responsible for, or contribute to, offender management and reentry committed to working together on this issue?			
3. Have individual stakeholders identified the ways in which their agencies can contribute to effective offender management and reentry?			
4. Do stakeholders demonstrate equal ownership and investment in offender reentry?			
5. Does the team include individuals, agencies, and organizations from the State that: • Are directly or indirectly responsible for offender management? • Work closely with, or advocate for, victims? • Provide mentoring or positive supports for offenders? • Offer educational and vocational services to offenders? • Promote access to appropriate and affordable housing for offenders? • Provide mental health services to offenders? • Facilitate access to employment opportunities for offenders? • Provide support and assistance to children and families of formerly incarcerated individuals?			
6. Are the efforts of the team defined through a clearly articulated vision, a clear mission, and specific goals regarding offender management and reentry in the State?			
7. Has leadership, facilitation, and staff support been dedicated to the State-level multidisciplinary team?			
8. At the case management level, do staff members collaborate with one another to facilitate successful offender reentry (e.g., do institutionally-based staff collaborate with one another; do institutional and community-based staff work together to ensure a smooth transition and continuity of care; does community supervision work closely with service providers and others to assure effective case management)?			

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Organizational Change/Leadership

Rational Planning Process

Collaboration

Effective Offender Management

Key Strategies in Effective Offender Management

Kurt M. Bumby

INTRODUCTION

Attempting to ensure that adult and juvenile offenders will exit correctional institutions and reenter communities as crime-free, responsible, and contributing members of society can be a daunting endeavor. The steady rise in prison admissions and releases, in and of itself, poses a significant challenge to facilitating successful reentry. Factoring in influences such as negative public sentiment, political exigencies, and increased scrutiny by policymakers only exacerbates the complexity of these efforts. Complicating matters even further are the remnants of the "nothing works" era in corrections that began in the late 1970s and lasted for roughly two decades (see, e.g., Andrews & Bonta, 2007; Burke & Tonry, 2006; Petersilia, 2003). Largely a function of a reported lack of evidence to support their effectiveness, rehabilitative ideals were replaced with an emphasis on incapacitation, deterrence, proportionality, and punishment as the primary means of crime control and community protection. Certainly, these are important aspects of the correctional system, but they are not sufficient for reducing recidivism and increasing public safety.

Recent trends continue to show an increase in the number of released offenders who are subsequently reincarcerated within short periods of time (Harrison & Beck, 2006). As a result, today's institutional corrections and community supervision agencies are faced with the question of how to stop the revolving door phenomenon while maintaining community safety. Correctional policymakers and practitioners undoubtedly want to do the right thing, but good intentions do not always translate into correctional policies and offender management practices that will be effective. Unfortunately, the range of strategies that sound right, look right, or feel right may not actually be right. Therefore, to help guide corrections agencies toward what is right for reducing recidivism and increasing public safety, this section provides an overview of the research-supported principles and practices that can be used to establish a maximally effective system of offender management.

Chapter 1 offers a working definition of an evidence-based approach, outlines the ways in which correctional research can be evaluated, and highlights a number of benefits of an evidence-based approach. Building upon the core evidence-based principles of effective correctional intervention, Chapter 2 emphasizes the key role that assessment plays in facilitating efficient and effective case management decisions throughout the institutional correctional and community supervision systems, from the point of intake, throughout the course of incarceration, and following release to the community. Chapter 3 provides an overview of the correctional programs, services, and interventions for adult and juvenile offenders that research demonstrates are effective in reducing recidivism and promoting positive offender outcomes. Also addressed are the multiple elements that are essential for ensuring program implementation and integrity, without which correctional programs and services will be ineffective.

Research-supported and promising strategies for post-release supervision are presented in Chapter 4, with an emphasis on the value and effectiveness of a balanced approach to supervising adult and juvenile offenders in the community. Chapter 5 clarifies that effective offender management strategies are not solely about assessment processes, specific programs and services, or supervision practices. Rather, evidence-based practice in corrections is also a function of the nature of the relationships and interactions between corrections practitioners and staff, all of whom can be powerful agents of change. Finally, Chapter 6 synthesizes the evidence-based strategies highlighted throughout this section into the overarching process and illustration of case management in corrections. Taken together, these chapters demonstrate that, when structured within a broader reentry framework, effective offender management strategies play a significant role in promoting public safety through successful offender reentry.

CHAPTER 1: AN EVIDENCE-BASED APPROACH TO REENTRY

Introduction

When the safety of communities is at hand, no one would dispute the inadvisability of decision making guided primarily by instinct, reaction, or trial and error. Indeed, many institutional corrections and community supervision agency officials nationwide recognize the need for a well-informed reentry strategy that will help them attain the overarching goal of public safety. Fortunately, they have the benefit of years of empirical evidence that illustrates the specific interventions and strategies that are effective for reducing recidivism among adult and juvenile offenders. As such, the movement toward evidence-based correctional practice has become increasingly popular.

What an Evidence-Based Approach Means and Achieves

For corrections officials and other key policymakers, the concept of an evidence-based approach is alluring, as it provides guidance about what works and alleviates concerns about whether the decision to modify specific adult and juvenile offender management strategies will be worth the investment. In addition to crime reduction, it carries with it the promise of cost effectiveness and better resource utilization. However, it has become a cliché in some ways. Sometimes, an evidence-based approach is endorsed by agencies without a full appreciation of the implications at the policy level, what implementation requires at the practice level, or even what an evidence-based approach truly is.

Becoming evidence-based is not simply about issuing an executive order or instituting a revised series of policies. Nor is it solely about establishing a new cluster of programs and services. Rather, it is a shared philosophy and approach that permeates the correctional system. As emphasized in the preceding sections, it is a commitment to a new way of

doing business. For the purposes of this handbook, the following working definition was developed to describe what is meant by an evidence-based approach:

> The objective, balanced, and responsible use of current scientific evidence to guide correctional strategies in a manner that will facilitate the most effective outcomes.

Just as numerous other disciplines and agencies (e.g., medical, mental health, education, child welfare) have come to rely on research to inform their efforts and enhance their effectiveness, adult and juvenile corrections agencies can also draw upon empirical evidence to improve results. Indeed, a considerable body of contemporary research exists already and is instructive not only with respect to what works in corrections, but also what does not work (see, e.g., Andrews & Bonta, 2007; Aos, Miller, & Drake, 2006; Aos, Phipps, Barnoski, & Lieb, 2001; MacKenzie, 2006). Taking full advantage of this literature can result in the following:

- *Evidence-Based Policies*. Legislators and other policymakers develop well-informed criminal and juvenile justice provisions and overarching agency standards grounded in research about what is most effective and what is not effective for enhancing public safety.
- *Evidence-Based Practices*. Corrections practitioners judiciously invest their efforts and resources on methods demonstrated by research to reduce recidivism and promote other successful outcomes, rather than on strategies empirically shown to have either no impact (or an undesirable impact), or which remain yet untested.

The body of correctional literature is ever evolving, and with new research comes the potential for new evidence that either supports or refutes current strategies. Adopting an evidence-based approach thus requires agencies to make an ongoing commitment to adjust policies and practices over time in accordance with the contemporary research.

An Evidence-Based Approach Requires Careful Weighing of the Evidence

Generally speaking, establishing public policy, including that within the criminal justice arena, can be the subject of much controversy. When interested parties with opposing viewpoints debate the issues at hand, it is not uncommon for them to cite examples of research evidence selected to support the merits of their respective positions. Such an approach is clearly not an objective or balanced use of the available research.

Identifying effective correctional interventions and other offender management strategies is not simply a matter of tallying the number of studies that support a specific intervention and comparing it to the count of those studies that failed to support the intervention. All research is not created equal. Variations in the ways in which studies are designed, carried out, and ultimately reported have an impact on the relative weight that should be placed on the findings. While not an exhaustive list, the following are among the most common and useful factors to consider when weighing empirical evidence.

Sample Size

An important first step is to be aware of the number of offenders that were included in a given study, because sample size makes a very real difference. Small samples limit the ability of researchers to generalize the findings, because these offenders are less likely to be representative of the larger offender population. This is because the idiosyncratic characteristics of a small group of offenders can skew the findings in one direction or another. Conversely,

the greater the sample size, the better the chances are for having a sample that more closely resembles offenders in general.

Consider how likely it is that a group of twenty offenders will "look like" the broader offender population, in contrast to a sample of 500 offenders. In addition to the increased potential to be able to generalize the findings and make broader inferences, large sample sizes also offer more statistical power and precision to the research. This means that any observed intervention effects (or lack thereof) are more likely to be real and not simply due to chance. Simply put, large sample sizes result in a greater degree of confidence that research findings are more reliable, meaningful, and applicable. In addition, large sample sizes allow researchers to ask more refined questions about the relationship between specific variables of interest (e.g., age, gender) and the outcomes that are measured.

Comparison Groups

In order to determine whether a specific correctional intervention has a significant impact on outcomes, researchers must be able to compare the offenders who received that intervention to offenders who received no intervention and/or a different intervention. Without comparison groups, neither the researcher nor the consumers of the research have a reference point and, as such, the findings provide little to no guidance with respect to policy and practice decisions. For example, simply reporting a low recidivism rate for a group of juvenile offenders who completed a cognitive skills program does not provide any evidence that the recidivism rate is linked to that specific intervention. To begin making any reasonable inferences about the effectiveness of the cognitive skills program, one would need to know the recidivism rate for juvenile offenders who did not participate in the program.

The existence of a comparison group does not automatically mean that observed differences between the intervention and control groups are

definitely the result of the interventions. Other influences may be operating (e.g., different ages, different risk levels, additional interventions that were provided) and could be confounding the findings. Therefore, reference groups should be matched to the intervention groups based on demographic characteristics, recidivism risk, crime type, and other important variables. This helps to ensure that the groups are as similar to one another as possible. Much like using large sample sizes, using matched comparison groups makes it more likely that any significant differences in outcomes can be attributed to the intervention.

Random Assignment

Even though carefully matching intervention and comparison groups increases the value of the evidence, this is still not the ideal research design. Indeed, the ways in which those groups are identified for inclusion in the first place can distort the findings. It could be that the intervention group was comprised of highly motivated offenders and that the comparison group primarily included resistant offenders, or that the offenders in the intervention group were already at low risk to recidivate, whereas the comparison group primarily included high risk offenders. These important preexisting differences are known as selection biases, which can artificially inflate the findings and lead consumers to make stronger inferences about the impact of the intervention than are actually justified.

The preferred method for attempting to level the playing field is to draw from a single source of potential research subjects and then randomly assign them to the intervention and comparison groups. Because the subsequent groups of offenders came from the same larger group and did not preexist as independent groups, the process of random assignment ideally results in equivalent samples that are not systematically different across key variables. Random assignment cannot guarantee that this will always be the case, however. As such, researchers must still compare the intervention and comparison groups to ensure their equivalence and statistically control for any differences that surfaced despite the random assignment process. Although random assignment is ideal, it is certainly not always feasible within correctional systems. Some offenders who need risk-reducing interventions (e.g., substance abuse treatment, intensive post-release supervision) would not receive them if they were subjects of a study that used a randomized design. That would be incompatible with the broader correctional goal of maximizing public safety and could potentially violate equal protection provisions of the law.

Cross-Site Replication

Ideally, the results of individual studies can be generalized so that corrections agencies throughout the country have the benefit of applying the findings to their own offender management systems. In addition to having a

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Questions to Consider When Evaluating Research Evidence

- Does the research sample include the specific offender population of interest (e.g., adults, juveniles, female offenders)?
- Is the sample size large enough to consider them to be relatively representative of the population of interest?
- Were comparison groups used?
- If comparison groups were used, did the researcher make sure that the intervention and comparison groups were similar or matched?
- Were offenders randomly assigned to intervention and comparison groups?
- If confounding variables existed, did the analysis control for those factors?
- Have these findings been replicated in other locations?
- Was this study published in a professional scientific journal?

sound research design, this can be accomplished when other independent sites in other locations create identical or very similar studies and those studies yield parallel results. Commonly known as cross-site replication, this approach increases the confidence that the observed intervention effects are genuine and not simply an artifact of the research design, specific samples used, location, or other confounding variables. Cross-site replication is especially important when the researcher has a vested interest in the outcomes because they are testing a model that they developed themselves, are receiving external funds or other resources from a party that has financial interests in the outcomes, or relying on ongoing funding or support that is contingent on positive demonstrations.

Meta-Analysis

The factors described above are useful when considering the evidence obtained from single research studies. The higher the quality of the research, the more weight it holds and the more implications it has for institutional correctional and community supervision practices. However, an evidence-based approach is not designed solely around one or two individual studies, even if they are high quality. Taking into account only a limited number of studies can result in bias and subjectivity, whether intentional or inadvertent. A truly evidence-based approach is based on a comprehensive and systematic review of the best available research and takes into account the strengths and limitations of the individual studies that comprise that larger body of evidence. This also means that as new information surfaces, it must be considered within the context of previous research.

A generally objective and increasingly common approach to weighing the broad research base is known as meta-analysis. It allows researchers to evaluate, concurrently and systematically, the accumulation of empirical studies about a specific intervention in order to identify an overall effect size. A meta-analysis can also control for potentially confounding variables (e.g., quality of research design, older versus newer studies, researcher affiliation with the

program being studied). As such, this sophisticated statistical analysis is an improvement over rudimentary and non-scientific methods such as simply counting the number of studies that support the effectiveness of a specific intervention and comparing the results to the number of studies that did not support the effectiveness of that intervention.

The Multiple Benefits of an Evidence-Based Approach

When the research is weighed carefully, when its implications for the current system of offender management are explored fully, and when it is strategically applied to institutional correctional and community supervision policies and practices, the paramount benefit is reduced recidivism and increased public safety. Evidence-based strategies also prove advantageous for adult and juvenile offenders and their families in multiple ways, such as enhancing problem-solving skills, strengthening important relationships and community supports, solidifying protective factors for the family, managing the complex dynamics associated with the offender's return home, and maintaining overall stability within the home. In addition, when corrections agencies adopt an evidence-based approach, multiple other benefits are realized, as highlighted below:

- *Internal Clarity and Meaning.* Sometimes, agency policies and practices exist without staff members having a full understanding of the underlying reasons for why they do what they do, other than because it is simply how things have always been done. Using research-supported strategies presents an important opportunity to move beyond the status quo. Staff members can be engaged and educated about effective correctional interventions and how their work in the institution or community is part of a bigger picture (the ways in which they contribute to public safety through successful reentry). This demonstrates a specific purpose for their work, demonstrates the value of their respective roles in the agency, and emphasizes that what they do (and how they do it) on a

day-to-day basis truly matters and makes a real difference in both the short and long term.

- *External Explanatory Power*. Grounding correctional policies in empirical evidence can also be enlightening and instructive for stakeholders outside the criminal justice system, including legislators, other agencies, victims and their families, and the broader public. Specifically, it provides a clear and arguably indisputable rationale (i.e., increased public safety) behind the interventions and strategies that are being employed and explains why other approaches are not being used. This can ultimately instill a greater degree of confidence about the efforts of institutional and community corrections agencies, which in turn can foster increased support.

- *Resource Efficiency*. Adopting an evidence-based approach also ensures that correctional resources will be strategically deployed in a manner that yields the best results from a dollars and sense perspective. As highlighted in the chapters which follow, when research-supported correctional interventions are used, the subsequent net benefits resulting from crime reductions outweigh the costs of implementing these interventions (Aos et al., 2001; Cohen, 2005; Drake, 2007; McDougall, Cohen, Swaray, & Perry, 2003; Welsh, 2004; Welsh & Farrington, 2000). Put simply, institutional and community corrections agencies get more bang for the buck.

- *System Accountability*. Because such a commitment creates a results-driven structure, it promotes accountability for demonstrating outcomes. By monitoring effectiveness of interventions and strategies that are employed, as well as the integrity of their implementation, agency officials are better able to identify key strengths and needs. Refinement of correctional policies and practices can be made accordingly, all in the interest of maximizing public safety and other outcomes.

Conclusion

Corrections agencies nationwide are faced with growing prison populations and are charged with reducing recidivism among the large number of adult and juvenile offenders who are released. Administrators and practitioners alike continue to seek the most effective and efficient methods to respond to this challenge. Adopting an evidence-based approach provides the needed answers. When current research is used wisely to inform correctional policies and practices, increasing public safety through successful reentry becomes possible.

KEY STEPS

- **Revisit the agency's vision and mission for reentry to identify the extent to which they complement or specifically articulate an evidence-based philosophy.**
- **Identify the ways in which team members define an evidence-based approach and how those descriptions comport with the working definition offered in this handbook.**
- **Establish and employ mechanisms for communicating to agency staff at all levels the specific ways in which an evidence-based approach can benefit them, the agency, offenders and their families, and the broader community.**
- **Critically explore the underlying rationale that drives current offender management practices within the agency. Identify which strategies were implemented based on a careful review of the "what works" literature and which were not. Then determine the agency's commitment and readiness to make adjustments accordingly.**

CHAPTER 2: ASSESSMENT

Introduction

From the point of incarceration throughout the period of post-release supervision, multiple important case management decisions are made by a range of institutional corrections and community supervision professionals. Because these decisions carry with them considerable implications for public safety, all stakeholders in the reentry process (e.g., institutional staff, paroling authorities, post-release supervision officers) should have access to comprehensive, accurate, and up-to-date information about each offender. Assessments are the means by which this information is provided and, therefore, they are the key to informed decision making.

Well-Grounded Assessments Increase the Effectiveness of Reentry Efforts

Research indicates that when offender management strategies are driven by reliable and valid assessments, reentry outcomes can be maximized. Specifically, such assessments are necessary for the effective and judicious use of correctional resources, reductions in recidivism, and increased public safety (e.g., Andrews & Bonta, 2007; Lowenkamp, Latessa, & Smith, 2006). A vital step toward creating sound assessments is to ground them in what are known as the core principles of effective correctional intervention: risk, need, and responsivity (see Andrews & Bonta, 2007).

Risk Principle

First, correctional practitioners must identify the level of recidivism risk posed by each offender, because this has significant implications for the intensity of case management efforts. The empirical evidence reveals that matching the intensity of interventions to the assessed level of risk results in better outcomes, with intensive strategies having much better impact on higher risk offenders than with lower risk offenders (Andrews & Bonta, 2007). After all, there is much more room for improvement or potential

for risk reduction with those offenders who pose a higher risk.
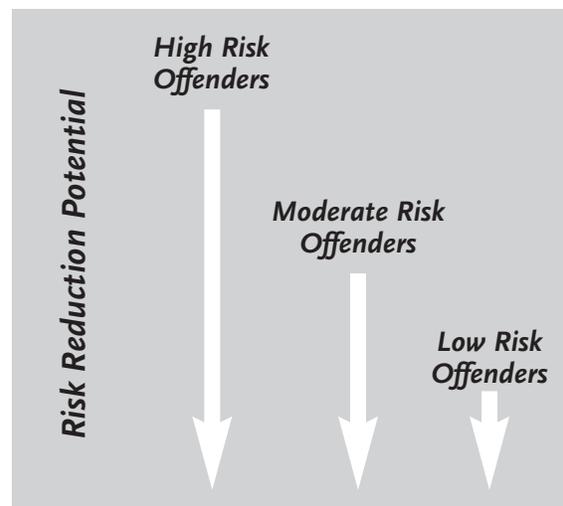
Because low risk offenders are already less likely to recidivate, and because there is very limited room for risk reduction, investing considerable time and correctional resources on that subgroup of offenders is unlikely to yield significant public safety benefits. Furthermore, to the surprise of some practitioners, the research demonstrates that when intensive correctional strategies are used with low risk offenders, recidivism rates may actually increase (see, e.g., Andrews & Bonta, 2007; Cullen & Gendreau, 2000; Gendreau, Goggin, Cullen, & Andrews, 2001; Lowenkamp, Latessa, & Holsinger 2006).

The importance of risk assessments, then, is clear. By identifying those adult and juvenile offenders who are most apt to recidivate and prioritizing staff time and resources for them, institutional and community corrections agencies will be better positioned to reduce recidivism and increase public safety (Altschuler & Armstrong, 1994; Andrews & Bonta, 2007; Lowenkamp et al., 2006). To assess risk most accurately, research-supported or empirically validated tools should be used, rather than relying solely on individual practitioners' subjective judgments and instincts, which are far less accurate or reliable (Grove &

Meehl, 1996; Grove, Zald, Lebow, Snitz, & Nelson, 2000). Additionally, by adopting tools that have been researched extensively and cross-validated across multiple jurisdictions (as opposed to an agency creating its own tool that simply seems to have the right types of items but that has not been formally validated), staff members are better able to differentiate higher from lower risk offenders.

Need Principle
Second, assessments should focus on identifying the dynamic or changeable risk factors (commonly known as criminogenic needs) that are directly linked with recidivism (see Andrews & Bonta, 2007). The most salient criminogenic needs identified in the research on adult and juvenile offenders are the following (Andrews & Bonta, 2007):

- History of antisocial behavior/poor self control
- Antisocial personality
- Antisocial attitudes and cognitions
- Antisocial associates/negative peer affiliation
- Problematic family/marital circumstances
- School/work difficulties
- Lack of prosocial leisure/recreational interests and activities
- Substance abuse

When corrections practitioners identify offenders' criminogenic needs, they can then focus offender management strategies on the types of issues that will result in the best outcomes, rather than targeting areas that are not actually associated with recidivism (i.e., non-criminogenic needs). Key examples of non-criminogenic needs include the following (Andrews & Bonta, 2007):

- Anxiety and stress
- Vague feelings of psychological/emotional distress
- Low self esteem
- Feelings of alienation and exclusion
- Physical inactivity
- Lack of ambition
- History of victimization

It is important for correctional practitioners to differentiate between criminogenic and non-criminogenic needs, as efforts to reduce recidivism and increase public safety will be undermined if they target offenders' non-criminogenic needs (Andrews & Bonta, 2007). As is the case with assessing risk, practitioners should use research-supported assessment tools to identify offenders' criminogenic needs most reliably.

Examples of Common Research-Supported Tools for Assessing Risk and/or Criminogenic Needs

For adult offenders:
- Correctional Offender Management Profiling for Alternative Sanctions (COMPAS)
- Historical, Clinical, and Risk Management Factors (HCR-20)
- Level of Service Inventory-Revised (LSI-R)
- Level of Service/Case Management Inventory (LSI/CMI)
- Psychopathy Checklist Revised (PCL-R)
- Statistical Information on Recidivism (SIR)
- Violence Risk Appraisal Guide (VRAG)
- Wisconsin Risk and Needs

For juvenile offenders:
- Psychopathy Checklist – Youth Version (PCL-YV)
- Structured Assessment of Violence Risk in Youth (SAVRY)
- Youth Level of Service/Case Management Inventory (YLS/CMI)

Fortunately, multiple tools already exist for conducting valid and reliable risk-need assessments and, as such, institutional corrections and community supervision agencies will be well served by adopting one or more of those instruments. Ideally, these agencies will work together to identify and implement the same risk-need assessment tool. This will provide a common language for practitioners, reduce the potential for unnecessary duplication of assessments, and increase the consistency and objectivity of case management decision making.

Although some research-supported and promising tools exist for special offender populations such as sex offenders (see Center for Sex Offender Management, 2007 for a review), the vast majority of assessment tools within the corrections field are validated only on adult and juvenile males. Although gender responsive risk-need assessment instruments for adult women and adolescent girls remain lacking, some important and promising advances have been made (see Section 7: Women Offenders).

Responsivity Principle

Third, correctional practitioners must identify individual characteristics that may have implications for offenders' responses to interventions. Known as specific responsivity factors, examples may include gender, culture, learning style, cognitive development, or level of motivation. The responsivity principle indicates that responsivity factors should be taken into account when determining the appropriate course of intervention. This may include making adjustments to existing programs and services to address these factors, matching service providers or supervision officers to individual offenders, or otherwise tailoring interventions to ensure maximum benefit (Andrews & Bonta, 2007; Cullen & Gendreau, 2000).

Additional Tips for Improving Assessments

Beyond the emphasis on the core principles of risk, needs, and responsivity as the foundation of assessment processes, correctional practitioners

can also increase the utility of assessments through the following practices:

- *Assess Early*. When adult and juvenile offenders enter the criminal or juvenile justice system, comprehensive assessments at the presentencing phase, including validated risk and needs assessments, can provide invaluable baseline assessment information about them. At the point of intake into correctional facilities, assessments assist institutional staff with identifying service needs and potential barriers that must be addressed during the period of incarceration. This creates greater opportunities to meet those needs well in advance of release. Risk and needs assessments at this early point also allow institutional staff to determine the appropriate intensity of case management efforts and to triage offenders into prison-based programs and services that are commensurate with their level of risk (i.e., higher intensity services for higher risk offenders).

- *Assess Accurately*. Assessments are only as good as the methods that are used and the skills and competencies of the practitioners who are conducting the assessments. As highlighted previously, instinct and experience are not reliable approaches to assessing risk. Rather, the most accurate and reliable information about risk and needs comes from structured, objective, and empirically validated assessment tools. Effectively using these types of tools requires specialized training and ongoing supervision to make sure that they are being scored, interpreted, and applied to case management decisions correctly. In addition to using empirically validated tools as a means of enhancing the accuracy of assessments, institutional and community corrections practitioners will have more reliable findings if they gather information from multiple sources, rather than relying only on a single data point.

- *Assess Deliberately*. Practitioners can also enhance the usefulness and effectiveness of assessments by attending to process-related

To improve offender programming in California, the *Expert Panel on Adult Offender and Recidivism Reduction Programming* made a number of recommendations to the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (2007). Two key recommendations included: selecting and using objective assessment tools to identify high-to-moderate risk offenders; and assessing their criminogenic needs and responsivity to determine appropriate treatment. The following depicts their plan for an assessment process supported by research:

1. Assess High Risk

Assess offender risk level and target offenders who pose the highest risk for re-offending.

2. Assess Needs

Administer assessment battery to identify the offender's criminogenic needs/dynamic risk factors.

3. Develop Behavior Management Plan

Utilize risk, need, and responsivity assessment results to inform the development of an individualized case plan guiding the types and levels of services required to address needs.

Administer Static Risk Assessment

Medium - High

Low

Need for Override?

Yes

No

No Treatment Prescribed

Assess Criminogenic Needs

Anti - social attitudes
Anti - social associates
Temperament & personality
Education/Vocation/Financial
Familial/Marital/Relationship
Substance abuse

Assess Responsivity Factors

Motivation/Readiness
Personality/Psychological
Cognitive/Intellectual
Demographics

Develop Individual Case Plan

Meet with Offender & Sign Behavioral Contract

(Develop Goals, Communicate Expectations, & Identify Incentives (e.g., housing, pay for program participation &/or progress, & other privileges)

Adapted from California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, 2007

variables. More specifically, as described in Chapter 5 of this section of the handbook (Staff-Offender Interactions), when practitioners take deliberate steps to enhance engagement and internal motivation among offenders, the assessment and subsequent intervention processes are more productive. The effective use of Motivational Interviewing techniques exemplifies a purposeful assessment approach that has become increasingly common within the correctional field (Ginsberg, Mann, Rotgers, & Weekes, 2002; Miller & Rollnick, 2002).

- *Assess Often.* A premise that underlies the notion of promoting public safety through successful reentry is that risk can change over time, particularly as a function of effective correctional interventions. Risk levels can also increase when offenders engage in problem behaviors such as affiliating with antisocial peers or abusing substances. Therefore, it is important to conduct repeated assessments throughout the course of an offender's time in the institutional corrections and community supervision systems, from the point of entry, throughout the period of incarceration, and into the community, as a formal and objective means of monitoring changes in risk and

needs. Having access to current and updated assessment data ensures that institutional corrections and community supervision staff are able to make well-informed case management decisions at key decision points and on an ongoing basis. Among the stakeholders that benefit from ongoing assessment data are prison-based program staff, institutional caseworkers, paroling authorities and other release decision makers, community supervision officers, community-based providers, and the offenders themselves.

- *Assess Collaboratively*. Finally, because different stakeholders interact with offenders for different purposes and at different points in time, these practitioners must collectively assume responsibility for assessing offenders. In addition, because assessment data that may be readily accessible to one practitioner may be inaccessible to others, a commitment to sharing assessment information across agencies and disciplines is important. By collaborating as partners in the ongoing assessment process, all parties will be operating with the most comprehensive and up-to-date information about each offender.

Conclusion

Quality assessments ensure that case management decisions are well informed throughout the reentry process, particularly when these assessments are conducted within the evidence-based framework of the core principles of effective correctional intervention. By using research-supported assessment tools, employing promising techniques that can increase offender engagement in the assessment process, and sharing important assessment information over time, institutional corrections and community supervision professionals will significantly increase the likelihood that reentry efforts will be successful.

KEY STEPS

- **Review the agency's assessment policies and procedures to determine whether they are currently grounded in the principles of risk, need, and responsivity, and make revisions as necessary.**
- **Take inventory of the various assessment tools used within the agency, and identify whether these tools are empirically validated and appropriate for the offender population(s) served by the agency. Where gaps exist, adopt an empirically validated risk-need tool(s).**
- **Provide practical training and policy-driven guidance to staff about how to use risk-need tools for case management purposes, beginning at the point of intake, during the course of incarceration, and continuing throughout the period of post-release supervision.**
- **Invest in skill-building initiatives for staff (e.g., Motivational Interviewing) to maximize their effectiveness during the assessment process.**
- **Explore current policies relative to information sharing across agencies and disciplines. Where internal and cross-agency barriers exist, develop complementary policies that will facilitate routine sharing of critical assessment information.**

CHAPTER 3: PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Introduction

For decades, rehabilitative ideals were among the cornerstones of corrections agencies. However, during the latter part of the twentieth century, as the rate of violent crime escalated, public confidence in the criminal justice system waned and correctional systems began to draw sharp criticisms from policymakers. At the same time, an influential researcher proclaimed that correctional rehabilitative programs were ineffective (Martinson, 1974). This combination of factors resulted in a widespread philosophical shift that almost exclusively favored punishment, incapacitation, proportionality, and deterrence. Subsequently, agency investments in correctional programs and services were curtailed and many resources were redirected toward increasing prison capacity.

Since that time, researchers have demonstrated that punishment- and sanctions-driven approaches do not have the intended impact with either adult or juvenile offenders when used in isolation (see, e.g., Aos et al., 2006; Cullen & Gendreau, 2000; Drake, 2007; Smith, Goggin, & Gendreau, 2002). As such, corrections officials and other policymakers are striving to identify and implement proven strategies that will reduce crime, increase public safety, and improve offender reentry outcomes overall. This evidence-based movement has brought a renewed focus on rehabilitative efforts as an important means to that end.

Many Correctional Programs and Services "Work"

If reentry is to be successful, adult and juvenile offenders must be equipped with the skills, competencies, and resources that will allow them to remain stable, crime-free, and productive upon their return to the community. This cannot be accomplished simply by incarcerating offenders and monitoring them following release. While important aspects of corrections, these

offender management strategies will not result in significant reductions in recidivism. Rather, they must be used in combination with correctional interventions that are demonstrated to be effective.

Institutional and community corrections agencies therefore need to ensure that quality evidence-based programs and services are in place to address the range of offenders' identified criminogenic needs and other barriers to reentry. Fortunately, correctional officials and practitioners have the benefit of an extensive and ever-growing body of research about the types of correctional interventions that work for adult and juvenile offenders, as well as those that do not work (see, e.g., Aos et al., 2001; 2006; Drake, 2007; MacKenzie, 2006; Seiter & Kadela, 2003). The tables that follow highlight several key examples of those programs and services.

More is Sometimes—But Not Always—Better

Given the wide range of programs and services that exist in institutions and the community, the institutional corrections and community supervision practitioners who are responsible for case management may be tempted to assign every offender to as many prison-based and community-based programs and services as possible. This more is better approach makes intuitive sense when working toward the overarching goal of reducing recidivism and, in some instances, it can be effective. Under other circumstances, it does not lead to the desired outcomes and may actually have the opposite effect.

Density Matters: Target Multiple Criminogenic Needs

As highlighted in Chapter 2 (Assessment), the need principle emphasizes the importance of making criminogenic needs the focus of correctional interventions. Changes in these crime-producing factors are associated with

## Examples of Adults Programming and Associated Impacts on Recidivism

Program	Impact
Community-based cognitive-behavioral sex offender treatment	31.2%
Prison-based cognitive-behavioral sex offender treatment	14.9%
Prison-based vocational education	12.6%
Community-based drug treatment	12.4%
Prison-based cognitive-behavioral programs (general and specific)	8.2%
Prison-based correctional industries programs	7.8%
Intensive prison-based substance abuse programs with community aftercare	6.9%
Cognitive behavioral drug treatment (prison-based)	6.8%
Work release programs	5.6%
Intensive prison-based substance abuse programs *without* community aftercare	5.3%
Prison-based basic adult education	5.1%
Community-based employment training and job assistance	4.8%
Educational/cognitive-behavioral domestic violence programs	0%

Adapted from Aos, Miller, & Drake, 2006

Examples of Juvenile Programming and Associated Impacts on Recidivism

Program	Impact
Functional Family Therapy (FFT)	15.9%
Multisystemic Therapy (MST)	10.5%
Juvenile sex offender treatment	10.2%
Behavior modification programs	8.2%
Aggression Replacement Training (ART)	7.3%
Juvenile drug courts	3.5%
Interagency coordination programs	2.5%
Boot camps	0%
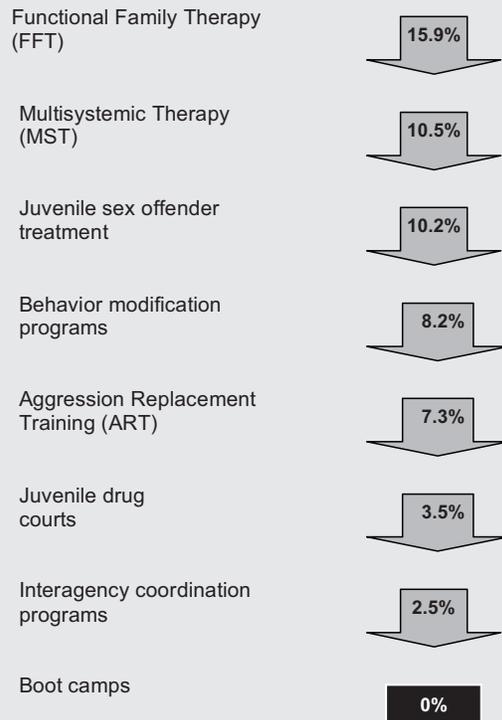
Adapted from Drake, 2007

Recidivism Impact as a Function of Density of Criminogenic vs. Non-Criminogenic Needs Targeted by Programs

Legend: ■ 6 ■ 5 ■ 4 ■ 3 ■ 2 ■ 1 ■ 0 ■ -1 ■ -2 □ -3

Targeting more criminogenic than non-criminogenic needs ⟷ Targeting more non-criminogenic than criminogenic needs
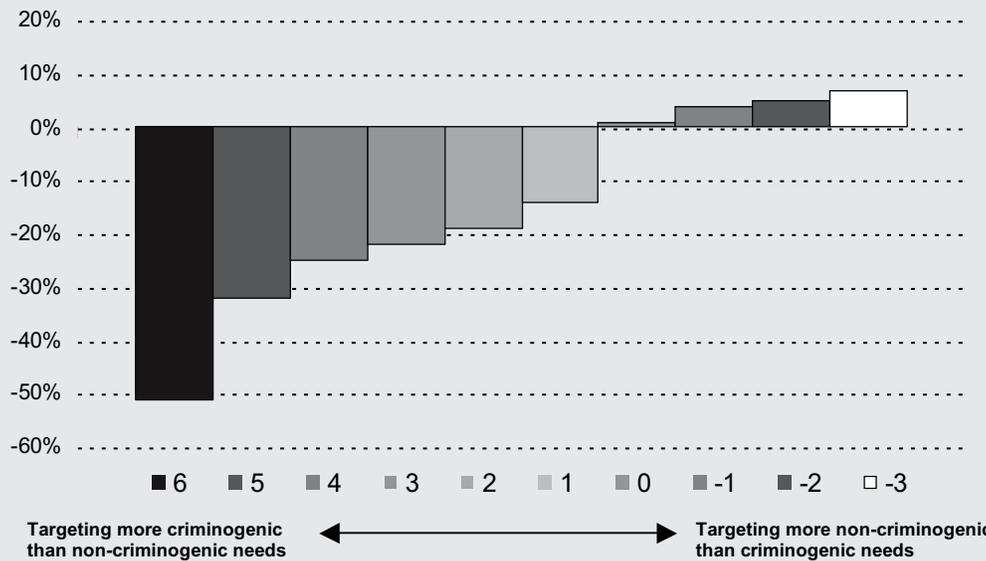
Adapted from Dowden, 1998, in Andrews & Bonta, 2007

significant reductions in recidivism. When programs are designed to target multiple criminogenic needs (in other words, when they increase the density of these targets), recidivism is further reduced (see Andrews & Bonta, 2007). For example, correctional programs that address 4-6 criminogenic needs have significantly better outcomes than those that target only 1-3 criminogenic needs (see, e.g., Andrews & Bonta, 2007). Beyond reducing post-release recidivism, greater density also has a significant impact on prison misconduct (French & Gendreau, 2006). Substantially lower incidences of institutional misconduct are achieved for correctional programs that address 3-8 criminogenic needs as compared to programs in which only 1-2 criminogenic needs are targeted (French & Gendreau, 2006). Put simply, with respect to density, more is better.

Conversely, focusing on offenders' non-criminogenic needs reduces density, which in turn causes programs to become diluted and less effective. Indeed, with every additional non-criminogenic need that becomes a focus of programming, the overall impact of correctional interventions is successively undermined. As

illustrated in the following graph, once the balance of programming efforts shifts in favor of non-criminogenic needs, recidivism rates begin to increase incrementally (see Andrews & Bonta, 2007). Under these circumstances, more is certainly not better.

Dosage Matters: Intervene with Appropriate Duration and Intensity

The effectiveness of correctional programs also varies in relation to the dosage of interventions (i.e., the units of service or number of treatment sessions provided over a given time period). Consistent with both the risk and need principles, higher risk offenders who have multiple criminogenic needs benefit more from higher dosages (Bourgon & Armstrong, 2005; Landenberger & Lipsey, 2005; Lipsey, 1995; Lowenkamp, Latessa, & Holsinger, 2006). More specifically, research reveals the following (Bourgon & Armstrong, 2005; Lipsey, 1995):

- High-risk, high-need offenders who receive higher dosages of interventions over longer periods of time are less likely to recidivate than are similar offenders who receive a lesser dosage.

- A minimum of 200-300 contact hours is needed to reduce recidivism for higher risk offenders with multiple needs.
- Low dosage (i.e., 100 contact hours) is not sufficient for reducing recidivism among high risk-high need offenders.

Taken together, the research on density and dosage indicates that while more is, in fact, better in some cases, it is not better in others. Because the differential impact appears to be a function of offenders' level of risk and needs, this highlights again the importance of using reliable and valid risk-need assessments to identify which offenders will benefit most from which types of interventions, for how long, with what level of intensity, and under what circumstances.

How Correctional Programs are Implemented is as Important as Which Programs are Implemented

Having the right types of programs in place is an important step toward promoting successful reentry. However, it should come as no surprise that if these programs are not well implemented, they are less likely to be effective (see, e.g., Andrews & Bonta, 2007). This vital implementation piece is often known as integrity or fidelity.

For example, as noted previously in this chapter, Functional Family Therapy (FFT) and Aggression Replacement Training (ART) are among the evidence-based programs for juvenile offenders that reduce recidivism significantly (see Drake, 2007). However, the extent to which these

programs are delivered appropriately and within the established protocols has an impact on the actual outcomes (Barnoski, 2004). The figure below illustrates that when program integrity (as a function of provider competency) was acceptable, juveniles' recidivism rates decreased considerably, whereas recidivism rates actually increased for juveniles who participated in FFT or ART programs that were delivered by suboptimal providers (Barnoski, 2004).

Integrity Matters

A number of factors influence the integrity of program implementation and service delivery, including, but not limited to, the following (see Andrews & Bonta, 2007):

- A sound underlying theoretical model that is known to affect behavior change (i.e., cognitive-behavioral and social learning).
- Formalized manuals and other policies/procedures that guide service delivery.
- Staff selection practices that are based on important relationship qualities and skills that are necessary for influencing change.
- Adequate training to ensure that staff understand their specific roles and responsibilities.
- Ongoing clinical supervision of staff to provide specific feedback designed to enhance skills and performance.

Each of these factors is independently and significantly associated with the overall effectiveness of correctional programs and therefore requires ongoing attention from both administrators and practitioners (see Andrews & Bonta, 2007; Cullen & Gendreau, 2000; Lipsey & Landenberger, 2006; Lowenkamp et al., 2006). Indeed, many of these factors can be incorporated into agency performance measures and used as quality assurance/continuous quality improvement indicators.

Another key aspect of correctional program integrity, and one that is closely linked to recidivism, is the extent to which programs for adults and juveniles adhere to the core principles of effective correctional intervention (i.e., risk, need, and responsivity) as well as the core practices for effective correctional interventions (e.g., cognitive-behavioral and social learning approaches, staff characteristics, training, and supervision). The greater the adherence is, the better the outcomes are (see, e.g., Andrews & Bonta, 2007; Lowenkamp et al., 2006). This holds true for prison- and community-based programs and services, halfway houses, and community supervision practices. Not surprisingly, as program integrity decreases, recidivism increases. Therefore, to maximize reentry efforts, corrections administrators must take active steps to increase the integrity of

Effect of Provider Competency on Juvenile Offender Recidivism: Functional Family Therapy (FFT) and Aggression Replacement Training (ART)

Adapted from Barnoski, 2004
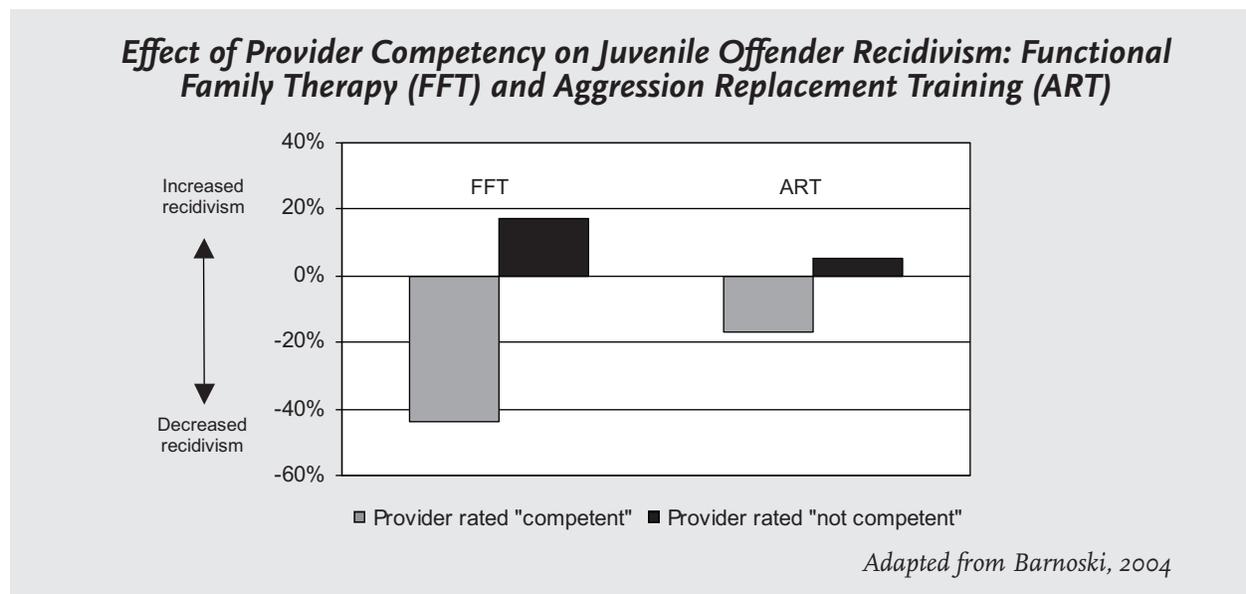
Program Adherence to the Principles of Risk, Need, and Responsivity: Impact on Recidivism

Increased recidivism

Decreased recidivism

- Adhere to all 3 principles
- Adhere to 2 principles
- Adhere to 1 principle
- Adhere to none
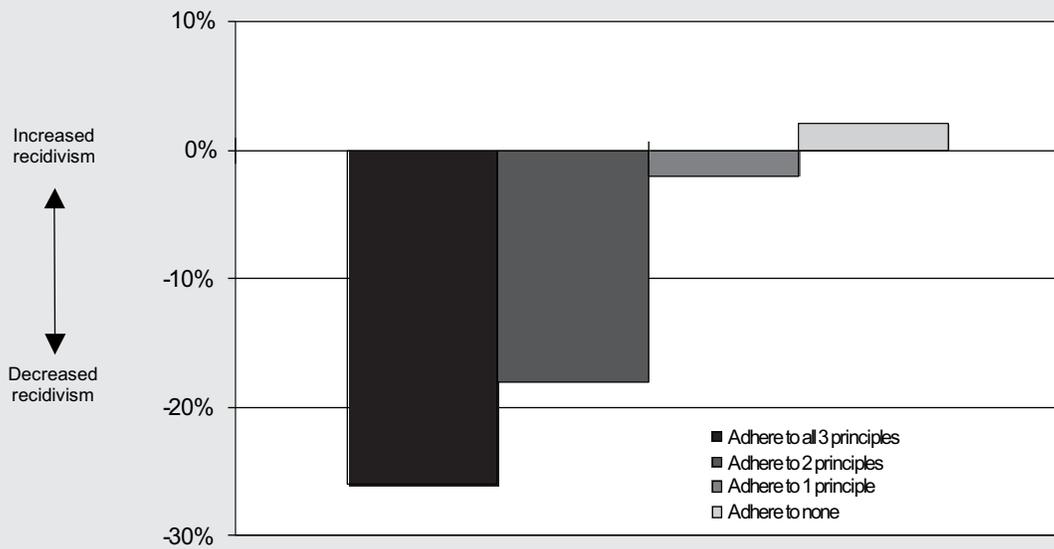
Andrews et al., 1999

A Checklist for Enhancing Correctional Program Integrity and Effectiveness

- Is staff hired or selected based on qualities, characteristics, and attributes that will increase program effectiveness (e.g., communication and relationship skills, recognition of the value of rehabilitative efforts)?
- Is an effective theoretical model of change clearly in place (e.g., behavioral, social learning, cognitive-behavioral)?
- Are specific expectations outlined for staff about what to do to carry out the program effectively (e.g., modeling, skill practicing, reinforcement)?
- Is staff trained to follow the model (preservice and on the job)?
- Are staff members supervised and monitored as they deliver programming (e.g., for relationship skills and interactions, adhering to the model)?
- Is the program delivered with appropriate intensity, dosage, and as designed?

Adapted from Andrews & Bonta, 2007

program and service delivery, both in the institutions and in the community.

Comprehensive Services Should Be Available

Without question, reducing recidivism as a means of promoting public safety is the chief objective of reentry efforts. This is largely accomplished by targeting criminogenic needs

through evidence-based interventions and strategies. It is also important that correctional practitioners identify and assist offenders with resolving fundamental survival needs that are necessary for adult and juvenile offenders to transition successfully from the institution to the community (see, e.g., Altschuler & Armstrong, 1994; Petersilia, 2003). For some offenders, these may include the following:

How Well Do Correctional Programs Measure Up?

Over the past several years, researchers have assisted hundreds of adult and juvenile correctional agencies with exploring the extent to which their programs adhere to the principles and practices of effective correctional intervention. Using the Correctional Program Assessment Inventory – 2000 (CPAI-2000; Gendreau & Andrews, 2001), programs are evaluated across several domains: program implementation and leadership, offender assessment, program characteristics, staff characteristics, evaluation, and other elements. Among the programs that were assessed, a considerable proportion were found to be in need of improvement (Matthews, Hubbard, & Latessa, 2001; Pealer & Latessa, 2004). The following were among the most common concerns:

- Standardized and objective assessments to identify risk, needs, and responsivity factors were lacking.
- Treatment modalities and practices did not have a strong theoretical basis.
- Services were often not matched to offender risk.
- A one-size-fits-all approach to treatment was used.
- There was an over reliance on punishment, with only sporadic rewards.
- Program evaluation was lacking, in terms of both assessing within-treatment change and examining recidivism outcomes.

Because research indicates that greater adherence to the principles and practices of the effective correctional interventions is progressively associated with greater reductions in recidivism (see, e.g., Andrews & Bonta, 2007; Lowenkamp et al., 2006), it is important for correctional agency administrators to emphasize program integrity, routinely monitor and evaluate these issues, and participate in ongoing improvement efforts to address identified areas of need.

- Obtaining personal documentation such as birth certificates, state identification, social security cards, driver's licenses or permits.
- Transitioning to private or state-assisted insurance.
- Accessing public assistance.
- Identifying and navigating public transportation system.
- Developing or improving life skills (e.g., shopping on a limited budget, hygiene and grooming, banking/money management, cooking).
- Enhancing job skills, such as completing employment applications, practicing job interviewing, and establishing positive work habits.
- Identifying transitional or other suitable housing.

Although these types of issues may not be directly linked to recidivism, they can nonetheless create significant barriers to community reintegration if left unaddressed. Corrections agencies must therefore have in place a comprehensive range of services and supports that take into account offenders' full range of reentry needs.

Continuity of Care and Aftercare are Critical

Some adult and juvenile offenders who are approaching release continue to have intervention needs that will need to be addressed in the community. As such, correctional staff must take active steps to ensure that these individuals are linked with appropriate programs and services prior to release in order to prevent unnecessary

Adhering to the Principles of Effective Programming:
Program Evaluation in Pennsylvania

This chart exhibits the efforts of the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections in evaluating the extent to which their available programs and interventions meet the principles of effective intervention.

	Targets crime - producing needs	Targets high-risk cases	Conducts risk and needs assessments	Utilizes cognitive-behavioral approach	Disrupts delinquency network	Includes relapse prevention component	Reinforces integrity of services	Integrates with community-based program	Based on program theoretical model	Provides intensive services	Matches offender's personality and learning style
WORK & EDUCATION											
Mandatory Education	●	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	●	●	●	NA	●
Special Education	●	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	●	●	●	NA	●
GED	●	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	●	●	●	NA	●
Secondary Diploma	●	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	●	●	●	NA	●
Vocational Education - General	●	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	●	●	●	NA	●
Vocational Education - Apprenticeship	●	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	●	●	●	NA	●
CITIZENSHIP											
Unit Based Citizenship	●	○	◉	●	○	○	◉	○	○	◉	◉
Character Development	●	○	○	●	○	○	◉	○	○	◉	◉
FAMILY / RELATIONSHIP / SELF											
Long Distance Dads	●	NA	◉	●	●	◉	◉	●	●	◉	◉
Fresh Start	○	NA	○	○	○	○	◉	○	○	○	○
Parenting Program Services	●	NA	○	●	◉	●	●	○	○	○	○
Parents Anonymous	●	NA	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	◉
Reading to Your Children	○	NA	○	○	○	◉	◉	○	○	○	○
Foundation Parenting	●	NA	●	●	●	◉	●	●	●	○	○
Elderly Inmates	●	○	○	○	●	●	●	●	●	●	◉
Long Term Offenders	●	○	◉	●	●	●	●	●	●	◉	◉
Positive Relationships	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	○	◉	◉	◉

	Targets crime - producing needs	Targets high-risk cases	Conducts risk and needs assessments	Utilizes cognitive-behavioral approach	Disrupts delinquency network	Includes relapse prevention component	Reinforces integrity of services	Integrates with community-based program	Based on program theoretical model	Provides intensive services	Matches offender's personality and learning style
OFFENSE RELATED											
Thinking for a Change	●	●	●	●	●	○	●	○	●	●	◉
Therapeutic Communities	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Residential Substance Abuse Treatment	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
AOD Abuse Education	○	○	○	◉	○	◉	◉	○	○	○	◉
AOD Group Counseling	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	◉	◉	◉
Relapse Prevention	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	◉	●
12 Step Facilitation	○	◉	○	○	◉	◉	◉	○	◉	◉	○
Sex Offender Program	●	●	○	○	●	●	◉	○	○	◉	○
Violence Prevention	●	●	◉	○	●	●	◉	○	●	◉	○
Batterers Program	●	◉	○	●	●	○	◉	○	●	◉	◉
Impact of Crime	●	○	○	○	◉	○	◉	○	○	◉	○
Victim Awareness Education	●	○	○	○	○	○	●	○	○	○	○
REENTRY											
COR Aftercare, Continuum of Care	●	○	○	○	◉	○	◉	●	●	○	○

Legend

●	Meets principle of effective programming
○	Does not meet principle of effective programming
◉	Partially meets principle of effective programming

Adapted from http://www.cor.state.pa.us/stats/lib/stats/ADResultsandRecommendations.pdf., last accessed July 25, 2007

delays or interruptions in needed services (see, e.g., Altschuler & Armstrong, 1994; Petersilia, 2003). Furthermore, research demonstrates that the impact of prison-based programs and services is maximized when those programs are followed by parallel services in the community (see, e.g., Andrews & Bonta, 2007; Gaes, Flanagan, Motiuk, & Stewart, 1999; Lawrence, Mears, Dubin, & Travis, 2002; MacKenzie, 2006; Seiter & Kadela, 2003). In addition, for juvenile offenders, aftercare programs and services are essential and have a greater impact in the community (Altschuler & Armstrong, 1994; Altschuler & Brash, 2004; Lipsey & Wilson, 1998). Promoting continuity of care and other aftercare services therefore becomes an important part of case management.

Included among the many specialized needs that may require attention with respect to continuity of care are the following:

- Mental health services
- Healthcare
- Substance abuse treatment
- Education/employment services
- Housing
- Family interventions

As highlighted in Chapter 6 of this section of the handbook (Effective Case Management), seamless service delivery is best accomplished through "reach in" and "reach out" activities during the transition phase, whereby institutional corrections and community-based providers collaborate with one another and with offenders to identify appropriate aftercare resources and supports. For example, identifying a community mental health center or public health clinic with a sliding fee scale is important for uninsured or underinsured offenders who have mental health or healthcare needs. Scheduling an initial appointment prior to release can be beneficial as

Meeting the Challenge: Securing Identification for Parolees

One of the biggest challenges facing the Massachusetts Parole Board was securing identification for offenders leaving prison for parole supervision through the Registry of Motor Vehicles (RMV). Parolees lacking primary and secondary identification (e.g., birth certificates, social security cards, and utility bills) were unable to secure quickly the identification needed to obtain essential needs—housing and employment, traveling, and applying for state and federal benefits. The Board found that only a small number of ex-offenders could meet the requirements of the RMV, and that many had to wait several months to receive replacement cards and birth certificates before returning to the RMV, which had serious implications for offenders' successful transition to the community.

The Parole Board and the RMV reached an agreement to enable parole officers to verify the identity (including birth date and social security number) and home address of parolees using law enforcement databases. Parole officers then escorted parolees equipped with a new parole identification form (authenticated by the parole office) and a photograph to the RMV to secure permanent identification. Given that ex-offenders are already screened, they are prioritized for service when they apply at the RMV office.

With the formation of a new partnership and an innovative strategy to meet standard RMV requirements, the Board has successfully secured 345 identification cards for parolees over the course of one year.

From correspondence with Maureen Walsh, Chairman, Massachusetts Parole Board, and Massachusetts Parole Board, Parole News, June 2007, http://www.mass.gov/Eeops/docs/pb/ june_07.pdf, last accessed November 26, 2007.

well, especially for those with chronic needs and those who are prescribed medication. Similarly, for offenders who have recently completed prison-based substance abuse treatment, correctional caseworkers or community supervision officers should work proactively to identify a local aftercare substance abuse treatment program and local AA/NA meetings (including meeting dates, times, and locations) prior to their release to the community.

To facilitate continuity of care and aftercare during the transition and release process, some corrections agencies have partnered with other human service agencies and organizations to establish "one-stop shops." In these locations, offenders are able to meet with their post-release supervision officer, obtain employment assistance, receive direct services or referrals for mental health and healthcare, and access public assistance from professionals who are specifically poised to assist and support them as they return to the community. Still other corrections agencies, particularly those responsible for juvenile offenders, have pooled resources and created networks of providers to address concurrently the multiple needs of reentering juveniles (see, e.g., Altschuler & Armstrong, 1994; Wiebush, Wagner, McNulty, Wang, & Lee, 2005). Another helpful tool is to create resource directories for local communities that can be accessed not only by institutional and community corrections practitioners but also by offenders and their families.

Recognize the Needs of Families

Although the focus of many interventions is on the offenders themselves, practitioners must also take into account the challenges and needs of partners, parents and guardians, children, and other family members of offenders, as they are likely to be impacted psychologically, emotionally, behaviorally, developmentally, and financially, both in the short and long term (see, e.g., Altschuler & Armstrong, 1994; Mears & Travis, 2004; Solomon, Waul, Van Ness, & Travis, 2004; Travis & Waul, 2003). The social stigma associated with having an offender as a relative can create significant hardships for families in and of itself. In addition, the return of an offender to a previously established and otherwise stable home in which a partner, children, or other family members reside may create unexpected disruptions. If domestic violence, sexual abuse or other maltreatment, marital difficulties, or other family difficulties existed prior to the offender's incarceration, there may be ongoing dynamics and aftereffects that need to be addressed. Therefore, programs and services specifically for families of incarcerated offenders are important to have in place. These might include marital or family therapy, parenting skills classes, substance abuse treatment and support groups, victim services, and mentoring programs that target children of incarcerated parents. Community-based partnerships and other sources of support must be identified for families as early as possible during the offenders' incarceration, and links to these services must be emphasized particularly during the transition and release-planning phase (Solomon et al., 2004; Travis & Waul, 2003). In addition, it is important for partners, parents, and other family members to be aware of the offenders' specific risk factors and range of effective coping strategies, so that they are able to support the offenders' progress toward a stable, law-abiding lifestyle.

Revising Inmate Visitation Policy to Better Serve Reentry Goals

In an effort to provide "more meaningful and productive contacts between offenders and their family members," the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction (2002) revised its policy on inmate visitation to "remove barriers prohibiting family members from visiting and provide for the reactivation of the visitation list for parole violators." Doing so aids the department in reaching its offender reentry goals by "providing family members with opportunities to be constructively engaged with the offender during his or her confinement."

Conclusion

An effective reentry strategy relies heavily on programs and services that are designed to reduce offenders' risk, increase their skills and competencies, and enhance their overall stability in the community. The extensive research and professional literature in the corrections field draws attention to numerous evidence-based and promising interventions for adult and juvenile offenders, provides helpful guidance to agencies regarding how to improve the fidelity, integrity, and impact of those programs and services, and highlights the need to address the multiple reentry needs and barriers experienced by offenders and their families.

KEY STEPS

- **Take stock of existing programs and services and identify the extent to which they comport with the evidence-based literature about correctional interventions that work.**
- **Analyze offender population data to explore the prevalence of criminogenic and other key reentry needs within the context of current program and service capacity and availability.**
- **Identify any significant gaps in needed programs and services for offenders and their families and begin to formulate strategies to enhance agency capacity for these programs.**
- **Invest in an independent, objective review or process evaluation of the agency's programs (e.g., using the CPAI).**
- **Incorporate formal performance measures and/or continuous quality improvement indicators to monitor program fidelity and service delivery over time.**

CHAPTER 4: SUCCESS-DRIVEN SUPERVISION

Introduction

Supervising adult and juvenile offenders following their release from incarceration is a central component of the reentry process. Indeed, supervision officers have long assumed a pivotal role in promoting successful community reintegration and public safety through a combination of practices that includes monitoring, enforcement, service brokerage, and engaging community supports. However, during the "nothing works" era, as priorities in institutional corrections agencies de-emphasized rehabilitative efforts in favor of a more punitive and retributive approach, a similar movement occurred within community supervision agencies, whereby surveillance and sanctioning strategies became paramount. This emphasis, in combination with steadily increasing caseloads of offenders under post-release supervision, significantly curtailed many of the change-promoting and social casework activities (i.e., advocating for and brokering treatment, educational, and other rehabilitative services; linking offenders to needed resources and supports) that had previously supported the transition from prisons to the community.

Despite the expectation that a principal focus on surveillance and sanctioning would reduce recidivism, neither the corrections system nor the community at large has experienced such an impact with either adult or juvenile offenders (see, e.g., Aos et al., 2006; Drake, 2007). Community supervision agencies can, however, improve outcomes for offenders under post-release supervision and reap tangible community safety benefits by designing supervision strategies that are well grounded in the correctional research. It also requires an agency mission that explicitly recognizes that offender success is a means of increasing public safety. Put simply, when offenders are successful following release from incarceration (i.e., they remain stable, productive, and crime-free), communities are safer.

Some Approaches to Offender Supervision Work and Some Do Not

In the preceding chapters, a number of correctional interventions were highlighted because empirical evidence demonstrates that they work individually and collectively to reduce recidivism and enhance outcomes for adult and juvenile offenders. Supervision strategies and other community management approaches are included in that "what works" research, and the findings can be very informative for community corrections and supervision agencies who are striving to improve their effectiveness. Indeed, as illustrated in the figure on the following page, correctional research indicates that while some supervision strategies are effective for adults and juveniles, others are not (see, e.g., Aos et al., 2006; Drake, 2007; Lipsey & Wilson, 1998; MacKenzie, 2006).

For example, intensive supervision that is driven by close surveillance and monitoring alone has limited to no impact on recidivism (see, e.g., Aos et al., 2006; Drake, 2007; Lipsey & Wilson, 1998; MacKenzie, 2006). Similarly, when intermediate sanctions are used as the primary supervision or community management strategies (e.g., electronic monitoring, drug testing, boot camps), recidivism is not reduced significantly (see, e.g., Aos et al., 2001, 2006; Drake, 2007; MacKenzie, 2006). In some cases, the use of these intermediate sanctions actually has the opposite effect and increases recidivism (see, e.g., Aos et al., 2001; 2006; Drake, 2007; MacKenzie, 2006).

Other approaches to supervision have much more positive outcomes. Specifically, when officers pair monitoring and accountability strategies with social casework activities, they are

likely to attain the desired results of decreasing recidivism and increasing public safety (see, e.g., Aos et al., 2001, 2006; MacKenzie, 2006). With adult offenders, this strategy is referred to as a balanced or rehabilitation-oriented supervision approach. As applied to juvenile offenders, this concept is sometimes known as intensive aftercare (see, e.g., Altschuler & Armstrong, 1994; Wiebush et al., 2005). The underlying philosophy of these types of approaches is that supervision should be results-driven and that officers must assume a direct role in ensuring that offenders will be successful following release to the community.

Applying the Core Principles of Effective Correctional Intervention Also Works for Supervision

Identifying what works and what does not work with respect to supervision is an important step for community supervision agencies as they strive toward maximizing public safety through successful reentry. Equally important is the manner in which agencies establish operational policies and procedures to guide officers in applying evidence-based principles to their day-to-day supervision practices. When the core principles of effective correctional intervention (i.e., risk, need, and responsivity) are used to structure institutional and community-based programming efforts, and when practitioners attend to evidence-based program integrity variables (e.g., staff selection and supervision, appropriate intensity and dosage), interventions are increasingly effective in reducing recidivism (Andrews & Bonta, 2007). Although research on the application of these principles specifically to offender supervision practices is limited, the same appears to hold true. To illustrate, investigators have found that recidivism rates decrease when the following risk-need conditions are met throughout the course of supervision (Lowenkamp, Pealer, Smith, & Latessa, 2006):

- High-risk offenders are targeted for the more intensive supervision strategies.
- Periods of supervision are longer for high-risk offenders than for low risk offenders.
- More program referrals are made for high-risk offenders.
- More criminogenic than non-criminogenic needs are the focus of intervention.

Common Supervision Frameworks: Impact on Recidivism

Intensive supervision: Treatment-oriented (adults) — **21.9%**

Intensive probation with programming (juveniles) — **5%**

Intensive supervision: Surveillance-oriented (adults) — **0%**

Surveillance-oriented parole (juveniles) — **0%**

Adapted from Aos et al., 2001, 2006; Drake, 2007

Intermediate Sanctions for Offender Management: Impact on Recidivism

Electronic monitoring — **0%**

Drug testing — **0%**

Adult boot camps — **0%**

Shock incarceration (juveniles) — **6%**

Scared Straight programs (juveniles) — **6.8%**

*Adapted from Aos et al., 2001, 2006; Drake, 2007*

As depicted in the graph below, the more that supervision officers adhere to these risk-need conditions, the better the outcomes are (Lowenkamp et al., 2006). When multiple risk-need conditions are addressed through supervision practices, recidivism rates decline substantially, whereas in the absence of risk-need application during the course of supervision, recidivism rates may increase.

## Success-Driven Supervision Requires Balance

Throughout this handbook and in this section specifically, it has been emphasized that focusing on offender success is an important way to increase public safety in the short and long term. Sometimes, putting the spotlight on offender success is misinterpreted as meaning that surveillance, enforcement, and sanctioning are not important (or are less important) aspects of community supervision. This is certainly not the case. While the social casework activities that characterize success-driven supervision are necessary, they are not sufficient. Nor are the monitoring and enforcement activities sufficient by themselves.

As described previously, when supervision strategies become overly weighted toward monitoring and sanctioning, there is generally little to no impact on recidivism, at least not in the desired direction. There is also some evidence, albeit limited, that when the balance of supervision practices shifts primarily in favor of social casework activities, the outcomes are also less than optimal (Paparozzi & Gendreau, 2005). For example, researchers revealed that parolees who were supervised by officers with a social casework orientation had much higher reconviction and overall revocation rates than offenders supervised by officers with a more balanced orientation (i.e., a blend of enforcement and social casework) (Paparozzi & Gendreau, 2005). These findings led the investigators in this study to hypothesize that the officers who favored a social casework philosophy may not have provided adequate direction, structure, and limit setting and, as such, the offenders were held less accountable, were less engaged in the change process, and ultimately were less successful (Paparozzi & Gendreau, 2005).

The important message here is that community supervision agency leaders are advised not to adopt an either/or supervision philosophy in which either monitoring and enforcement or social casework occurs in the absence of the other. To be most effective with adult and juvenile offenders, these philosophies and practices must coexist, and the agency mission must take into

Adherence to Risk-Need Principles in Supervision Practices: Impact on Recidivism

Increased recidivism

Decreased recidivism

20%

10%

0%

-10%

-20%

■ Adhered to 0   ■ Adhered to 1-2   □ Adhered to 3-4

Adapted from Lowenkamp, Pealer, Smith, & Latessa, 2006
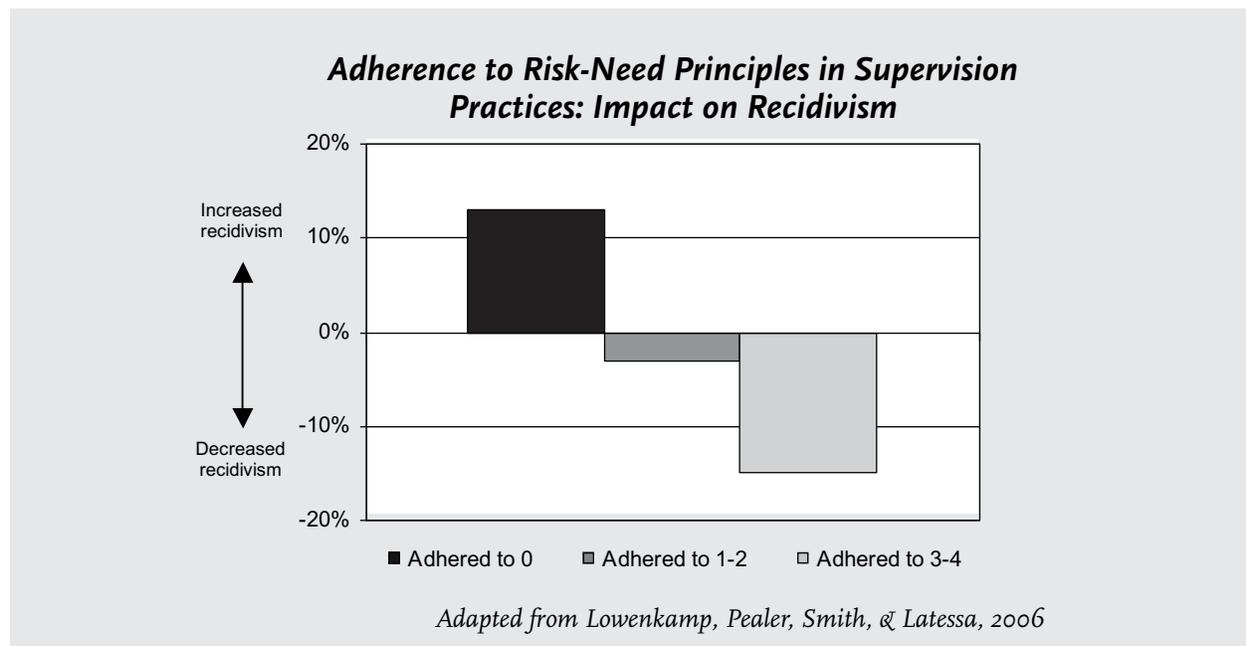
account the dual roles of supervision officers as monitors/enforcers and social caseworkers. After all, both are designed to achieve the same primary goal: to increase public safety. What differs are the ways in which these sets of activities help to achieve this common goal.

Supervision Philosophies and Functions Should be Balanced

Monitoring and enforcement | Social casework
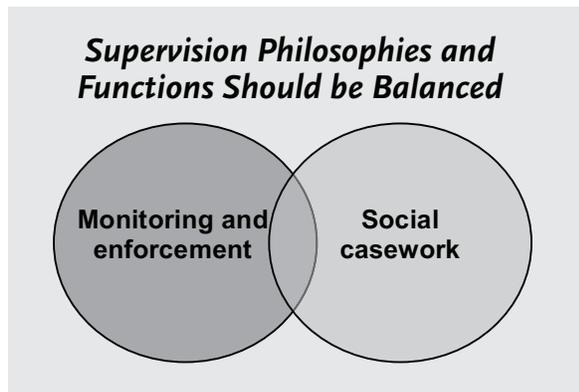
In effect, the monitoring/enforcement and the social casework functions represent two sides of the same coin. On the one side, the social casework supervision activities are designed to enhance offenders' internal controls and shape their behaviors so that they can ultimately remain stable, successful, productive, and crime-free in the community—eventually ultimately independent of being under the supervision of the corrections system. On the other side of the coin, monitoring/enforcement provides important external controls, structure, accountability, and public protection safeguards as offenders transition from correctional facilities to the community. In many ways, the external controls that occur via the enforcement and monitoring aspects of supervision provide a system of checks and balances for the internal controls that are being developed through the social casework aspects. When offenders demonstrate that their own internal controls are not adequate, supervision officers still have the leverage of the correctional system and formal risk management mechanisms to maintain public safety. Therefore, a balanced supervision approach provides officers with full coverage over the types of activities that are necessary for achieving successful outcomes.

Supervision Officers Should Be Recognized as Change Agents

It is unlikely that anyone would disagree with the idea that outcomes of a success-driven supervision strategy (and any other correctional intervention, for that matter) are ultimately a function of offenders' choices. This includes their willingness to commit to the change process, develop important self-management and problem solving skills, maintain prosocial attitudes and values, genuinely participate in programs and services that will help them acquire and refine skills, rely on appropriate community networks, and comply with established post-release conditions.

At the same time, supervision officers can be a powerful influence on offenders' attitudes and behaviors through their ongoing work with offenders throughout the course of supervision. This is one of the key distinctions between surveillance-oriented and success-driven approaches to supervision. Indeed, as described fully in Chapter 5 of this section of the handbook (Staff-Offender Interactions), all corrections practitioners—including supervision officers— can facilitate change among offenders by consistently using evidence-based relationship skills and practices in their routine interactions with offenders (Andrews & Bonta, 2007; Dowden & Andrews, 2004). From a practical perspective, supervision officers can be positive agents of change in the following ways (see Fulton, Stone, & Gendreau, 1994; Taxman, Yancey, & Bilanin, 2006):

- Developing productive, change-promoting relationships with offenders and their families in a way that decreases resistance and increases offender investment.
- Modeling during all supervision contacts the prosocial attitudes and behaviors they expect offenders to exhibit, and working with them during these contacts to practice effective problem-solving and other skills.
- Advocating for and brokering needs-based services for offenders and their families and supporting their participation in these programs and services.

- Providing incentives, rewards, and reinforcers consistently when offenders demonstrate prosocial attitudes and behaviors, attain established goals, and comply with supervision expectations.
- Using the firm but fair nature of the officer-offender relationship to demonstrate disapproval for antisocial attitudes and behaviors and to apply proportional sanctions when warranted.

All Supervision Contacts Should Be Meaningful and Purposeful

The aforementioned practices draw attention to another important difference between a surveillance-oriented and success-driven supervision approach: the nature and purpose of officer-offender contacts. Within a surveillance-oriented approach, contacts tend to become obligatory tasks that serve little purpose outside of meeting a policy-driven expectation or standard. Not surprisingly, contacts that occur primarily for the sake of *documenting* that they occurred do little to promote public safety or to facilitate offenders' successful reintegration into the community. On the other hand, officer-offender contacts within a success-driven approach are purposefully designed around measuring progress and achieving meaningful goals. In other words, supervision contacts are results driven (see, e.g., Altschuler & Armstrong, 1994; Fulton, et al., 1994; Taxman, Shepardson, & Byrne, 2004; Taxman et al., 2006; Wiebush et al., 2005).

Therefore, to maximize their ability to influence change and enhance outcomes, supervision officers must take advantage of the various face-to-face contacts (i.e., both field and office contacts) that they have with the adult and juvenile offenders on their caseloads. When used strategically, officer-offender contacts can be valuable for not only ensuring accountability and compliance, but also for facilitating offender change and success.

- *Initial contacts*. The initial interactions between supervision officers and offenders can go a long way in setting the stage for successful supervision outcomes, namely by providing excellent opportunities to begin engaging offenders and fostering their internal motivation. The use of Motivational Interviewing (described more fully in Chapter 5) is a specific strategy that can facilitate this process up front, as well as throughout the course of supervision, and it has become increasingly popular with supervision officers in recent years (Clark, Walters, Gingerich, & Meltzer, 2006; Ginsberg, Mann, Rotgers, &

Surveillance-Oriented vs. Success-Driven Supervision: How Do the Key Philosophies and Practices Differ?

Surveillance-Oriented
- Officers are viewed as enforcers of release conditions
- Monitoring occurs primarily to identify compliance and need for sanctions
- Contacts are driven by adherence to policies and standards
- Emphasis is on sanctions/punishment for noncompliance and problem behaviors
- Referrals to programs and services are ancillary/secondary
- Officers react after problems arise

Success-Driven
- Officers are viewed as agents of change
- Monitoring occurs to assess progress, goal attainment, and compliance
- Contacts are driven by problem-solving and change-promoting interests
- Emphasis is on reinforcers to promote positive behavioral change, sanctioning when warranted
- Advocacy and brokerage for programs and services are central
- Needs are anticipated in advance and officers intervene proactively

Adapted from Fulton et al., 1994; Taxman et al., 2006

Weeks, 2002; Miller & Rollnick, 2002; Walters, Clark, Gingerich, & Meltzer, 2007). Officers can also maximize the utility of initial contacts with the offenders assigned to their caseloads by reviewing risk-need assessment findings with them (see, e.g., Taxman et al., 2006; Taxman et al., 2004). Particularly when this occurs in conjunction with Motivational Interviewing techniques, it can assist offenders with developing insight into the relationship between identified criminogenic needs and their problem behaviors, and it can begin to facilitate recognition of important changes that they may need to make (see, e.g., Taxman et al., 2006; Taxman et al., 2004). Taking it a step further, when officers explain the various programs and services that can help offenders become successful in the community and prevent them from having further encounters with the justice system, offenders may be more motivated to participate in these programs. Finally, initial contacts are an important time for officers to review and clarify post-release supervision conditions with offenders, outline incentives and rewards that are associated with engagement in the change process and compliance with expectations, and explain the potential consequences and sanctions that are used to respond to violations.

Benefits of Supervision Officers' Use of Motivational Interviewing

- Ensures that officers take an active role in facilitating behavior change and influencing successful reentry
- Prepares offenders for the change process, increases internal motivation and investment
- Places responsibility on offenders, prevents officers from working harder than the offenders
- Provides officers specific tools for managing offender resistance and helps prevent difficult situations from getting worse
- Allows officers to address problem behaviors while still being motivational

Adapted from Clark et al., 2006

- *Home visits/contacts.* Supervision officers can use home visits to accomplish multiple important objectives as well. Over and above verifying offenders' residence and periodically confirming curfew compliance, home contacts allow officers to assess the quality and stability of the home environment and identify any potential risk factors (e.g., presence of drugs/alcohol, weapons, antisocial associates) that may signal a need to intervene. In addition, home contacts provide opportunities to observe the nature and quality of the interactions between offenders and their partners, parents, or other family members. During these contacts, officers can begin to engage these individuals as positive supports by identifying a common goal with the family members: to ensure and support the success of the offender. When officers establish these partnerships with family members, they have an additional set of eyes and ears that can be useful for holding offenders accountable, supporting change, and communicating about important issues that may arise.

- *Other collateral and community contacts.* Similar to home visits, other field contacts provide the opportunity for supervision officers to interact with offenders in natural environments to meet several objectives. For offenders who are employed, enrolled in school, or involved in a treatment program, field contacts in these settings can demonstrate to offenders that the officers are interested in and supportive of their participation in these prosocial activities. Officers can frame such contacts as a means of verifying and reinforcing that offenders are continuing to demonstrate that they are doing well, rather than simply verifying that the offenders are where they are supposed to be. In addition, officers can use these contacts to build relationships with employers, school officials, or providers and elicit their involvement as community supports for offenders. Field contacts can also be used to engage other individuals who may be members of offenders' community support networks, such as mentors, AA/NA sponsors, or members of the faith-based community.

Because of their routine interactions with the offenders, these individuals can provide officers with insights into offenders' day-to-day activities and behaviors through a perspective that tends to differ significantly from what the officer may observe during a face-to-face contact only with the offenders themselves.

- *Office contacts*. Although field contacts typically provide supervision officers with the richest and most diverse opportunities for both monitoring and supporting offenders, office contacts can also be meaningful. For example, office contacts allow supervision officers and offenders to engage and interact without the distractions of the home, work, or school environment. This may be especially important when concerns or other issues need to be raised, by either the officer or the offender, in a more discrete setting. Office contacts can also be used purposefully as behavioral contingencies to shape offenders' behaviors. Reporting requirements can be reduced when an offender has consistently demonstrated responsibility and progress, or increased when greater accountability is needed because of problem behaviors or violations of post-release conditions.

Responses to Violations Should Be Measured and Proportional

Undoubtedly, some adult and juvenile offenders will exhibit problem behaviors and violate release conditions following their return to the community. Because the overarching goal of successful reentry is to promote public safety, supervision officers must be ready and willing to respond effectively to these violations. This does not mean, however, that a revocation of conditional release and a return to incarceration will be the most appropriate, effective, or efficient means to that end (see, e.g., Altschuler & Armstrong, 1994; Burke, 2004; Carter, 2001). Indeed, while some violations significantly compromise public safety (e.g., committing a violent crime), others are more "technical" in nature (e.g., missing work, failing to report for an office contact) and do not pose an unacceptable threat. Some violations are driven by offenders' firmly entrenched antisocial attitudes, deliberate disregard for supervision expectations, and active resistance to the change process. Yet others may be situationally driven or symptomatic of other difficulties (e.g., mental health issues, family chaos, relationship problems, financial hardships, substance abuse relapse).

Technical Violation Rates As a Function of Parole Officers' Orientation to Supervision
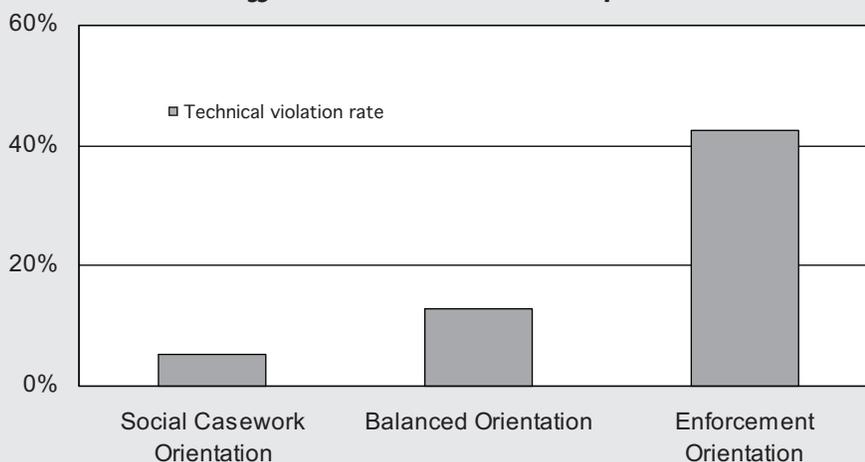
Adapted from Paparozzi & Gendrea, 2005

These and other differences in the nature of (and reasons for) violation behaviors mean that the manner in which officers respond should be varied, flexible, and well-informed, based on the individual circumstances of any given case (see, e.g., Altschuler & Armstrong, 1994; Burke, 2004; Carter, 2001). However, agencies must also take steps to prevent officers from responding in widely inconsistent and largely subjective ways. Disparate and inequitable responses to violations can occur when policies provide insufficient guidance and structure for officers and can also be a function of officers' different personalities and styles, philosophies about supervision, and interpretations of policies (Burke, 2004; Carter, 2001; Paparozzi & Gendreau, 2005).

For example, supervision officers whose supervision approach is centered exclusively on surveillance and monitoring may be overly rigid, crack down on offenders, and provide harsh sanctions for all technical violations when less onerous responses would have been appropriate or sufficient. While this might have an immediate effect on recidivism (primarily because offenders are more apt to be revoked and returned to incarceration before a crime actually occurs), it does not promote successful reentry or reduce recidivism over the long term. Conversely, some officers tend to be overly lenient when problem behaviors arise and may therefore be less inclined to cite offenders for technical violations even when they should, which does not serve public safety interests either.

Research on this very issue reveals technical violation rates vary considerably in relation to officers' orientations toward supervision (Paparozzi & Gendreau, 2005). This highlights again the need for a balanced approach to post-release supervision in which responses to violations are measured and proportional.

When thinking about how best to manage violations, it can be a valuable exercise for agency administrators to work closely with officers in the field to identify the overarching goal of post-release supervision, envision what an ideal supervision

system might look like, and then examine whether their current responses to violations support that goal and resemble that ideal system (Burke, 2004; Carter, 2001). If the goal of supervision is to facilitate offenders' successful reentry as a means of increasing public safety, the following may be particularly helpful principles and ideals against which agencies can gauge their current approaches (Burke, 2004; Carter, 2001):

- Adult and juvenile offenders (and their families) clearly understand the expectations of post-release supervision and recognize that any problem behaviors or noncompliance will result in some type of sanction or response.
- Supervision practices are designed to prevent violations by identifying offenders' risk and needs, brokering services proactively, assessing progress routinely, and limiting the number of supervision conditions imposed to prevent unnecessary overload.
- Officers respond to every violation in order to ensure that offender accountability remains a visible priority.
- Officers have at their disposal a range of sanctions and other strategies for responding to violations, and they are empowered to impose lower-level sanctions when warranted and without unnecessary administrative or bureaucratic barriers.
- All responses are timely and proportional, thus demonstrating an immediate and logical link between offenders' problem behaviors and the accompanying responses.
- The lowest level sanction or response is always used in order to manage correctional resources effectively and allow offenders the ongoing opportunity to modify their behaviors and work toward successfully completing supervision, provided that public safety will not be unnecessarily compromised.
- Referrals to programs and services are included as potential responses to violations as appropriate, so that offenders can use skill-building and risk-reducing resources to enhance their ability to be productive and stable in the community.
- The system processes violations efficiently for

the benefit of both the offenders and the officers.

- External stakeholders understand the agency's overall philosophy, approach, and purposes with respect to responding to violations.
- Responses to violations assist officers and offenders alike with attaining successful supervision goals.

As is the case with other offender management decisions, supervision officers are most likely to identify effective responses to violation behaviors when they collaborate with other key stakeholders to consider potential interventions within the context of community safety and offender needs (see, e.g., Burke, 2004; Carter, 2001).

A Success-Driven Approach Requires the Support of Supervision Officers

In some community corrections and supervision agencies, a success-driven model has been established through these agencies' vision, mission, and goals and the officers have subsequently bought in to the associated philosophies and practices. However, administrators and managers who are at a different stage and are currently considering adopting such an approach may have concerns about the extent to which they will experience skepticism and resistance. Their concerns may be most significant with respect to the officers who will be expected to engage in and balance

the enforcement/monitoring and social casework activities that characterize the success-driven supervision model.

Educating officers about the superior outcomes and public safety benefits of a success-driven approach can be an important first step in garnering their support. This may be especially compelling when officers are enlightened about any offender management or supervision strategies they use on a day-to-day basis that have little to no impact on recidivism and that may actually increase recidivism of the adult or juvenile offenders on their caseloads. In addition, when agencies assist supervision officers with understanding the ways in which a success-driven approach will actually benefit them (e.g., encountering less resistance from offenders and their families, working with offenders who are more internally motivated, managing their caseloads more effectively and efficiently, better outcomes for offenders on their caseloads), they may be apt to recognize its utility and value. Finally, it can be worthwhile to help officers and supervisors recognize that using evidence-based supervision strategies will put them and the agency on more solid ground in the event that a case with a particularly negative outcome comes under scrutiny from the public or other external stakeholders.

As some agency leaders begin to take steps toward formally implementing a success-driven

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What Factors Should Be Considered When Responding to Violations?

- Nature and seriousness of the problem behavior
- Degree to which community safety was compromised
- Current risk level of the offender, or recent change in risk level
- Overall stability in the community, including employment, housing, financial, social, and family circumstances
- Responses to prior interventions or sanctions
- Ongoing patterns of noncompliance versus an isolated instance
- Presence of assets, resources, community supports, or services and
- Extent to which the offender can be realistically and safely maintained in the community with adjustments to the supervision plan

Adapted from Burke, 2004; Carter, 2004

By Their Own Accounts: What Parole Officers Need To Promote Successful Reentry

Greater latitude to exert authority/control
Stricter laws or policies
Treatment services for parolees
Employment services for paroless
Educational services for parolees
Public education about parole officers' roles
Public tolerance for parolees

0%   20%   40%   60%   80%
Percentage Agreement
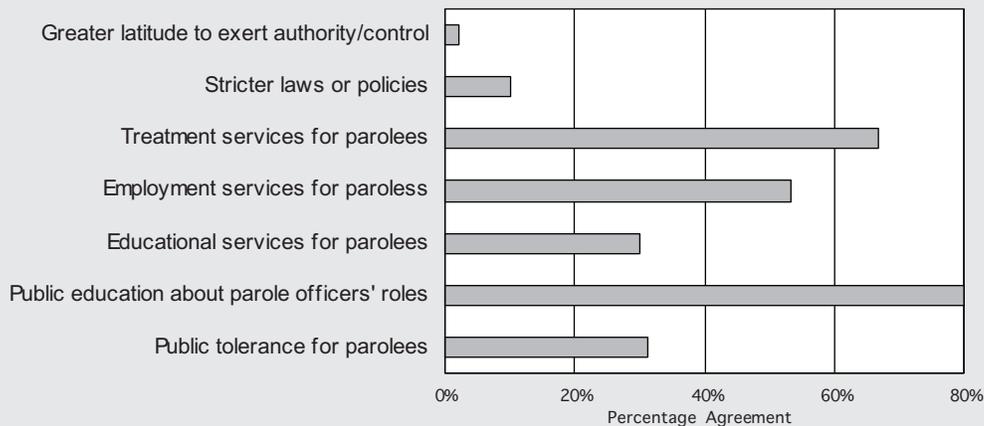
Adapted from Quinn & Gould, 2003

model, they might be pleasantly surprised to find that officers' existing beliefs and desires about what effective supervision should look like are already congruent with such an approach. Indeed, just as researchers have found that support for rehabilitative efforts is not uncommon within the range of staff working in correctional institutions (e.g., custody officers, correctional case managers, unit supervisors) (Farkas, 1999; Larivière & Robinson, 1996), others have found that similar orientations are prevalent among probation and parole officers (see, e.g., Fulton, Stichman, Travis, & Latessa, 1997; Paparozzi & Gendreau, 2005; Quinn & Gould, 2003; Seiter, 2002; Seiter & West, 2003; West & Seiter, 2004).

For example, supervision officers in multiple studies recognize the importance of their dual roles as enforcers/monitors and caseworkers for promoting successful offender outcomes and public safety (Fulton et al., 1997; Quinn & Gould, 2003; Seiter, 2002; Seiter & West, 2003; West & Seiter, 2004). More specifically, many understand the value of assessing offenders' individual risk and needs early in the supervision process and proactively linking them to appropriate programs, services, and other resources, rather than making referrals primarily in response to problems that arise later. They also cite the

importance of keeping abreast of offenders' employment needs, making job referrals, helping them obtain and maintain employment, and providing on-the-job support and encouragement. As illustrated in the chart above, when supervision officers rate the types of things that will allow them to carry out their duties more effectively, their responses overwhelmingly favor more programs and services to support offenders' successful reintegration (as well as public support for reentry efforts), rather than additional get tough measures or enforcement tools (Quinn & Gould, 2003).

Taken together, this information is noteworthy for agency officials and other key policymakers in the following ways:

- It signals the possibility that obtaining buy-in from supervision officers should not be assumed to be a daunting or insurmountable task.
- It implies that the attitudes and values of many staff members, and arguably some of their current supervision practices, may already lean in the direction of the evidence-based correctional literature pertaining to supervision of adult and juvenile offenders.
- It suggests that the line level staff directly charged with ensuring public safety, as well as

the offenders for whom they are responsible, may currently lack necessary resources.

Therefore, to increase the likelihood that supervision officers will be both willing and able to operate within a balanced, success-oriented framework, agency leaders must be prepared to critically evaluate internal and external resources, staffing patterns, and caseloads (Burrell, 2006; DeMichele, 2007). Indeed, for community supervision officers who are attempting to implement evidence-based supervision practices, caseload size is perhaps the most significant barrier (Burrell, 2006; DeMichele, 2007). If officers are expected to employ effective strategies, smaller caseloads are necessary (Burrell, 2006; DeMichele, 2007).[9] This allows the officers greater opportunities to develop and use relationship skills and other techniques to engage offenders, broker appropriate programs and services, foster community ties, and coordinate case management efforts with other stakeholders involved in each case (Altschuler & Armstrong, 1994; Burrell, 2006; Caplan, 2004; DeMichele, 2007; West & Seiter, 2004; Wiebush et al., 2005).

A Model Strategy for Adult Offenders: Proactive Community Supervision (PCS)

The Proactive Community Supervision (PCS) model is a key example of a balanced, success-driven approach (see Taxman et al., 2006; Taxman et al., 2004). Broadly speaking, PCS is designed to promote successful supervision outcomes by engaging offenders early in the supervision process, employing supervision strategies and other interventions that target criminogenic needs, and fostering positive involvement with community support networks. Consistent with the principles of effective correctional intervention, PCS emphasizes the importance of assessing risk and criminogenic needs, prioritizing interventions to higher risk offenders, and making interactions between supervision officers and offenders purposeful during the ongoing supervision/case management process. Within the State of Maryland, the Division of Parole and Probation implemented the PCS model through the following methods:

- Agency guidelines and expectations were established regarding officer-offender interactions within local offices in order to create the positive environment necessary to engage offenders and support change.
- Officers were trained to use Motivational Interviewing skills and techniques.
- Supervisors and managers provided coaching to officers, observed the quality of officer-offender contacts, and provided feedback.
- Officers were trained to use the Level of Service Inventory–Revised (LSI-R) as a reliable way to assess risk and needs and develop well-informed and responsive case plans.
- Case plans were designed to include a combination of internal and external controls, as well as programs and services to target criminogenic needs.
- Supervisors were required to review and approve supervision plans to ensure that these plans were individualized based on offenders' risk and needs.
- Community partnerships were developed to address employment, programming, and monitoring.
- Performance measures that focused on both offender outcomes as well as the outcomes within individual supervision units were established.

Preliminary findings in Maryland are very promising. Compared to a matched group of offenders supervised in a more traditional approach, offenders under the PCS model have significantly lower rearrest rates, and fewer warrants are issued for technical violations (Taxman et al., 2006).

A Model Strategy for Juvenile Offenders:
The Intensive Aftercare Program (IAP)

In the 1990s, concerns arose throughout the country about the transition and reentry of high-risk juveniles from institutional programs to the community. Subsequently, the Intensive Aftercare Program (IAP) model was developed and became widely recognized as a promising reentry initiative for juvenile offenders (Altschuler & Armstrong, 1994; Wiebush et al., 2005). The IAP model is designed around three key sets of core activities: prerelease planning and preparation during the juvenile's incarceration, deliberate and structured transition planning that requires both institutional and aftercare staff to be involved prior to and following release, and substantial reintegration activities that balance needed programs and services with external controls and conditions.

On a more specific level, and congruent with evidence-based correctional literature, the following case management practices are emphasized (see Althschuler & Armstrong, 1994; Wiebush et al., 2005):

- Using validated risk assessment tools to identify higher risk juveniles for the focus of intervention efforts.
- Creating individualized, assessment-driven case management plans that include family, peer, school, and other social networks.
- Identifying service needs beginning at the point of intake and beginning to address these needs during the course of incarceration, while proactively anticipating community-based resources that will be needed post-release.
- Maintaining a balance between monitoring/surveillance activities and programs and services.
- Ensuring that case management efforts are coordinated by community supervision officers or case managers with small caseloads.
- Implementing a system of rewards and incentives in combination with graduated and proportional sanctions.
- Establishing and maintaining key linkages with community-based resources and other positive networks of support in the community.

The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) sponsored a multi-phase, multi-site implementation and evaluation project using the IAP model. Although superior outcomes in terms of long-term recidivism reductions have not yet been consistently identified, a number of promising findings have been revealed (Wiebush et al., 2005). For example, sites that implemented the IAP model enhanced program and service access for high risk juvenile offenders reduced institutional misconduct among IAP juveniles, reduced the length of time these juveniles remained incarcerated, and promoted a more balanced approach to post-release supervision.

Recommended Maximum Caseload Sizes for Community Supervision Officers		
	Adult offenders	Juvenile offenders
Highest risk	20	15
Moderate to high risk	50	30
Low risk	200	100

Adapted from Burrell, 2006

In addition to adequately addressing caseload sizes, administrators can increase officers' effectiveness by reviewing and eliminating performance expectations that are outdated and no longer of value, redeploying existing resources, increasing agency capacity through additional appropriations, or using trained paraprofessionals (e.g., case aides, trackers, criminal justice interns, volunteers) to provide support to officers.

Conclusion

By definition, successful reentry is contingent on offenders' ongoing stability in the community. Because supervision officers have such important responsibilities for managing offenders following release from incarceration, they are uniquely poised to influence positive outcomes, specifically by way of their supervision philosophies and practices. The best available research indicates that a balanced, success-driven approach to supervision, whereby officers blend enforcement and monitoring with casework activities, is effective in reducing recidivism. As such, when implemented in accordance with the principles of effective correctional intervention and paired with evidence-based programs, services, and practices, this model of post-release supervision plays a key role in facilitating public safety through successful reentry.

KEY STEPS

- **Ensure that promoting offender success is an explicit focus of the agency's vision/mission for post-release supervision.**
- **Critically examine the extent to which current supervision strategies are consistent with evidence-based principles and practices, and be genuinely committed to make adjustments accordingly.**
- **Establish supervision policies and practices that include both surveillance and monitoring activities and social casework activities (including meaningful field contacts) and include these responsibilities in officers' performance expectations and reviews.**
- **Assess prospective supervision officers' attitudes and beliefs about supervision as part of the hiring and selection process, with ideal candidates demonstrating support for a balanced philosophy.**
- **Review current and historical violation data critically to identify any trends that signal under- or over-responding to offenders' problem behaviors, and create a system of graduated violation responses that requires timely, proportional, efficient, and effective responses to all violations.**
- **Develop performance indicators that include process elements and outcomes for supervision practices (e.g., application of risk-need principles, number and type of program referrals, nature and frequency of field contacts, technical violation and revocation rates).**

CHAPTER 5: STAFF-OFFENDER INTERACTIONS

Introduction

As outlined in the preceding chapters in this section of the handbook, successful reentry outcomes depend upon the implementation of multiple evidence-based principles and practices specific to assessment, programs and services, and supervision. Although the combination of these strategies is necessary to achieve positive correctional outcomes, it is not sufficient. Indeed, a key lesson from the research is that none of these components will be fully effective unless offenders are motivated internally, engaged actively, and influenced positively throughout the intervention process. The latter elements can best be realized through productive relationships and interactions between correctional practitioners and the adult or juvenile offenders with whom they have routine contact.

This chapter provides an overview of the powerful influences of staff-offender interactions on offender engagement, motivation, and behavioral change and highlights the specific qualities, skills, and behaviors of staff that are important to promoting desired outcomes among offenders. These elements are known as relationship and structuring principles of effective correctional intervention (see Andrews & Bonta, 2007; Dowden & Andrews, 2004).

Successful Reentry is Dependent upon Offenders' Readiness and Internal Motivation to Change

Most professionals and others would likely agree that people in general are not likely to change their behaviors until they first recognize a need to change. Furthermore, most would probably concur that the greatest potential to make lasting changes ultimately stems from internal motivation and genuine engagement in an intervention process, rather than from external pressures alone. This is, in fact, true for individuals across most settings, including adults and juveniles involved in criminal and juvenile justice systems.

Unfortunately, correctional systems are not typically designed to promote engagement and internal motivation among offenders and, in some ways, the very nature of these systems can actually increase resistance (Ginsberg et al., 2002; Taxman et al., 2004). Consider, for example, the typical environment within correctional facilities, where maintaining safety, order, and structure are paramount. Staff members control the movements and activities of offenders, who are limited substantially in terms of what they are allowed to do and when and how they are allowed to do it. Similarly, when offenders are released to the community, multiple conditions and restrictions are imposed on them as a means of behavioral control in the interest of maintaining accountability and public safety.

Although the use of external controls is an important and necessary feature within institutional corrections and community supervision settings, it potentially fosters an underlying adversarial us versus them way of thinking among both offenders and the staff charged with managing them. Additionally, it can inadvertently place responsibility for offenders' behaviors on institutional corrections and community supervision professionals rather than on the offenders themselves. Moreover, these controls do not produce lasting effects on public safety when used in isolation. Observed success tends to be short-lived because it is primarily a function of offenders demonstrating compliance to avoid further sanctions or restrictions.

Successful reentry over the long term depends heavily upon offenders being internally motivated to make attitudinal and behavioral changes. They

must be ready and willing to engage in the change process while incarcerated, continue as they reintegrate into the community, and maintain these changes over time. Therefore, institutional corrections and community supervision staff must consider the ways in which they can facilitate change (not solely compliance) with adult and juvenile offenders. Decades of research indicates that this is best accomplished through quality working relationships and interactions between staff and offenders.

Change-Promoting Relationships between Institutional Correctional and Community Supervision Practitioners and Offenders are Grounded in Common Characteristics

Within the mental health and behavioral health field, evidence-based practices emphasize the importance of therapist-client relationships (see Castonguay & Beutler, 2006; Norcross, 2002). The nature of these relationships can impact treatment outcomes in both positive and negative ways, over and above the actual interventions that are provided. Service providers maximize the effectiveness of interventions when relationships with their clients are characterized by a strong therapeutic alliance, warmth and empathy, effective management of attitudes or feelings about their clients, collaborative development of treatment goals, and tailored responses to clients' readiness and motivation to change (see Castonguay & Beutler, 2006; Miller & Rollnick, 2002; Norcross, 2002).

Although the relationships between staff and offenders differ in many ways from therapist-client relationships, the overall quality of their interactions should be similar, if they share the goal of promoting and maintaining positive change. Indeed, the evidence-based correctional literature confirms that the nature of staff-offender relationships contributes substantially to the effectiveness of interventions (see, e.g., Andrews & Bonta, 2007; Dowden & Andrews, 2004). Specifically, in order to be most effective

in facilitating engagement and change, institutional correctional and community supervision staff must demonstrate the following qualities in their working relationships with offenders:

- Mutual respect
- Openness
- Attentiveness
- Structure and support
- Warmth and empathy
- Genuineness
- Flexibility

These characteristics collectively illustrate the relationship principle of effective correctional intervention and create an environment that allows adult and juvenile offenders to feel comfortable expressing themselves, become increasingly open and less resistant to receiving feedback, and begin to consider the need to make adjustments in their lives (see, e.g., Andrews & Bonta, 2007; Dowden & Andrews, 2004). Additionally, establishing such a relationship allows practitioners to better assess the extent to which offenders are ready and internally motivated to change initially and over time. In turn, interventions and strategies are adjusted accordingly in order to minimize resistance and continue to facilitate engagement and motivation throughout offenders' tenure in the system (see, e.g., Miller & Rollnick, 2002). This type of relationship between staff and offenders is in clear contrast to the more traditional staff-offender relationship, which tends to be built upon power, authority, and control.

Motivational Interviewing Provides a Model Framework for Enhancing Offender Engagement

One of the most promising approaches to increasing individuals' interest and commitment in the intervention process, including those within the criminal justice system, is the use of Motivational Interviewing (Ginsberg et al., 2002; Miller & Rollnick, 2002). Broadly speaking, as applied to institutional correctional and community supervision practices, this strategy

Important Groundwork for Increasing the Effectiveness of Correctional Practices

| Establish a Change-Promoting Relationship | Explore Offender's Internal Motivation and Readiness to Change | Engage Offender, Foster Internal Motivation | Manage Resistance Effectively, Promote Ongoing Engagement |
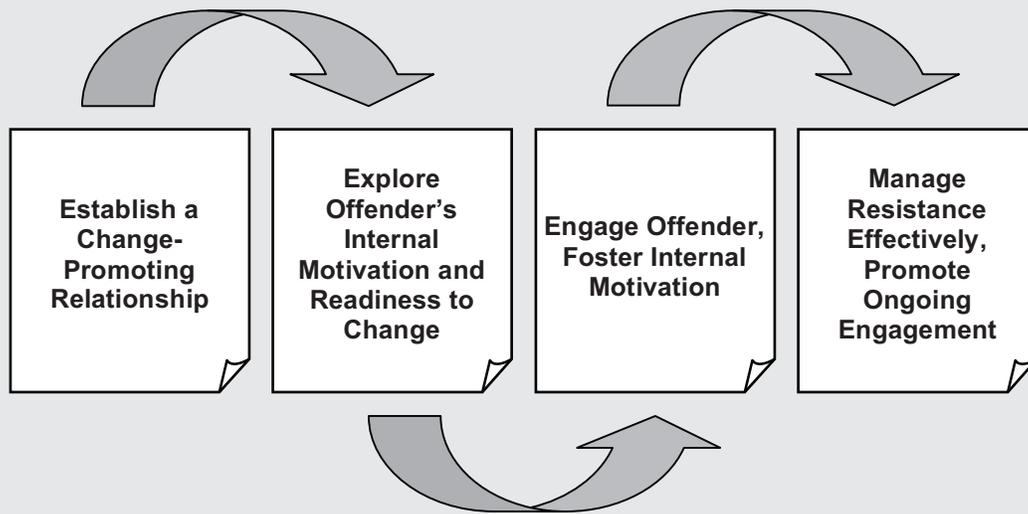
involves establishing collaborative relationships between institutional and community practitioners and the offenders with whom they work, respecting the offenders' current perspectives, and facilitating their readiness and motivation to change without attempting to force change upon them (Ginsberg et al., 2002).

The guiding principles of Motivational Interviewing are as follows (see Miller & Rollnick, 2002):

- *Express empathy*. When individuals feel accepted and do not perceive themselves as being judged, they are more likely to engage with practitioners and are subsequently more open to change. The skillful use of reflective listening without communicating criticism or blame is an important part of this process.

- *Develop discrepancy*. Rather than telling people why they should change their behaviors, staff should assist them with self-assessing or self-diagnosing. As a result, individuals are able to see on their own the incongruence between important personal goals and values and their actual behaviors. In turn, they are

independently able to determine the need for change.

- *Roll with resistance*. Instead of engaging in counterproductive confrontations with clients when resistance, reluctance, or ambivalence is expressed, practitioners should accept this resistance as an understandable part of the change process. It also provides a signal that a new strategy may be warranted. Effectively working through resistance can take the form of inviting the client to consider new information or perspectives, while ensuring that the practitioner does not impose his or her own viewpoints. This gives the client permission to accept or reject the information, which ultimately allows the client to remain in the driver's seat.

- *Support self-efficacy*. Even when people independently recognize a problem and a need to change, they are unlikely to engage in the intervention process if they feel hopeless or powerless about their actual ability to change. Practitioners must view the individuals as capable of change, convey this confidence, and assist them with believing

that they are fully capable of overcoming difficulties and successfully changing.

By understanding Motivational Interviewing philosophies and using these strategies effectively, institutional corrections and community supervision practitioners are better equipped to interact effectively with offenders at different stages of change, foster internal motivation, and facilitate offenders' ownership of the change process (Clark et al., 2006; Ginsberg et al., 2002). As such, interventions are more likely to be responsive and effective.

Supporting Offender Change is the Responsibility of All Staff

Without a doubt, offender participation in evidence-based programs and services (e.g., cognitive skills training, substance abuse treatment) enhances reentry efforts and reduces recidivism by facilitating positive changes in criminogenic needs. It should be noted, however, that potential for offender change is not confined to offenders' physical presence and participation in correctional programs. This is good news, as programming encounters represent only a small fraction of the ways in which offenders spend their time either in institutions or in the community.

Some of the most powerful opportunities to support offender change exist outside of the formal treatment setting and occur as a result of the behavioral influences of corrections practitioners. Indeed, social learning and behavioral principles demonstrate that human behavior in general is shaped by people's observations of, and interactions with, reinforcements and punishments from others. The compelling evidence underlying these practices, therefore, has significant implications for staff-offender interactions, particularly those involving front-line staff such as custody officers, youth care workers, supervision officers, program staff, and others who have routine contact with offenders (e.g., work crew supervisors, education professionals, community mentors). Specifically, the attitudes and behaviors modeled by these staff, and the ways in which staff members

respond to offenders, have a considerable impact on shaping ongoing and future attitudes and behaviors of offenders (see, e.g., Andrews & Bonta, 2007). Put simply, regardless of whether they are aware of it, all institutional corrections and community supervision staff are influential change agents. In turn, they contribute in both positive and negative ways, and on an ongoing basis, to reentry outcomes.

Every Interaction Provides an Opportunity to Influence Positive Attitudinal and Behavioral Changes

To take full advantage of the routine teaching moments that exist at any given point in time, it is important that staff members understand and use the following set of skills and practices to structure and guide their everyday contacts with offenders (i.e., the structuring principle) (Andrews & Bonta, 2007; Dowden & Andrews, 2004):

- *Model Desired Attitudes and Behaviors*. The more offenders are exposed to prosocial attitudes and behaviors, the more likely they are to begin to adopt and display such attitudes and behaviors. Therefore, staff must always model the kinds of prosocial attitudes and behaviors that are desired of offenders, such as healthy communication patterns. This is especially important given that many offenders come from home and community environments in which prosocial attitudes and values are not predominant and may even be viewed in negative terms.

- *Promote Skill Acquisition and Effective Problem-Solving Through Structure and Practice*. As suggested by the adage practice makes perfect, offenders are better at adopting new skills when they have the opportunity to learn and practice those skills in a structured way. Staff must clearly describe and explain the skills that are needed (e.g., key steps in the problem-solving process), model the proper ways to use these skills, provide offenders with opportunities to practice these skills (e.g.,

through role-playing), receive feedback about how well they demonstrated the skills, and ensure that they are given additional opportunities for skill practice and refinement. Enhancing problem-solving and other key skill sets (e.g., anger management, assertiveness, and conflict resolution) will assist offenders with remaining successful in the community. Correctional facilities provide multiple real-life opportunities for staff to work with offenders on these skills. Similarly, community supervision officers can assist offenders and their families with putting these skills to use as they experience actual challenges in the community.

• *Use Reinforcers and Incentives Consistently and Generously*. Reinforcement involves providing a positive response or reward or removing a negative element as a means of increasing the frequency of a desired behavior. Because of the powerful motivating influence on behavior change, reinforcements or rewards should be immediately and consistently provided to offenders any time they demonstrate positive, prosocial attitudes or behaviors. To be most effective, experts suggest that reinforcers should outweigh the use of punishments or sanctions using an ideal ratio of four reinforcers for every punisher (see Andrews & Bonta, 2007). However, consistent and generous reinforcement can be challenging in correctional contexts, as it is often human nature to focus on problem behaviors. Additionally, for some staff, going out of one's way to reinforce offenders simply for meeting basic expectations may feel unnatural and unnecessary. Nonetheless, the use of reinforcements and incentives is essential for facilitating offender motivation and positive change.

• *Use Disapproval and Punishment Wisely and Selectively*. Punishment is the act of imposing a negative stimulus or removing a positive one when problem behavior is demonstrated. Punishment can be fairly effective for promoting short-term compliance (simply to

avoid the punishment or sanction), but it has little effect on enhancing internal motivation or facilitating long-term changes in attitudes or behaviors. Therefore, reinforcement is the preferred approach. Within corrections, a combination of punishments and reinforcement is required, as some behaviors (e.g., high-risk behavior, noncompliance, new arrest) require that sanctions are applied in the interest of deterrence, retribution, and broad public safety interests. To reiterate, however, for every punisher used in response to a problem behavior, four reinforcers for prosocial behaviors should be provided in order to have the most impact on behavior change.

• *Remain Authoritative, Not Authoritarian*. It is not uncommon for the interactions between some correctional practitioners and offenders to be characterized by positional power, control, inflexibility, and demands for obedience. Not surprisingly, this authoritarian approach is not conducive to increasing engagement or internal motivation. Much like the use of punishment, it may result in a degree of short-term compliance but not lasting change. Correctional staff members are more effective change agents when they instead use an authoritative approach that includes respect, predictability, encouragement, and the leverage of a productive working relationship. This firm but fair approach allows practitioners to establish the rapport necessary for engaging offenders while maintaining clear expectations, limits, rewards, and consequences. As such, behaviors can be gradually influenced without increasing resistance that arises from attempting to force change.

• *Assume an Advocacy and Brokerage Role*. Program staff, correctional case managers, and supervision officers should work with offenders and their families to identify needed programs, services, and resources within facilities and the community. Facilitating access or serving as a liaison and link between these resources and the offenders is an
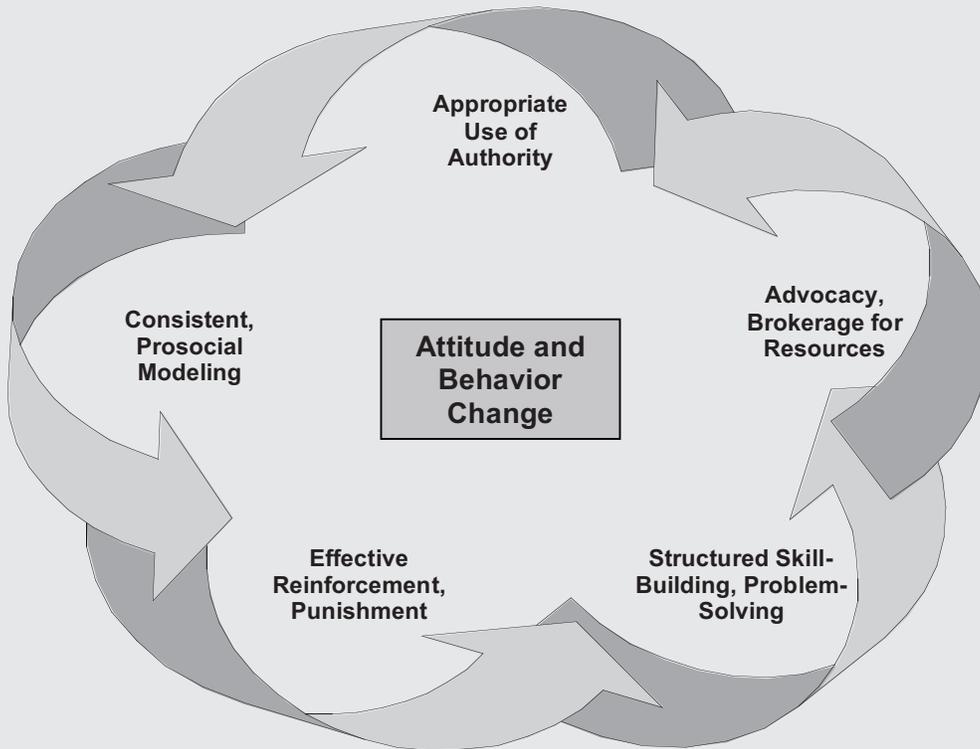
important aspect of supporting and maintaining the change process. It also allows offenders and their families to recognize staff members' ongoing interest in and commitment to their successful reintegration in the community.

Staff-Offender Interactions Should Be a Visible Priority Within the Organizational Culture

In order to translate the theories behind these relationship and structuring principles into consistent and effective agency-wide practices, they must be made an explicit priority within institutional corrections and community supervision agencies. Indeed, establishing productive working relationships that facilitate engagement, motivation, and change should be a given for all staff and should be clearly reflected within an agency's driving philosophies, mission, policies, and culture. This is most likely to be achieved and highly visible when agency

administrators and managers take the following actions on a consistent basis:

- Understand and target the attitudes and orientations staff have about offenders and offender interventions that may either support or undermine a change-promoting environment.
- Clarify the underlying rationale and bottom line for a specific focus on staff-offender interactions, both in terms of what such a focus means and what it does not mean.
- Rigorously pursue and support staff development issues (i.e., preservice training, ongoing in-service training, direct supervision) to ensure that staff acquire and use relationship and structuring skills routinely and effectively.
- Demonstrate agency investment in and commitment to these principles through staff recruitment, selection, and retention efforts.

Presence of a Rehabilitation-Supportive Orientation among Various Institutional Corrections Professionals
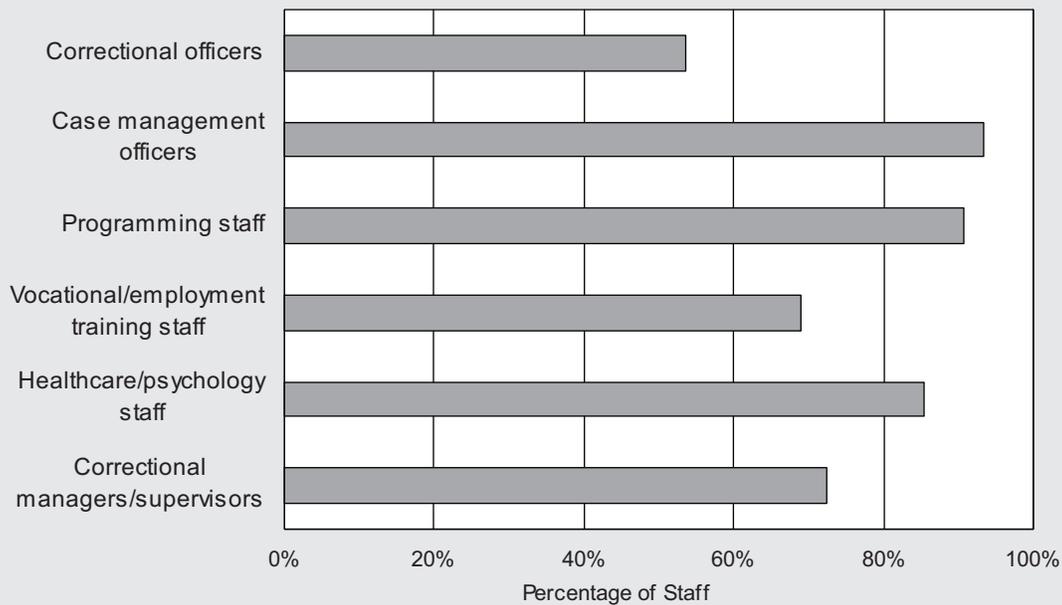
Adapted from Larivière & Robinson, 1996

Understand and Target Staff Attitudes and Beliefs

Without question, obtaining and maintaining staff buy-in is an integral aspect of establishing the overall agency culture. It is particularly salient with respect to front-line staff (e.g., corrections/custody officers, supervision officers). By virtue of their frequent contact with offenders, these staff members are in ideal positions to facilitate offender engagement, motivation, and behavioral change. In addition, because the perspectives of front-line staff influence their day-to-day interactions with adult and juvenile offenders, it is important to ensure that their orientations toward this work are congruent with the expectations and values of the agency.

In some jurisdictions, staff attitudes are already properly aligned or, at the very least, within the realm of the desired culture. For example, investigations involving supervision officers' viewpoints reveal that they consider offender rehabilitation as well as their social casework responsibilities (e.g., advocacy, referrals, and service brokerage) as very important to successful reentry (see, e.g., Fulton et al., 1997; Paparozzi & Gendreau, 2005; Quinn & Gould, 2003; Seiter, 2002; Seiter & West, 2003; West & Seiter, 2004). Similarly, as seen in the preceding graph, research indicates that institutional corrections staff in a variety of positions, including correctional/custody officers, are supportive of correctional rehabilitation efforts (Farkas, 1999; Larivière &

The 3 Rs of Staff-Offender Interactions in the Oregon Department of Corrections

As a key component of implementing evidence-based practices to promote successful reentry, the Oregon Department of Corrections (2007) promotes productive interactions between staff and offenders through a "3 Rs" philosophy:

- Role model pro-social behaviors
- Reinforce positive behaviors
- Redirect negative behaviors

Robinson, 1996) and may even have an interest in assisting in the intervention process (Larivière & Robinson, 1996). Furthermore, when compared to correctional officers whose orientations toward offenders are punitive, officers with intervention-supportive attitudes are more likely to experience the following benefits (Larivière & Robinson, 1996):

- Greater career and job satisfaction.
- Less job stress.
- More empowerment on the job.
- An increased sense of physical safety on the job.
- Greater support for the agency mission.

Whether a function of preexisting attitudes, staff selection practices, training efforts, and/or internalization of agency missions, this data provides an optimistic perspective about the receptiveness of front-line staff to their roles as change agents.

Of course, not all corrections professionals hold attitudes and beliefs that are naturally conducive to maintaining productive interactions with offenders or supporting intervention efforts. Some are not opposed to other staff (e.g., treatment and education personnel) having a role in the offender engagement, motivation, and change process, but they may view their own professional responsibilities as limited to custody, control, and enforcement (see, e.g., Farkas, 1999; Fulton et al., 1997). Others may be leery altogether about offenders' abilities to change and they may question an approach that focuses on quality staff-offender relationships as an important component of the correctional system, potentially viewing it as being soft on offenders. Still others, particularly staff members with longevity in their positions (who have likely witnessed shifting correctional philosophies and priorities over the years) may simply go through the motions while waiting for this perceived phase to pass. Yet despite having attitudes that are less than enthusiastic about the value of correctional interventions, these staff members are not necessarily resistant to assuming a

change agent role. Indeed, even correctional officers who hold negative attitudes toward offenders and are largely punitive in their orientations express a willingness to contribute to an agency mission that emphasizes effective correctional practices (Larivière & Robinson, 1996).

Taken together, these and other similar findings speak to the importance of understanding staff values and perspectives, taking steps to reinforce complementary orientations, and targeting non-supportive attitudes for change. This can help foster an agency culture that embraces the use of relationship and structuring elements to shape offenders' behaviors in prosocial ways and thereby leads to successful reentry.

Clarify the Bottom Line

Another key to increasing staff buy-in for an agency culture in which staff-offender interactions are a routine part of doing business is to reiterate the underlying rationale for implementing these principles and practices. The message should be unmistakable and consistently repeated that such an emphasis is not incompatible with public safety interests or offender accountability, or that punishment, deterrence, and retribution are no longer relevant philosophies or goals. Nor does it mean that either rehabilitative or punishment philosophies must exist at the expense of the other. Rather, staff must be taught to appreciate that these philosophies and practices can and should coexist if the goal is to facilitate public safety and effective reentry outcomes. The relationships and interactions between staff and offenders, in combination with additional evidence-based correctional interventions, are an important means to that end.

The value of these coexisting philosophies, principles, and practices may be further illuminated, and buy-in increased, when staff members are educated about their effectiveness not only in reducing recidivism post-release, but also for decreasing institutional misconduct, which translates into increased safety and order

within correctional facilities (French & Gendreau, 2006).

Rigorously Pursue and Support Staff Development

It should come as no surprise that the effectiveness of staff-offender interactions is linked to the integrity of their implementation and the extent to which staff are adequately trained and supervised (see, e.g., Andrews & Bonta, 2007; Dowden & Andrews, 2004). As such, staff development is particularly important and has a number of implications:

- Preservice training provides the opportunity to introduce newly hired staff to the agency philosophies and expectations, particularly those concerning the roles of all staff as change agents. Under ideal circumstances, preservice training activities should be used to begin teaching staff members the necessary relationship and structuring skill sets and provide them with multiple opportunities to practice these skills in a controlled environment prior to entering the field.

- On-the-job staff development and skill practicing are among the most important aspects of the staff development process. Community supervision agency supervisors, unit managers, and others in an oversight capacity play a vital role in this respect. They must describe and model for their staff the expected relationship qualities and ways of influencing behaviors, observe staff as they work with offenders, offer corrective feedback when warranted, and provide reinforcements for appropriate demonstrations of these skills. Peer mentoring by more experienced staff can be a valuable source of support, guidance, and problem solving as staff develop and use these relationship and structuring skills.

- Agency administrators must provide the tools, resources, and other supports necessary to ensure that all staff members are able to carry out their duties effectively. This may include, for example, funding for specific skill-building

initiatives (e.g., intensive Motivational Interviewing training) that will enhance staff effectiveness, or instituting flexible schedules or leave options to allow staff to participate in off-site professional development activities. In addition, administrators and supervisors should encourage, reward, and advocate for staff who seek out and participate in continuing education activities that will further the agency's mission, such as obtaining specialized certifications or advanced degrees. Performance-based rewards, recognition, and advancement opportunities should be prioritized for those staff members who clearly excel in their work, exceed minimum performance expectations, and are able to demonstrate exceptional outcomes.

Staff Recruitment and Selection Practices

Finally, agency administrators and supervisors can promote these organizational priorities through staff recruitment, interviewing, and selection practices. For example, during interviewing processes, they should specifically explore staff attitudes and orientations toward offenders and offender rehabilitation. Staff recruitment and interviewing processes also provide the opportunity to clarify expectations regarding the roles of all staff, including corrections/custody officers, supervision officers, and other front-line staff, as change agents. Incongruence between individual staff members' attitudes, orientations, and role expectations and the philosophies, priorities, and expectations of the agency can lead to poor quality interactions between staff and offenders, job dissatisfaction, burnout, and increased turnover. Consequently, this impacts the ability of other staff to manage workloads effectively and creates hardships with providing the training, staff development, and ongoing supervision of new and existing staff. However, turnover does provide an excellent opportunity for agencies to recruit and hire new staff members whose attitudes and philosophies are more congruent with the organizational culture, which can ultimately maximize staff retention, minimize the turnover potential, and

provide agency stability in the short and long term.

The specific strategies outlined above as a means of shaping and maintaining a change-supportive agency culture should sound familiar. This is because the activities largely parallel the key relationship and structuring practices used to shape offenders' attitudes and behaviors as a means of enhancing outcomes. Indeed, both are driven by the social learning and behavioral approaches that are so effective in influencing human behavior.

Conclusion

To be successful in the community, adult and juvenile offenders must be committed to long-term positive change. Given the ability of institutional and community correctional staff to influence and shape offenders' attitudes and behaviors through the nature and quality of their relationships and routine interactions with them, staff members can play a pivotal role in impacting behavior change and, therefore, public safety. As agencies strive toward improving reentry practices, they may be tempted to focus their efforts on strategies such as risk-need assessments, evidence-based programming, and post-release supervision efforts because of their widely recognized impact on reducing recidivism. However, even with the right assessment processes and the right types of programming, long-term offender change cannot be fully realized absent offender engagement and internal motivation. These rely, in large part, on the relationship and structuring principles of behavioral influence. Therefore, it is essential that equal attention be paid to these evidence-based elements to guide staff-offender interactions, so that offender reentry and public safety outcomes are maximized.

KEY STEPS
• **Elevate and formalize the value of staff-offender interactions through the agency mission.**
• **Promote an agency environment in which productive, civil, dignified, and quality professional relationships are expected among all staff members at all times and hold staff accountable for these relationships.**
• **Ensure that agency administrators, supervisors, and managers consistently model and reinforce the desired style of interactions with their staff that are expected between staff and offenders.**
• **Invest in staff training programs that will enhance relationship skills and interactions (e.g., Motivational Interviewing, other engagement and communication strategies).**
• **Incorporate specific expectations about staff-offender interactions into performance expectations and performance reviews for staff in all positions.**

CHAPTER 6: EFFECTIVE CASE MANAGEMENT

Introduction

The term "case management" is sometimes described in ways that imply it is a discrete task or activity that is distinct from the effective practices outlined in the preceding chapters. In reality, however, case management is the synthesis of these practices. Conducting or using risk-need assessments, delivering or brokering prison- and community-based programs and services, providing or supporting post-release supervision efforts, and influencing offender change through meaningful interactions are all interrelated aspects of case management.

For the purposes of this handbook, case management is conceptualized as the overarching process through which institutional corrections and community supervision practitioners purposefully integrate evidence-based strategies, rationally deploy and allocate resources, and effectively collaborate within and across facility and community lines to facilitate successful reentry. In addition, case management is a means of working with offenders (as opposed to doing to offenders) toward a shared goal. Finally, it is an incremental, cumulative, and phased process that, for each offender, is guided by an individualized, assessment-driven, and dynamic plan of action from the point of entry through their ultimate return to the community.[10]

Case Management Efforts Bridge Three Sequential Phases of the Reentry Process

In order to maximize the potential for successful reentry, a number of key case management objectives must be met as adult and juvenile offenders move through the institutional corrections and community supervision systems. These objectives and the associated case management activities and strategies are best illustrated when considered within the context of three specific but overlapping stages of the reentry process: the institutional, transition, and community phases.

Institutional Phase

Case management officially begins upon intake, at which time the first objective is quick assessment of offenders to identify and subsequently address any issues that may pose a threat to the safety and security of the facility or which critically affect the well-being of the offender. Once any such issues are resolved, institutional corrections staff initiate, from the outset, the gradual and deliberate process of
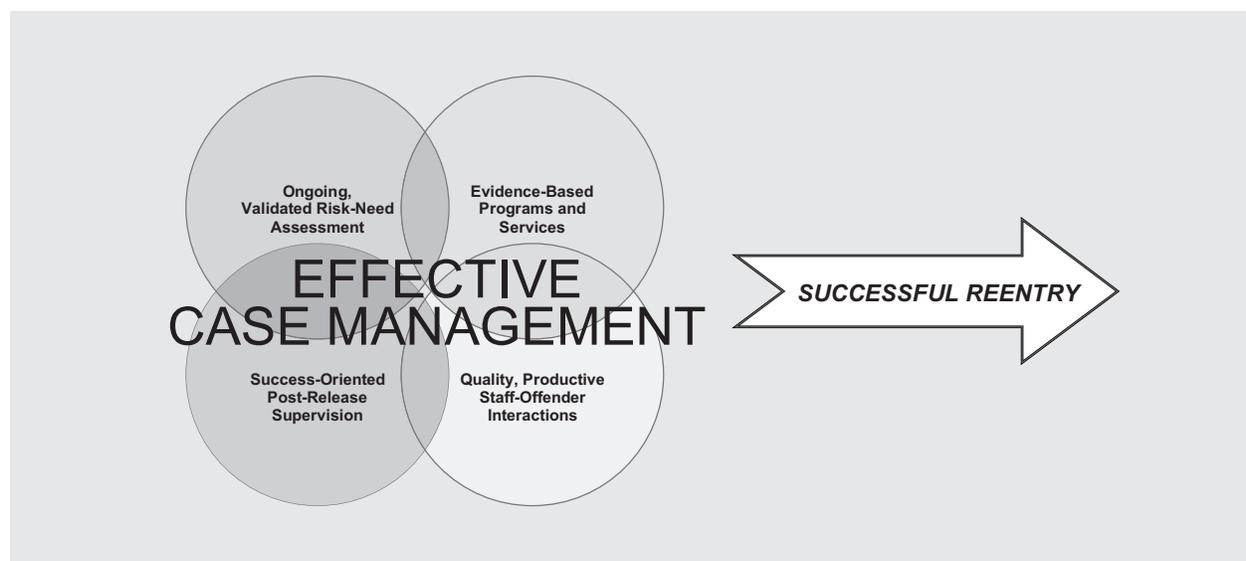
ensuring that offenders are adequately prepared to return to the community. Put simply, a focus on reentry essentially begins at the point of entry.

To attain the ultimate goal of preparing offenders for release and reintegration, the following are among the chief case management objectives and activities during the institutional phase:

- *Triage Offenders*. Shortly after intake, conduct formal assessments using empirically validated tools to determine the appropriate intensity of case management efforts that will be necessary for each offender. Offenders who pose a greater risk for recidivism and who have multiple criminogenic needs are targeted for a more intensive case management track, whereas those whose recidivism risk is already low and who have few criminogenic needs are designated for a case management path that requires minimal institutional and staff resources. This process of sorting offenders based on assessments ensures that institutional resources are brokered efficiently and effectively.

- *Chart a Course of Intervention via a Case Management Team*. Use a core multidisciplinary team approach to develop each offender's case management plan (described in more detail later in this chapter). Such a team is comprised of institutional representatives who will have a significant intervention and management role with the offender during the period of incarceration (e.g., caseworker, substance abuse or other treatment providers, educational or vocational staff, health/mental health care professionals, housing unit/custody staff). To build the case management plan, the team works together to review the assessment findings, identify intervention needs, and develop strategies to address these needs. The plan should sequence and prioritize interventions based on the most salient criminogenic needs and significant barriers to reentry.

- *Reinforce*. Take advantage of the multiple opportunities to provide tangible incentives, rewards, and reinforcements when offenders demonstrate desired behaviors. These behaviors may include taking ownership in the development of their case plans, participating in prison-based risk-reducing programs and skill-building services, practicing effective problem solving and communication techniques, participating in family interventions, and maintaining appropriate institutional conduct. Beyond increasing the prosocial attitudes and behaviors, consistent reinforcement fosters offender engagement, internal motivation, and investment in the change process, all of which are necessary building blocks for successful reentry.

- *Review, Reassess, and Readjust*. Throughout the period of incarceration, routinely review offenders' case management plans (e.g., every ninety days) with the offenders to explore progress, challenges, and ongoing needs. In addition, update risk assessments at appropriate intervals to identify important changes that have occurred over time objectively. These ongoing reviews and assessments position the team to evaluate the current appropriateness of the objectives, strategies, and timelines detailed in the case management plans and make well-informed modifications accordingly.

Transition Phase

Approximately six months prior to an offender's anticipated release date, the formal transition phase begins. It is not wholly distinct from the institutional and community phases. Rather, it merges with and bridges the various case management activities that occur throughout the reentry process. It is at this juncture that institutional and community practitioners formally partner to assist offenders with a seamless transition from correctional facilities to the community. To facilitate a deliberate, smooth, and well-coordinated handoff, the following case management activities are essential during the transition phase:

**Effective Case Management Requires
"Out-Reach" and "In-Reach" During the Transition Phase**
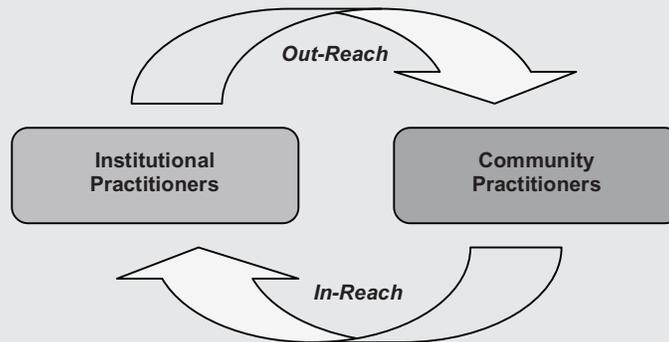
- *Realign the Team Composition.* Ensure that the core case management team evolves from a working group of institutional staff into an appropriate blend of relevant institutional and community stakeholders. For example, the community supervision officer joins the team at this point, providing an important opportunity to build rapport with the offender prior to release. In addition, representatives from relevant community agencies and entities (e.g., community mental health, health and human services, schools, family services, specialized treatment programs) become members of the case management team as warranted. Over time, these individuals play an increasingly greater role, while the institutional team members begin to gradually step back. The coordination of case management activities becomes a shared responsibility between the institutional caseworker and the community supervision officer and is ultimately assumed by the supervision officer as the transition phase ends.

- *Link to Community-Based Resources.* Facilitate continuity of interventions and a seamless transition to the community by connecting offenders and their families to needed programs and services in the returning community. This requires dedicated outreach efforts, whereby institutional practitioners identify, make referrals to, and assist offenders

with contacting these resources. It is also accomplished via in-reach activities through which community-based practitioners conduct service-specific needs assessments, determine eligibility for their respective programs and services, and facilitate access to these services.

- *Explore Community Support Networks.* Work diligently with adult and juvenile offenders to build, enhance, and maintain (or rebuild and reestablish) strong relationships with significant individuals in their lives who can be a positive influence upon their return to the community. These may include partners or spouses, parents or other family members, AA/NA sponsors, members of community- and faith-based organizations, and trained volunteers or mentors. Networks of support can offer encouragement, foster accountability, and mitigate some of the challenges offenders encounter during the community reintegration process (e.g., housing, financial, transportation).

Although identifying community supports should be an objective at the outset of offenders' incarceration, it becomes especially important as they prepare for release. This highlights again the importance of outreach and in-reach activities during the transition phase.

- *Reassess, Readjust, Record, and Reinforce.* Update risk-need assessments, evaluate participation and progress in prison-based programs and services, and review institutional conduct and adjustment. Thoroughly document and use this information to make sure that case management plans are current, well informed, and appropriately structured as the offenders begin to reintegrate into the community. In addition, use the information to develop discharge summaries at the point of offenders' release to the community. The revised case management plan and discharge summary are vital for ensuring that the corrections practitioners and other stakeholders who will be working with offenders in the community will be operating from the most accurate and up-to-date information. As always, continue to use reinforcers, rewards, and incentives to motivate offenders internally as goals are attained, progress is made, and other positive behaviors and changes are identified.

Community Phase

In this final phase of the reentry process, the primary case management goal is to ensure that offenders are stable and successful in the community, which ultimately translates into public safety. The most intensive case management activities continue to be prioritized for high-risk, high need adults and juveniles, as they are most likely to have difficulties with community reintegration. In addition, during the community phase, the following case management practices are particularly salient:

- *Realign the Team Composition.* Finalize the team membership in a manner that ensures that case management responsibilities are fully assumed by the community supervision practitioners and other service providers who are working closely with the offender in the community. If outreach and in-reach efforts are effectively coordinated during the transition phase, most of these stakeholders will already be at the table.

- *Supervise for Success.* Employ a balanced approach to post-release supervision that consists of a blend of enforcement/monitoring and social casework functions. Specifically, use external controls (e.g., reporting requirements, curfews, drug testing, other specialized conditions) as warranted to promote accountability; at the same time, continue to broker programs and services (e.g., mental health services, family interventions, substance abuse treatment, education/employment services) and work closely with members of community support networks to ameliorate destabilizing influences. Ground all supervision strategies in the philosophy that offenders' success in the community is the key to public safety, and implement research-supported supervision approaches that have been demonstrated to be most effective in attaining these outcomes.

Summary of Key Case Management Objectives in a Phased Reentry Process

Institutional Phase

- Triage offenders
- Chart a course of intervention via a case management team
- Reinforce
- Review, re-assess, and readjust

Transition Phase

- Realign the team composition
- Link to community-based resources
- Explore community support networks
- Re-assess, readjust, record, and reinforce

Community Phase

- Realign the team composition
- Supervise for success
- Re-assess and readjust
- Reinforce and retreat

- *Reassess and Readjust.* Conduct formal assessments (i.e., risk-need) and informal assessments (e.g., via office and field visits, communication with community supports, employers, and treatment providers) throughout the course of the community phase. These reassessments allow the case management team to keep abreast of important changes in offenders' risk, needs, attitudes, behaviors, and overall circumstances and subsequently make any necessary revisions to case management plans. Detecting factors that signal an increased potential for recidivism are especially important during this phase. Examples include evidence of affiliating with antisocial peers, use of drugs or alcohol, or unstable housing or employment. In these instances, formal sanctions or other strategic adjustments to case plans may be required. Responses to violations must be proportionate to the nature and seriousness of the behavior and delivered in a manner that prevents unnecessary returns to incarceration while continuing to ensure accountability and public safety.

- *Reinforce and Retreat.* Finally, in anticipation of offenders' eventual discharge from the correctional system, a key case management objective is to cultivate self-efficacy and healthy autonomy among offenders, which is necessary for them to maintain stability and success independently in the community. Reentry outcomes are ultimately determined by offenders' ongoing motivation, personal commitment, and genuine change. Again, these elements can be bolstered by consistently using incentives and reinforcers. Therefore, as adult and juvenile offenders demonstrate positive decision making and increased responsibility over time, the case management team should gradually reduce the intensity of case management efforts. Provided that offender risk does not preclude such an approach, this allows institutional corrections and community supervision practitioners to provide more and more

invaluable opportunities for offenders to put into place the skills they have developed or enhanced, while still having the supports and leverage of the criminal justice system as a public safety backup if necessary. In other words, the balance of external and internal controls progressively shifts in favor of offenders' self-reliance on internal controls, ideally reinforcing offenders' abilities to remain productive and crime-free long after the period of post-release supervision ends.

The Case Management Plan Provides the Roadmap for Institutional Corrections and Community Supervision Practitioners and Offenders Alike

The interrelated objectives and activities that span the three phases of the reentry process underscore the fact that no single practitioner can assume sole responsibility for all aspects of case management. Effective case management is a shared responsibility among multiple agencies, organizations, and disciplines, all of whom are working toward the same end goal of ensuring public safety through successful reentry. This parallels the goal of most adult and juvenile offenders: returning to and remaining in the community.

To attain this common goal, institutional corrections staff, community supervision officers, service providers, and offenders alike need a clear guide to help them navigate effectively and efficiently through the institutional, transition, and community phases. The case management plan becomes that roadmap. It is the result of carefully collecting and synthesizing key information about an offender and translating that information into a comprehensive plan of action that is:

- Singular in nature
- Individualized
- Dynamic

When developing such a plan, the offender must be engaged and involved in the process. After all,

effective case management is not about "doing to" an offender; it is about working with an offender. If adult and juvenile offenders are not encouraged and expected to be active participants in their own case planning efforts, they are less apt to take ownership and may be more resistant to the interventions and strategies that are designed to assist them.

One Offender, One Plan

In some instances, because a given offender has multiple needs that warrant intervention, multiple case management plans are developed for that offender. Consider the following hypothetical: Shortly after the intake and assessment process in a correctional facility, a caseworker develops a service plan that outlines the offender's housing unit assignment, work detail, and recommended prison-based interventions. Throughout the period of incarceration, as the offender enters the prescribed programs (e.g., educational services, substance abuse treatment, sex offender treatment), separate intervention plans for these respective programs and services are developed and addressed independently with the offender. Later, for release consideration, or in anticipation of a presumptive release date, a release plan is developed and presented to the parole board or other releasing authority. Once released, a supervision officer creates a post-release supervision plan that includes specific conditions, restrictions, and community-based programming requirements. In turn, each community-based program then develops an individual plan for the offender.

Although this illustration is extreme, it represents a very real potential. Even with the best of intentions, if the practitioners involved in reentry efforts fail to collaborate effectively around case management, a number of problems may arise. These include fragmented offender management activities, duplication of efforts, unclear roles and responsibilities, lost information across agencies and disciplines, and misallocation of resources. Moreover, using multiple case plans for a single offender can create confusion, frustration, and easy opportunities to pass the buck among all

parties involved, including the offender. It may also create a situation in which the offender is unnecessarily overburdened with demands, thus decreasing the likelihood of successfully meeting expectations.

The ideal is to craft a single case management plan for each offender that comprehensively addresses the intervention needs and management strategies that will ultimately facilitate a successful return to the community. This plan essentially becomes a behavioral contract that integrates the following (see, e.g., Taxman et al., 2006; Taxman et al., 2004):

- Specific, measurable objectives or expectations for the offender—and the family, as appropriate—during a specific period of time (e.g., 90 days).
- Target dates associated with each of the specific objectives.
- Interventions and strategies that will be provided to assist the offender (and family) with meeting these objectives.
- Staff responsible for working with the offender to meet these objectives through the identified interventions and strategies.
- Specific incentives, rewards, or consequences for meeting or failing to meet specific objectives or expectations.

Individual Offender, Individualized Plan

Because offenders differ in multiple ways, so should their case management plans. As highlighted in the preceding chapters in this section of the handbook, outcomes are maximized when interventions and strategies are matched based on the individual risk level, criminogenic needs, and responsivity factors of a given offender. Put simply, one size fits all case management plans will not effectively reduce recidivism, increase public safety, or lead to successful reentry. Case management plans must be assessment-driven and tailored to the specific individual.

To illustrate, consider an adult offender with an extensive history of substance abuse, longstanding patterns of criminal behavior,

affiliation with negative peers, antisocial attitudes, and who is assessed at high risk for recidivism. Initially, a primary objective on the case management plan may be to focus on engaging the offender and fostering internal motivation. This could take the form of a correctional caseworker processing the assessment findings with the offender to assist with developing insight into the criminogenic needs that ultimately led to incarceration (see, e.g., Taxman et al., 2006; Taxman et al., 2004). In addition, the case manager provides information about the prison-based intervention programs and services that can give the offender a jump start on increasing the likelihood of successful reentry and reducing the chances of being incarcerated again. In so doing, the offender may begin to independently recognize the importance of engaging in the change process.

The case management plan for this offender might then be structured to include a cognitive skills intervention program to focus on cognitive restructuring, emotional management, and problem-solving skills, followed by an intensive therapeutic community substance abuse program within the correctional facility. It may be further modified by including expectations that the offender practice these skills on an ongoing basis within the institution, initially applied to interactions in the housing unit, then expanded to include the work assignment setting, and then to leisure and other contexts or activities. When the offender successfully meets these objectives, the case management plan might be modified again to include a lower intensity maintenance program and AA/NA support groups, first in the institution and continuing following release.

As this offender enters the community, the plan may center around intensive supervision that includes random drug testing, maintaining employment (but that is restricted to minimize exposure to high risk situations), routine office and field contacts, and ongoing substance abuse support groups. If the offender later begins to demonstrate noncompliance with post-release supervision, is known to be affiliating with

antisocial peers again, and tests positive during a drug test, the case management plan would need to be adjusted. Provided that the offender can still be managed effectively in the community with appropriate strategies, the revised plan might include a short-term residential treatment program followed by day treatment, more frequent drug testing, and increased contacts with the supervision officer, both scheduled and unannounced.

In contrast, the case management plan would be quite different for a moderate risk juvenile offender with very few criminogenic needs, but who is identified as having significant depressive symptoms and a history of suicide attempts. The plan during the institutional phase may initially target addressing suicidal ideation and self-injurious behaviors, and could include the use of an anti-depressant medication. Later, a time-limited psychoeducational class about understanding mental health disorders may be added to the plan, followed by a weekly cognitive-behavioral group to address underlying causes of depression and symptom management. Ultimately, after identifying an appropriate community-based provider, these interventions might be replaced with individual and family therapy during the transition and community phases. Updated assessment findings might reveal a need only for low intensity post-release supervision that includes medication compliance, routine medication checks with a qualified mental health provider, outreach for crisis intervention services as needed, and relatively limited office or field contacts with the supervision officer.

Dynamic Offender, Dynamic Plan

The case management plan must be a fluid, flexible, and responsive working document that evolves with the offender as the offender moves through the institutional, transition, and community phases. This is important because— as highlighted in the examples above—changes occur with offenders and their circumstances over time. Some of these changes affect recidivism potential and intervention needs, and

others provide evidence of progress and stability. Regardless of the nature and direction of these fluctuations, the case plan must be adjusted in order to be most effective.

For example, throughout the course of incarceration, if an offender has participated in risk-reducing programs and services, completed vocational skills training, and consistently demonstrated positive institutional adjustment, the case management team and classification staff may determine that a transitional or community corrections facility is appropriate. The case management plan could then be adjusted to focus on specific strategies relevant for the transition phase, such as participating in prerelease classes or work-release programs, exploring housing options, engaging in family reunification activities, or connecting with employment services and other community-based resources. This also provides reinforcement for the progress made by the offender thus far, creates opportunities for additional incentives for demonstrating prosocial behaviors, and continues to foster internal motivation. Alternatively, for an offender who has been released under community supervision but who has recently begun to demonstrate noncompliance with release conditions, the case management plan may require adjustments that could include more frequent officer contacts, an

earlier curfew, and additional monitoring. Depending on the underlying reasons for noncompliance (e.g., substance abuse, marital conflict), relevant treatment services may need to be incorporated into the plan as well.

The dynamic nature of the case management plan is also important because the plan cannot realistically incorporate at the outset every potential intervention or management strategy that will be needed from start to finish. Rather, it should be limited to the key targets of change that are most important during a given period of time. Specific objectives and strategies should be sequenced in a manner that makes the plan manageable for both the offender and institutional corrections and community supervision practitioners, generally beginning with the core criminogenic needs of that offender. As these objectives are met, the plan is modified accordingly and new objectives replace the old.

A final advantage of a dynamic case management plan is that it promotes the seamlessness that is so important for successful reentry. Specifically, as a unified plan that is initially crafted at the point of intake and is routinely updated and adjusted for continued use through release and reintegration, it minimizes the potential for last minute (and oftentimes

Using the Transition Accountability Plan to Guide Case Management in Missouri
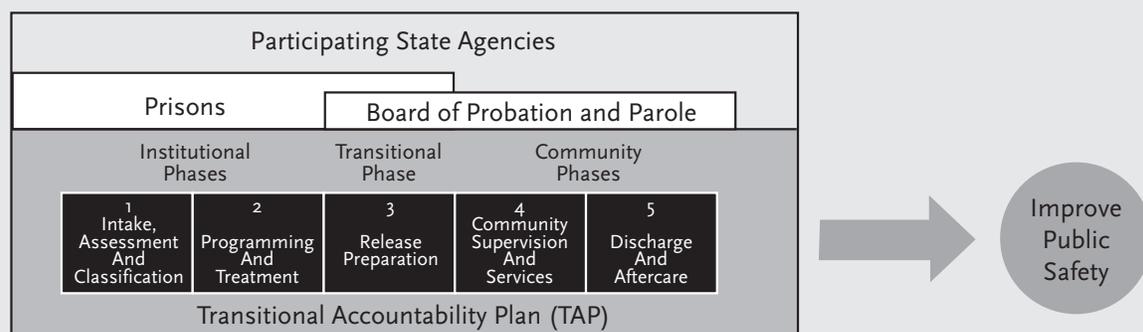
Adapted from MDOC, 2007

preventable) reentry barriers to arise. The updates and changes to the case management plan are guided by information sharing that crosses institutional and community lines. As such, all stakeholders have a shared awareness of ongoing intervention needs and required risk management strategies and they are clear about their respective roles in ensuring that these issues are addressed in an adequate and timely manner. This results in greater accountability for continuity of case management efforts, thereby reducing the potential for issues to fall through the cracks as offenders transition from the institution to the community.

Conclusion

Identifying and then executing the wide range of activities necessary to guide adult and juvenile offenders through a successful return to the community is not a simple endeavor. This challenge is compounded by the need to ensure that correctional and community resources are efficiently managed, that interventions and strategies from multiple disciplines are integrated and coordinated, and that public safety is always maintained. Indeed, the overall case management process, which is largely designed for these purposes, can seem quite daunting. Yet when institutional corrections staff and community supervision practitioners and other key stakeholders work collaboratively as a case management team armed with a focused plan of action, they are most ideally positioned to accomplish each of these goals.

KEY STEPS

- **Establish or revise agency policies to ensure that comprehensive case management expectations are clearly delineated for each phase of the reentry process (i.e., institutional, transition, community).**
- **For each phase of the reentry process, clarify the specific case management roles and expectations for institutional staff and supervision officers to prevent duplication of activities or diffusion of responsibilities.**
- **Develop complementary policies and procedures across institutional corrections and community supervision agencies that articulate specific shared or collaborative case management responsibilities, including in-reach and outreach activities during the transition phase.**
- **Collaboratively develop a model for case management planning that establishes a single, individualized, dynamic plan for each offender.**
- **Incorporate key elements of the case management process into formal performance expectations and reviews (e.g., in-reach and outreach activities, timely and assessment-driven case plan development and reviews, application of evidence-based practices).**

Assess Your Agency: Effective Offender Management Practices			
	Yes	*No*	*Not Clear*
1. Assessment: • Are offender assessments conducted shortly after admission to prison, and in an ongoing fashion thereafter, to identify risk level, criminogenic needs, and responsivity factors? • Are empirically supported or promising assessment tools used? If yes, please list which tools are used: • Do the results of the empirically supported or promising assessment tools inform the offender management process (e.g., treatment planning, supervision case planning)?			
2. Case Management: Please answer these questions in relation to the work done by staff and partners with individual offenders. This may be termed "correctional counseling" or some other term within correctional institutions, or "field supervision" while an offender is under supervision in the community: • Do the stated goals of case management (within institutions and in the community) include the provision of safe, secure custody, monitoring/supervision, and successful offender reentry? • Is case management a seamless continuum from admission to prison until the termination of community supervision? • Does each offender have a single, dynamic case management plan that follows him/her from intake through post-release supervision? • Is this approach to case management supported and enhanced by information technology? • Does the case plan address the offender's risk and needs at each stage (intake and incarceration phase, prerelease planning phase, and reentry and post supervision phase)? • Is the case plan updated to reflect changes in the offender's risk and needs, and to document improvement and progress made? • Is information about the offender exchanged between institution and community supervision staff? • Are multidisciplinary team approaches used to manage offenders? • Are noncorrections partners (such as public agencies, community partners, nonprofits, family members, etc.) involved in creating, updating, and accessing case plan information? • Does the case plan identify programmatic interventions appropriate for the offender based on the offender's assessed level of risk and criminogenic needs? • Do case management plans target the three to four (or more) most significant criminogenic needs? • Are offenders prioritized for participation in programs and services based on risk and needs? • Are policies, procedures, and priorities in place to facilitate the actual delivery of such interventions to offenders? • Are interventions delivered in a timely way in view of an anticipated release date?			

Assess Your Agency: Effective Offender Management Practices			
	Yes	*No*	*Not Clear*
• Are offenders active participants in creating and updating their own case plans (as opposed to just complying with its terms)? • Do appropriate corrections staff members (within institutions and in the community) receive skills training on how to better engage offenders in the change process? • Are interactions with offenders, including infractions and violations, viewed as opportunities to enhance motivation?			

3. Institutional/Residential Interventions:
• Are existing institutionally-based programs and services for offenders:
  - Multimodal and integrated?
  - Cognitive-behavioral in nature?
  - Skills-oriented?
  - Linked with parallel services in the community?
  - Matched to offenders based on risk, needs, and responsivity factors?
  - Monitored and evaluated?			

4. Proactive Release Planning: • Does planning for release begin when offenders enter the institutional or residential setting? • Does the release planning process include both institutional/residential staff and community stakeholders? • Are barriers to reentry anticipated and identified early in the release planning process? • Are transition and case management plans tailored to address the risk, need, and responsivity factors of every offender? • Are offenders actively involved in the development of transition and case management plans? • Are community resources that support the transition process identified prior to release? • Are the needs of victims addressed in the release planning process?			
5. Informed Release Decision Making: • Are offenders released to the community through a discretionary decision making process? • Does the releasing authority have access to, and does it use, the results of risk assessments, transition plans, and information from institutional programming to inform decision making? • Does the releasing authority establish conditions based upon the assessed risk level and criminogenic needs of offenders? • Does the releasing authority use structured guidelines to inform decision making? • Does the releasing authority use information from victims and victim advocates to inform decision making?			

Assess Your Agency: Effective Offender Management Practices	Yes	No	Not Clear
6. Success-Oriented Approach to Supervision: • Do current supervision policies and practices reflect a strength-based approach (in contrast to a more exclusive focus on deterrence or punishment)? • Is multiagency collaboration a key feature of supervision? • Are supervision levels assigned and adjusted over time based on the risk level and needs of each offender? • Are the nature and frequency of field contacts guided by the risk level and needs of offenders? • Do supervision officers use incentives to promote and reinforce pro-social, appropriate offender behavior? • Are responses to supervision violations flexible, graduated, and reasonable, and informed by the risk posed by offenders and the severity of the violations?			
7. Programs and Services: • Do community and institutional programs and services complement one another? (Is there continuity of care?) • Are offenders linked to specific community supports that can enhance the supervision process and promote success (e.g., informal social support networks, mentoring programs for juveniles)? • Are the following programs and services available to offenders while incarcerated: - Healthcare services? - Behavioral health programs? - Life skills assistance? - Substance abuse services? - Educational and vocational services? - Employment assistance or job matching? - Social services? - Housing assistance? - Programs for children and families? • Are the following programs and services available to offenders while in the community: - Healthcare services? - Behavioral health programs? - Life skills assistance? - Substance abuse services? - Educational and vocational services? - Employment assistance or job matching? - Social services? - Housing assistance? - Programs for children and families?			

Assess Your Agency: *Effective Offender Management Practices*			
	Yes	*No*	*Not Clear*

8. Monitoring and Evaluation:
• Has the agency established a specific monitoring and evaluation plan regarding offender reentry with clearly defined performance measures and outcomes, including:
  - Educational achievement scores, graduation, or GED attainment?
  - Job placement and retention?
  - Stability in housing?
  - Behavioral health symptom improvement?
  - Sobriety?
  - Stability of health?
  - Family preservation?
  - Recidivism?
  - Nature and frequency of violations?
  - Other(s)_____
• Are monitoring and evaluation data routinely collected and analyzed?
• Are the results of the data analyses used to inform the development and/or revision of reentry policies and practices?			

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Section Seven:

Women Offenders

Judith Berman, Adapted by Susan Gibel

INTRODUCTION

As institutional corrections and community supervision agencies examine existing policies and practices and consider how best to adapt them to encourage successful offender reentry, important opportunities are presented to think about the varying needs of diverse groups of offenders, and how policy and practice takes their different needs into account. The rapidly increasing population of women under correctional supervision, their differences from male offenders in terms of the pathways that bring them into the system, their risks and needs, and their role in the community from which they have come and to which they will return suggest that institutional corrections and community supervision agencies need to think differently about how to promote women's successful reentry.

In this section, the unique challenges to successful reentry faced by women offenders will be explored. Chapter 1 outlines women offenders' involvement in the criminal justice system and their distinctive pathways to criminality. Chapter 2 focuses specifically on the principles of gender responsiveness. Finally, in Chapter 3, an overview of the key offender management issues with women offenders is presented, with an examination of some of the specific issues raised in the reentry process.

This section is provided in recognition of the unique challenges faced by women offenders returning to their communities; however, it is not intended as a comprehensive exploration of this topic. The section will provide a brief overview of the issues involved and direct the user to additional resources that may be useful in crafting policies and practices to address women offender reentry.

CHAPTER 1: WOMEN OFFENDERS

The population of incarcerated women offenders is growing, and continues to grow at a faster rate than the population of men (Harrison & Beck, 2003). Many trace the increase to changes in State and national drug policies that mandated prison terms for even relatively low-level drug offenses. Nationally, the number of women incarcerated in State and Federal prisons and local jails has jumped eightfold between 1980 and 2002 (Lapidus et al., 2005). Between 1986 and 1999, the number of women incarcerated in State facilities for drug-related offenses alone increased by 888 percent (compared to an increase of 129 percent for non-drug offenses) (Lapidus et al., 2005). The female offender population continues to rise at a faster rate than the male offender population: from June 30, 2003 to June 30, 2004, the number of women in State and Federal prison increased by 2.9 percent, while the rate for men rose 2.0 percent (Harrison & Beck, 2005). Moreover, this does not include women under community supervision.

A similar situation exists for female juveniles. Although the juvenile offense rate in 2004 was the lowest since 1980, the proportion of female juveniles relative to male juveniles continues to increase. Rates of arrest for female juveniles increased or decreased less than the rates of arrest for male juveniles (Snyder, 2006). In 2004, 24 percent of arrests for aggravated assault and thirty-three percent of arrests for other assaults could be attributed to female juveniles. These figures are much higher than those for female involvement in other types of violent crime. Between 1980 and 2004, the juvenile arrest rate for simple assault increased 290 percent for female juveniles, compared to 106 percent for male juveniles. Most of the increase in female arrest rates for violence can be attributed to familial abuse or relational aggression, including domestic violence (Chesney-Lind & Irwin, 2007). Between 1995 and 2004, juvenile arrests for drug abuse violations increased 29 percent for

females, compared to a decrease for male juveniles of eight percent (Snyder, 2006).

For many women, involvement in the criminal justice system has become a revolving door from which they cannot escape, particularly for those who are drug-involved or for whom meeting the obligations of the system (supervision conditions or fees and restitution, for example) becomes an obstacle in itself. Many institutional corrections and community supervision agencies have taken a position against differentiating between males and females and make efforts to apply policies and practices universally. Research, however, has identified significant differences between male and female offender populations that may help shed light on this revolving door (See, e.g., Bloom, Owen, & Covington, 2003; Chesney-Lind, 1997; Dehart, 2005; NIC, 2000; Richie, 1996).

Pathways to Criminality for Girls and Women

Offending patterns for women and girls are qualitatively different from men. In comparison to men, women are:

- Less likely than men to have been convicted of a violent crime (Greenfield & Snell, 1999).
- Less likely to be a major dealer or kingpin in a drug enterprise and less likely to have played a major planning role in a drug related crime (Lapidus et al., 2005).
- Less likely to have used a gun or other weapon in the commission of the crime (Greenfeld & Snell, 1999).
- Less likely to present the same degree of danger to the community as their male counterparts (Bloom, Owen, & Covington, 2003).

Women become involved in criminal behavior for different reasons than men do, and these reasons are important when considering how to keep women from reentering the system once they leave. "Women's most common pathways

to crime are based on survival of abuse, poverty, and substance abuse." (Bloom, Owen, & Covington, 2003.) The relationship between these three factors is complex and significant. Physical, sexual, and emotional abuse are very common in the life histories of women offenders. These can be the source of a substance abuse problem (using drugs to self-medicate the pain of abuse) or they can also be a result of involvement in a lifestyle that revolves around substance use, such as an intimate relationship with a substance abuser who also commits acts of sexual or domestic violence. Similarly, many women are driven to the drug trade by poverty or become involved in prostitution (often following a history of sexual abuse) that then leads to substance abuse and vulnerability to further physical and sexual abuse. In other words, violence in the lives of women prior to their involvement in the criminal justice system is often connected to the criminal behavior with which they are charged (Bloom, Owen, & Covington, 2003; Dehart, 2005; Lapidus et al., 2005).

Similarly, women who are involved in the criminal justice system are significantly more likely than men are to have mental health problems and/or previous involvement in the mental health system (Ditton, 1999). For example, the rate of Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) is very high among substance abusers, averaging 12-34 percent, compared to lifetime prevalence in the adult U.S. population of about 8 percent. For women with substance abuse disorders, the rate is 30-59 percent (CSAT, 2005b). Mental health problems serve as a common trigger for substance use, and substance use can in turn exacerbate some mental health problems, and/or set the stage for further experiences of trauma. Women in the criminal justice system also experience high rates of depression, anxiety, and other personality and mood disorders (CSAT, 1999). Institutions are increasingly finding that helping women manage mental health symptoms through cognitive, behavioral, and relational approaches, and not just medication, has a positive impact on the

institutional environment and individual behavior (Hills, Siegfried, & Ickowitz, 2004).

Females in the Juvenile Justice System

Like adult women offenders, female juveniles enter the justice system with different and often more severe problems than male juveniles. Risk factors for female juveniles include childhood abuse and neglect, mental health and substance abuse issues, problematic peer and dating relationships, family contexts, and early childhood behavioral patterns (Acoca & Dedel, 1998). Female juveniles are likely to be younger than their male counterparts (Bergsmann, 1994) and more likely to have run away from home (Chesney-Lind & Shelden, 1998) and to have attempted suicide (Miller, 1994). Female juveniles experience higher rates of abuse than do their male counterparts (see, e.g., Brosky & Lally, 2004; Browne, Miller, & Maguin, 1999; McClellan, Farrabee, & Crouch, 1997), with estimates ranging from 43 percent to as high as 80 percent (Acoca & Dedel, 1990).

Although the incidence of mental health disorders among juveniles in the justice system is high, it is particularly high among female juveniles. A 1997 study estimated that 84 percent of female juveniles (compared to 27 percent of their male counterparts) had evidence of serious mental health symptoms (Timmons-Mitchell et al., 1997). Similarly, an epidemiological study of psychiatric illnesses among youth in detention published in 2002 estimated that 74 percent of female juveniles (compared to 66 percent of their male counterparts) met the criteria for a current disorder (Teplin, Abram, McClelland, Dulcan, & Mericle, 2002).

Family Role Distinctions

Another important difference between incarcerated men and women is that women are significantly more likely to have been primary caretakers of children prior to entering prison (Mumola, 2000) and are more likely to plan to return to that role upon release (Hairston, 2002). This fact alone transforms the experience of

many incarcerated women. They are concerned in an ongoing way with their children's day-to-day welfare, since incarceration may have caused significant family disruption and children are often moved several times during a woman's incarceration. While 90 percent of children of male offenders continue to live with their mother during their father's incarceration, only 28 percent of children of female offenders live with their other parent. Instead, they live with grandparents (52.9 percent), other relatives (25.7 percent), in non-relative foster homes (9.6 percent), or with friends/others (10.4 percent) (Mumola, 2000).

Incarcerated women stand to lose their parental rights if they do not stay abreast of child welfare actions that require regular contact between a parent and a child placed in foster care (see, e.g., Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) of 1997, and for more information about ASFA, see Child Welfare League of America's Web site at http://www.cwla.org.). At the same time, few correctional institutions maintain relationships with child welfare agencies that would facilitate the sharing of information with offenders, and enable offender participation in relevant proceedings. The limited number of facilities for women means that visitation can be especially difficult, since children and caregivers may have to travel long distances and caregivers often do not have the time or the means to do so. The negative impact of a threatened mother-child relationship, whether through action like a Termination of Parental Rights petition or inaction like lack of contact, can have a dramatic impact on women during their incarceration, as well as increase the obstacles faced during reentry.

Conclusion

Any attempt to address the successful reintegration of female offenders into the community following incarceration in an adult or juvenile facility must address the many and varied distinctions between male and female offenders and integrate that information into the development of informed policies and practices that build upon the strengths presented by those distinctions. Institutional corrections and community supervision agencies must be cognizant of different pathways to criminality for girls and women and the impact of those experiences on both their interaction with the justice system and their ability to reintegrate following release.

Female offenders, regardless of age, present dissimilar risks to the communities to which they return. In addition, they impact in different ways the communities to which they return, often reassuming primary responsibility to provide and care for children and/or other family members. While they share the need for suitable employment, housing, and treatment programs with male offenders, programs and services designed to meet these needs for female offenders must also address issues related to histories of physical and sexual abuse and depression.

The unique characteristics of this population and the strengths and challenges they bring to efforts to reintegrate female offenders should be fully explored as part of building effective and gender responsive reentry strategies.

CHAPTER 2: GENDER RESPONSIVENESS

Research on the differences between male and female offenders invites institutional corrections and community supervision agencies to consider how policies and practices either acknowledge or ignore the ways in which women's experiences within and outside the criminal justice system are different from their male counterparts. It also invites consideration of how the role of institutional corrections and community supervision agencies in supporting the success of reentering women offenders might be adjusted to maximize the strengths inherent in these differences and minimize the inherent challenges and obstacles. Researchers in this field call this being "gender responsive:" taking account of the differences in experience that men and women bring to the criminal justice and institutional corrections and community supervision systems and adjusting strategies and practices in ways that are appropriately responsive to those differences (Bloom, Owen, & Covington, 2003). While this also opens the door to looking at more effective gender responsive programming for men (such a step would be encouraged), the correctional system was designed with the predominantly male population in mind, incorporating assumptions about typical male behaviors, experiences, and criminal pathways. While this has not necessarily produced the desired results for men, as there is significant work to be done in improving offender reentry success rates for men, it has in effect rendered the unique experiences of women invisible within the field of criminal justice.

The study of gender responsiveness has taken cues from many other arenas, including substance abuse treatment, which has begun to recognize the limitations of certain treatment models when used with women, differences in women's typical patterns of and physical responses to substance abuse, and the importance of addressing issues of trauma and victimization as part of a comprehensive approach to intervening in women's substance abuse behaviors (Hanson, 2002). Because so many women in the criminal justice system have substance abuse problems, this field has contributed significantly to the thinking about gender responsive approaches to women offenders.

The health field has also been instructive. For example, recent research on heart disease has substantiated differences in the way heart attacks manifest in women. While the disease is essentially the same, a blockage in the flow of blood to the heart muscle, women often experience a different set of symptoms than men do. This has caused many women and their doctors to fail to recognize a heart attack in progress (McSweeney et al., 2003). Thus, it is not only in the obvious areas of reproductive health that physicians and researchers need to look at differences between men and women. Instead, they need to look at the many and subtle ways in which women's bodies are different from men's bodies. Once these differences are understood, they must take the next step of educating the public and health care practitioners about how to respond more effectively to health problems in women.

Principles of Gender Responsiveness

A gender responsive approach to women offenders in the correctional system includes several key elements or principles, according to *Gender Responsive Strategies: Research, Practice, and Guiding Principles for Women Offenders*, the influential 2003 report by Bloom, Owen, and Covington. These principles address the areas of gender, environment, relationships, services and supervision, economic and social status, and community:

- First and foremost is the simple acknowledgement that gender does make a difference for correctional practice. Without this acknowledgement by senior policymakers,

and grounding in the knowledge of gender differences, there is little support for changing and improving policy and practice based on the gender specific needs of women.

- Next would be creating an environment based on safety, respect, and dignity. Given the high rates of trauma and victimization of women in the correctional system, it is important for both offenders and staff that the environment does not reinforce or exacerbate the impact of a history of violence. Women must be free from sexual and other forms of abuse by staff and other offenders. As the field of psychology has taught, behavioral change is most likely to occur in environments that are safe, nurturing, compassionate, and consistent. While these are not concepts typically associated with a prison environment, taking cues from the field of treatment becomes increasingly important as the field of corrections renews its commitment to rehabilitation and offender success in the community.

- The field of developmental psychology (and much anecdotal experience) teaches that women's experience is defined through relationships, in contrast to men, whose major developmental tasks are defined through achieving autonomy and independence. Many of women's criminal experiences can be best understood in the context of unhealthy relationships, often with significant others who encourage substance abuse or make demands on women to become involved in the drug trade or prostitution. Because of dysfunctional family backgrounds and histories of domestic violence and sexual abuse, many women in correctional institutions have no experience of healthy, trusting, prosocial relationships with either men or women. For correctional practice, this means that policies and practices need to promote healthy relationships within the institutional setting, as well as support offenders' healthy connections with children, families, significant others, and the community.

- Women's typical pathways into crime and the criminal justice system involve a complex interplay of trauma and victimization, substance abuse, and mental health problems. Services and supervision provided to women offenders, therefore, should address these issues in an integrated way in order to respond most effectively to how women actually experience and understand them. Cultural issues also need to be appropriately integrated into program design in order to increase participant retention and have maximum impact on the targeted offenders.

- From a socioeconomic point of view, most women who enter the criminal justice system are economically disadvantaged, with little education, few job skills, and sporadic employment histories. Many have relied on public assistance that, in some states, will no longer be available following a felony drug conviction. At the same time, many of these women are single mothers who must find ways to support both themselves and their children. Their capacity to be economically self-sufficient is essential to their success in their community, especially if understood in the context of relationships. Women who are not self-sufficient must depend on family or significant others. While some families and significant others can be sources of tremendous support and stability, others can contribute to women's instability and leave them vulnerable to further involvement in substance abuse or other criminal activities.

- Women typically return to the same communities from which they left to go to prison. The challenges they faced there likely will still exist for them upon their return. Therefore, they need to find support within those same communities in order to face the myriad challenges that accompany reentry: staying clean and sober, finding safe and sober housing, returning to a primary caretaker role for their children, finding employment that pays a livable wage along with child care and transportation, and

negotiating the requirements of community supervision along with the possibility of additional requirements of the child welfare system. For some women, this also involves finding care for chronic health conditions like HIV. Just as the services and programming within corrections need to take account of the interrelationship of substance abuse, violence, mental health, and family/relationship issues in women's lives, so do supportive services in the community. Services must be comprehensive, and must be coordinated so that receiving support does not place additional burdens on returning offenders. In order to achieve this level of service for women, institutional corrections and community supervision agencies need to join forces with public and private community organizations to ensure that the community support is available for women to successfully fulfill their criminal justice system obligations, and achieve successes that will ensure that they do not return to prison.

There is ongoing work in the development of specific models for practice based on these gender responsive principles. They can serve as both a basis for self-assessment and a guideline for implementation of changes. Many jurisdictions have incorporated these principles through such practices as developing contractor requirements for women's treatment services that require a gender specific treatment approach; creating gender specific caseloads for community supervision; revising family visitation programs to better support mother-child relationships; and revising intake procedures to identify and address PTSD and co-occurring mental health and substance abuse disorders early in a woman's stay in prison so that women suffering from trauma are better able to cope with the demands of institutional life. These are just examples of ways in which gender responsive principles have been translated into practice.

Conclusion

Research has provided important information on how a consideration of the different experiences of male and female offenders can impact successful reentry. While both male and female offenders face many of the same challenges to success (e.g., housing, employment, substance abuse issues), the solutions to these issues often are achieved through different methods, requiring different sets of skills, services, and programming. An acknowledgement that gender makes a difference in the success of institutional corrections and community supervision agencies' reentry policies and practices is a key first step in developing a strategic plan that will provide avenues for successful reentry for the growing population of women offenders.

KEY STEPS

- **Acknowledge that gender (male and female) makes a difference.**
- **Apply the principles of gender responsiveness to the development and implementation of reentry policies and practices.**
- **Use models from other fields of study (such as health and substance abuse treatment) to inform the consideration, development, and implementation of gender responsive policies and practices.**

CHAPTER 3: KEY MANAGEMENT ISSUES FOR WOMEN OFFENDERS

While women face many of the same obstacles as men during their period of incarceration and throughout the early stages of their return to the community (e.g., addressing substance abuse issues or locating jobs and housing), women's reentry experience is influenced by the same factors that create their unique pathways into the criminal justice system. These include:

- Histories of physical and sexual abuse.
- The combination of substance abuse and mental illness.
- Economic disadvantage.

In addition, women offenders are unique in that they are challenged by the expectation (their own and that of others) that they will resume full-time parenting responsibilities upon their release. In addition, many also are faced with the challenge of managing chronic physical health problems such as HIV or hepatitis. Perhaps one of the greatest challenges for institutional corrections and community supervision agencies is the need to understand and implement strategies that address this entire complex of issues simultaneously rather than considering them independently or sequentially.

Assessment

> ### Assessment: Key Questions
>
> 1. Is information gathered on the issues that are most relevant to women (e.g., abuse and trauma, family and children, mental health, relationships)?
> 2. Have the assessment tools been validated on a relevant female population?
> 3. Does the staff conducting assessments understand the areas in which male and female offenders differ?

Every offender goes through a process of assessment upon entry into an institution, and often at various stages throughout their incarceration and beyond. Full and accurate information gathering is a critically important component of reentry, since all decisions about an offender's experience (from custody level, to eligibility for programs, to type of programming needed, to the types of support necessary to achieve success) are linked to what can be known about each offender, the risks the offender presents, and what types of programming and support the offender needs in order to succeed.

> Prerelease is not the beginning of offender reentry. It is a stage that follows and should be built upon efforts that begin at intake, including assessment, case planning, and the provision of programs and services.

Assessments, however, serve many different purposes. The first function of assessment and the mainstay of most correctional programs is a classification system that predicts an offender's likelihood of rearrest, reconviction, absconding (e.g., community risk assessment instruments), or serious misconduct (e.g., institutional custody classification and reclassification instruments). Another important function of assessment is the identification of treatment needs. Needs assessments complement the risk assessment and direct correctional practitioners to treatment targets that should be addressed during the correctional term and upon release. These assessments are often understood in terms of the particular tools that are used. Most states, however, use the same assessment tools for men as they do for women, despite what is known about the different pathways, needs, and custodial behavior presented by males and

females. An inventory conducted by the National Institute of Corrections, now several years ago, found that at that time only fourteen states had validated institutional risk assessments for women offenders, and fewer (eight states) had different needs assessments for women and men (Van Voorhis & Presser, 2001).

> The first step in assessment should be asking each woman her goals in each of the basic life areas.

Tools that are validated on male populations invariably overclassify the risk level of women offenders. In other words, the highest risk women are almost inevitably lower risk (for assaultive misconducts, non-walkaway escapes, and violence) than the highest risk men (Hardyman & Van Voorhis, 2004). The designation of high risk, therefore, miscategorizes some women offenders and can lead to fewer opportunities for programming and stepdown to community placements. In addition, there is evidence that some factors currently assessed in ostensibly gender-neutral tools operate differently in men and women. For example, a factor like greater education that suggests lower risk of institutional infractions among men enhances rather than lowers the risk of such infractions among women (Hardyman & Van Voorhis, 2004).

Another problem with these non-validated, non-gender specific tools is that they can miss some of the issues that constitute women's unique experience, and therefore provide insufficient information about the placements, programming, and other needs that will advance women's success. While current correctional practice strongly emphasizes the need to dedicate resources toward the criminogenic needs of offenders (or in other words, those factors most likely to contribute to future criminality) (Andrews & Bonta, 1998), there is considerably more research needed to understand whether the criminogenic needs

shared by men and women are, in fact, the ones that will contribute most significantly to women's success both within and outside the institution (Hardyman & Van Voorhis, 2004). Some studies suggest that factors such as the well-being of a woman's children, which are not accounted for in existing gender neutral assessment tools, have a profound impact on women's institutional and post-institutional behavior and need to be understood more fully (Hardyman & Van Voorhis, 2004).

Institutional corrections and community supervision agencies are strongly encouraged to examine their assessment processes and ensure that the tools that are being used for women have been validated on an appropriate female population. More importantly in the short term, however, is to recognize the need to gather full and accurate information about the women who are entering the institutions, whether that is accomplished by revising existing tools or simply supplementing existing tools with additional assessment instruments in order to solicit information on those factors known to be important to women. These factors include: history of abuse; current relationship status; mental health concerns, especially PTSD; family issues (including how many children the offender has, whether she is caring for parents or other family members, who provides care in the woman's absence, concerns the offender has about family members' wellbeing, and whether she needs assistance in working with child welfare agencies to ensure that her parental rights are not terminated); and socioeconomic history and what she will need in order to become economically self-sufficient.

Research is underway to test whether and how these gender specific factors actually predict risk (McCampbell, 2005) and it is clear that the current generation of risk assessment tools has not adequately addressed these issues for women. Preliminary evidence has been reported which suggests that when gender responsive items are used to predict criminal behavior they are more predictive than traditional risk/need

assessments (Van Voorhis, 2007; Blanchette, 2007). Further research is needed to augment these findings; however, it is clear that the issues identified above (e.g., mental health, child care, relationships) are significant issues that must be acknowledged and addressed before a woman will be able to address those factors successfully.

Until recently there have been few efforts to develop or modify assessments to be gender responsive. However, there are some recent developments that hold promise:

- The National Institute of Corrections, in conjunction with Pat Van Voorhis at the University of Cincinnati, has developed a comprehensive gender responsive assessment tool that has been validated with a sample of women in Missouri (Van Voorhis, 2007).
- The University of Cincinnati has developed a trailer which consists of a number of gender responsive items that can be used in addition to existing risk needs assessment tools (Van Voorhis, 2007).
- Orbis Partners of Ottawa Canada [www.orbispartners.com] is piloting a risk/needs/strengths assessment that was developed for women. The Service Planning Inventory for Women (SPin-W) incorporates gender responsive needs and protective factors across ten critical domains.

Whatever tool is used, information needs to be gathered across all of the basic life areas (subsistence/livelihood, residence, health/sobriety, family/relationships, and criminal justice compliance). This will enable a determination of what concerns women are bringing with them to the institution that will impact their experience, what issues need to be resolved over the period of incarceration, and what challenges will need to be surmounted as they approach their release into the community. Assessments should also be looking for strengths and protective factors that can be nurtured in order to build women's resilience as they face the challenges they will inevitably encounter while incarcerated and upon release.

Finally, sufficient attention should be paid to the context of these assessments since it might be expected that women will withhold information unless and until they can trust that it will be used for their benefit and not their detriment. This is a difficult task in the correctional environment but one that is built upon the gender responsiveness principles of both environment (safety, respect, and dignity) and relationships (modeling and facilitating healthy connections with others).

Behavior and Programming

Behavior and Programming: Key Questions

1. Does staff have the necessary training to translate assessment information into a meaningful case plan?
2. Do programs and services effectively correspond to the risks and needs identified among women?
3. Do programs and services, and the structure through which they are delivered, reflect the interrelatedness of women's risks and needs?

As part of the transformation from a security-oriented to success-oriented approach to corrections, women's institutions must consider how to incorporate the elements of gender responsiveness on both a structural and programming level. Of primary concern is ensuring that women who have experienced physical, sexual, and emotional trauma, especially those with PTSD, are not further traumatized by the environment or the behavior of staff, including but not limited to sexual misconduct and verbal abuse. This is both a training and leadership issue, representing the kind of broad organizational change covered in Section Three. It requires the coordination of new training for staff on key issues related to women offenders and the reconsideration of existing policies and practice related to providing incentives for staff to adopt new behaviors. It also requires the clear and open commitment of the institutional leadership to implementing this kind of change. Taking on

institutional culture is a difficult but necessary element of facilitating successful reentry for women offenders, since their experience within the institution will inevitably impact their experiences on the outside, perhaps far into the future (Harding, 2000).

Structurally, consideration should be given to the creation of appropriate and sustainable relationships between offenders and representatives of the institution, such as creating a case management system whereby women are encouraged to develop a healthy, supporting, or encouraging relationship with a team of staff members whose primary interest is the woman's success. This can also be accomplished through connections between the institution and community-based agencies. When community-based treatment and other service providers are encouraged to provide services to women in the institution, these same service providers are better equipped to provide ongoing services to the women when they leave and, in fact, may be better equipped to anticipate, plan, and proactively prepare offenders for release than those with institutional experience alone. With the connections and relationships in place, women offenders may be more likely to follow up with essential services upon their return to the community, thus enhancing their likelihood of success in all of the basic life areas. This is especially important because women typically have shorter lengths of stay in prison than do men (Greenfeld & Snell, 1999; Parke & Clarke-Stewart, 2002). There is often insufficient time for women to complete treatment and other types of programming during their incarceration. Community partnerships are essential to ensure that what is begun in the institution can be completed in the community, and/or opportunities for treatment and programming that are missed in the institution can be compensated for in community-based programming.

> Because the challenges women face in the community are interrelated, programming for women must address these issues in integrated rather than compartmentalized ways. For example, programming must reflect an understanding of how violence in the lives of women impacts many of their decisions and experiences, including where to work, where to live, who to trust, with whom to associate, and whether to use drugs.

Programming availability and content must also reflect the gender specific needs of women. Because the challenges women face in the community are interrelated, programming for women must address these issues in integrated rather than compartmentalized ways. For example, programming must reflect an understanding of how violence in the lives of women impacts many of their decisions and experiences, including where to work, where to live, who to trust, with whom to associate, and whether to use drugs. Only when women receive help in understanding these interrelationships can they begin to develop strategies for sustaining a healthy crime-free life in the community.

Additional Considerations in the Transition of Women Offenders

Subsistence/Livelihood
In order to succeed in the community, women need to be equipped for gainful employment. Institutions can benefit from partnerships with local or statewide workforce development agencies in order to ensure that institutional education, job readiness, and employment training match the opportunities available to women on the outside. Too often women spend valuable time learning skills that their criminal justice status will prevent them from using for legal employment (i.e., employment requiring licensure, often unavailable to those with felony criminal records), or that are unlikely to lead to

jobs with sufficient wages for them to support a family. Women who cannot support themselves will need to rely on others, and research on the pathways to criminality for women offenders indicates that this dependence is often directly related to their criminal behavior. Programming needs to target long-term economic self-sufficiency as a primary goal, and begin moving women offenders in that direction to the extent possible.

Residence

Most jurisdictions have many fewer institutions for women than men do. As a result, most women are housed far from the communities to which they will return (an average of 160 miles) (Travis, Cincotta, & Solomon, 2003), which limits their ability to build relationships with and/or remain connected to both the people and services in those communities. The use of community-based alternatives for women is especially important for this reason. Community-based residential facilities for women can help prevent some of the disruption caused by incarceration while serving many of the same purposes, especially for those women who are classified at the lowest custody levels. Women should be diverted to or transferred to community-based facilities for as much of their sentences as possible.

Family/Relationships

For the wellbeing of women offenders, as well as their children and their children's caregivers on the outside, institutions need to develop policies and practices that recognize that healthy relationships are critical to women's long-term success. "Studies comparing the outcomes of prisoners who maintained family connections during prison through letters and personal visits with those who did not suggest that maintaining family ties reduces recidivism rates." (Travis, Cincotta, & Solomon, 2003). Institutions must work to remove as many obstacles as possible to sustaining and, where possible, improving the essential connections between women, their children and families, and other members of their existing support networks. This can include

creating child friendly visiting spaces and policies (e.g., allowing physical contact, providing snacks, removing limits on the number of children that can visit, working with community groups to develop programs for weekend long visits; pairing parenting classes with therapeutic visiting programs, flexible visiting hours). Institutions should consider eliminating family visits from the list of privileges that can be taken away and instead view them, like daily exercise, as activities essential to offender well-being. Other methods of strengthening family/relationship ties include creating family reunification counseling programs to help prepare offenders and their significant others for the challenges of reentry, and identifying a child welfare liaison to ensure women are aware of and meeting obligations that will prevent termination of their parental rights.

When women do have children in foster care, they need assistance from the correctional institution to remain in contact with their children. They may need flexibility on approved phone numbers (foster children can be transferred with minimal notice and case workers reassigned) and the ability to make calls that are not collect (not all foster parents will accept collect calls), copy cards and letters sent to them (to prove that the offender kept in contact), and work with legal services to prepare for and attend hearings. Even if children are not in foster care, they may enter a crisis and women may need flexibility in order to be involved. For example, children may attempt suicide, drop out of school, get evicted from their living situation, or have an emotional breakdown. While incarceration inevitably disrupts family and community connections, there are myriad ways that institutions, in partnership with community-based organizations, can work to mitigate some of those effects and better prepare women and their significant others for their eventual return.

Health/Sobriety

Most women who enter prison are in poor health as a result of lifestyles that damage their bodies, and poverty and histories of abuse prevent them from seeking and receiving the help they need

(Bloom, Owen, & Covington, 2003; CSAT, 1999). Ironically, prison may be the first place that women receive regular treatment for both acute and chronic physical and mental health problems. Screening for health problems in women is essential, both because some of the health conditions are infectious and may need specialized management, and because physical and mental impairments can prevent women from participating in and benefiting from other essential programming. Some recent studies have suggested that women entering prison have much higher rates of self-injury or self-harm than women who are not incarcerated. Women offenders who exhibit self-injury behaviors do not adjust to the institutional environment or respond to programming as well as women who do not exhibit this behavior (Wichmann, Serin, & Abrucen, 2002). Understanding this critical issue from a behavioral and programming perspective (not to mention assessment) seems critical to successfully working with women while they are incarcerated.

Women also need to be screened for pregnancy so that proper prenatal care can be administered and preparations made for birth and infant care, or steps can be taken to terminate the pregnancy, if appropriate. It is important that treatment be provided in a manner consistent with individual dignity, respect, and privacy. Too often women in prison are treated as if their bodies are public property (Galbraith, 1998), and this kind of treatment runs counter to the ultimate goal of encouraging women to value and take care of their bodies. In addition to treatment for disease, institutionalized women need education on health related issues, including reproductive health, nutrition and exercise, mental health, and managing chronic diseases.

Of all the health issues that women bring to prison, substance abuse is probably the most common, both alone and in combination with other mental and physical health problems. The Center for Substance Abuse Treatment (CSAT), a branch of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration of the U.S.

Department of Health and Human Services, has published a variety of technical assistance materials pertaining to best practices in substance abuse treatment for women, including *Substance Abuse Treatment for Women Offenders, Guide to Promising Practices* (CSAT, 1999). The CSAT approach is to view substance abuse as being intricately intertwined with all the major facets of a woman's life. The substance abuse cannot be addressed as an isolated problem. If a woman is to heal and maintain recovery, the treatment program must help her address both her social and psychological needs. These areas include the impact of physical and sexual abuse during childhood, depression, domestic violence, the drug and alcohol abuse of her partner, relations with her children, and the guilt, shame, and low self-esteem and confidence that her life experience has produced (CSAT, 1999).

According to the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA, 2005), research shows that women receive the most benefit from drug treatment programs that provide comprehensive services for meeting their basic needs, including access to the following:

- Food, clothing, and shelter
- Transportation
- Job counseling and training
- Legal assistance
- Literacy training and educational opportunities
- Parenting training
- Family therapy
- Couples counseling
- Medical care
- Child care
- Social services
- Social support
- Psychological assessment and mental health care
- Assertiveness training
- Family planning services

While some of these issues (such as transportation or couples counseling) are less relevant to incarcerated women, they become very relevant to women upon leaving the

institution. Correctional substance abuse program leaders, therefore, need to consider how to partner with their community corrections counterparts and community-based treatment providers to ensure that these offender reentry needs are addressed through their program design that should, ideally, involve community-based providers in a seamless network of services.

The principle that emerges from the well-researched area of substance abuse intervention is the need to integrate and not isolate the various elements of women's experience in program design. This will apply to substance abuse as well as mental health treatment, physical and sexual health education, employment training and preparation, parenting skills programs, and general life skills, stress management, problem solving, and empowerment. Each of these topics needs to integrate information on coping with trauma and mental health symptoms; managing parenting, elder care, and childcare responsibilities; and dealing with sexual harassment or abuse (whether by a partner, treatment provider, employer, corrections officer, or supervision officer). All must be oriented toward increasing women's self-efficacy, the sense that the offender has the power to affect the course of her life. The combination of integrated service elements with attention to the institutional and treatment environment can have a profound effect on women's ability to move toward genuine behavioral change. On an institutional level, understanding the issues that impact a woman's health can suggest a variety of funding sources that may assist the woman in receiving the care the offender needs in the community.

Criminal Justice Compliance
As most correctional officers know, women's behavior in institutions differs from that of men. Women commit far fewer serious and violent misconducts than men but are more frequently cited for minor misconducts (Hardyman & Van Voorhis, 2004). Researchers note that staff members who are inexperienced or untrained in

working with women often use write-ups as a way to manage minor incidents, which has significant repercussions for incarcerated women (Hardyman & Van Voorhis, 2004). Multiple infractions such as staff disrespect or yelling can elevate a woman's custody level, thus limiting her access to visitation, programming, and ultimately release on supervision, despite the fact that these women pose little risk to safety either within or outside the institution. In addition, disciplinary codes in the institutions often fail to distinguish between misconducts with severe and relatively minor implications. For example, all assaults will be coded the same, whether involving a sexual assault, an aggravated assault involving substantial injury to the victim, or simple assaults with no injury (which is far more common among women). This, too, can result in over classification of women. Moreover, there are other implications: at the time of release, the paroling authority's release decision may be based on a skewed impression of what a high number of misconducts represent in terms of women's institutional compliance and risk of reoffense.

> Women commit far fewer serious and violent misconducts than men but are more frequently cited for minor misconducts. Researchers note that staff members who are inexperienced or untrained in working with women often use write-ups as a way to manage minor incidents, which has significant repercussions for incarcerated women.

The issue of institutional misconducts reaffirms the importance of gender specific assessments, both at initial classification and reclassification. For one thing, troubled women (i.e., those with mental illness, experiences of abuse, substance abuse, and other high needs) appear to commit more misconducts than women who score high on criminal and institutional history (the traditional predictors) (Hardyman & Van Voorhis, 2004). Thus, for women, needs may be better

predictors of misconduct than criminal history, though most institutions still rely on the latter rather than the former to make classification decisions (and custody classification according to need rather than behavior poses ethical questions that need to be addressed) (Hardyman & Van Voorhis, 2004). In addition, most assessments do not take account of gender specific needs, even those that have been shown to correlate to institutional adjustment such as having been a victim of child abuse, codependency or lack of power in relationships, and mental health (Hardyman & Van Voorhis, 2004).

Release Preparation

Release preparation should begin immediately following intake assessment and the development of an individual programming plan. Like their pathways into the system, women's needs upon leaving institutions are directly influenced by their gender specific experience. While all offenders need to think about housing, women need to consider whether they will be safe from domestic violence if they choose to live with an intimate partner. While all offenders need to consider job opportunities, women typically have more limited work histories and lower expectations for their wage levels than men do, despite their need to support themselves and their children (LaVigne, Kachnowski, Travis, Naser, & Visher, 2003). Reunification with children may be the primary issue for women, so they are also more likely to need childcare, and will have to consider whether a potential job location or schedule will allow them access to affordable childcare opportunities. Thus, as women are prepared for release, the subjects may be similar but the questions and issues that need to be addressed are likely to be different from those addressed for men.

At the time of release, women should leave the institution with the essentials for their survival. The release package should include:

- All paperwork
- A reasonable supply of medication (based on the availability of public health services)

- Social security card
- Birth certificate
- Government identification
- Copy of her case management plan (with updated assessments)
- Schedule for her first week

This can be a difficult process requiring significant coordination, and should be initiated in a timely fashion. The offender will need both money and transportation from the facility to her new residence. Most importantly, the offender will need a case manager or other supportive contact in the community who can help her negotiate the challenges of her reentry. Depending upon how long the offender has been incarcerated, the offender may need an orientation to new technologies, such as credit-like cards for public transportation, public assistance, and Medicaid. Community-based agencies, faith groups and others can be important allies both to the individuals being released and to the institutions. They can serve as a necessary bridge and offer services that women need but that the institution is not structured to provide.

As part of a systemic approach to offender reentry, the prerelease period should include updated assessments and revisions to the case management plan, as necessary. If the institutional programming plan has been successful, women will be returning to the community with different needs than when they left. These changes should be noted both to assist the woman in developing her sense of success and self-efficacy, and to assist the community supervision agency and community service providers in moving forward with the woman rather than duplicating work that has been done. Institutional corrections and community supervision agencies need to look carefully at parole rates, look at the releasing authority's interpretation of institutional behaviors, and ensure that women are being released on supervision at rates at least equal to those of the male population. If a case management plan is being used to help assess offenders' eligibility for supervision, and the

programming or other structural support is not in place for women to meet the goals of their plans successfully, the institution may need to address this issue on a system-wide basis.

Additional Considerations During Release Preparation

Subsistence/Livelihood

While the ultimate goal is for women to be self-supporting and financially independent, with sufficient education and training opportunities to ensure long-term stability and growth, the immediate concern in the prerelease phase is on short-term survival and stabilization. Women should be working toward job opportunities that will provide living wages and benefits, though subsidized employment and minimum wage work are often necessary as a beginning, due to poor work histories and discrimination by employers. Women offenders reentering the community will also need to consider where they will acquire food, clothing, and other essentials upon release, and where they will be able to receive mail, make phone calls, and receive messages in order to pursue job, housing, and other opportunities and responsibilities. Institutions can help by ensuring that women apply for any public health or cash benefits for which they may be eligible at the earliest possible opportunity, including prior to release. Some programs take as long as three months to determine eligibility, and still others routinely reject certain types of applicants and require an appeal. Assisting women in this area may require working with other public systems both to become familiar with their procedures and to identify roadblocks and challenges that may cause delays. Women should also leave the institution equipped with proper identification.

Service systems that case managers need to become familiar with in order to assist women include: substance abuse treatment, child welfare, housing and homelessness, public assistance (e.g., TANF, food stamps, SSI), mental health, child care, Medicaid, and HIV/AIDS Services.

Research has shown that offenders who participate in work release programs are more likely to find and retain employment in the three to six months following release than those who participate in either job training or job readiness education or institutional job placements (LaVigne, Kachnowski, Travis, Naser, & Visher, 2003). There have traditionally been many fewer work release opportunities for women than for men, but clearly this is the direction to follow to assist women in achieving financial stability. The particular challenge for women is ensuring that financial dependence does not lead to relationships that jeopardize their sobriety, their physical, sexual, and emotional safety, or their likelihood of becoming involved in criminal activities. When domestic violence is an issue in a woman's life, the offender needs to be actively encouraged to seek alternatives to returning to the abusive relationship. While such a relationship may satisfy an immediate need for financial support and companionship, it can be highly detrimental to her longer-term prospects.

Residence

Residential goals include safe, sober, permanent (and permanently affordable) housing that will accommodate a woman and her children, though many women pass through homeless shelters and other housing alternatives on their way toward the goal of a permanent residence. Women may need to rely on a network of family and friends, though this option should be carefully considered in terms of whether the situation supports or threatens her sobriety (Sullivan, Mino, Nelson, & Pope, 2002). Too many women leaving prison end up homeless. This often leaves them extremely vulnerable to both drug use and violent victimization. To avoid this scenario, prerelease planning is essential. Many public housing authorities will not serve women with criminal histories that include drug felonies. This can severely limit women's options. Even public housing for which an ex-offender is eligible often has long waiting lists and cannot be considered a survival or even stabilization phase option. Corrections agencies should work to ensure that there are sufficient halfway house placements for women in the communities where women are most likely to return. Halfway house

placements can facilitate a successful return because they allow women time in their communities to seek appropriate housing and employment without resorting to old criminal networks, abusive partners, or living on the street.

Among the housing challenges that some women face is the challenge of meeting Child Welfare requirements in order to regain custody of children in foster care. A woman must locate housing adequate for the size of her family but often, in the case of subsidized housing, cannot rent a large enough apartment until the children are actually in her custody. This creates a difficult situation for women whose goal is family reunification. Finally, while most incarcerated women come from and will return to urban environments, special attention should be paid to women from rural communities. Rural communities tend to have fewer housing options and other services, and women are more likely to need to rely on family and friend networks in order to avoid homelessness. While that could be a positive development if the family is sufficiently healthy and supportive, it could also place a woman back in a situation that is either dangerous and/or conducive to relapse.

Family/Relationships
Regardless of how long a woman has been incarcerated, whether the offender has maintained contact with her children, and whether the offender has a positive relationship with the children's caregiver(s), family reunification following incarceration can be challenging both emotionally and practically. It is made easier, however, if family ties have been supported through the period of incarceration. During the prerelease phase, institutions can facilitate successful family reintegration by creating opportunities for both offenders and family members to learn about what to expect, and helping them to plan for anticipated challenges. Some corrections agencies have designed programs at prerelease centers that involve family counseling sessions with offenders and their families, and/or group educational sessions for families alone. While involving families directly is

ideal, it is not always possible at isolated institutions. Alternatives include partnering with community-based agencies to provide counseling or information sessions, and increasing visitation opportunities such as weekend stays for children and visits with partners that might include a meeting with a prerelease counselor, or using video conferencing technology.

In addition to family reunification issues, prerelease is an important time to consider how to develop or support appropriate and therapeutic offender relationships with treatment and other service providers in the community, as well as with community supervision officers. If community-based treatment providers have not been involved during incarceration, they should be invited to meet with offenders prior to release to establish a connection and set up appointments for the women upon release. Similarly, other service providers should be invited to share whatever resources they have available since a personal contact will make it more likely that a woman will avail herself of the resources once the offender is in the community. Supervision officers should also be encouraged to make contact with offenders well in advance of release in order to discuss expectations and establish appointments.

Health/Sobriety
Prerelease planning for health and sobriety issues involves ensuring that plans are in place for continuity of treatment for physical health, mental health, and substance abuse related disorders. State and local public health agencies are important partners in this endeavor, since most reentering offenders will rely heavily on public sector health care services upon release (RAND, 2003). Applications for public health benefits may need to be submitted prior to release in order to ensure that services will be in place when offenders leave the institution. Determination of eligibility can take up to ninety days in some cases, and may require appeals, depending on the eligibility claim. Many offenders will need education on how to manage chronic illnesses in order to avoid an over-

reliance on emergency services. They will also need to be prepared to manage their reproductive health, and will need counseling on contraceptive options, as well as protecting themselves (and/or their partners) from sexually transmitted diseases. Offenders who identify as lesbian will need different information in terms of their sexual health, and may also need referrals to health care providers who are sensitive to their differing health needs.

Community-based substance abuse treatment services for the poor are limited, and can be especially so for women, and even more so for women with children who require childcare services or residential treatment facilities where children can accompany them. Because the immediate period following release can be so dangerous to sobriety, the fact that so many treatment facilities have long waiting lists can be particularly damaging to this population of women. Ideally, women should leave the institution with a prearranged placement in an appropriate level of treatment. If not, they will most likely need to rely on self-help groups until an opening becomes available and should be provided information on the locations and schedules of these meetings. This should not be considered sufficient, however, since most substance-abusing women who are returning to the community will need multidimensional support around their drug use behaviors which self-help groups are not necessarily geared to provide.

Criminal Justice Compliance
During the prerelease period, women should be well informed about the criminal justice conditions that will be applied upon their release, and have an opportunity to meet with the supervision officer to whom they will be reporting in order to begin to establish a rapport and clarify expectations. They should be assisted in anticipating which conditions are going to be the most difficult for them, and how they might overcome those difficulties, whether it is a matter of transportation to meet contact requirements, or avoiding contact with people who might threaten their sobriety. Women will need to know

how much money they will need to dedicate to fees of various kinds and if they will need to pay rent at a halfway house or contribute to the costs of treatment. This process can be an important education in planning and budgeting and will help women manage some of the stress that will surely accompany their release. This is also a time to examine other system obligations that might compete or conflict with their criminal justice compliance requirements, such as child welfare requirements for family reunification, participation in a dependency court, or TANF. Often, each system representative (e.g., supervision officer, child welfare caseworker, judge) will assume that their requirements should supersede all others, leaving women in an untenable position. Many women need assistance negotiating a plan that will not be a recipe for failure, and women should not have to choose between these equally vital needs.

Release: Key Questions

1. Have supervision officers been integrated into the prerelease process and received necessary information about institutional achievements, progress, and ongoing needs?
2. In addition to basic supplies for survival (e.g., money, identification, etc.), is there an established linkage with a supportive person in the community with whom the offender can make contact immediately upon release?
3. Many incarcerated women have mental and physical disorders. Do women leaving the institution have prescriptions, adequate supplies of medication, and an appointment with a community-based health care provider?
4. Is gender used as an analytic category in monitoring and evaluating release rates? Are women being released at rates comparable to men and appropriate to their level of threat to the community?

Release

Part of a systemic approach to offender reentry involves consideration of the role of community supervision. Too often, whether parole is part of the same or a different agency, institutional corrections and community supervision agencies do not communicate well or work together to facilitate reentry for offenders. As institutional corrections and community supervision agencies move toward a focus on offender success as a means of achieving public safety, this communication becomes increasingly important. Interpersonal communication among treatment providers, case managers, supervision officers, community service providers, and others involved in addressing offender needs and obligations is critical to providing support to the woman's reentry efforts.

Additional Considerations at Release

Subsistence/Livelihood
Unless a woman is in the unlikely position of having a job waiting for her when following release, the first days or even weeks out of prison will likely be a basic struggle for survival. Without income, women need to find ways to acquire food, clothing, and transportation, maintain basic hygiene, and fulfill their criminal justice obligations. Many will need public services, such as those provided by faith and community-based organizations like clothing banks and food pantries. Women should leave with a list of providers of basic services, with as much information as possible about locations, hours of operation, accessibility by public transportation, contact phone numbers, et cetera.

Residence
No woman should leave the institution without a place to go, whether it is to the home of a family or friend, a shelter, or a halfway house, and transportation to get there. The lack of a plan, however, is not a good reason to keep women past their release date. The solution is a proactive approach, adequate preparation time, and a solid backup plan facilitated by strong connections between the institution and a

network of community shelter and housing providers. Ideally, a woman will be going where someone is expecting her arrival. Absent these preparations, many women will end up spending their time on the street, a condition that is not conducive to long-term success.

Family/Relationships
The first task for many women upon release will be locating their children and other members of their family and making contact with them. Depending on how long the offender has been incarcerated and if the offender has remained in contact, this experience will vary in the level of difficulty, satisfaction, pain, and frustration it might produce. Preparing a woman for this process by encouraging family contact prior to release or, if necessary, preparing a woman to handle the feelings of disappointment or loneliness the offender might experience if the process does not go as the offender would like, is an important prerelease task. Though not a substitute for family, encouraging contact with service providers, twelve-step groups, and other potential sources of support can help women cope while seeking to reconnect with family.

Health/Sobriety
Avoiding relapse is perhaps one of the biggest challenges for newly released women. Part of a woman's early survival on the outside will be dependent on knowing whom to contact for support (and whom to avoid) when the urge to use substances becomes strong. While current thinking about relapse is that it is part of the journey to sobriety, offenders should be striving to lengthen the period of time between relapses or, in other words, increase the periods of sobriety. An early relapse can set the stage for failure in the community, since it will make it difficult to successfully reconnect with family and manage criminal justice obligations, if not cause a return to custody in and of itself. Therefore, women with substance abuse issues should be linked as quickly as possible with an appropriate level of treatment. This may require that their Medicaid eligibility be established, that appointments have been made prior to release,

and that information from the institution has been shared with the treatment facility.

Women with other physical and mental disorders in addition to substance abuse issues will need to be able to continue on medication regimes, and establish routines in the community that are compatible with self-care. Women who are homeless are vulnerable to additional illnesses and infections and have a very difficult time managing care of chronic illnesses like HIV or diabetes. Therefore, women who are ill have a particular need for a stable residential plan to prevent worsening of their conditions and efforts should be made to ensure that education on self-care is part of the release plan. Prerelease managers may be able to assist women in locating housing resources that are tied to funding streams for HIV/AIDS or severe mental illness. It is vital that institutions provide a prescription and/or supply of medication that will realistically carry a woman until she can meet with a community health care provider or until medical benefits can go into effect. A backup plan must be in place in case the process takes longer than expected.

Criminal Justice Compliance
The primary criminal justice goal for returning offenders at the earliest stages of release is to report for community supervision as required. This can be facilitated with prescheduled appointments, and a transportation plan. Supervision officers should be prepared to assist women in making sure that their basic survival needs are being met in order to prevent them from failing in their criminal justice obligations for no other reason than that basic survival takes precedence. Supervision officers should also be prepared for women looking to them for support and advice.

Supervision and Services

Effective supervision for women involves partnerships with community-based services, including those under contract with community supervision agencies, those with formal or informal collaborative relationships, and those that are unaffiliated in any way beyond referral. If essential community service providers are not currently involved in the reentry partnership, efforts should be made to involve them. Ideally, supervision officers should be looking to these community-based services as partners in a team approach to offender management, helping to determine the risks and needs of individual offenders and the best strategies for addressing them based on available resources. These would include: mental health and substance abuse treatment providers, especially those who can work with dually-diagnosed women and those that have programs geared toward women with

children; employment programs, especially those that have programs to address the specific challenges women face in the workforce; domestic violence and sexual assault service providers; halfway housing providers; and child care specialists.

Increasingly, community supervision agencies are considering ways to make supervision practices more gender responsive. Some are organizing gender specific caseloads, while others are making efforts to train all officers on strategies and practices most effective with women. Agencies that have made these efforts have begun to see increasing numbers of women successfully completing their supervision obligations. Women are more likely to be successful when attention is paid to the quality of the relationship between the officer and the offender (Koons, Morash, Burrow, & Bynum, 1997). Women's success also depends upon support in dealing with family obligations, such as ensuring that childcare is available at required programs. More generally, the services to which women are referred, and especially services for which the corrections agency contracts, should be required to demonstrate that their programs are gender responsive. Gender responsive programs should be structurally designed to meet women's needs (like providing onsite childcare and single sex treatment groups) and the content should also integrate the variety of issues known to be significant for women, such as victimization and trauma.

Community supervision professionals, like their institutional colleagues, need to embrace the position that a significant part of their role is to help offenders succeed. It is no longer sufficient, in this model, to focus on surveillance, infractions, and failures; rather, consideration must be given to how to motivate and support offenders in meeting their obligations and achieving success in the community. This requires an ability to assess and make best use of offender strengths, such as helping offenders to articulate their own goals for their future and how their period of supervision can help them

progress in their chosen direction. Supervision officers are increasingly being asked to function as case managers, a balance requiring both support and management skills. Community supervision agencies should consider how well prepared their staff members are to fulfill both the supporting and enforcing functions required by this approach. One important key to effective case management and supervision is being very up front with information about expectations and consequences. Women may be more likely to accept being held accountable by someone who they look to for support when the accountability measures are perceived as fair and predictable, rather than arbitrary and personal.

Most women under community supervision will be relatively low-risk offenders (in terms of risk to public safety) compared to the population of men. This suggests that they may be low priority on a mixed supervision caseload. While this reduces their chances of being violated for technicalities, it may also increase their chance of failure since women offenders need support in order to succeed in becoming sober, independent, law-abiding members of the community (Bloom & McDiarmid, 2000). Unless the system has developed a relationship with a community-based agency to provide case management services to women offenders, the supervision officer may be the only person positioned to provide support and facilitate access to needed services. This challenge underscores the importance of taking a team approach with community-based service providers to the supervision of women offenders. Some of these service providers (e.g., substance abuse treatment, halfway housing providers) may be well equipped to provide the case management services the women need, freeing the supervision agent to play a supporting rather than primary role in seeing that women's essential needs are met.

Because women offenders present so many needs, however, there is an additional challenge: ensuring that women are not over supervised, that their level of obligation does not exceed the

level of their crime or risk they pose to the community, and that their readily apparent needs are not automatically translated into greater criminal justice requirements. In other words, it is very important that supervision officers recognize and provide guidance and referrals for problems like domestic violence. However, attendance at a battered women's support group should not necessarily become an additional obligation of a woman's conditions of supervision. Community supervision agencies and others who have any control over supervision conditions should make every effort to ensure that conditions for women are realistic, relevant, and research-based.

Additional Considerations During Community Supervision

Survival/Livelihood
Holding a job is a typical condition of community supervision, and research supports the connection between employment and lower offending rates among offenders under community supervision (Visher, LaVigne, & Travis, 2004). Women, however, face obstacles that most men do not in finding and keeping jobs. In addition to histories that typically include less education and training, greater incidences of mental illness, and limited work experience and earnings, women need to have adequate, affordable childcare and a backup plan for times when children are sick in order to succeed in the workplace (Reed & Leavitt, 1998). They need to have safe transportation; women are not necessarily safe when walking or taking public transportation at certain times or in certain places. They need to understand how to manage sexual harassment issues if they should arise. If a woman needs to leave her job in order to achieve safety from sexual or physical abuse, this should not be held against her. To supervise women effectively, supervision officers need to understand the specific barriers that women face in the job market and in retaining employment.

In order to be most effective with women offenders, supervision officers should try to educate themselves on the local resources available to support employment among women offenders. Ideally, the community supervision agency will have formal relationships with workforce assistance programs that specialize in hard-to-place employees. Some of these programs will include services in other areas as well, like substance abuse treatment, and some will help direct women into jobs, like construction trades, that promise a better economic future for women and their families. These programs should be assessed for their gender responsiveness, such as whether they are prepared to help women address domestic violence and sexual harassment, both of which can profoundly impact employment stability. They should also be assessed as to whether the staff includes women whose backgrounds reflect their client population.

Residence
Affordable housing is a national crisis, and women under community supervision are victims of this crisis along with many other low-income groups. They also face additional obstacles, however, since criminal background checks are a mainstay of housing applications, and many are still struggling with addiction, mental illness, and other obstacles to stability. Some women under community supervision will be fortunate in finding a placement at a halfway house facility that is designed to help women with the reentry process, whether a prerelease facility or a facility designed for women who have been released to community supervision. It is best for women when supervision officers work together with staff at these residential facilities to manage the various services and obligations of each individual woman. For women without access to these resources, supervision officers need to be mindful of their vulnerability to homelessness—not considering homelessness a failure for which the women are responsible, but rather a challenge that they are facing due to multiple obstacles. Supervision agencies should work closely with local homelessness programs

to help women on supervision stay connected to treatment services and other essential support services that are significantly threatened when stable housing is not available.

When family or friends provide housing, supervision officers should seek ways to include these individuals as part of the woman's support network. Using them not merely as collateral contacts who will report on the woman's behavior but as assets who can support her in her efforts to succeed, supervision officers can help the support network remain in place and become stronger. Officers can educate family and friends on issues such as addiction, ensure that the presence of the offender is not placing undue burdens on the household that can jeopardize her stability, and provide referrals to services if, in fact, they are needed. This kind of approach both assists women under community supervision in maintaining a stable residence, and honors the importance of these relationships in the lives of women.

Many believe that most women offenders do not belong in prison at all, and that community-based corrections facilities are the best, most appropriate option for non-violent women offenders. Advantages of these kinds of facilities include the ability of women to maintain connections in the community that will facilitate their ability to locate permanent affordable housing.

Family/Relationships
Reintegrating with family after a period of incarceration is one of the most difficult and emotionally loaded challenges that women face. Supervision officers need to be aware that, in addition to the emotional issues that may genuinely wreak havoc on women's ability to cope, women may face legal issues which will require their presence in court. They may be under obligations to the child welfare system to participate in a variety of programs in order to avoid losing their children permanently. This means they may need legal assistance for which referrals will be helpful, and they may need to

negotiate visitation and program schedules that will present logistical challenges as they attempt to meet their other obligations as well. While supervision agencies typically have little to say about family and parenting issues except insofar as they involve the offenders' contacts with others who might have criminal justice histories or be actively involved in substance abuse, it is helpful to women in particular if supervision officers can be aware of and acknowledge the challenges they may be facing. Supervision officers can then provide them with sufficient flexibility to address these important matters, as well as referrals to community-based agencies that may be able to assist. Efforts expended to assist women in becoming effective parents and integrated members of supportive, functional families can be expected to pay returns in women's success in the community.

Health/Sobriety
Substance abuse treatment providers can be supervision officers' most important and valuable allies in working with the many women offenders who have substance abuse issues (CSAT, 2005a). As partners, substance abuse treatment agencies are often prepared to provide case management services, and can work closely with supervision officers to develop relapse prevention plans and other resources to help officers maintain perspective on the risks and needs of women offenders. Together, treatment providers and officers can agree on responses to violations or failures in treatment, the consistency of which will assist women in understanding and meeting their obligations. It is essential that treatment providers have both knowledge and experience in working within a criminal justice system as well as in treating women offenders, in order that they recognize the need for gender specific, women only programs, and are prepared to address the complicated lives of women returning to the community from incarceration.

To some extent, the effectiveness of this partnership will depend on the cooperation of the institutions in providing treatment programs

that comply with State treatment standards (thus enabling consistent follow up), facilitating the sharing of information among institutional and community treatment providers, and encouraging access to offenders by community providers during the prerelease period. Community supervision agencies are responsible for developing ongoing collaborative relationships with the treatment providers, including protocols for sharing case information, and establishing clear expectations of the roles and responsibilities of the different agencies in managing the women.

Supervision agencies should be aware of how women generally are responding to a given treatment program. Because men in treatment significantly outnumber women, many treatment facilities have developed programs based on the needs and substance abuse patterns of men. Even when these programs provide women-only groups, they may be doing so using approaches that were developed for a male population and thus fail to address the differences in men's and women's drug use and recovery patterns, their different co-occurring problems (like eating disorders), and the ways that violence, mental health, and family and significant relationships impact their substance use (Kassebaum, 1999). In other words, it may be that the program is not meeting the needs of the women, and women drop out or fail to progress not because they are resistant but because they are essentially invisible within the context of the program. There has been significant research in the past decade on the substance abuse treatment needs of women, and partnerships should be sought with those programs that are familiar with this research and are best equipped to address the gender specific needs of women.

Criminal Justice Compliance

Most supervision officers are aware of the importance of providing swift and certain consequences for inappropriate behavior. Fewer are familiar with or adept at providing rewards and recognition for small or even large successes. Operant conditioning, the idea of

using positive and negative reinforcement to shape behavior, is basic to behavioral modification. In fact, research in this area has shown that positive reinforcement is much more effective than negative reinforcement (Bandura, 1996; Bandura & Ross, 1963; NIC & CJI, 2004; Gendreau & Goggin, 2007; Higgins & Silverman, 1999). Yet community supervision has always been more focused on responses to violations than accomplishments. In the switch toward a success-oriented corrections system, developing a set of rewards is just as important as a set of sanctions for violations. These rewards can include everything from certificates of achievement (e.g., six months without a missed appointment, completion of parenting program, etc.) to ceremonies of celebration (e.g., completing a phase of treatment, completing supervision, etc.) to early discharges. The point is to find things to celebrate and provide women with sources of pride and accomplishment.

> ### *Response to Violations: Key Questions*
> 1. Are expectations and potential consequences clear and responses consistent?
> 2. What policies and practices are in place to ensure that women are not unnecessarily revoked and reincarcerated? Are conditions reasonable?
> 3. Is there a system of responses that both reward and punish as appropriate?

Response to Violations

Accountability to the case management plan (crafted while the woman was incarcerated) will clearly be different outside the institution than within it. Accountability should always be based on clearly defined expectations and an advance understanding of consequences. Sanctions should be graduated, gender responsive, and appropriate to the level of the violation and should avoid over-reliance on revocation and

reincarceration which may have severe long-term repercussions for both women and their children. In addition to the offender's accountability, releasing authorities and community supervision agencies need to be accountable for making sure that expectations are reasonable based on the availability and accessibility of services, as well as the gender responsiveness of services. Finally, data should be kept that includes gender as an analytic category to ensure that rates of violation and revocation are comparable between men and women. If large discrepancies are found, there should be some investigation into the sources of the problem.

Conclusion

Offender reentry is a complicated matter, but it is vital to the cause of public safety and community stability that institutional corrections and community supervision agencies address these issues head on. Creating an effective offender reentry system for both men and women offenders requires a multidisciplinary, collaborative approach by the full range of corrections and community-based stakeholders. Effective collaboration is itself a challenge, requiring the development of a shared vision and goals, and trusting relationships among working members of the collaborative. A commitment to offender success, including women offenders, can prove to be the common ground that will make these collaborations possible. In working with women offenders in particular, institutional and community corrections and community supervision professionals should be mindful of four key issues:

- Gender matters. Men and women come to the criminal justice system in different ways and with different life experiences which must be accounted for if the system is going to succeed in helping them become sober, contributing, crime free members of the community.

- Effective offender reentry requires a system wide approach, beginning with thorough, gender specific assessment and individualized

case planning at offenders' entry into the institutional system, the provision of targeted services, and concluding with linkages to gender specific aftercare services.

- When working with or planning for work with women offenders, consider their roles in the community as mothers and members of families. These relationships are essential to their understanding of themselves and a failure to take these vital relationships into account often sets up women to fail.

- The role of trauma and violence in the lives of women offenders is not to be underestimated in terms of how it impacts their experience within the correctional system, and how it will impact them when they return to the community. All staff working with women should be trauma-informed.

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<tr><th colspan="4"><i>Assess Your Agency:
Women Offenders</i></th></tr>
<tr><th></th><th><i>Yes</i></th><th><i>No</i></th><th><i>Not Clear</i></th></tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.   Are the institutional and post-release supervision agencies committed to implementing gender responsive policies and services to women offenders?</td><td></td><td></td><td></td>
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<td>2.   Has the agency developed a working knowledge of the principles of gender responsiveness:
• Does agency policy and practice reflect an understanding that gender matters in relation to the successful management and reintegration of women offenders?
• Has the agency created an environment for women offenders based on safety, respect, and dignity?
• Do agency policies and practices promote healthy relationships within the institutional setting, as well as support women offenders' healthy connections with children, families, significant others, and the community?
• Do programs and services offer women offenders the opportunities to learn skills that will allow them to be economically self-sufficient?</td><td></td><td></td><td></td>
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<td>3.   Has the agency developed a detailed understanding of the services and resources currently available for this population (both institutional and community-based)?</td><td></td><td></td><td></td>
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<td>4.   Has the agency developed a clear, data-supported understanding of the women offenders who are under its control and supervision (e.g., critical information about the women offender population that includes: offenses of conviction, length of sentences, risk levels, treatment and service needs, responsivity issues, programming received, length of supervision, locations to which they return, recidivism rates)?</td><td></td><td></td><td></td>
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<td>5.   Is training provided to staff to facilitate the development of the specific types of skills necessary to intervene with women offenders in ways that will promote successful case outcomes?</td><td></td><td></td><td></td>
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<td>6.   Does the agency prioritize work activities that promote successful outcomes for women offenders (in contrast to focusing exclusively on custody and control, and surveillance and punishment-oriented activities)?</td><td></td><td></td><td></td>
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<tr>
<td>7.   Does the agency use assessment tools that have been validated on a relevant women offender population?</td><td></td><td></td><td></td>
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<tr>
<td>8.   Do agency staff members conducting assessments understand the key areas in which male and female offenders differ and how that should impact the assessment process?</td><td></td><td></td><td></td>
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Assess Your Agency: Women Offenders			
	Yes	*No*	*Not Clear*
9. Does the agency offer gender responsive programming and services for women offenders?			
10. Are case management plans developed in a manner that reflects the interrelatedness of women's risks and needs, and are programs and services structured to address these risk and need areas?			
11. Has the agency developed gender responsive policies and procedures (e.g., discipline), taking into account the differences between male and female offenders?			

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Conclusion

Madeline M. Carter

National detention and prison population growth, the rate of release of offenders to the community, accelerating correctional costs, a recognition that incarceration is falling short of our hope to stem the tide of recidivism, and a substantial body of evidence regarding approaches that can significantly impact the likelihood that offenders will offend again have resulted in a growing interest in offender reentry and effective offender management practices. This handbook describes an approach to beginning or continuing the important work of assuring that institutional corrections and community supervision agencies are aligned in such a way that they can have the maximum potential for promoting the success of offenders upon their return to the community.

This framework includes four key components:

- Exercising leadership and undertaking organizational change efforts.
- Undergoing a rational planning process.
- Building and supporting internal and external collaborative relationships.
- Engaging in empirically based offender management practices that are effective in reducing recidivism.

Experience demonstrates that by following this approach, institutional corrections and community supervision agencies will improve not only the way in which their work is conducted, but also the outcome of their efforts. This approach will result in:

- Clarity of purpose and direction for the agency (a clear vision).
- A more thorough understanding of the corrections agency and its surrounding system

(through the development of a system map, creation of resource directories, and a risk-based understanding of the offender population).
- The prioritization of those work activities most likely to result in offender success (such as meaningful offender contacts and engagement, effective case management, and programs and services that reduce risk).
- The identification and implementation of specific strategies and tools that will support the agency's activities (for instance, the use of empirically-based assessment tools, motivational interviewing techniques, and engagement of community supports in the offender change process).
- Improvements in important working relationships (within corrections and community supervision and across agency boundaries resulting in, for example, collaborative case management and enhanced access to or availability of resources and services).

Ultimately policymakers, professionals, and community members seek the same end: safer communities. Promoting offender success through the strategies outlined in this handbook offers the greatest opportunity to realize this goal.

Appendix

OFFENDER REENTRY POLICY AND PRACTICE INVENTORY

The purposes of this inventory are to assist institutional corrections and community supervision agencies to begin to look critically at their current policies and practices in comparison to evidence-based and emerging practices for offender reentry, and to identify issues and need areas that require further examination. This inventory does not provide a comprehensive description of all of the policies and practices necessary for successful offender reentry.

How to Use This Inventory
This inventory can be utilized in a variety of ways and settings. Institutional and community corrections practitioners are encouraged to employ it in the manner that is effective for their purposes. However, it is important to point out that the value of engaging in this exercise is maximized when respondents spend time processing their answers to the questions in the context of a group discussion. Through this processing, strengths, needs, and diverging opinions around policies and practices are discovered and examined within a lens of successful offender reentry.

Processing the Questions
In a group setting, users should review the items marked "No" in order to identify need areas for improvement. Positive responses indicate strengths of the agency (or agencies) in working toward successful offender reentry and provide opportunities to build upon current successes. Items marked as "Not Clear," as well as conflicting answers between respondents, may indicate an area requiring further research/inquisition, where the actual policies or practice must be clarified for certain staff within the agency, or where policies or practice diverge between agencies/divisions. For example, where an institutional representative may answer yes to a question, and a post-release supervision representative may answer no to the same question, further discussion on the reasons for this discrepancy should ensue.

The value of the inventory lies not so much in its completion but in the promise of clarification, discovery, and advancement that can be its result.

Leadership and Organizational Change	Yes	No	Not Clear
1. Are the institutional and post-release supervision agencies committed to promoting offender success?			
2. Does agency policy clearly indicate that offenders' successful completion of supervision following release from confinement is a primary goal?			
3. Are agency managers routinely involved in discussions about the purpose or focus of offender management activities (i.e., to promote successful outcomes)?			
4. Have special means or strategies been used (e.g., annual meetings, publications, the distribution of a rewritten vision statement) to communicate to staff the agency's specific vision and expectations regarding offender management and supervision (i.e., to promote successful outcomes)?			
5. Does the agency hire/promote individuals who support the agency's vision and who have the necessary qualities to assist in carrying out the vision?			
6. Is training provided to facilitate the development of the specific types of skills necessary to intervene with offenders in ways that will promote successful case outcomes?			
7. Does the agency routinely involve staff at all levels in discussions regarding the ways in which the agency can most effectively carry out its mission?			
8. Does the agency value and measure those activities that promote offender success?			
9. Does the agency prioritize work activities that promote successful offender outcomes (in contrast to focusing exclusively on custody and control, and surveillance and punishment-oriented activities)?			
10. Are incentives offered to reward and recognize staff who support the agency's vision for offender reentry?			
11. Do line staff understand that they play a significant role in providing offenders with opportunities to be successful?			

Rational Planning	Yes	No	Not Clear
12. Has the agency developed a clear, data-supported understanding of the offenders who are under their control and supervision (e.g., critical information about the offender population that includes: offenses of conviction, length of sentences, risk levels, treatment and service needs, responsivity issues, programming received, length of supervision, locations to which they return, recidivism rates)?			
13. Has the agency developed a clear understanding of current reentry policies and practices from intake to community release, supervision, and aftercare?			
14. Has the agency developed a detailed understanding of the services and resources currently available for this population (both institutional and community-based)?			
15. Has the agency developed a working knowledge of evidence-based practices and promising approaches in the area of offender management and reentry?			
16. Has the agency gathered information on the attitudes, knowledge, and skills of staff to assess their ability to work effectively with offenders?			
17. Has the agency identified its offender management and reentry gaps and need areas based on these analyses?			
18. Has the agency prioritized for implementation key strategies specifically designed to address the most significant need/gap areas?			
19. Has the agency developed a strategic plan to organize and guide the implementation of change strategies?			
20. Has the agency established goals and objectives to implement prioritized change strategies?			
21. Has the agency established a monitoring plan to assess the impact of these change strategies?			
Collaboration	Yes	No	Not Clear
22. Has a State-level, multidisciplinary policy team been established to collaboratively direct a comprehensive effort to improve offender management and reentry policies and practices?			
23. Are the leaders of State agencies that are responsible for, or contribute to, offender management and reentry committed to working together on this issue?			

	Yes	No	Not Clear
24. Have individual stakeholders identified the ways in which their agency can contribute to effective offender management and reentry?			
25. Do stakeholders demonstrate equal ownership and investment in offender reentry?			
26. Does the team include individuals, agencies, and organizations from the State that: • Are directly or indirectly responsible for offender management? • Work closely with, or advocate for, victims? • Provide mentoring or positive supports for offenders? • Offer educational and vocational services to offenders? • Promote access to appropriate and affordable housing for offenders? • Provide mental health services to offenders? • Facilitate access to employment opportunities for offenders? • Provide support and assistance to children and families of formerly incarcerated individuals?			
27. Are the efforts of the team defined through a clearly articulated vision, a clear mission, and specific goals regarding offender management and reentry in the State?			
28. Has leadership, facilitation, and staff support been dedicated to the State-level multidisciplinary team?			
29. At the case management level, do staff members collaborate with one another to facilitate successful offender reentry (e.g., do institutionally-based staff collaborate with one another; do institutional and community-based staff work together to ensure a smooth transition and continuity of care; does community supervision work closely with service providers and others to assure effective case management)?			
Effective Offender Management Practices	Yes	No	Not Clear
30. Assessment: • Are offender assessments conducted shortly after admission to prison, and in an ongoing fashion thereafter, to identify risk level, criminogenic needs, and responsivity factors? • Are empirically supported or promising assessment tools used?If yes, please list which tools are used: • Do the results of the empirically supported or promising assessment tools inform the offender management process (e.g., treatment planning, supervision case planning)?			

	Yes	No	Not Clear
31. Case Management: Please answer these questions in relation to the work done by staff and partners with individual offenders. This may be termed "correctional counseling" or some other term within correctional institutions, or "field supervision" while an offender is under supervision in the community: • Do the stated goals of case management (within institutions and in the community) include the provision of safe, secure custody, monitoring/supervision, and successful offender reentry? • Is case management a seamless continuum from admission to prison until the termination of community supervision? • Does each offender have a single, dynamic case management plan that follows him/her from intake through post-release supervision? • Is this approach to case management supported and enhanced by information technology? • Does the case plan address the offender's risk and needs at each stage (intake and incarceration phase, prerelease planning phase, and reentry and post supervision phase)? • Is the case plan updated to reflect changes in the offender's risk and needs, and to document improvement and progress made? • Is information about the offender exchanged between institution and community supervision staff? • Are multidisciplinary team approaches used to manage offenders? • Are noncorrections partners (such as public agencies, community partners, nonprofits, family members, etc.) involved in creating, updating, and accessing case plan information? • Does the case plan identify programmatic interventions appropriate for the offender based on the offender's assessed level of risk and criminogenic needs? • Do case management plans target the three to four (or more) most significant criminogenic needs? • Are offenders prioritized for participation in programs and services based on risk and needs? • Are policies, procedures, and priorities in place to facilitate the actual delivery of such interventions to offenders? • Are interventions delivered in a timely way in view of an anticipated release date? • Are offenders active participants in creating and updating their own case plans (as opposed to just complying with its terms)? • Do appropriate corrections staff members (within institutions and in the community) receive skills training on how to better engage offenders in the change process? • Are interactions with offenders, including infractions and violations, viewed as opportunities to enhance motivation?			

32. Institutional/Residential Interventions:
• Are existing institutionally-based programs and services for offenders:
  - Multimodal and integrated?
  - Cognitive-behavioral in nature?
  - Skills-oriented?
  - Linked with parallel services in the community?			

	Yes	No	Not Clear
- Matched to offenders based on risk, needs, and responsivity factors? - Monitored and evaluated?			
33. Proactive Release Planning: • Does planning for release begin when offenders enter the institutional or residential setting? • Does the release planning process include both institutional/residential staff and community stakeholders? • Are barriers to reentry anticipated and identified early in the release planning process? • Are transition and case management plans tailored to address the risk, need, and responsivity factors of every offender? • Are offenders actively involved in the development of transition and case management plans? • Are community resources that support the transition process identified prior to release? • Are the needs of victims addressed in the release planning process?			
34. Informed Release Decision Making: • Are offenders released to the community through a discretionary decision making process? • Does the releasing authority have access to, and does it use, the results of risk assessments, transition plans, and information from institutional programming to inform decision making? • Does the releasing authority establish conditions based upon the assessed risk level and criminogenic needs of offenders? • Does the releasing authority use structured guidelines to inform decision making? • Does the releasing authority use information from victims and victim advocates to inform decision making?			
35. Success-Oriented Approach to Supervision: • Do current supervision policies and practices reflect a strength-based approach (in contrast to a more exclusive focus on deterrence or punishment)? • Is multiagency collaboration a key feature of supervision? • Are supervision levels assigned and adjusted over time based on the risk level and needs of each offender? • Are the nature and frequency of field contacts guided by the risk level and needs of offenders? • Do supervision officers use incentives to promote and reinforce pro-social, appropriate offender behavior? • Are responses to supervision violations flexible, graduated, and reasonable and informed by the risk posed by offenders and the severity of the violations?			
36. Programs and Services: • Do community and institutional programs and services complement one another? (Is there continuity of care?)			

	Yes	No	Not Clear
• Are offenders linked to specific community supports that can enhance the supervision process and promote success (e.g., informal social support networks, mentoring programs for juveniles)? • Are the following programs and services available to offenders while incarcerated: - Healthcare services? - Behavioral health programs? - Life skills assistance? - Substance abuse services? - Educational and vocational services? - Employment assistance or job matching? - Social services? - Housing assistance? - Programs for children and families? • Are the following programs and services available to offenders while in the community: - Healthcare services? - Behavioral health programs? - Life skills assistance? - Substance abuse services? - Educational and vocational services? - Employment assistance or job matching? - Social services? - Housing assistance? - Programs for children and families?			
37. Monitoring and Evaluation: • Has the agency established a specific monitoring and evaluation plan regarding offender reentry with clearly defined performance measures and outcomes, including: - Educational achievement scores, graduation, or GED attainment? - Job placement and retention? - Stability in housing? - Behavioral health symptom improvement? - Sobriety? - Stability of health? - Family preservation? - Recidivism? - Nature and frequency of violations? - Other(s)_____ • Are monitoring and evaluation data routinely collected and analyzed? • Are the results of the data analyses used to inform the development and/or revision of reentry policies and practices?			
Women Offenders	**Yes**	**No**	**Not Clear**
38. Are the institutional and post-release supervision agencies committed to implementing gender responsive policies and services to women offenders?			

	Yes	No	Not Clear
39. Has the agency developed a working knowledge of the principles of gender responsiveness (please indicate yes, no, or not clear for each): • Does agency policy and practice reflect an understanding that gender matters in relation to the successful management and reintegration of women offenders? • Has the agency created an environment for women offenders based on safety, respect, and dignity? • Do agency policies and practices promote healthy relationships within the institutional setting, as well as support women offenders' healthy connections with children, families, significant others, and the community? • Do programs and services offer women offenders the opportunities to learn skills that will allow them to be economically self-sufficient?			
40. Has the agency developed a detailed understanding of the services and resources currently available for this population (both institutional and community-based)?			
41. Has the agency developed a clear, data-supported understanding of the women offenders who are under their control and supervision (e.g., critical information about the women offender population that includes: offenses of conviction, length of sentences, risk levels, treatment and service needs, responsivity issues, programming received, length of supervision, locations to which they return, recidivism rates)?			
42. Is training provided to staff to facilitate the development of the specific types of skills necessary to intervene with women offenders in ways that will promote successful case outcomes?			
43. Does the agency prioritize work activities that promote successful outcomes for women offenders (in contrast to focusing exclusively on custody and control, and surveillance and punishment-oriented activities)?			
44. Does the agency use assessment tools that have been validated on a relevant women offender population?			
45. Do agency staff members conducting assessments understand the key areas in which male and female offenders differ and how that should impact the assessment process?			
46. Does the agency offer gender responsive programming and services for women offenders?			
47. Are case management plans developed in a manner that reflects the interrelatedness of women's risks and needs, and are programs and services structured to address these risk and need areas?			
48. Has the agency developed gender responsive policies and procedures (e.g., discipline), taking into account the differences between male and female offenders?			

Endnotes

1. For additional information about the TPC model, including reasons to implement the approach, key features of the model, and key learnings from states involved in the TPC Initiative, see the E-Learning Module that will soon be available at the NIC Learning Center at http://nic.learn.com.

2. This represents a comparison of 1970 to 2005 data.

3. The initiatives discussed here are representative of activities underway around the country; see also the Council of State Governments Re-Entry Policy Council, and other initiatives sponsored by both federal agencies and leading national foundations.

4. For additional references on the importance of positive reinforcement to behavioral change, see NIC & CJI, 2004.

5. More information on how to conduct such a planning process is available in the *TPC Reentry Handbook*, an additional resource for corrections practitioners seeking to implement a successful offender reentry strategy in the context of a multidisciplinary agency effort. Other resources include Carol Flaherty-Zonis Associates (2007), McGarry, P. & Ney, B. (2006), CSOM (2002), and CSOM (2007).

6. See pages 87-88 of Section Five, Chapter 4 for a discussion of effective team members.

7. For a detailed guide to conducting a resource assessment, see McGarry & Ney, 2006, p. 151-161.

8. For a detailed guide to creating a vision statement, see Carter (2005), *Collaboration: A Training Curriculum to Enhance the Effectiveness of Collaborative Teams*.

9. As noted in the American Probation and Parole Association's *Caseload Standards for Probation and Parole*, "[d]espite the fact that it is very difficult to define an optimal caseload size..., a general consensus seems to be emerging from the research, practice and dialogue in the field" (Burrell, 2006). These represent APPA's promulgated standards for supervision caseloads.

10. The explanation of effective case management in the handbook is conceptually consistent with the Integrated Case Management and Supervision Model (ICMS) outlined in two companion documents, *The National Institute of Corrections TPC Reentry Handbook, and The TPC Case Management Handbook*, forthcoming from the National Institute of Corrections. Both of these approaches move beyond a traditional contact-standard driven, surveillance model of supervision to a case management approach that engages offenders in the process of change.