



Rehabilitation Programs Division Bulletin

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Mission Statement

To develop and provide evidence-based rehabilitation programs that facilitate positive change in the lives of offenders by a dedicated team of skilled professionals.



Program Spotlight

Sex Offender Treatment: A Positive Therapeutic Community in Action

The 18-month high-intensity Sex Offender Treatment Program (SOTP) employs a cognitive-behavioral model and includes psycho-educational classes, as well as group and individual therapy in a Therapeutic Community. The primary goals of this program are to reduce recidivism and teach a pro-social lifestyle. There are three phases of programming (Orientation, Main Treatment, and Reentry Planning). Offenders must be within two years of release to be eligible and priority placement is given to offenders with an FI-18R vote from the Board of Pardons and Paroles (BPP).

Joseph Bon-Jorno is the Program Manager of the two male SOTP's at the Goree and Hightower Units, and Geralyn Engman is the Program Manager of the female SOTP at the Hilltop Unit. Rhonda Lindsey is the Program Supervisor at the Goree Unit, while Brian Connealy is the Program Supervisor at the Hightower Unit. Anne Mooney, Associate Psychologist V, oversees the female SOTP at the Hilltop Unit.

Interviews with the female SOTP participants were very positive as they answered questions. Most said that it helped them to identify their thinking errors, made them realize what brought them to prison and what they must change in order to stay out or not return. All of them, in some way, expressed that the program helped build up their self-esteem and self-respect, as well as respect for others.

One offender described the group as a "practice family," and feels that working with the group gives her tools to use at home with her real family. "We were broken women, but we are still human, and we made bad choices." Another participant in the Orientation Phase said the program has "helped me through acceptance and to stop being afraid. My practice family corrects me." An offender in Phase II states, "It's very emotional." Many of the group members will be returning to their families with new tools.

Anne Mooney asserts, "Women who commit sexual offenses have a distorted understanding of emotional relationships. Within the therapeutic community, offenders have an opportunity to develop and practice healthier ways of interacting. Women gain the skills to identify and meet their emotional needs. The treatment requires tough honesty, but they agree that the healing is worth it."

Correspondence from an offender who recently completed the SOTP reads, "having been through an intensive program, I have gained personal insight that has proven beneficial to me. One of the most profound

learning experiences for me was that of uncovering the cyclical nature of sexual offender behavior. *Understanding* that cycle allows me to *circumvent* thoughts, leading to a term I have coined, 'stress induced stupidity.' Being able now to avert harmful behavior assures me that there will be no more victims." He gives credit to Rhonda Lindsey, who "demonstrated professionalism and compassion, which instilled hope in me. Sometimes, all SOTP clients need is for someone to both believe in and encourage them."

Ms. Lindsey stated, "He actively engaged in his therapy and allowed himself to become vulnerable enough to fully accept the consequences of what he had done in the past, increase his sense of self-efficacy and empathy, and to challenge the very way that he thinks. He has truly done a great service to himself and his loved ones for accepting the challenges and gifts of self-improvement. I imagine he is very proud of himself, as he should be."

According to the latest evaluation¹ by Executive Services, the treatment group had lower rates of recidivism than the control group.

Sex Offender Treatment Program Recidivism					
	Two Year Recidivism		Three Year Recidivism		
	Cohort Size	Percent	Difference to Comparison	Percent	Difference to Comparison
SOTP	247	8.50%	-3.32%	12.59%	-5.61%
Comparison Group	203	11.82%		18.23%	

¹TDCJ Executive Services, *Evaluation of Offenders Released in Fiscal Year 2007*

²Texas Performance Review. <http://www.window.state.tx.us/pr/pr57/ps/ps07.html>

Executive Services also extrapolated the female sex offender recidivism rates and determined that in 2007, the two year and three year recidivism rates for females completing SOTP and paroled in FY 2007 is 6.67%.

There were 15 females who completed SOTP; of the 15, only one returned to the TDCJ by the end of the three years.

Further research indicates that even serious, high-risk sexual offenders can be successfully treated and supervised in the community, if their overall program is highly structured and they are intensively supervised. When sex offenders are released to the community, many are under the supervision of the Parole Division.

With the sex offender risk assessment, community supervision, and close accountability of sex offenders being utilized, there is promise for real rehabilitation.

Current News

SVORI: Continuing to Demonstrate Positive Results



The SVORI Program has provided this newsletter with many stories about the participants who have become role models for the program, have been released on parole, and are now leading remarkable lives. Frankie Torres, subject of our SVORI success story from Volume I, Issue 1, is now an employee for the State of Texas, and lives to care for his wife and children. Willie, recent graduate and our success story in Volume 2, Issue 1, is living his life for God and working with the Calvary Commission missionaries in Texas and across the world. They have all made their gratitude and positive thinking clear through our interviews, and it can be attributed to their hard work and the dedication of the SVORI staff. I sat with Mr. Owen, a SVORI participant, and had a brief, candid conversation with him. Mrs. Woolley described him as a model SVORI participant, an offender who voluntarily moved to the SVORI Program. He credits Aimee Clark, SVORI Case Manager, for writing a letter to Mrs. Woolley on his behalf. At the time of the interview, he was waiting on the parole decision that would allow him to go home. When he does release, he wants to develop a documentary and help other offenders by showing them how to survive real life after leaving Ad Seg. He explained that during his time in the SVORI Program, he learned that "Putting out positive energy creates a positive environment." Mrs. Woolley added that he "took initiative and steps to change positively."

Mr. Owen said that before he came to the SVORI Program, he didn't want to face his crime, but now he considers himself transformed. He continued by saying that "in order to get past the anxiety level of not being around people, one has to look beyond oneself, and not think of only one's needs."

Mrs. Woolley showed us how the offender attends class on the computer. The teacher conducts class through a computer camera, and the offenders respond by speaking into the microphone or typing their responses.

Special Note: Mr. Owen was granted parole! His release date was in February 2012.



Employee Spotlight



Leslie Woolley
Rehabilitation Programs Division
Recently Retired
Program Director
Serious Violent Offenders Reentry Initiative

Leslie Woolley has worked for the State of Texas for 26 years, starting as a student aide in the Math and Computer Science Department at Sam Hous-

ton State University (SHSU). In 1988, she graduated from SHSU with a degree in Criminal Justice. She was a member and elected officer of the American Criminal Justice Association - Lambda Alpha Epsilon (LAE). Right after graduating from college, she was employed by the Special Prison Prosecution Unit as a Legal Aide. In 1989, she was hired by the Huntsville Institutional Parole Office, assigned as an Institutional Parole Officer at the Pack I and Pack II Units. In 1992, she promoted to work as a Parole Release Officer II for the Huntsville Release Office at the Walls Unit. In 1997, the Parole Division Headquarters in Austin, Texas hired her as a Parole in Absentia (PIA) Parole Officer/Parole Duty Officer. She was promoted again in 1998 by the Programs and Services Division (now the Rehabilitation Programs Division) as the Community Treatment Coordinator in Austin, Texas. In 2003, she promoted to the Program Specialist position for the SVORI Program with the Programs and Services Division. She was again promoted by the RPD in 2006, when she became the Program Director at SVORI, where she has worked so tirelessly to help the grateful participants in the program. Recently, Ms. Woolley was voted into the 100 People: A World Portrait project. Unfortunately for us, as of January 31, 2012, Ms. Woolley retired after working with so much dedication and diligence. The RPD and the State of Texas has been blessed to have such an exemplary employee, and she will be greatly missed. We wish you success during your retirement, Leslie!!

Principles of Recidivism Reduction

by: National Reentry Resource Center, Published: 12/26/2011

What Do We Mean by Risk of Recidivism / Criminogenic Risk?

The likelihood that an individual (either formerly incarcerated and/or under supervision of a justice agency) will commit a crime or violate the conditions of his/her supervision. In this context, risk does not refer to the seriousness of crime that a person has committed in the past or will commit in the future.

When implemented correctly and consistently, the Risk-Need-Responsivity Principles will help administrators and practitioners focus their resources where they will have the greatest impact on reducing recidivism and meeting the needs of individuals released from correctional control. These principles state the following: **Risk Principle: Focus supervision and services on the people most likely to commit crimes.**

Research shows that prioritizing resources for individuals at moderate or high risk for reoffending can lead to a significant reduction in recidivism. Conversely, intensive interventions for low-risk individuals are not an effective use of resources and may even be harmful by exposing them to high-risk individuals.

What Do We Mean by Risk Assessment?

A comprehensive examination and evaluation of both dynamic (changeable) and static (historical and/or demographic) factors that predicts risk of recidivism and provides guidance on services; placements and supervision; and in, some cases, sentencing.

Traditionally, service providers have prioritized services and treatment for people who volunteer to participate or demonstrate a willingness to participate in services. However, programs that target high-risk individuals have a larger impact on recidivism rates than those programs that target low-risk individuals.

Need Principle: Address an individual's greatest criminogenic needs.

Research shows that a person's likelihood to commit a crime or violate the rules and conditions of their supervision can change when you attend to their criminogenic needs. This research indicates that there are seven criminogenic needs which contribute to an individual's risk of recidivating: (1) anti-social attitudes; (2) anti-social beliefs; (3) anti-social friends and peers; (4) anti-social personality patterns; (5) high-conflict family and intimate relationships; (6) substance abuse; (7) low levels of achievement in school and/or work; and (8) unstructured and anti-social leisure time.

What Do We Mean by Criminogenic Needs?

These needs are used to predict risk of criminal behavior. Because criminogenic needs are dynamic, risk of recidivism can be lowered when these needs are adequately addressed. While a person may have many needs, not all of their needs are directly associated with their likelihood of committing a crime.

An effective reentry strategy does not ignore other general reentry needs (such as getting participants clothing, a driver's license, a place to live, etc.). But it may use referrals and focus fewer resources to meet those needs. It structures services and supports so that these services attend first to participants' key criminogenic needs.

Responsivity Principle: Adapt interactions and services so that they enhance an individual's ability to learn and acquire new attitudes and skills.

The responsivity principle requires that all of an individual's barriers to learning are considered when assigning or delivering services. People require interventions that are tailored to their distinct personality traits, service needs, and characteristics. Adherence to responsivity principles can help service providers address non-criminogenic needs that interfere with interventions or learning and motivate individuals who are unprepared for change.

- One of the most important responsivity issues that your initiative should address is an individual's motivation to change. Research has helped define techniques that are effective in motivating change. Corrections staff and service providers should incorporate these techniques in order to (1) effectively engage higher-risk participants, (2) build and strengthen intrinsic motivation, and (3) reduce the risk of recidivism. Examples of these techniques include providing more compliments than critiques (researchers have demonstrated that a ratio of four to one is most effective);
- using motivational interviewing tactics;
- issuing swift, certain, and proportionate incentives and sanctions for behavior;
- expressing empathy without conveying approval for negative behavior;
- avoiding engaging in a power struggle when an individual resists change; and
- reinforcing a person's belief in his or her ability to change.

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Announcements

2012 PACT Conference Strengthens Communication with the Public



The TDCJ Public Awareness - Corrections Today (PACT) Conference was held on Saturday, March 24, 2012 at the Sam Houston State University, George J. Beto Criminal Justice Center. An estimated 467 participants attended and visited TDCJ departments at their many displays/tables set up on the 1st and 2nd floors. Guests were able to ask

questions about the divisions they were interested in and pick up brochures that provided additional information, or listen to the presenters in

the main auditorium or any break-out session of their choosing. The PACT Conference is held every other year, and legislation passed during the previous year is generally a topic of the conference.

Along with the various divisions who gave presentations or provided displays, the GO KIDS (Giving Offenders' Kids Incentive and Direction to Succeed) initiative had an exhibit room that included resource tables for organizations that provide assistance to strengthen the bond between incarcerated parents and their children. Some of the resource exhibits in the room with GO KIDS were the Prison Fellowship's Angel Tree Program and the Big Brothers/Big Sisters Amachi Program.

Attendees who came to the GO KIDS exhibit room seemed interested in the many resources provided to the inmates' children, such as Forgiven

Announcements, cont'd.

Ministries, which provides children with an opportunity to spend time with their incarcerated parents through their "One Day with God" program. This ministry provides a weekend of fun and guided activities that includes games, crafts, lunch, music, clowns, an illusionist, face painting, and a parent and child quiet time.



Pictures provided by the Windham School District.

The Rehabilitation Programs Division would like to welcome the following staff to our team:

Transfers/Laterals:

Jamie Strickland, Administrative Assistant II - SVORI - Estelle Unit
James Laird, Substance Abuse Counselor II - SATP - Hamilton Unit
Jullion Preston, Substance Abuse Counselor I - SATP - Hamilton Unit
Errol Andrus, Program Supervisor I—Treatment Coordinator—LeBlanc Unit
Marie Williams, Case Manager IV - SORP - Huntsville Unit
Darrell Phillips, Case Manager IV - SORP - Ellis Unit
Kenneth Horton, Chaplain II - Robertson Unit
Mary Berry, Chaplain II - Vance Unit

Promotions:

Joshua Morrison, Chaplain I - Crain Unit
Doris Houston, Substance Abuse Counselor III - SATP - Hamilton Unit
Tina Bean, Substance Abuse Counselor III - SATP - Hamilton Unit
Ladedra Bell-Johnson, Substance Abuse Counselor III - SATP - Hamilton Unit
Stacie Woods, Program Supervisor III - Rehabilitation Programs Division Administration

Donnie Jones, Case Manager II - Gang Renouncement and Disassociation - Ellis Unit
Hilaria Leon, Human Resources Specialist I - Rehabilitation Programs Division Administration
Tina Smith, Administrative Assistant II - Johnston Unit
Jennifer Carroll, Clerk IV - SORP - Hightower Unit
Loren Shayne Roberts, Administrative Assistant IV - Chaplaincy Department
Brandy Powell, Associate Psychologist II - Goree Unit
Jerry Satterlee, Chaplain II - Briscoe Unit
Jonathan Sherman, Chaplain II - Dominguez Unit
Jeffery Gilchrist, Substance Abuse Counselor II - SATP - LeBlanc Unit
Raymond Jackson, Case Manager III - SORP - Hightower Unit
Deborah Maxwell, Associate Psychologist II - SORP - Hightower Unit
Fred Collisson, Associate Psychologist IV - SORP - Goree Unit
John Leidecke, Case Manager IV - SORP - Goree Unit

The Rehabilitation Programs Division Bulletin can be read on-line at: http://www.tdcj.state.tx.us/publications/pubs_rpd_newsletter.html.

Readers are encouraged to submit articles, events or other newsworthy items for publication consideration.

All submissions should be forwarded to:
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Please Note: Texas law requires that readers not employed by TDCJ to notify us annually, in writing, that they wish to continue to receive the *Rehabilitation Programs Division Bulletin*.