PRISON EDUCATION IN CALIFORNIA

TRANSITIONS; CERTIFICATES; AND ASSOCIATE DEGREES

Presented by: Antelope Valley College and California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation

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TOPICS

The Purpose of the Programs
How we got involved
The current programs
The Transitions Program
The current Education Programs
- GED
- High School
- College
- Certificate Programs
Inmate Education Program
Recap
IN THE BEGINNING

Transitions Program
- Results
- Chancellors Office and CDCR Interagency Agreement/SB 1391
- Proposal to offer CTE – Certificate/Degree Programs

Purpose
- Recidivism reduction
- Productive Citizens
CURRENT EDUCATION

MR. RON UNDERWOOD

GED
High School
College Correspondence Courses
CTE Certificates: Microsoft, Plumbing, Painting, etc.
Prison Industries
Shaping Offender Behavior
Evidence-Based Best Practices
CDCR IS IN THE RISK MANAGEMENT BUSINESS

Risk Control and Risk Reduction

- **Risk Control** aims to reduce crime by limiting the offenders' **CAPACITY** to carry out new criminal acts.
- **Limitation:** Risk to reoffend increases after control is removed.
RISK CONTROL AND RISK REDUCTION

- **Risk Reduction** seeks to diminish the likelihood that an offender will **ELECT** to commit another crime.

- **Limitation:** Risk to reoffend remains until skills, education, and desire are **INTERNALIZED**; may require control until intervention takes hold.
INCREASE THE ODDS

The goal is to increase the odds of a positive outcome
Recidivism Rates
The Revolving Door

• National Averages:
  67% rearrests rates for prison releases
  30% reconviction rates for probationers

• Why are these rates so high?
WHY ARE THESE FAILURE RATES SO HIGH?
SOME POSSIBLE EXPLANATIONS

1. We didn’t have the research knowledge we have today
   - Have been focusing on the wrong issues
   - Gave too much attention to low risk and too little to high risk
   - The system is not in alignment
   - Lacked the knowledge and skills about what works in changing offender behavior

2. Workloads have been too high
WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED?
IN THE PAST FIFTEEN YEARS

Can You Trust Research?
Yes, with Quality and Quantity

- Quantity, no single study proves anything
- Quantity, need to examine the number of studies that confirm findings, author’s credentials, self-interest, methodology, etc.
WHAT HAS THE RESEARCH TAUGHT US?

Research Finding #1

- Low risk offenders tend to recidivate at higher rates when services/interventions are over-delivered
- Give low risk offenders stabilization services (e.g., housing, job placement, transportation) rather than those that target behavioral change.

Research Finding #2

- Services should be targeted to those offenders who are assessed as medium or high risk to reoffend. Offenders who are at low risk to reoffend are unlikely to benefit from correctional intervention designed to change their behavior.
- Assess the risk level of offenders to determine who (i.e., medium and high risk) should get services, and the length and intensity of those services
- Differentiate supervision levels based upon risk.

Research Finding #3

- Risk of recidivism is greatly reduced when attention is paid to criminogenic needs (dynamic risk factors) such as antisocial attitudes, beliefs and values, certain personalities and temperamental factors, age, and education. There is a clear association between the number of criminogenic needs targeted, the lower the rate of recidivism.
What are the risk factors?

Common Historical Risk Factors (Static Risk Factors)

- Age at first arrest
- Current age
- Gender
- Criminal history
What are the risk factors?

Common Criminogenic Needs (Dynamic Risk Factors)

- Anti-social attitudes, cognitions
- Anti-social associates, peers
- Anti-social behavior
- Family, marital stressors
- Substance abuse
- Lack of employment opportunities
- Lack of educational achievement
- Lack of pro-social leisure activities
## The Big Four

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criminogenic Need</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anti-social cognition</td>
<td>Reduce anti-social cognition, recognize risk thinking and feelings, adopt an alternative identity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anti-social companions</td>
<td>Reduce association with criminals, enhance contact with pro-social peers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anti-social personality</td>
<td>Build problem solving, self-management, anger management, and coping skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family and/or marital</td>
<td>Reduce conflict, build positive relationships and communication</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# The Other Four

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criminogenic Need</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Substance Abuse</td>
<td>Reduce usage, reduce the supports for abuse behavior, enhance alternatives to abuse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment</td>
<td>Provide employment seeking and keeping skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>Enhance opportunities for literacy, GED, CTE, and college education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leisure and/or recreation</td>
<td>Enhance involvement and satisfaction in pro-social activities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Effectively directed interventions can reduce recidivism by 30% (or more)

Research Finding #4:

- Interventions that are matched to the individual offender increase their effectiveness.

Average recidivism reduction/gain

- Inappropriate treatment: -0.06
- Unspecified treatment: 0.13
- Appropriate treatment: 0.30
Cognitive-behavioral and Behavioral Intervention

Research Finding #5:

- The most impactful programs aimed at changing criminal behavior and reducing recidivism are cognitive-behavioral and behavioral interventions
- Non-Behavioral intervention reduced recidivism by 7%
- Behavioral intervention reduced recidivism by 29%
The California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) has undergone fundamental changes that were mandated by the courts and the state legislature. CDCR has completely restructured rehabilitation programs, including Academic and Career Technical Education (CTE) Programs to reduce recidivism in California.

California State Prison – Los Angeles County
Academic and CTE Programs

- Adult Literacy and ESL
- Adult Basic Education I, II, & III
- General Education Development
- College
- Plumbing
- Masonry

- Electronics
- Computer Literacy
- Painting
The RAND Corporation concluded that we no longer need to debate the benefits of correctional education. Prison-based education programs play a major role in reducing recidivism.

- Correctional Education programs reduce recidivism by 43%.
- Correctional Education programs increases employment rates by 13%.
- CTE programs increase the employment rate by 48%.
- $1 dollar investment in education reduces incarceration costs by $4-5
COMPETENCY BASED ACADEMIC EDUCATION MODEL

CSP-LAC GED and college programs utilize an individualized, self-paced learning format inherent in competency based instruction and consistent with Cognitive-Behavior Therapy techniques. The competency based education model fosters individualized, self-paced instruction. Open entry and exit into and from education programs allow inmates at all levels to progress.
Career Technical Education (CTE) Programs

LAC offers Plumbing, Masonry, Industrial Painting, Office Services, Computer Literacy, Electronics, and Electrical Works. These are more structured classes and allow inmates to earn accredited trade certification with the National Center for Construction Education and Research (NCCER)
CSP-LAC is currently partnering with seven universities and colleges to provide our inmate population expanded opportunities to obtain an associate or bachelor degree. The college program fosters positive rehabilitative programming consistent with CBT goals and ensures that all inmate participants are prepared with the needed education and skills to successfully compete in the workplace.
In conclusion, we need to focus our efforts where “best practices” leads us, along with the efforts of thousands of dedicated correctional educators, including some 32 teachers, CTE instructors, librarians, and support staff at LAC, all of whom confirm and reinforce the idea that correctional education really works.
CHALLENGES

Internal
- Space

External
- Community connection
- Communication
- Image
OVERVIEW OF Transitions

Topics
- Fiscal management
- Resume Writing
- Job Search
- Housing
- Agencies of support

5 weeks, 5 days weekly, 4 hours, 11 classes per year
15/class, 2 classes per day
One week off
The Transition Class Has Been Very Educational, It Has Given Us Real Insight On How To Approach Life After Incarceration. For Some Of Us, This Class Was The First Time Ever Having To Go Through A Job Interview, Even The Majority Of Us That Did Have Some Type Of Knowledge Have Benefited In One Way Or Another. Everything From Bonding To Certain Phrases Used During Interviews Greatly Increases Our Chances For Employment. One Of The Hardest Things For A Person Who Has Been Incarcerated Is Transitioning, Just Learning The Simple Ways To Cope With Day To Day Activities. In The Workplace, A Huge Part In Us Maintaining Employment, Much Of What We Learned Can Also Be Applied To Other Aspects Of Life Which Adds To The Overall Picture Of Us Becoming More Productive People.

We Like To Thank You For Your Time And Willingness To Educate Those Of Us Behind These Walls.

AM Transition Class
Instructor, Janie.
CHALLENGES

State rules vs Community College environment
Collaboration with in the community
Changing the picture for the public
Employment opportunities
Lockdowns
Politics
INMATE EDUCATION PROGRAM

What?
- MOU between the Chancellor and CDCR
- To set the standard for Community College Certificate and degree programs at CDCR institutions.

Where?
- CDCR Hubs adjacent to: Lassen CCD, Chaffey CCD, Los Rios CCD and Antelope Valley CCD.

How?
- Ground classrooms for face to face instruction
- FTE baring coursework
MORE CHALLENGES

How to enroll students
Assessment tools
How to overcome maximum security
Ordering books, eBooks, supplies
Lockdown

Internal with CCD: admissions, assessment, outreach, Academic Senate, and Faculty.
SUPPORT FROM SACRAMENTO

Chancellors Office
- Dr. BJ Snowden
- Leslie LeBlanc

CDCR
- Robert Soto, Warden
- Ron Underwood
- Nathan Wilcox, Counselor

Prison University Project
- Dr. Jodi Lewen
RECAP

• Creating resources
• Changing Environments
• Understanding
• Reducing recidivism
• Responsibility

Thank you!