Circles of Support and Accountability

Dimensions of Practice, Research and Inter-agency Collaboration in Prisoner Re-entry

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Circles of Support and Accountability

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Presentation Outline

- Welcome and introductions – Andrew
- Preamble - Brief UN Perspective – Bob
- CoSA history, development & practice – Robin & Andrew
- Break
- Inter-agency collaboration – Bob
- Research & Links to Theory – Robin
- Q & A
Circles of Support and Accountability

Preamble:
An International Perspective on Prisoner Re-entry from the United Nations
Rule 64 - The duty of society does not end with a prisoner’s release. There should therefore, be governmental or private agencies capable of lending the released prisoner efficient after-care directed towards the lessening of prejudice against him and towards his social rehabilitation.
United Nations Standard Minimum Rules


**Rule 17.2** - Public participation should be regarded as an opportunity for members of the community to contribute to the protection of their society.

**Rule 19.2** - Volunteers should encourage offenders and their families to develop meaningful ties with the community and a broader sphere of contact by providing counselling and other appropriate forms of assistance according to their capacity and the offenders’ needs.
Rule 22.1 - Suitable mechanisms should be evolved at various levels to facilitate the establishment of linkages between services responsible for non custodial measures, other branches of the criminal justice system, social development and welfare agencies, both governmental and non governmental, in such fields as health, housing, education and labour, and the mass media.
Placing offenders in custody alone is not sufficient to solve the problem of crime. Imprisonment only temporarily removes criminals from the community. Most prisoners are freed and many of them relapse into the cycle of crime afterwards. The ultimate goal of corrections is offenders’ successful reintegration into the community (Rujjanavet, 2007).

Role of Crime Prevention

- **Primary prevention:** through various forms of environmental design or manipulation
- **Secondary prevention:** identifying and working with those considered most likely to offend - at risk of offending
- **Tertiary prevention:** working with known offenders to reduce the incidence of re-offending
Role of Crime Prevention

Australian Institute of Criminology: 2003

... deals with offending after it has happened. The primary focus is on the lives of known offenders in an attempt to prevent them re-offending.
Focusing on persons most at risk of offending, including:

- children aged 6-11 years, to prevent their initiation to criminal activity
- young people aged 12-17, to reduce the pressures brought about by known risk factors among those who are the most predisposed to criminal activity
- young adults aged 18-24, particularly those who have a history of offending
- offenders who have completed their sentence and have been released into the community, to prevent or reduce recidivism
Circles of Support and Accountability

Dimensions of Practice
Birth of Circles of Support and Accountability (CoSA)

Charlie’s Story: 1994 - 2006
Rev. Harry Nigh
Circles Pioneer
What are Circles of Support and Accountability?

Typically, about five volunteers enter into an agreement (covenant) with a newly released sex offender, called a “core member.” At least one volunteer meets with him on a daily basis for the first 60 to 90 days, while the others have weekly contact, and the full circle meets on a weekly basis.
Circles of Support and Accountability (CoSA)

CoSAs are fundamentally Two Circles
Two Circles of CoSA
The “Outer” Circle
The Outer Circle

- Comprised of local, community-based professionals who may participate in Steering Committee, Advisory Panels, Boards of Directors, etc.
- Linkage between the volunteers, the CoSA ‘project” and the larger community
- Offer support, guidance and mentoring to CoSA organizers and providers
Two Circles of CoSA
The “Inner” Circle

Core Member  Volunteer
The Inner Circle...

...Is an “Accompaniment” model, rather than a model of supervision.

...Is guided by a “Covenant”
Circles of Support and Accountability in Canada

Voluntary and Community-Based

Core Member  Volunteer  Professional
Circles of Support and Accountability in Canada

Co-ordinator

Voluntary and Community-Based

Core Member  Volunteer  Professional
Who do CoSAs (generally) Accompany?

- Sex offenders returning from custodial sentences;
- Who are considered a high risk to reoffend
- In Canada, who have reached the expiration of their sentence (i.e., Warrant Expiry Date – WED), or in the U.S. offenders who have “maxed out”
- Who have little or no support in the community
- Who wish to voluntarily join a CoSA and abide by a Covenant
- Who wish to commit personally to ensuring there are no more victims
What Do CoSAs Do?

Volunteers and CoSA Staff work with Core Members to create as much as possible healthy relationships based on friendship.
No, Really…
What Do CoSAs Do?

High quality relationship and the development of close (pro) social bonds is the setting, the backdrop and context for effective change through modeling and reinforcement of anticriminal behaviour, and effective disapproval of pro-criminal behaviour, attitudes, values and beliefs, best accomplished by people who genuinely care:

Key words: connecting, trusting, genuiness and truthfulness, caring, modeling, reinforcing (shaping), disapproving, celebrating accomplishments and milestones.
Relationships are the Conduit

By attending to responsivity issues and through a willingness to develop and nurture pro-social bonds (trust, reciprocity, mutuality) allows the other principles of the RNR model to be addressed.
Criminogenic Needs?

- Significant Social Influences (Positive, Neutral, Negative)
- Relationship Stability
- Emotional ID with Children
- Hostility toward women
- General Social Rejection
- Lack of concern for others
- Impulsive
- Poor Problem Solving Skills
- Negative Emotionality
- Co-operation with Supervision (e.g., willing to be in CoSA)

- Sex Drive
- Sexual Preoccupation
- Sex as Coping
- Deviant Sexual Preference

*These factors are left for professional sex offender therapists to address (we can refer).*
Life Cycle of a Circle

Phase One
First 30-90 Days
- Release Trauma
- Immediate Physical and emotional Needs
- Trust-building
- Working toward stability

Phase Two
90 Days – 1 year or more
- Consensus decision-making
- Increased equity, reciprocity, empathy
- Effective role modelling
- Celebrating milestones

Phase Three
Typically 1-2 years on, but may be more.
- Move to informal friendship networks, and community life
- Circle may “close” and mark a transition to responsible citizenry
Life Cycle of a Circle

- Not rigid and are, in fact quite fluid and will depend on:
  - Core Member and fluctuations in needs
  - Relationships within the circle and the community
  - Elements of changing levels of risk and risk-taking behavior
Not a “Program”

- Community engagement and active involvement is essential to an effective CoSA
- Collaboration and flexibility among service providers is needed;
- Professionalism gives way to relational processes needed to build and contribute to a sense of community within CoSA.
Protective Factors

These are factors that “protect” against criminal behaviour and criminal reoffending.

- Being involved in community is a powerful protective factor (the Circle is a returning person’s first encounter with community).
Protective Factors

“...it is generally accepted that social relations and their quality ... have a stabilizing effect, especially after release.”

- see also Albrecht (1979)
Protective Factors

Close supporting relationships were found to decrease the risk of relapse in child molesters and in rapists.

- see also Berner & Bolterauer (1995)
Protective Factors

Violent sexual reoffence is related to the extent and quality of positive prosocial support, particularly by male associates.

Circles of Support and Accountability

Inter-agency Collaboration in Prisoner Re-entry
The following key point was included in the working definition of crime prevention “providing appropriate interventions through an interagency/partnership approach where knowledge, expertise and best practice are shared to the maximum” (National Crime Council, 2003).
Examples of Police Linkage Models

**Process Model**
Canada
The National Joint Committee of Senior Criminal Justice Officials (NJC)

**Legislated Model**
England
Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA)
Role of the Police Community

- “Trail ‘em, nail ‘em, jail ‘em”
- Independence with enhanced interdependence
- Linkage
National Joint Committee of Senior Criminal Justice Officials (NJC) – Canada

- Mission emphasizes “the promotion of effective partnerships to improve the administration of criminal justice in Canada”
- National, Regional and Zone Committees strive to enhance inter-agency cooperation and interdependency
- The Committees are made up of criminal justice officials from across Canada
NJC Membership

A multi-jurisdictional forum that consists of senior officials appointed by:

- Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police
- Canadian Association of Crown Counsel
- Correctional Service of Canada
- Department of Justice
- First Nation Chiefs of Police Association
- Parole Board Canada
- Public Safety Canada
- Royal Canadian Mounted Police
NJC’s Mandate

- Act as a catalyst for dialogue and creative problem-solving on issues crossing organizational and jurisdictional boundaries
- Enhance community safety through strategic partnerships and inter-agency collaboration
- Operate nationally, regionally and locally
Community Protection and the Release Of the Federally Incarcerated Detained Offender

Pacific Region NJC,
With the Support of the British Columbia Association of Chiefs of Police
June 2007: Meeting of Experts

- Collaborative effort of BCACCP, Pacific Region NJC, Public Safety Canada, BC Ministry of Public Safety & Solicitor General, CSC & the International Centre
- 39 participants: police 13; Crown attorneys 9; corrections & parole 8; and NGO’s 9
- 5 provinces and the US were represented
- Final Report of the Meeting was completed and distributed in September 2006
- Meeting contributed to the content and focus of the November 2007 “What Works Conference,” Ottawa, Canada
Linkage: “Legislated” Model

Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) – England

- MAPPA are a set of statutory arrangements to assess and manage the risk posed by certain sexual and violent offenders
- They are established by virtue of Sections 325 to 327 of the Criminal Justice Act 2003
- MAPPA bring together the Police, Probation and Prison Services into what is known as the MAPPA Responsible Authority for each MAPPA Area
MAPPA: Duty to Cooperate

A number of other agencies are under a duty to cooperate with the Responsible Authority:

- Children’s Services
- Adult Social Services
- Health Trusts and Authorities
- Youth Offending Teams
- Local housing authorities
- Certain registered social landlords, Jobcentre Plus, and electronic monitoring providers
Inter-Agency Cooperation
Public Protection

- Offenders eligible for MAPPA are identified
- Information is gathered and shared about them across relevant agencies
- The nature and level of the risk of harm is assessed
- A coordinated risk management plan is implemented to protect the public
Three Preventions & Seven Around One
A Perspective From Chaoyang

3 Preventions

1. Prevent major criminal cases
2. Prevent extreme and violent acts
3. Prevent incidents affecting social stability
Community Protection: China

Article 14 - Criminal Law of the People’s Republic of China

- Refers to “socially dangerous consequences”
- The model contained on the previous slide refers to a presentation made in August 2010 at the International Forum on Halfway Houses made by the Division of Community Correction, Beijing Municipal Bureau of Justice
- A key goal of the referenced inter-agency model is the prevention of extreme acts of violence or “socially dangerous consequences”
Inter - Agency Cooperation & Mutual Support

“It marks a big step in your development when you come to realize that other people can help you do a better job than you can do alone.”

*Scottish born American industrialist Andrew Carnegie*

People can be divided into two groups: those who go ahead and do something and those who will sit still and inquire why it wasn’t done the other way.”

*Oliver Wendell Holmes*

- The right leadership can shift the theoretical and inspirational to the operational.
Why Do Circles Work?
And that goes for Lancelot, Galahad, and the rest of you guys. ... No more stickin’ your gum under the table.
Effective Programs

Based on meta-analytic research, Don Andrews and his colleagues have suggested these principles of effective correctional interventions, known collectively as the RNR Model.
Principles of RNR Model

- **Risk Principle**: WHO to target for intervention
- **Need Principle**: WHAT to target for intervention
- **Responsivity Principle**: HOW to target for intervention

(Andrews & Bonta, 2010)
Why do Circles Work?

Offender Social Support

Released sexual offenders who have positive, pro-social support in their community are at less risk of re-offending than those who have no such support, or whose supports are anti-social in nature.
Core member experience

Without my Circle, I may have …

- had difficulty adjusting
- had difficulty in relationships with others
- become isolated and lonely
- turned to drugs or alcohol
- reoffended
Acute 2007

- Victim Access
- Hostility
- Sexual Pre-occupation
- Rejection of Supervision
- Emotional Collapse
- Collapse of Social Supports
- Substance Abuse
The Three Key Principles

Support
- Reduce Isolation and Emotional Loneliness
  - Model Appropriate Relationships
    - Demonstrate Humanity and Care
  - Reduce Re-offending

Monitor
- Public Protection
  - Safer Communities
  - Support Statutory Authorities – Police, Probation, MAPPA
  - Maintain Treatment Objectives

Maintain
- Hold Offender Accountable
  - Relationship of Trust
  - Reduce Re-offending
## Outcome – Recidivism data

### Ontario Pilot Sample

*(Wilson, Picheca, & Prinzo, 2007)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>CoSA (60)</th>
<th>Matched Control (60)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>M(SD) age</strong></td>
<td>47.47 (12.27)</td>
<td>43.62 (10.84)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>M(SD) STATIC-99</strong></td>
<td>5.60 (2.22)</td>
<td>5.00 (1.96)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>M(SD) RRASOR</strong>*</td>
<td>3.18 (1.65)</td>
<td>2.12 (1.31)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>M(range–mos) follow-up</strong></td>
<td>54.67 (3-123)</td>
<td>52.47 (3-124)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>M(mos) until 1st failure</strong></td>
<td>22.10</td>
<td>18.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Recidivism</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual*</td>
<td>5.00% (3)</td>
<td>16.67% (10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expected sexual</td>
<td>28.33% (17)**</td>
<td>26.45% (16)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violent*</td>
<td>15.00% (9)</td>
<td>35.00% (21)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General ‡</td>
<td>28.33% (17)</td>
<td>43.44% (26)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Dispositions</strong></td>
<td>38</td>
<td>49</td>
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</table>

* *p < .05  ** p < .01  ‡ p < .10
## Outcome – Recidivism data

**Canadian National Replication Sample**

*(Wilson, Cortoni, & McWhinnie, 2009)*

<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Control (44)</th>
<th>Matched CoSA (44)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>M(SD) age</strong></td>
<td>42.6 (9.6)</td>
<td>42.9 (8.4)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>M(SD) STATIC-99</strong></td>
<td>4.9 (2.1)</td>
<td>6.1 (1.5)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>M(SD) RRASOR</strong></td>
<td>2.7 (1.5)</td>
<td>2.7 (1.3)</td>
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<td><strong>M (mos; range) follow-up</strong></td>
<td>35.8 (9-86)</td>
<td>38.6 (8-96)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>M (mos) until 1st failure</strong></td>
<td>9.59</td>
<td>16.72</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Recidivism</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sexual*</td>
<td>2.27% (1)</td>
<td>13.67% (6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any Violent**</td>
<td>9.09% (4)</td>
<td>34.09% (15)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any**</td>
<td>11.36% (5)</td>
<td>38.64% (17)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total # (conv + chgs)**</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>73</td>
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REDUCED RE-OFFENDING THROUGH CoSA PARTICIPATION (Wilson, Cortoni, & McWhinnie, 2009)

- Sexual: 83%
- Violent: 73%
- General: 70%
Bates et al., 2012
Circles SE 10-year Retrospective

<table>
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<th></th>
<th>CSE core members</th>
<th>Comparison group</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N = 71</td>
<td>N = 71</td>
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<tr>
<td>Contact sexual or violent</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reconviction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-contact sexual</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>reconviction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Failure to comply</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>with Sex Offender Register</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Breach of SOPO</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ \chi^2 = 10.75, \text{df} = 1, p < .001; \, \, \chi^2 = 6.04, \text{df} = 1, p < .01 \] (combined—contact sexual, violent, noncontact sexual); SOPO = Sex Offender Protection Order
Circles of Support and Accountability in the Thames Valley

The First Three Years
April 2002 to March 2005
Duwe (2012) – MnCoSA

- First US CoSA outcome study
- Statistically elegant design (RCT)
- 31 CoSA vs. 31 Control
- Significant reductions in hazard ratios noted for 3 of 5 outcome indicators
  - 62% fewer rearrests, 72% fewer technical violation revocations, and 84% fewer “any reincarceration”
- Follow-up times still too short to show differences in sexual reoffending
- Cost-Benefit Analysis = $1.82
Circles UK estimated a “break-even” benefit of £1.02.

However, when costs to victims and families were considered, the estimated “real cost saving to society may be in the region of about £650,000 – £1.4M”
Where do we go from here?

Canada and the United Kingdom lead the way for Circles projects around the globe, but there is lots of interest here in the United States.

The US Government (through the SMART Office) has recently identified CoSA as a “promising” alternative to current practices—offering over $1M in contracts for start-up, training and technical assistance, and evaluation.
European Handbook
Research has clearly shown that a collaborative approach which includes representation from all stakeholders can assist considerably in enhancing public safety and offender accountability. Working together, we can manage the risk.

*Teamwork is the key,*

*and the community has an integral role to play in public safety!!*
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