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CSPRI moves over to the Community Law Centre

CSPRI was established as a joint project between NICRO and the Community Law Centre in 2003 and was formally launched in June of that year. After a productive partnership lasting nearly two years, it has been agreed that CSPRI will from 1 June 2005 be a project of the Community Law Centre at the University of the Western Cape. CSPRI is privileged to be part of such an esteemed institution as the Community Law Centre. The partnership has seen some noteworthy achievements over the past two years, and witnessed the reaching of significant milestones in the corrections field.

The CSPRI website will soon migrate over to the Community Law Centre website, so please keep an eye on the CLC website; the address is <http://www.communitylawcentre.org.za/index.php>.

In the meantime, the CSPRI material remains available on the NICRO website. The link is not visible on the website, so please type in the URL, or follow from this link <http://www.nicro.org.za/cspri/home/>.

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An Integrated Approach to Offender Reintegration By Amanda Dissel

by Amanda Dissel, Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation.

Introduction

Young prisoners between the ages of 15 and 25 years currently constitute 41% of the prison population, whilst they make up less than 12.5 of the country's population. Even though some have been convicted of serious crimes, nearly all will return to society after a period of imprisonment. It is essential then that while these young people are in prison they are protected from influences that would serve to further harden their engagement in criminal activities. More importantly, and in keeping with the White Paper on Corrections, their imprisonment provides the opportunity to intervene positively in their lives, and to facilitate the learning of new skills and behaviours that would enable them to stay out of crime after their release.

Although NGO's and the Department of Correctional Services have been offering developmental programmes to young prisoners for many years, few are holistic in the sense of targeting a range of needs over a period of time. In response to this need, a group of NGOs together piloted an integrated approach to working with young offenders at Boksburg Youth Centre, a prison for young offenders. The Integrated Young Offender Programme (IYOP) aimed to build resilience among young people to enable them to address the problems that lead to offending and to enable them to choose a non-criminal life after release from prison. The project was piloted in 2004 with a group of 20 convicted youth at the Boksburg Youth Centre.

The programme is based on the theory of risk and resilience, as well as incorporating an understanding of the socio-economic dynamics impinging on young people. The benefit of the

integrated approach is that it acknowledges the co-existence of a range of risk factors. The approach used allowed young people to identify these factors as they impact on their own lives and offending behaviour. The programme aimed to develop protective factors in response to the specific risks. Risk factors identified included:

- poor cognitive skills and learning challenges;
- high impulsivity and anti-social attitudes and feelings;
- lack of problem-solving skills;
- family breakdown and disrupted relationships;
- participation in high risk behaviour such as substance abuse and unsafe sexual activity;
- weak social ties and identification with anti-social role models.

The focus was on influencing behaviour change, and consequently the trans-theoretical model (cycle of change process) formed the basis for the approach, methodology and sequencing followed in the programme. This model identifies a number of stages that a person experiences before change in behaviour and attitudes takes place. This includes developing an understanding of the need for change, deciding to change, taking action to change the behaviour, maintaining behaviour change, and dealing with lapses and relapses. Each aspect of the programme aimed to build on what the participant had learned before, and to support and reinforce the change process.

The project had the following objectives

- To address the individual's attitudes and responses towards education, development and employment, and to assist in opening up opportunities to employment and other opportunities.
- To develop conflict management and problem solving skills to support interpersonal interactions.
- Reintegration and rebuilding of family relationships and networks.
- To improve the young person's ability to make informed decisions about healthy living in relation to drug and alcohol use, HIV/AIDS and sexual relationship.
- To address issues of taking personal responsibility and recognising the impact of their actions, through restorative justice and other processes.
- To develop the social, behavioural and socio-economic skills to enable the young person to resist risk factors and develop an internal resilience to face up to the difficulties that life throws in their way.

The eight-month intervention was delivered by six partner organisations. These were:

- Phaphama which offered a three-part "Alternatives to Violence Programme" (AVP) dealing with pre-emptive conflict management skills, enabling individuals to build successful interpersonal interactions, gain insights into themselves and to find new and positive approaches to their lives. There were three four-day AVP programme sessions covering the beginner, advanced and train-the-trainer modules.
- The Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation (CSV) offered the "Vuka S'Hambe Programme". This formed the core of the IYOP and is a psychotherapeutic approach to life skills that promotes the development of self knowledge, psychological well-being, and authentic self-esteem. The 21-session programme included a short restorative justice component.
- Centre for Alcohol and Drug Studies (CADS), a division of SANCA. This intervention involved a prevention and awareness programme that dealt with addiction, information on drugs and alcohol and its impact on the body, peer pressure and the link between drugs and alcohol and HIV infection. Fourteen sessions were offered to participants.
- NICRO offered an intervention around family reintegration. It focused on relationships between the offender and the family to enhance contact and increase awareness of responsibilities during and after imprisonment. NICRO ran three four-hour sessions on family relationships, followed by individual consultations with prisoners and family members.
- Themba HIV/AIDS organisation offered an interactive theatre programme on relationships and sexual health. The 13-session programme aimed to provide knowledge around HIV/AIDS and to explore techniques so that participants could keep themselves safe from infection. The programme began with a theatre presentation to the prison population by Themba staff, and concluded with a drama presentation by IYOP participants to a group of prisoners and prison personnel.
- BEntrepreneurING offered a four-session programme on business skills to develop participants' self knowledge and self management skills. It helped them to reframe and understand the knowledge and skills they had derived from criminal activities and learn how to channel them into practical and healthy business skills. A short programme on writing skills was also offered by this organisation.

The integrated programme was offered in a phased approach, during which each intervention

was designed to build on the core protective factors known to prevent offending and to reinforce messages, values and skills learned in the previous session. The programme was managed by CSVR, and a case management approach was used to ensure a smooth transition between the different organisations' interventions and also that the specific needs of individuals were addressed in a coherent manner.

Project Evaluation

In order to review the success of the project, an independent researcher, Margaret Roper, was contracted to undertake the evaluation.^[1] In relation to the young participants, the evaluation sought to determine:

- What has changed in the young person as a result of the programme, individually and collectively; and
- Whether the IYOP model of intervention is appropriate and whether this has been the correct selection of programmes.

The methodology used for the evaluation was a combination of pre and post evaluation questionnaires administered to participants and participative-action techniques with project partners, participants and members of the prison staff. The questionnaires were designed to measure cognitive skills, attitudes, behaviours and beliefs. The post evaluation took place immediately on completion of the programme and was thus not an indication of long-term impact and behaviour change. What follows is a summary of some of the evaluation findings.

Building resilience and addressing risk factors

Participants who were interviewed after the programme tended to be more articulate and demonstrated a greater understanding and depth of insight. The writing skills workshop yielded an improvement in the writing skills of the participants. Participants' ability to reflect on themselves and on the processes they participated in, improved as a result of the programme. In addition, they came to a better understanding of how their decisions and actions change their lives. The results from the questionnaires indicated that although the number of participants who felt good about themselves remained stable, the reasons for these feelings changed. Initially they focused on external factors, such as being good at soccer. After the programme they tended to have an internal focus and 28% of participants indicated an increase in self esteem. The shifts in self-esteem and communication were confirmed by observations by programme facilitators.

Participants indicated that they had a greater understanding of their anger and its relationship to conflict, as well as to events that led to their imprisonment. They indicated a desire to search for alternative ways to leading their lives, although many of them realised the difficulty in applying the skills they had learned, in the prison context.

There was an increase in recognition of the importance of leading a healthy life, and two participants indicated that they had stopped using drugs and/or alcohol while in prison, while others indicated a desire to do so. The participants were also able to link their dependence on drugs and alcohol to their criminal activities. There was also increased knowledge around HIV/AIDS and sexual relationships. Seen together, this contributed to a shift in attitude towards taking care of one's physical self.

[1] Roper, M (2005). 'A review of the Integrated Youth Offender Programme piloted in Boksburg Juvenile Correctional Centre with the "*Inkanyezi yentathakusa*"', Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation. A copy of the report will be available shortly on the CSVR website, www.csvr.org.za

Most of the participants had a deeper insight into what it means to be part of a family and understanding the roles, relationships and importance of caring, guidance and accountability within the family network. However, there was no indication that participants had a greater understanding of how their crime had impacted on their families. This may be due to the family intervention focusing primarily on family relationships more generally, rather than specifically on the consequences of the crime or offending behaviour for their families.

Although it was acknowledged that insufficient attention has been paid to the restorative justice components in the project, several participants expressed the desire to meet with the victim to explore further healing processes. There was increased acknowledgement by offenders that they had committed the crime which led to their imprisonment, and increased empathy expressed for the victim.

According to the evaluator "*the enhancement of life skills and protective factors... contributed*

towards the self development and social skills of the young people towards their families, each other and the programme staff" (Roper 2005). They were also more aware of their individual strengths and how they could use these to help them lead different lives outside of prison. All these factors contributed to a shift away from anti-social associations and a more positive way of life. The strong bond that developed between the group members was an important modelling experience for alternative and more positive forms of group support and friendship.

Effectiveness of the IYOP approach

The strength of the IYOP process was found to lie in the fact that each programme offered a core coping skill, but also built on the skills and values dealt with by the other programme components. Each programme ran independently using the approach and methodology that the organisation had developed over time. However, there were certain core principles that ensured a coherent delivery. These included a commitment to outcomes-based education and participative action-orientated methodologies that engaged participants on a practical, physical, emotional and psychological level. A case management approach for each individual was integrated into the delivery of programmes. Consequently, participants indicated that they felt guided across the programme. Participants also found the sequence of the programmes to be appropriate.

Recommendations

The findings of the evaluation indicate that the programme impacted on the risk and protective factors of participants. The process of engaging in dialogue contributed to changes in attitude towards the key factors the programme sought to address, such as education, employment, healthy living, sense of purpose, conflict resolution, building family networks, and taking personal responsibility for their lives, as well as improved skills for developing an internal resilience. However, it was acknowledged that long term change takes time, and that the participants experienced difficulty in trying to make these shifts in their daily interactions with others in the prison environment.

Several recommendations were made to strengthen the programme. These included a need to mainstream behaviour change and that sessions should be set aside to talk about the practical steps that participants faced in trying to bring about changes in their lives. Another recommendation pointed to the need for post-programme support of participants to facilitate the retention of new habits. The review also recommended a stronger emphasis on restorative justice within the programme. This may involve the introduction of another partner, particularly to facilitate victim offender conferencing, when requested and appropriate. It was also recommended that the project should provide for a longitudinal evaluation to measure the impact of the programme over time.

Conclusion

The evaluation also recommended that the IYOP programme should continue and attempt to increase the number of inmates reached by offering the programme twice a year. In keeping with this, a second IYOP group is currently underway at Boksburg Youth Centre, and a third is scheduled to start later in the year.

Through evaluating and documenting the process, the IYOP partners hope to contribute towards the growing knowledge on effective interventions with young prisoners, and so also strengthen programmatic intervention by the Department of Correctional Service, as well as, civil society organisations.

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HIV/AIDS: The Human Impact in Prison

by Frikkie Venter, Mangaung Correctional Centre

The bright Free State sun is burning down on the dry soil, but the eyes of the person that is walking towards me, looks like a summer downpour. His face looks like a thunderstorm that is ready to erupt into the mother of all storms. He has just heard that he is HIV Positive.

Almost every day every South African is confronted with the latest Aids statistics and so often, the faces behind the statistics get lost or forgotten, as do the people that are sent to prison.

South Africans also suffer from the effects of crime and there is an outcry in the community to "lock the criminals away".

These, sometimes forgotten people, which the community does not want in free society, are

many of the faces behind the HIV/AIDS statistics of our country and have to deal with dual "sentences", of which one may ultimately lead to their death. Fortunately it is also at these prisons, like Mungaung Correctional Centre (MCC), that those incarcerated are assisted in developing their self worth and to become the human beings that they want to be. MCC is one of the places where they do not have to suffer, grieve or die alone nor be forgotten but a place where they are assisted with the necessary care and support and given the opportunity to deal with their diagnosis in a dignified manner.

When confronted with a positive HIV diagnosis, inmates enter a process which could be described as an emotional rollercoaster of shock, negotiation, denial, anger, depression and ultimate acceptance. This, together with dealing with the physical effects of their illness, family's feelings and behaviour, fellow inmates' reaction towards them and even the feelings and behaviour of the employee's who is working with them, makes it a challenging and difficult journey for the inmate to deal with. One inmate described this journey as follows: *"Living with HIV/AIDS in prison is like a dark cloud covering your whole body."* During this period, the inmates are supported through pre- and post testing counselling and as they may be prone to self-injury during the initial phase, special suicide and self-harm procedures are followed. Confidentiality is maintained at all costs

One of the most difficult aspects, also has to be dealt with under these circumstances, is the prisoner's relationship with his family and loved ones. Some inmates are worried about how their family will react towards them when they receive the news about their illness and some do not want to speak to their family alone. An inmate stated: *"I worry a lot about my family – my wife, children, brothers and sisters. I am thinking a lot about them, how they feel."* The social worker plays an important facilitative and support role in this regard. The "breaking of the news" to the family is therefore mostly done in a therapeutic and supportive environment and thus ensures the ongoing support by the family. Inmates are supported and guided to deal with their fears. *"I have told my wife and she is very supportive"*, one inmate reported after such a family conference.

Inmates dealing with HIV/AIDS do not all react in the same manner and employees must deal with the different responses by accepting the individual's specific journey. One inmate may go through the normal grieving process while the other may become stuck in a specific stage like anger or depression. As most inmates at the Mungaung Correctional Centre have a history of violence, some tend to find this an acceptable coping strategy. The challenge for prison management and staff are to ensure support for each inmate's individual coping mechanisms, and to provide therapeutic intervention to those who cannot complete the journey.

In a prison like Mungaung Correctional Centre, inmates receive intervention in the form of pre- and post testing counselling, bereavement therapy, family conferencing and counselling, religious guidance and support, medical intervention and support and the individual support of an employee allocated to him to attend to his specific needs. Prevention of HIV infection by providing prevention programmes, education and the easy access to condoms are also an important priority. In order to keep inmates healthy and to minimize the risk of inmates being identified as HIV-positive by fellow inmates, support is given to ensure that confidentiality is maintained. The management of MCC has even gone so far to provide high-protein and high fibre meals to all inmates, so that inmates cannot stigmatize those receiving high protein meals as being HIV-positive.

Facing the reality of HIV/Aids in a prison could be an emotional and demanding process for staff in a correctional setting. They also experience loss at the death of an inmate, especially in an environment where a personal and caring approach is followed. The employees working directly with the inmates are, more often than not, the first (sometimes only), person the inmate entrusts with the information regarding his illness and staff members therefore go through a normal grieving process when an inmate dies. In acknowledging the effect that working with these inmates has on employees, the employer has to provide individual support and guidance by the employee's immediate supervisor, as well as the utilization of formal counselling services. At the Mungaung facility the services of Independent Counselling and Advisory Service (ICAS) is used as part of a structured employee assistance programme and has been proven to provide efficient services and support during such trying and difficult times.

Since prisons are not there as a place of punishment, the person walking towards me knows that, although this may be a dark day for him, he will have the support of the people around him. He knows that inmates and staff will join hands to find the silver lining in the cloud that currently threatens his existence.

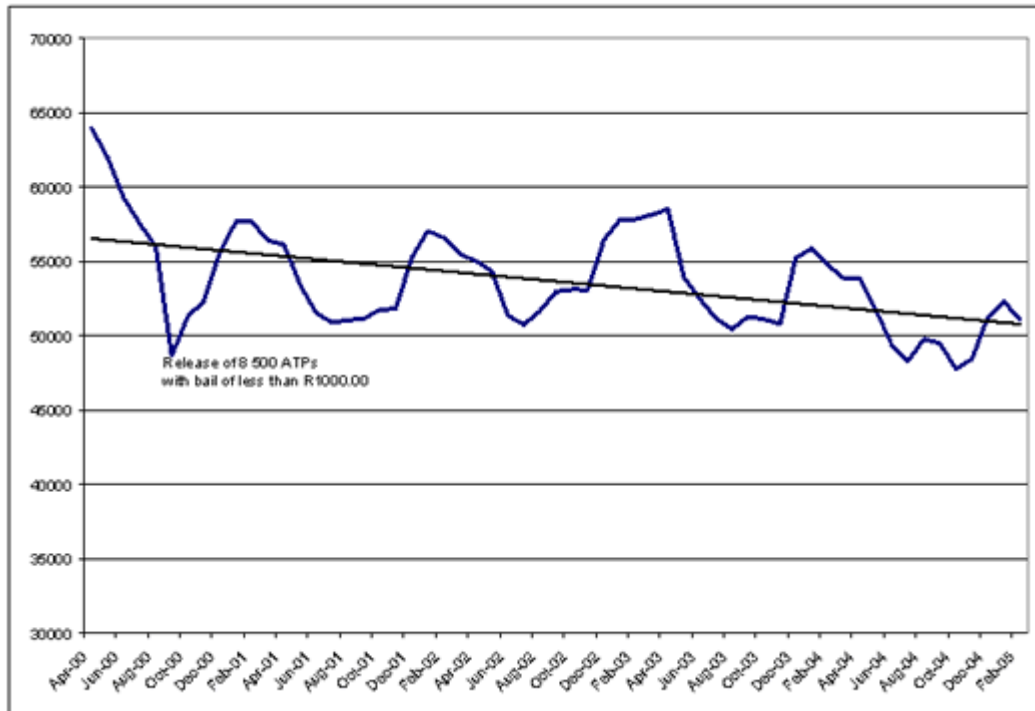
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Stats in Brief

Our usual statistics overview is unfortunately not available for this issue of the newsletter. We

hope to have it available again from the next issue. We apologise for any inconvenience.

In view of this, we are sharing with our readers some figures on the awaiting trial population [2]. The graph below shows the cyclical nature of the awaiting trial population on an annual basis. Each year shows a "bulge" developing as the courts go into recess and a reduction following in the following year. By June to August of the following year the backlog has been erased. Two encouraging trends are observed. The first is there is a general downward trend as indicated by the trend line. Secondly, the bulge is getting smaller every year and there are indications that the numbers are coming down quicker to the previous middle of the year lowest.



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UN Convention Against Torture

After South Africa signed and ratified the UN Convention Against Torture, we have yet to comply with the reporting requirements. Article 19.1 requires a first report within one year of ratification and then every four years thereafter. These were not submitted.

Enquiry made by CSPRI confirmed that the first country report has been finalised by the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development and handed to the Department of Foreign Affairs on 17 February 2005. The Department of Foreign Affairs has further stated that since this report has been outstanding for some time, that the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights has proceeded to fast track this report and it is expected that this report will be presented to the African High Commission for Human Rights during October -November 2005. The initial report will also be considered by the UN Commission Against Torture in November 2006.

White Paper on Corrections and Strategic Plan

The Correctional Services White Paper was launched on 30 March 2005 by the Department of Correctional Services in Krugersdorp. The White Paper as well as the accompanying Strategic Plan are available on the DCS website

White Paper - <http://www.dcs.gov.za/Communication/Documents/WHITEPAPER.doc>

Strategic Plan - <http://www.dcs.gov.za/Communication/Documents/Strategic Plan 2005-6 to 2009-10 .doc>

Annual Report of the Office of the Inspecting Judge

The 2004/5 Annual Report of the Office of the Inspecting Judge was released last week. The report is also available on the website of the office at:

<http://judicialinsp.pwv.gov.za/Annualreports/annualreport2005.asp>

The Office can also be contacted at the following should you wish to receive a hardcopy:

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Portfolio Committee on Correctional Services

The Portfolio Committee on Correctional Services have been following a very full schedule under the Chairmanship on Mr Denis Bloem MP (ANC). The programme for the Committee for June 2005 reveal an interesting range of submissions as indicated below. The PMG website can be visited for more detail at <http://www.pmg.org.za/> .

- Briefing by DCS on status of investigations into the rapes of two nurses and the ambushing of staff and inmate at the Grootte Schuur hospital
- Briefing by the department of Justice on the impact of the Child Justice Bill and Criminal Law Amendment Bill on children and youth in prison
- Briefing by the Special Investigation Unit (Department of Justice): Investigation into Medical Aid Scheme of DCS
- Briefing by the National Council of Corrections on the status of inmate sentenced to death sentences.
- Briefing by Khulisa (Crime prevention organization) on Rehabilitation and reintegration
- Briefing by DCS on its anti-corruption strategy Status Report by DCS on human resources and personnel development within DCS
- Briefing by DCS on New Generation Prisons and Parole Boards

[1] Roper, M (2005). 'A review of the Integrated Youth Offender Programme piloted in Boksburg Juvenile Correctional Centre with the "*Inkanyezi yentathakusa*"', Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation. A copy of the report will be available shortly on the CSVr website, www.csvr.org.za

[2] The figures were supplied by the Office of the Inspecting Judge.

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