

CSSD Chronicle

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“Year 2” of Positive Behavior Interventions and Support (PBIS) Program

EDITOR'S NOTE: This edition of the CSSD Chronicle was written by CSSD's Patricia Nunez, Program Manager, Juvenile Residential Services. Questions about this story can be directed to her at Patricia.Nunez@jud.ct.gov

The Hartford Juvenile Detention Center, Washington Street Secure Community Residential Program, and GRACE Community Residential Program are completing “Year 2” of **Positive Behavior Interventions and Support (PBIS)** implementation. This nationally recognized program has assisted both the CREC educators (who provide the educational program in all three facilities), as well as the detention staff, with a frame-

work to improve student academic and behavior outcomes.

“Year 2” began with kickoff events at the start of the 2012-2013 academic school year at each facility. These events were a collaborative effort between the CREC school system and facility administrators. PBIS was formally introduced at the kickoff events to the juveniles through the use of PowerPoint presentations, skits, and a poster contest.



Teacher Appreciation Day cards made by GRACE students

CREC facilitators Karen Mooney and Donna Morelli provided ongoing technical assistance for the leadership teams at each facility. The leadership teams attended five trainings in 2012-2013 to assist staff in furthering the development of PBIS concepts, integration of existing curriculum models, and technical assistance.

“Year 2” began with a review of all the accomplishments that occurred in Year 1 which included: the establishment of Team

Agreements and Team Meetings, the development of Facility Expectations and Rule Matrices, a schedule for Teaching Expectations, and the establishment of Acknowledgement Systems for juveniles, as well as staff.

Goals and outcomes for “Year 2” included: evaluating practices and strengthening Tier 1; reviewing data, and building Tier 2 systems.

A tremendous advantage to the facilities in “Year 2” was the consistency among staff on the leadership teams. Although some new members were added due to staff attrition, the majority of the original leadership teams remained intact.

Hartford Detention – Dave Chapman, Lorretta Satchell, Michael Bell, Susan Davis, Kristine Cormier, Beth O’Dea, Cynthia Power, Michelle Carras, , Nicole Sestito, James Nord (new), Sandra Levay (new), Nicholas Demico (new), Ramon Rosado (new), Jessica White (new), and Tayna Schweitzer (new)

Washington Street – Barbara Taylor, Randi Salwitz, Leslee Knowlton, Margaret Stewart, Lilian Ijomah and Kim Golden

GRACE – Freddie Watkins-Mendez, Ashley Caldwell (new)

There have been many notable accomplishments this year with regard to PBIS implementation. First, the Hartford Juvenile Detention Center began utilizing the SWIS database to enter in school referrals. School referrals are defined as any disciplinary action

which occurs as the result of participation in the CREC education program. Staff are beginning to review data entered to date to analyze for trends.

Second, all facilities have completed and posted throughout the detention centers/programs, their facility Behavioral Expectations. These expectations are broken down into five areas: “*Be Respectful*,” “*Be Safe*,” “*Have a Positive Attitude and Behavior*,” “*Be Responsible*,” and “*Be a Communicator*.” Expected behaviors are then defined for each area of the detention center/program: Housing Unit, Medical/Mental Health, Transition, Classroom/Groups, Meal Time, Recreation, Visiting, and Appointments/Transportation/Court. Expectations are posted and reviewed with juveniles upon admission and as they transition to each area of the detention center/program. Teaching juveniles is an integral component to PBIS. Detention staff teach, and reteach juveniles on an on-going basis so that there is clear communication regarding expected behaviors.

Third, the CREC facilitators made on-site visits to each of the three PBIS facilities to gain first hand knowledge, insight, and appreciation for PBIS implementation in detention. These on-site visits allowed the facilitators to offer practical technical assistance ideas and suggestions for teaching expectations, offering rewards, and weaving PBIS



PBIS leadership team and CREC facilitators

into the detention culture. One of the on-site visits in Hartford Detention allowed the facilitators to witness the weekly reward system for juveniles at the conclusion of the school day. Juveniles were able to choose books to read, journals, and gift cards. PBIS has allowed juveniles to feel success when it comes to education; whereas in their community they may be struggling to attend school and/or appropriately behave.

Karl Alston; Deputy Director of Juvenile Residential Services is extremely pleased with the commitment to PBIS. “I want to commend the Hartford Juvenile Detention Center staff, and the Washington Street and GRACE programs for

their collaboration with CREC educators. Their dedication to help improving staff and juvenile interactions are invaluable. We will continue to examine the most effective ways to promote and teach good behavior among the juveniles in detention.”

Finally, leadership team staff were recognized for all of their hard work and commitment to PBIS during a recognition ceremony on June 5, 2013. Staff received Certificates of Appreciation signed by Stephen Grant, CSSD Director of Juvenile and Family Services. Grant explained, “I am deeply proud of the significant accomplishments made by the Hartford Juvenile Detention Center, and the Washington Street and GRACE community residential programs. The juvenile justice system here in Connecticut continues to strive to implement best practice for the juveniles they serve. I look forward to the continued development and implementation of PBIS as we look to expand into additional facilities.”

The CSSD Chronicle is a regular publication of information and news about the Court Support Services Division. Questions or comments on this edition, or suggestions for future articles, can be directed to

Linda.Grzeika@jud.ct.gov