

SANCTIONS

UPDATE

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Programs for girls and women are no longer just an “add-on” to programs designed for boys and men. Over the past few years, Connecticut’s Judicial Branch Court Support Services Division (CSSD) has focused on developing and evaluating statewide initiatives that are providing gender responsive services system-wide targeted to the discrete risks and needs profile of girls and women. These programs, designed specifically to address female delinquency and criminality, are garnering national attention.

This is especially important since the female prison population nationally is growing five times faster than that of males, and Connecticut reflects that trend. The majority of offenses committed by females are non-violent. CSSD recognized early on that if girls and women are to be kept out of the justice system, programs must be delivered in a gender specific manner and must be culturally relevant. Other state agencies -- including the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS), the Department of Children and Families (DCF), and the Department of Correction (DOC) -- are also now committed to the creation of female responsive programming.

THIS SANCTIONS UPDATE ISSUE REVIEWS:

☛ HISTORY & MILESTONES

The history of CSSD’s attention to the needs of girls and women, to provide a context for the State’s reform.

☛ PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY

Why there is a need for gender specific programming and supervision techniques, and what gender specific really means.

☛ SYSTEM INITIATIVES FOR GIRLS

An overview of system initiatives that are addressing the needs of girls in three key areas: probation, detention, and diversion programs for status offenders.

☛ SYSTEM INITIATIVE FOR WOMEN

An introduction to the gender responsive Women Offender Case Management Model (WOCMM) for adult women on probation that has recently been funded by the National Institute of Corrections.

Letter from Judge Quinn

Connecticut’s programs have received national attention for their provision of gender specific services for court-involved women and girls. Most recently, Connecticut was one of just two sites awarded a National Institute of Corrections (NIC) grant to implement a gender-responsive Women Offender Case Management Model for adult women on probation. Connecticut has been chosen to demonstrate the model in a community supervision setting; the Utah State Department of Corrections will be demonstrating it in a corrections context.

The Judicial Branch is proud of the proactive approach the Court Support Services Division and its Center for Best Practices have taken -- leading the state and, in some cases, the nation in bringing program innovation and change for court-involved girls and women to fruition.

*The Hon. Barbara Quinn
Chief Court Administrator*

New Britain WOCMM Probation Officer Lisa Cato and Resource Advocate Emily Zarotney from Wheeler Clinic meet with a client to discuss her case plan. They will review her assessment results and Emily will work with her on accessing local service providers. Not shown is the Wheeler Clinic Intervention Specialist, Megan Kilduff, who is also a member of the WOCMM team and delivers the Moving On curriculum at the New Britain AIC.

PROFILE OF NEEDS OF COURT-INVOLVED FEMALES

The profile of needs for court-involved females is different than that for men. Most (70 – 90%) are victims of physical, sexual and emotional abuse. Most are poor, undereducated, and lack jobs or job skills. They need comprehensive medical and mental health education and services. They need housing or stable and secure places to live. They have little sense of self-worth or self-confidence. They tend to cope with the stress and trauma in their lives by turning to drugs, alcohol, eating disorders, depression, running away, and attempted suicide. Many are single parents, and there is a “ripple effect” of consequences when a mother becomes involved in the justice system. Nationally at least one of every eight children with an incarcerated parent becomes involved in the criminal justice system themselves.

HISTORY/ MILESTONES



A context for State reform

The history of CSSD's attention to the needs of girls and women is impressive. The Judicial Branch, Court Support Services Division (CSSD) has shown a specific commitment to evidence-based, gender specific program models and system change. Milestones include:

Program Philosophy

WHAT DOES GENDER SPECIFIC PROGRAMMING REALLY MEAN, AND WHY IS IT NECESSARY?

“Gender specific” means examining an entire range of programs and services, and evaluating them in the context of the different ways research has shown that girls and women develop, learn, and relate to others and the system. These models intentionally move away from women’s programs as an “add-on,” and instead demonstrate integration of gender specific philosophy and practices throughout the system. CSSD’s commitment to gender specific programming extends to highlighting and changing policies and practices for both sexes that are not congruent with a gender specific approach.

CORE ELEMENTS OF GENDER SPECIFIC PROGRAMMING

While quality of services, staff, and facilities should be the same for men and women, equality of services can not be accomplished until the type and level of services offered to girls and to women reflect gender differences. The connection between the female role in society and societal barriers to growth and development must be addressed. Four core elements have been identified by research as integral in programming to meet the developmental and experiential needs of girls and women:

1. **Relational issues:** Women and girls are more “relational” in orientation. Gender specific programming must grow out of policies, practices and programs that promote healthy connections to family, children, peers, and the community.
2. **Attention to patterns of offending:** Programming must take into account not only differences in patterns of

offending for women but also their apparent, attendant reasons for offending. Frequently, women’s pathways to crime are based on reactions to their common life histories of poverty, violence, substance abuse, and physical, sexual, and emotional abuse. They engage in criminal activities that for them are survival reactions to these conditions. For girls, trauma and disconnection can trigger risky behavior that leads to juvenile justice involvement.

3. **Anger:** Women and girls often express great anger. The Iowa Gender Specific Services Task Force noted: “A lifetime of oppressive poverty, abuse, academic failure, familial disruption, gender-bias, racism, heterosexism, harassment, and uncountable unmet needs can build a powder keg. Some girls explode – behaving destructively towards others...and others implode – harming themselves through self destructive behaviors.”
4. **Trauma:** Stephanie Covington, Executive Director of the Center for Gender and Justice, notes: “Programs must assume that all girls they serve are survivors of some trauma, and must develop an appropriate, trauma sensitive framework.” Women in prison report childhood abuse at a rate almost twice as high as men, and the risk of abuse or interpersonal violence continues to be higher for women than for men throughout their adolescent and adult life. Nearly 80% of female prisoners have experienced some form of abuse, either as children or as adults. Nearly eight of every ten mentally ill female offenders report prior physical or sexual abuse. Approximately 22% of women in US jails are diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder.

1992

During the 1992 Reauthorization of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974, Congress paid close attention to concerns brought by youth-serving professionals of the necessity to address the gender specific needs of girls. The final Act required states to respond and take action by: a) analyzing existing and needed gender specific services for the prevention and treatment of juvenile delinquency; then b) developing a plan for providing needed gender specific services.



PROFILE OF GIRLS IN GENERAL

In 2002, the University Of Connecticut School Of Social Work released a study commissioned by CSSD to look at court-involved girls in Connecticut. This research mirrored national trends of increases in numbers of court-involved girls. Data showed that, in Connecticut, girls represent 34% of the juvenile justice population (3,530 of the 10,435 juveniles referred). Relevant profiles of girls are highlighted under each program section, but two things stand out that support gender specific programming for this population:

LOW NUMBER OF FELONY OFFENSES:

Connecticut has a relatively small number of girls who commit serious criminal offenses. Recent studies of girls in detention show that, while most girls have high risk scores on the JAG risk/needs assessment instrument, they are rarely at risk for violent crimes. In fact, assessments have indicated that only 14% of girls in detention are at risk of committing a violent crime, indicating the need for an alternative response for the majority of these girls. Of girls committed to the Department of Children and Families (DCF) for delinquency, only 10% have committed a felony.

STATUS OFFENDERS: *Girls who enter the juvenile justice system with status offenses (offenses that are not punishable if committed by an adult) have a significant risk of becoming entrenched in the court system as delinquents if they are not diverted with appropriate, gender specific services. Girls with multiple status offense referrals have historically been at highest risk for future justice involvement and are often the same girls with multiple referrals to DCF due to abuse and neglect.*

System Initiatives for Girls

During the past decade, as research has acknowledged the importance of recognizing and addressing girls' specific risks and needs factors, CSSD has remained in the forefront of the national landscape. Its service delivery system has changed dramatically in favor of gender responsive practice, particularly over the past five years. CSSD's entire service system for girls is moving toward more effective methods of behavior management, as well as more effective interventions and more appropriate services and treatment.

THREE KEY SYSTEM INITIATIVES

Three key system initiatives have recently been designed and implemented to address the needs of girls and to prevent their future court involvement and/or recidivism

PROBATION

“Gender Responsive Juvenile Probation: A Practice Model for Serving Girls.”

DETENTION

“Capacity Building: Creating a Gender Responsive Juvenile Detention System for Girls in Connecticut.”

DIVERSION PROGRAMS FOR STATUS OFFENDERS

Center for Assessment, Respite and Enrichment (CARE) programs, and expansion of CSSD's status offender service delivery continuum.

1997

CSSD opened the first program model in Connecticut designed to address the assessed needs of substance abusing women who have dependent children or who are pregnant. Women and Children's Residential Programs are community based programs that provide comprehensive, gender specific assessment, client engagement, long-term residential substance abuse treatment, and integrated case management services for women offenders/defendants who may be pregnant and/or have dependent children from birth to age five. Currently CSSD funds W&C programs in Waterbury, New Haven and Hartford.

“If you make the system better for boys, it does not always translate into better services for girls. But, if you make the system better for girls, it results in better services for boys.”

STEPHANIE COVINGTON, PH.D.
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, CENTER FOR GENDER & JUSTICE

1. PROBATION

“Gender Responsive Probation: A Practice Model for Serving Girls”¹

Key Importance: This model, released in June 2007, is dramatically changing the way probation for girls is being administered in Connecticut, and is the precursor to the Women Offender Case Management Model for adult female offenders recently funded by the National Institute of Corrections.

BACKGROUND

The Girls’ Probation project is in direct response to the combination of the rising numbers of girls in the juvenile justice system, the high number of girls entering the system for status offenses, and the identified differences between the risks, needs, strengths and protective factors of girls and boys. Through funding authorized by the Honorable William Lavery, Chief Court Administrator, CSSD was able to strengthen juvenile probation so that a specialized, statewide probation team for girls could be established. Dedicated caseloads mean that selected probation officers have the skills and access to resources needed to meet the unique needs of girls.

MODEL COMPONENTS

As CSSD’s commitment to identifying girls’ needs, strengths, and risk and protective factors through research continues, so too does its commitment to testing innovative strategies to improve gender specific services and interventions.

¹ Sokoloff, Kimberly (Program Manager of Girls’ Services) and Minoudis, Amy (Juvenile Probation Supervisor). “Gender Responsive Juvenile Probation: A Practice Model for Serving Girls.” Prepared for the State of Connecticut Judicial Branch, Court Support Services Division. June 1, 2007.

PROFILE OF GIRLS ON PROBATION

Probation officers and practitioners continue to report that girls are more difficult to serve because of their very different pathways into, through and out of the court system. Ask most probation officers and they will tell you, “I’ll take 10 boys for one girl.” Characteristics include:

- Girls often demand a greater time commitment from probation officers because of the complex issues that drive court involvement. The survival skills clients use are often the very behaviors that result in criminal activity. Status offenses frequently bring them to court.
- Court-involved girls’ “offenses” often are linked to abuse and/or unhealthy relationships with older males. Being victims of abuse affects daily functioning and decision making.
- Girls see themselves through the (frequently negative) relationships they experience in their lives. Their tendency to make decisions based on relational factors requires a different approach.
- Girls are at high risk for pregnancy or are already pregnant when they become court involved.
- Court involved girls have higher rates of chronic medical and mental health problems.

In short, girls require a different approach to service - one that probation officers have not been trained to deliver until now.

1998

CSSD applied for and received a four-year grant from the Bureau of Justice Assistance and the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention to provide services and programming for court involved girls who were pregnant and/or parenting. The scope of the grant quickly expanded its focus to the unique risks, needs, and strengths of all girls in the juvenile justice system.



This innovative, specialized probation model is research-based and relies on several principles, including:

- **Female responsive:** The model accounts for the realities of girls' lives - including their emotional, intellectual, and physical development, socialization, and individuality;
- **Strengths-based:** It requires staff to see what is good about girls in order to help them help themselves;
- **Trauma-informed:** It trains staff to understand the prevalence and impact of trauma on girls' lives and to work actively to prevent system-level trauma;
- **Culturally competent:** Programs maintain a culturally competent approach;
- **Family centered:** Girls' needs are addressed within the context of their families and communities;
- **Relational:** Girls are helped to achieve success within, not outside of, a relational context.

WHO QUALIFIES?

At the point of referral intake, all non-judicial FWSN, judicial FWSN and judicial delinquency female referrals are considered for assignment to a Gender Specific Probation Officer (GSPO) based on caseload slot availability. Case assignment is random by identified geographic catchment areas and is not based on the charge(s) or any other "selection" criteria, e.g., identified mental health needs, perceived risk/need level, offense behavior, or prior history.

Clients ineligible include:

- Girls turning 16 years old within the next 90 days, or girls 11 years old or younger;
- Clients committed to DCF placement at the time of referral;
- Youth In Crisis (YIC) referrals (girls age 16-18);
- Non-judicial delinquency cases;
- Sibling of a client already involved with another Juvenile Probation Officer.

IMPLEMENTATION HIGHLIGHTS

CSSD has dedicated 13 full time Gender Specific Probation Officers. Probation officers volunteered to be considered for participation. One officer was selected for each of the 13 probation offices.

Caseloads do not exceed 25 girls. Dedicated caseloads allow officers the time necessary to address the specific needs of the girls. Initial and ongoing training and support within a team model are provided to all project participants and are seen as key elements to the success of this project.

Designated project coordinators provide oversight: A project coordinator oversees day-to-day operations and coordinates project goals, objectives, and outcomes including training, resources, technical assistance and, eventually, quality assurance. The project coordinators host monthly meetings to review difficult cases and support decision making. They are available on-site as needed and offer weekly phone and e-mail support to every officer.

HOW DOES THIS MODEL DIFFER FROM CURRENT PRACTICE?

Specific strategies include:

- Increasing staff's ability to identify risks and needs through root-cause analysis of presenting problems;
- Effectively intervening in the cycle of court involvement utilizing a relational, strengths-based approach;
- Linking girls to appropriate programs based on assessment of risks, strengths, and needs;
- Advocating for the services that girls really need, not just those available.

This probation model includes ways to advocate for services that girls really need, not just those that are available.

1999

CSSD took an important first step in improving services for female youth in detention by providing single-sex detention programming. It became apparent that just separating females from males did not make a program or its fundamental philosophy and practices gender specific. Focus groups with girls at all levels of system involvement and the staff who worked with them began to affect programming.

PROFILE OF GIRLS IN DETENTION

Every year there are more than 1,500 girls ordered to detention in Connecticut. Over the past five years, that number has remained steady but some things have changed:

- *Number of referrals:* The number of referrals for each juvenile has increased. Last year there were more than 3,500 referrals to detention representing those 1,500 juveniles. Many detained girls have at least two detention admissions, with some girls having as many as six.
- *Time in detention:* About 40% of detained girls spend one to seven days in detention and 20% spend 30 or more days.
- *FWSN history:* The majority of girls who spend time in detention have a history of Family With Service Needs (FWSN) referrals, infractions and violations for status offenses which, by definition, are offenses that are not punishable if committed by an adult. More than 75% of girls who spend time in detention have at least one prior FWSN referral.
- *Type of charge:* Fewer than 12 % of girls who spend time in detention have been charged with a felony offense. Boys are much more likely to have felony charges and person and property type offenses, whereas girls are more likely to have violations, infractions and public order type offenses.

These and other differences between girls and boys must be accounted for in the development, implementation, and delivery of effective gender responsive services in detention.

2. DETENTION

“Capacity Building: Creating a Gender Responsive Juvenile Detention System for Girls in Connecticut”²

Key Importance: The vision of the *Capacity Building Project (2007)* is to have a detention system, public and private, that is fundamentally gender specific in philosophy and in all aspects of programming and service delivery.

BACKGROUND

CSSD has taken dramatic steps to improve the State’s detention system -- steps that few other systems nationwide have taken. Over the course of two years, the State-operated detention system became part of an elite group of nationally accredited facilities. All three of Connecticut’s State-run facilities met standards of the American Correctional Association (ACA) in May 2003 and the National Commission on Correctional Health Care (NCCHC) in 2004. The leadership at CSSD celebrated these accomplishments, but still recognized and acknowledged the need for gender specific programming, services and interventions within the detention system, and made a major commitment to creating a gender specific juvenile detention system. Currently there are two contracted juvenile detention facilities for girls that are implementing this gender responsive model and three State-run facilities that have begun preparation to move toward gender responsiveness:

Contracted services (Community Partners in Action)

- Washington Street Girls Detention Center, Hartford
- SAGE Community Detention Center for Girls, Hamden

State-run

- Bridgeport Detention Center
- Hartford Detention Center
- New Haven Detention Center

² Benedict, Alyssa (Executive Director, CORE Associates, LLC,) and Sokoloff, Kimberly (Program Manager of Girls’ Services, State of Connecticut Judicial Branch, Court Support Services Division). “Capacity Building: Creating a Gender Responsive Juvenile Detention System for Girls in Connecticut.” Submitted to The State of Connecticut Judicial Branch, Court Support Services Division. April 1, 2007.

2001

In July 2001, Public Act 01-181 was passed in the State of Connecticut requiring that any juvenile justice-serving agency provide services that are gender specific and gender appropriate for the developmental needs of the targeted group. CSSD established the Center for Best Practices to research the most up-to-date, evidenced-based program models for adult and juvenile offenders, especially as they related to females. CSSD also piloted a girl’s probation model for a period of 18 months.



MAKING DETENTION GENDER SPECIFIC FOR GIRLS: THREE IMPORTANT STEPS:³

Step 1: Single-sex programming and services (1999)

CSSD took an important first step in improving services for girls in detention by providing single-sex detention programming and services, but it soon realized that simply separating females from males does not make a program -- or its fundamental philosophy and practices -- gender specific.

Step 2: Detention center audits (2002)

CSSD conducted audits at each detention center and determined that there was an immediate and critical need to implement gender specific programming principles, interventions, and training at each of Connecticut's three privately operated girls detention centers open at that time. Management and staff at each center: a) lacked the knowledge and skills to implement gender specific approaches and interventions as identified by best practices and the federal JJDP Act; b) did not have a "safe" program culture (defined by OJJDP as those practices that enhance client emotional/psychological and physical safety); and c) lacked an effective and gender specific behavior management system. In response, CSSD developed an improved behavior management approach for immediate use at each of its girls detention centers.

Step 3: Capacity building (2003)

CSSD then took a third and critical step and initiated a comprehensive, system-wide project designed to build the capacity of the detention system to provide research-based, best practice services to girls. In 2003, CSSD requested federal

technical assistance to: 1) assess gender specificity in the detention system; 2) train staff to implement a gender specific behavior management system using key concepts of gender specific programming; and 3) provide technical assistance to ensure consistent application of a gender specific philosophy. In conjunction with federal funds, CSSD Detention Services supplemented funding to hire a consultant to partner with CSSD to help design and facilitate comprehensive assessment, training, and technical assistance at each of the State's five detention centers. Alternative to Detention programs were also provided training, technical assistance, and ongoing support to develop a gender responsive program.

IMPLEMENTATION HIGHLIGHTS

A process of assessment, training, implementation, technical assistance and support has been designed to institutionalize cultural change in each facility by teaching best practices to administrators and staff and actively engaging the leadership and staff at each facility in a mutual process of learning designed to secure "buy-in." This approach facilitates the shift in attitudes and beliefs necessary to sustain cultural change and facility enhancement. Two core components include:

- 1. OUTCOME MEASURES** that provide concrete indicators of changes in such areas as: frequency of targeted operational occurrences (e.g., use of restraints, accidental or intentional injury of staff or detainees/clients, suicidal behavior); staff attitudes and mastery of training topics; and client perception of facility programming.

3 Who goes to detention?

A juvenile is placed in detention when probable cause exists that a child has committed an alleged delinquent act as determined by a judge and:

- 1. There is a strong probability the child will run away prior to the court hearing or disposition,*
- 2. There is a strong probability that the child will commit or attempt to commit other offenses injuring him/herself or the community,*
- 3. There is a strong probable cause to believe that the child's continued residence in his/her home pre-disposition will not safeguard the best interest of the child and of the community because of the dangerous nature of the acts set forth in the petition of delinquency,*
- 4. There is a need to hold the child for another jurisdiction, or there is a need to hold the child to assure his/her appearance before the court, in view of his/her previous failure to respond to the court process.*

2002

A comprehensive report on court-referred girls in Connecticut was published in March 2002 that described the current population of girls in the juvenile justice system. Data analysis was conducted on the universe of boys and girls in juvenile justice as well as on a sample of girls on probation, in detention, and those who were committed to the Department of Children and Families. Clear differences were noted between boys and girls pathways into, through, and out of the juvenile justice system in Connecticut. CSSD also conducted preliminary audits of gender specific services and needs at each detention center.

2. **CAPACITY BUILDING ACTIONS** that include: mandatory gender specific training to existing pre- and in-service training agendas; creation of policies that support changes in practice; and consultation support that develops internal institutional expertise, and diminishes reliance on an outside “expert.”

The Project looks to sustain change over time with program- and system-level quality assurance in place provided by the CSSD Center for Best Practices and CSSD’s Detention Services. Data for evaluation and project adjustment is being collected at four time intervals, beginning prior to the project’s inception.

3. THE CENTER FOR ASSESSMENT, RESPITE & ENRICHMENT (CARE)

Expansion of CSSD’s status offender service delivery continuum.

Key importance: CARE is an important initiative working to divert status-offending girls from any further court involvement and from any kind of detention. To date, 80% of CARE participants have remained free of involvement in detention, and 70% have not returned to court. As a result, CSSD has expanded its overall status offender service delivery continuum.

BACKGROUND

Because of a recent legislative change, it is important to provide an extended context for this third initiative for girls.

WHAT IS A STATUS OFFENDER? OR, IN CONNECTICUT’S CASE, A FWSN?

In Connecticut, a Family with Service Needs (FWSN) is a family which includes a child who a) runs away without just cause; b) is beyond

PROFILE OF FAMILY WITH SERVICE NEEDS GIRLS (FWSNs)

Historically, girls have been referred to court because of status offenses which, by definition, are offenses that are not punishable if committed by an adult. In Connecticut, a FWSN is a juvenile who runs away, is truant, is beyond control of a guardian, is in defiance of school rules, engages in indecent or immoral conduct and/or engages in illegal sexual activity. Until recent legislation that decriminalized the violation of a FWSN order, judges commonly reported remanding juveniles to temporary placements (including detention), even when the youth posed no real threat to the community.

Numbers of FWSNs: During 1999 in Connecticut, almost half of all girls referred to court were referred for status offenses as a child in a Family with Service Needs (FWSN). In 1999, there were 3,530 girls referred to juvenile court in Connecticut, representing 34% of the total juvenile justice population. Of the 3,530 girls referred, 1,611 (or 46%) were referred as a child in a Family With Service Needs (FWSN). In FY2003/04 there were 5,452 girls referred, representing an increase of 54% since 1999. Boys’ numbers increased during the same time period, but at a lower rate, with an overall increase of 40%.

Most serious offense: FWSN was the most serious offense on the first referral for more than 1,200 girls referred to court in 1999 and for 1,792 in 2003, meaning that a status offense was the most serious offense and no delinquency was charged.

Detention: More than 75% of girls in detention have at least 1 FWSN referral in their court history.

FWSN-referred girls exist at every level of judicial involvement, even though their “offenses” are minor and they are more of a threat to themselves than to the community.

2002

Career Resources, Inc. opened the STARS Program (Striving Towards Achievement, Renewal and Success) in the greater Bridgeport area, the first outpatient female-only program of its kind within the CSSD contracted network. Developmentally appropriate gender responsive services and education programming were designed for females, ages 16-21, referred from the Court’s IAR Unit (Intake/Assessment/Referral), Probation and the Department of Correction. STARS is a demonstration site for the National Institute of Corrections Women Offender Case Management Model (WOCMM) pilot project.



the control of his/her parents or guardian; c) has engaged in indecent or immoral conduct; d) is truant or habitually truant or continuously and overtly defiant of school rules and regulations; and/or e) has engaged in illegal sexual intercourse. These children are engaged in behaviors that would not be considered criminal if they were committed by adults.

WHAT HAS CHANGED?

Under previous law, violating a court order issued after a Family with Service Needs adjudication was a delinquent act, subjecting a child to detention and possible commitment as a delinquent. Legislation was passed in 2006 that decriminalized a violation of a FWSN order. Beginning in October 2007, violations of Family with Service Needs court orders cannot be prosecuted as delinquency offenses. This means that FWSN violators – boys and girls – can no longer be committed to detention. The Judicial Branch is planning alternative sanctions for FWSN violations, which could include a secure facility exclusively for FWSN violators when safety is an issue.

WHAT IS THE IMPACT OF THIS CHANGE ON THE CARE PROGRAM?

The CARE program was developed before there was any talk about changing the law, so its design was intended primarily to divert children away from the harsher sanctions of delinquency and detention. But its fundamental purpose was and continues to be to help children and their families become well, stable and healthy. CARE allows children who are in crisis, are escalating in risky behavior, and have unfulfilled needs to access programs that can help them. The program was designed as a “net” to catch children before negative behaviors escalated to the point of detention. Now the programs can focus on diverting escalation of negative behaviors that may

result in delinquent acts and subsequent arrest. The goal continues to be to intervene and prevent behaviors that cause crisis and disruption in families.

WHAT IS THE CARE MODEL?

The Center for Assessment, Respite and Enrichment (CARE) is a short-term, temporary respite care and service model for FWSN-referred girls in crisis. It is designed to be a bridge to home-based, family-centered treatment and other appropriate services. While, ideally, all families with high-risk adolescents could benefit just from home-based services, many families refuse these services because they believe that removing the “problem” juvenile is their only hope. CARE provides a brief separation option -- a cooling off period – but its goal is rapid reunification with family, accompanied by services to help the family recognize and deal with the underlying issues that cause conflict.

Girls and their families are connected to interventions specific to their assessed risks and needs. Formal agreements are made with local service providers to provide ongoing therapeutic interventions. The CARE program’s goals include: enhancing school relationships, increasing positive coping skills, reducing substance use, reducing runaway behavior, and strengthening family relationships and family functioning

CARE is designed to be the brief respite care that girls in crisis and their families need in order to reunite and subsequently engage in therapeutic services.

2003 - 2004



Over the course of two years, the State-operated detention system became part of an elite group of nationally accredited detention facilities. All three State-run detention facilities met standards of the American Correctional Association in May 2003 and the National Commission on Correctional Health Care in 2004. However, CSSD recognized that more attention to gender specific activities was needed, and federal technical assistance was requested that enabled capacity building projects both in areas of detention and probation.

“This important program is working to cut off the pipeline between girls as status offenders and girls in detention. This program intervenes in the cycle of repeated high-risk, non-delinquent behaviors that FWSN-referred girls present. We want to intervene at this very early level – both to keep girls out of the system and to prevent behaviors that cause crisis and disruptions in families. The CARE program is gender-responsive from soup to nuts.”

KIMBERLY SOKOLOFF

PROGRAM MANAGER OF GIRLS’ SERVICES

STATE OF CONNECTICUT JUDICIAL BRANCH, COURT SUPPORT SERVICES DIVISION

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

This is a voluntary program that is offered only through the Probation Department. Currently there are two six-bed CARE facilities for girls that adhere to the gender specific model – one in New Haven and one in Waterbury. Each is a staff secure respite care center that is open 24 hours a day, seven days per week and provides crisis stabilization and supportive counseling in a non-threatening, therapeutic environment.

It is anticipated that 100-150 girls per year may be served at each CARE program. The average length of stay is three to 14 days, to be determined by CARE, the girl, and her family upon intake. Girls may not stay at CARE more than 14 days. This program is not a residential treatment facility and may not be used to house girls waiting for placement. Rather, it provides a

short-term, safe, caring environment for non-delinquent girls who display high-risk behaviors that, without intervention, may likely result in delinquent behavior.

IMPLEMENTATION HIGHLIGHTS

The development of the CARE program model has helped shape the development and implementation of a broader State-wide service delivery continuum for FWSNs that is built on the theoretical underpinnings of the CARE program: strengths-based, relational, trauma sensitive, culturally competent, family focused, and holistic. Programs for both FWSN girls and boys now include: multi-service, one-stop assessment; crisis intervention; family support; on-site services and treatment; and staff secure programs for adjudicated FWSN violators or those in imminent risk.

2003 & 2005



CSSD contracts for adult services in the Alternative to Incarceration Program network were rebid and language was included that emphasized provision of single sex groups for clients and implementation of gender specific interventions to address female needs. Training opportunities were also made available to contracted staff on female gender responsive curricula and client management skills through the CSSD Training Academy. These enhancements are ongoing.

PROFILE OF WOMEN ON PROBATION

Probation officers report that women are a “tough population and difficult to deal with.” They are seeing more of them on their caseloads. These women often demand a greater time commitment because of the complex issues that drive their court involvement. They require different approaches that probation officers need to be trained to recognize and respond to in a gender responsive manner.

National profile: Over the last ten years the numbers of women in the criminal justice system has increased. Nationally, the female prison population is growing five times faster than that of men. At the end of 2005, almost one in four probationers was female.

Connecticut profile: In Connecticut, women account for 23% of all adults aged 18 and over sentenced to probation for a year or more, an increase from 21% in 1995. They score significantly higher than men on the emotional/personal and family/marital domains of the LSI-R, the risk/needs assessment given to all sentenced probationers. The top four offenses for women in Connecticut are 6th degree larceny, possession of narcotics, operation of a motor vehicle under the influence and assault 3rd or failure to appear. The top three court imposed conditions are substance abuse treatment, community service and restitution.

System Initiative for Women

Establishment of a gender responsive adult probation system: The Women Offender Case Management Model Project (WOCMM)

Key importance: CSSD is implementing a gender responsive adult probation system in Connecticut that addresses the complex issues that frequently drive court involvement for women – focusing on their gender specific development, pathways to crime, and identification of risks, strengths and needs in order for them to succeed and change their behaviors. When probationers succeed, their families and their communities benefit.

BACKGROUND

The National Institute of Corrections initiative

The National Institute of Corrections (NIC) is committed to exploring new approaches for the management of offenders that help women succeed on their own following incarceration and/or periods of community supervision. NIC contracted with a national expert on female offender issues to develop a gender responsive case management protocol called the Women Offender Case Management Model (WOCMM). Developed by Dr. Marilyn VanDieten of ORBIS Partners in Ontario, Canada, the model is designed around research- and evidence-based techniques that work with women. It incorporates specific gender responsive supervision practices such as assessment, classification and case planning that enhance positive outcomes for women.

CSSD applied for NIC’s three year, \$400,000 technical assistance and training award and was chosen in January 2007 as one of only two programs nationally to implement and evaluate this new case management approach. Connecticut will demonstrate the model in a community supervision setting; the Utah State Department of

2004 - 2005

CSSD piloted the first-ever respite care program designed to divert status offending girls from further court involvement and detention.

“Our decision to apply for this project was in direct response to the Judicial Branch commitment to providing services for clients that promote behavior change and have lasting results. WOCMM is aligned with our agency goals to provide gender responsive services for adults and juveniles.”

WILLIAM CARBONE CSSD EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Corrections will be demonstrating it in a corrections context. Under the terms of the award, NIC will provide training and technical assistance, including training on gender specific issues and gender responsive best practices, as well as supervision skills, assessments, and interventions.

Connecticut’s initiative

This pilot has been implemented by CSSD probation staff in four Connecticut offices: Bridgeport, Hartford, New Britain, and New Haven. NIC is funding the outcome and process evaluation of the project in order to gain a better understanding of what works. This will enable CSSD to identify gender responsive practice and interventions for replication statewide in Connecticut and will provide the NIC with model protocols and principles for use by other jurisdictions nationwide. The WOCMM project is expected to:

- Allow for more effective intervention in the cycle of court involvement through the use of gender responsive supervision techniques, and thereby reduce recidivism for female offenders
- Increase CSSD’s ability to identify women’s needs and strengths through better, gender responsive assessment of their presenting problems.
- Create a sustainable network to access expanded contracted and community based services that meet women’s identified needs.

WOCMM’S CORE PRINCIPLES

The model is based on a team approach, with professional staff working collaboratively with the woman offender to monitor progress and update outcomes from sentencing to discharge. Nine core practices guide the model:

1. Provide a comprehensive case management model that addresses the complex and multiple needs of women in the criminal justice system.
2. Recognize that all women have strengths that can be mobilized.
3. Ensure the collaborative involvement of women in the supervision process.
4. Promote services that begin when women enter probation and continue after probation until they are no longer needed.
5. Match services in accordance with risk level and need.
6. Build links with the community and create a strong, accessible network of services.
7. Implement supervision through a multidisciplinary case planning team, to include the probation officer, a resource advocate and an intervention specialist.
8. Monitor progress and evaluate outcomes.
9. Implement procedures to ensure adherence to the program model.

2006 - 2007

CSSD Center for Best Practices and Juvenile Probation co-developed a research-based practice model for successful probation handling of girls. In addition, Connecticut was one of just two sites awarded a National Institute of Corrections grant to pilot its newly designed Women Offender Case Management Model (WOCMM) for female adult probationers.

IMPLEMENTATION HIGHLIGHTS

- **CSSD has dedicated eight full time Gender Specific Probation Officers (GSPOs) to WOCMM.** Probation officers volunteered for this assignment and are located at the four demonstration sites: three (3) officers in Hartford, two (2) each in New Haven and Bridgeport and one (1) in New Britain. These officers have agreed to a 12 month commitment to the program to ensure continuity of engagement with clients.
- **Caseloads will not exceed 35 women.** Dedicated caseloads will improve probation services, allowing officers to spend the time needed to address the unique needs and specific problems of women.
- **Client selection criteria.** Eligible women include those who: are 18 years and older; newly sentenced to probation for a minimum of 12 months; and score 22 or above on the Level of Service Inventory-Revised (LSI-R) service and needs assessment form. Sex offenders and arsonists are excluded. WOCMM probation officers have been trained to deliver gender specific assessments for case planning purposes. Teams began accepting clients Summer, 2007.
- **Participating officers are supported through a team approach, with ongoing oversight provided by a dedicated WOCMM project field coordinator.** The team in each demonstration site includes the probation officer (primary case manager), a resource advocate (ensuring linkages to a network of services for each client), and an intervention specialist (trained in delivery of gender specific interventions). The resource advocate and intervention specialist are contracted staff from the CSSD network providers in the demonstration sites⁴. A CSSD project field coordinator provides ongoing field oversight, coaching and mentoring, and quality assurance efforts.

HOW THE MODEL WORKS

Following assignment to the WOCMM caseload, clients are interviewed by their probation officer who administers gender

“NIC is striving to implement probation supervision approaches that improve public safety, the well-being of our communities, and the pro-social functioning of women clients and their families. NIC chose Connecticut for this initiative because we have already begun to implement key practices that are foundational to the WOCMM approach. This pilot will enable our staff to learn from some of the top experts in the field of gender responsive supervision while collaborating with other agencies that work with the same clients.”

THOMAS HOGAN
CHIEF PROBATION OFFICER I
WOCMM PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION TEAM

responsive assessments, including the SPIN-W (Service Planning Instrument for Women) that identifies strengths and service needs. The SPIN-W results in a case plan “wheel” that documents needs and strengths for each woman. The results of all assessments are reviewed by the team in a case analysis process that identifies key areas to be addressed in order to comply with court orders and encourage behavior change.

The client then meets with her WOCMM officer and the resource advocate to discuss the results and to engage in case planning which includes her own input into the process. The client works with the resource advocate to access appropriate services throughout the supervision process. The probation officer is the primary case manager and retains responsibility for supervision contacts and monitoring of conditions as per established CSSD policy. Other professionals may be included in supervision and case plan meetings as needed to provide input and guidance to the process. The training and tools used in WOCMM were chosen to encourage engagement with the client as soon as possible. It is that process which research has indicated is key to encouraging behavior change and better outcomes for women.

⁴ Contracted service providers include: Project M.O.R.E., New Haven; Career Resources/S.T.A.R.S. Program, Bridgeport; Wheeler Clinic, New Britain; and Community Partners in Action, Hartford.

TRAINING AND SUPPORT

Comprehensive initial and ongoing training is provided to all project staff, including probation officers, their supervisors and contracted service staff. Training and support is key to the success of the WOCMM project. All team members are cross trained as much as possible. So far, 11 full days of training have occurred and additional sessions will be provided during the course of the project. A selected gender responsive curriculum, *Moving On*, has been developed and CSSD WOCMM staff were trained on this in November. The curriculum will initially be offered at the Alternative to Incarceration Center at each demonstration site for both WOCMM and non-WOCMM women as appropriate. It is anticipated that *Moving On* will be available statewide in the future.

DEVELOPMENT OF AND COLLABORATION WITH LOCAL SERVICE NETWORKS.

WOCMM calls for a statewide advisory team to provide interagency collaboration and input. The advisory team includes members of state and community agencies that provide services to women and their families, as well as advocacy groups.⁵ They meet quarterly to review progress. The advisory team has three main responsibilities: 1) to help

expand a local resource network at each demonstration site; 2) to advocate for resources to address service gaps and needs; and 3) to help encourage and implement policy changes on a statewide level. NIC sponsored introductory meetings in 2007 that focused on working with community and statewide stakeholders from the advisory team to educate them about the model and enhance awareness of the issues facing woman probationers.

EVALUATION PLANS

The project will evaluate at least 300 women offenders over three years. Eligible clients will be referred on a first come/first serve basis at intake, following CSSD's regular intake process, until the caseload cap of 35 is reached. Those women who would have otherwise met the criteria but who could not be referred due to caseload limit will be tracked as the evaluation comparison group. During the course of the demonstration, as women complete probation or leave caseloads for others reasons, they will be replaced with new participants. It is anticipated that more than 300 women will eventually be assigned to the WOCMM caseloads. The evaluation will focus on measuring outcomes in recidivism and quality of life indicators.

“This program is geared toward gender-based supervision and utilizes a strengths-based approach. In my opinion this approach empowers the client to move out and away from criminal behavior and into a better place. Simply put, the client is held accountable by carefully assessing her strengths and then becoming motivated to change past offensive behavior using her own skills. My perspective? The fact that probation officers have the desire to work with clients using new approaches that ultimately help our clients adds value to Probation as a profession.”

JOSEPH BEKANICH
CHIEF PROBATION OFFICER I, NEW BRITAIN
WOCMM STAFF SUPERVISOR

⁵ The Department of Mental Health & Addiction Services, the Department of Children & Families, and the Permanent Commission on the Status of Women were among the original supporters of this application. Additional participation has come from the Department of Social Services, CT Coalition Against Domestic Violence, the Department of Public Health, the Office of the Public Defender and community based providers.

Court Support Services Division
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PROGRAMS FOR GIRLS & WOMEN

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ANYONE WISHING TO CONTRIBUTE ARTICLES OR IDEAS FOR ARTICLES TO THE SANCTIONS UPDATE ARE INVITED TO CONTACT JIM GREENE AT THE COURT SUPPORT SERVICES DIVISION AT 860-721-2175 EXT 3110.

ALTERNATIVE SANCTIONS PROGRAMS AND PROVIDERS IN CONNECTICUT

ADULT PROGRAMS

Access and Visitation
AMPS, Inc.

Adult Behavioral Health Services
Barbara Grover
Community Health Resources (aka: North Central Counseling Services, Inc.)
Community Prevention and Addiction Services, Inc.
Connecticut Renaissance, Inc.
The Connection, Inc.
Family Re-Entry, Inc.
Hockanum Valley Community Council, Inc.
Midwestern CT Council on Alcoholism (MCCA)
Morris Foundation, Inc.
Natchaug Hospital
Network Connecticut, Inc.
New Directions, Inc. of North Central Conn.
Perception Programs, Inc.
Regional Network of Programs
Rushford Center, Inc.
Southeastern Council on Alcoholism & Drug Dependence, Inc. (SCADD)
Stonington Institute
Wheeler Clinic, Inc.

Adult Mediation Services
Community Mediation, Inc.
Community Partners in Action
Dispute Settlement Center, Inc.

Adult Risk Reduction Center
Wheeler Clinic, Inc.

Adult Sex Offender Treatment Services
The Connection Inc.

Alternative Incarceration

Center Services
Community Partners in Action
Community Renewal Team
The Connection, Inc.
Corporation for Justice Management, Inc.
CSI Connecticut, Inc.
CTE, Inc.
Norwalk Economic Opportunity Now, Inc.
Perception Programs, Inc.
Project More
Wheeler Clinic, Inc.

Bridgeport Domestic Violence Intervention Services
Family Re-Entry, Inc.

Building Bridges
Community Foundation of Greater New Haven
City of Hartford

Community Court
Community Partners in Action
CSI Connecticut, Inc.

Community Service Officers
Norwalk Economic Opportunity Now, Inc.
United Community & Family Services
United Way of Meriden & Wallingford, Inc.
United Way of Greater New Haven
Volunteer Center of Southwestern Fairfield County
The Volunteer Center of Western Connecticut

Domestic Violence - Evolve (52 wk)
The Consultation Center, Inc. (aka: CCB)
Families in Crisis, Inc.
Family Re-Entry, Inc.

Domestic Violence - Explore (26 wk)
Association of Religious Communities, Inc.
Families in Crisis, Inc.
Family Re-Entry, Inc.
Mandel Mellow and Went (dba: N.A.)
Opportunities Industrialization Center (OIC) of New London County, Inc.
Wheeler Clinic, Inc.

Drug Intervention Program
Family Re-Entry, Inc.
Hill Health Corporation
Liberation Programs, Inc.
Perception Programs, Inc.

Family Violence Education Program
Association of Religious Communities, Inc.
Catholic Charities/Catholic Family Services
Community Health Resources (aka: North Central Counseling Services, Inc.)
The Consultation Center, Inc. (aka: CCB)
Family Re-Entry, Inc.
Mandel Mellow and Went (dba: N.A.)
Marianne Christiano
Maxine L. Varanko (dba: FMHS)
United Services, Inc.
Wheeler Clinic, Inc.

Gender Specific - Female
Career Resources, Inc.

Latino Youth Offender Services
Catholic Charities/Catholic Family Services

Residential Services - Halfway House
Corporation for Justice Management, Inc.

Residential Services - Jail Re-Interview
The Connection, Inc.

Residential Services - Medical Detoxification
Rushford Center, Inc.

Residential Services - Project Green
CSI Connecticut, Inc.
Project More

Residential Services - Substance Abuse Intermediate
APT Foundation, Inc.
Morris Foundation, Inc. - Morris House
Rushford Center, Inc.

Residential Services - Youthful Offender
CSI Connecticut, Inc.

Women and Children Services
Community Renewal Team, Inc.
The Connection, Inc.
CSI Connecticut, Inc.

Zero Tolerance Drug Supervision Program
Project More

JUVENILE PROGRAMS

Adolescent Clinical Treatment
Catholic Charities/Catholic Family Services
Connecticut Renaissance, Inc.
Natchaug Hospital
Wheeler Clinic, Inc.
Yale University

Alternative to Juvenile Detention Program
Community Renewal Team
Community Partners in Action

Corporation for Justice Management, Inc.
St. Francis Home for Children, Inc.

Center for Assessment Respite Enrichment
Connecticut Junior Republic
St. Francis Home for Children, Inc.

Community Detention for Girls
Community Partners in Action

Court Based Juvenile Assessment Services
Campagna Associates, LLP
Clinical Consultants of Connecticut
The Connection, Inc.
Natchaug Hospital
Wheeler Clinic, Inc.

Hartford Juvenile Review Board
Catholic Charities/Catholic Family Services

Juvenile Diversion Program Services
The Connection, Inc.
Family & Children's Agency, Inc.

Juvenile Mediation Services
Community Mediation, Inc.

Juvenile Risk Reduction Center
Connecticut Renaissance, Inc.
CSI Connecticut, Inc.
Forensic Health Services, Inc.
The Village for Families and Children, Inc.

Juvenile Sex Offender Services
The Connection, Inc.

Multi Systemic Therapy
Connecticut Renaissance, Inc.
Connecticut Junior Republic
CSI Connecticut, Inc.
NAFI Connecticut, Inc.
Wheeler Clinic, Inc.