COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS COLLABORATIVE NETWORK:

Safe and Smart Ways To Solve America's Correctional Challenges

by Jason Ziedenberg

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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ABSTRACT

The National Institute of Corrections (NIC) Community Corrections Collaborative Network (CCCN)—a network representing community corrections professionals—commissioned a position paper to explore the successes and challenges facing the community corrections field. The position paper, *Community Corrections Collaborative Network: Safe and Smart Ways To Solve America's Correctional Challenges*, finds that community corrections are a critical part of the public safety system that supervises individuals under the legal authority in the community to reduce crime and victimization.

Community corrections are changing lives, reducing harm, and helping build communities, and they have strong public support. To succeed in the future, community corrections and their partners need to refocus resources on approaches that are proven to work; change laws, policies, and practices that do not work; target treatment and supervision only to those who need it; and reallocate resources appropriately. Also to succeed in the future, community corrections and their partners need to expand the capacity of the field to take on new challenges and designate resources appropriately.

CCCN comprises the leading associations representing probation, parole, pretrial, and treatment professionals around the country, including the American Probation and Parole Association, the Association of Paroling Authorities International, the International Community Corrections Association, the National Association of Pretrial Service Agencies, and the National Association of Probation Executives.

This technical assistance activity was funded by the Community Services Division of the National Institute of Corrections. NIC is a federal agency established to provide assistance to strengthen state and local correctional agencies by creating more effective, humane, safe, and just correctional services.

The Community Corrections Collaborative Network would also like to acknowledge and thank the American Probation and Parole Association (APPA) and American Paroling Authorities International (APAI) for its contribution to the project. APPA volunteered to design the position paper and executive summary and APAI volunteered to design the logo for the CCCN.

Onsite technical assistance was provided through a cooperative agreement at the request of the National Institute of Corrections. The direct onsite assistance and the subsequent report are intended to assist the agency in addressing issues outlined in the original request and in efforts to enhance the agency's effectiveness.

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DISCLAIMER

This Technical Assistance activity Project #13C5022 is funded by the Community Services Division of the National Institute of Corrections, U.S. Department of Justice. Points of view or opinions expressed in the Technical Assistance report are those of the authors and do not represent the official opinion or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice.

Community corrections are a critical part of the public safety system that supervises individuals under the legal authority in the community to reduce crime and victimization. Probation, parole, pretrial services, and community treatment organizations work together to match the right supervision and the right service to the right person at the right time. Together, our field of professionals works with more than five million juveniles and adults to try to help break the cycle of crime and offending, reserve costly prison and jail beds for violent people, and reduce the harm that criminal justice involvement can have for those who can safely remain in the community; and it helps save untold human potential.

The Community Corrections Collaborative Network (CCCN) wants to work with you as our partner to reduce recidivism, help young people and adults succeed, help taxpayers get better public safety results from corrections, and work with millions of juveniles and adults to leave offending behind them. CCCN comprises the leading associations representing probation, parole, pretrial, and treatment professionals around the country, including the American Probation and Parole Association, the Association of Paroling Authorities International, the International Community Corrections Association, the National Association of Pretrial Service Agencies, and the National Association of Probation Executives.

With the right investment of public and private dollars, CCCN can focus on proven approaches to change people's behavior and help save untold human potential that is otherwise lost to the cycle of crime. Matched with the right kind of training, research, and technology, community corrections can work with our public safety partners in law enforcement and the courts and with policymakers to deliver the smart and cost-effective justice that the public wants.

REDUCING REOFFENDING, RECIDIVISM, AND VICTIMIZATION IN YOUR COMMUNITY

The community corrections approach to public safety involves developing an individualized plan for each client, supported by scientific tools that allow our profession to target the risk, need, and responsivity of individuals under our custody. When we can target our approach based on a person's measured risk to reoffend, identify that person's treatment needs, and match both to the person's motivation and responsivity to learn better skills, community corrections reduces recidivism, reoffending, and victimization in our communities. Since most community corrections approaches are far cheaper to provide than incarceration, working with community corrections partners can be a much more cost-effective way to reduce crime, recidivism, and victimization.

CHANGING LIVES, REDUCING HARM, AND HELPING BUILD YOUR COMMUNITY

There will always be individuals who need to be incarcerated to keep the community safe. But people who have spent time in prison or jail have a harder time getting a job, earn less money, face challenges returning to school, and may see health problems worsen while they are incarcerated. Children of incarcerated parents can face even more lifelong challenges. By enabling people to be in the community when they safely can be, community corrections agencies help individuals stay employed, keep them paying taxes and participating in our local economies, help them remain parents and be involved in their families, pay their child support, and make restitution to crime victims.

COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS HAS STRONG PUBLIC SUPPORT IN YOUR COMMUNITY

Opinion surveys show that vast public support exists for a strong community corrections system that holds young people and adults accountable, and helps our clients get a job, get treatment, and pay back crime victims. The public supports a community corrections system that can respond swiftly and with certainty to behavior or offending. Risk assessments are seen as effective ways to prevent crime, prevent flight, and ensure appearance at trial. The public supports reinvesting some of the billions America spends on prisons and jails on community corrections approaches.

WHAT DO WE NEED TO SUCCEED IN YOUR COMMUNITY?

From California to New York and from Texas to Michigan, probation, parole, pretrial services, and community treatment organizations are rising to the challenges of serving whole new populations of juveniles and adults who were once incarcerated and are now back in our communities. To assume an ever more critical role in driving correctional practices and managing public safety spending, CCCN believes that our profession will need to work with our partners to improve how we all approach public safety.

TO SUCCEED IN THE FUTURE, COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS NEEDS TO:

1) *Refocus resources on approaches that are proven to work, and change laws, policies, and practices that do not work.* Community corrections must adopt evidence-based practice as the foundation of the profession. We must work with our partners to revise laws, policies, and practices that do not work or that do more harm than good.

2) *Target treatment and supervision only to those who need it, and reallocate resources appropriately.* We need to continually revise our approach so that we can target the right supervision and treatment to the right individuals for the right period of time to change their behavior, and work with our partners to ensure that we serve individuals with the most minimal needs in an effective way.

3) *Expand the capacity of community corrections to take on new challenges.* We need to help build the capacity of our profession and organizations so that we can continue to ensure the strong public safety outcomes the public deserves and desires. We need to harness the potential of new technologies to serve individuals more effectively, and focus on developing our workforce and practices through training, research, new skills, and staff development.

4) D*esignate appropriate resources to community corrections.* We are responsible for changing the behavior of 7 out of 10 individuals in the corrections system, but more than 7 out of 10 correctional dollars is spent on institutions. Across eight states, 88% of additional corrections spending since 1983 has gone to prisons. For community corrections to successfully help the system save money and improve public safety, our partners will need to do more than simply flood the system with additional offenders. We need to reallocate resources appropriately to support treatment for our clients, invest in capacity building for the profession, fund the purchase and use of new technology and research, and train and develop our workforce to meet new challenges.

For more information on the data and information provided here, see the full position paper, *Community Corrections Collaborative Network: Safe and Smart Ways To Solve America's Correctional Challenges (March 15, 2013),* Contact the Community Corrections Collaborative Network at: http://community.nicic.gov/wikis/cccn/default.aspx

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