

The NCTI Cognitive Report



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**A RESEARCH STUDY TO DETERMINE THE EFFECTS OF THE CROSSROADS®
PROGRAM ON OFFENDERS SUPERVISED BY THE MARICOPA COUNTY ADULT
PROBATION DEPARTMENT**

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1996

Published by University of Phoenix

Synopsis of the Findings: Hellen J. Carter, PhD

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ABSTRACT

This research study investigated whether or not the Crossroads® Program, from the National Curriculum Training Institute, Inc., (NCTI) would have an effect upon recidivism for individuals supervised by the Maricopa County Probation Department. The Crossroads Program is a life skills program with cognitive restructuring components. The study focused on 50 probationers who successfully completed this 16-week program and compared them to 50 probationers who did not participate. The comparison between the two groups was in the areas of new arrest, petitions to revoke probation being filed, and the status of the probation grants. The information necessary to conduct this study was gathered from computer records through the Law Enforcement Judicial Information System (LEJIS). The findings of this study indicated the Crossroads Program was successful in reducing the recidivism rate of offenders. The Chi-square test was utilized to determine the level of significance between the two groups. Based on the outcome of this study, it was recommended that life skills and cognitive restructuring programs continue to be utilized with the offender population.

SYNOPSIS OF RESEARCH

INTRODUCTION

The incarceration of offenders had increased to record numbers. Prisons continued to be overcrowded and it was extremely costly to build new ones. Many prisons housed repeat offenders (recidivists). Incarcerating offenders had proven to be an ineffective method to reduce the crime rate. Alternatives to incarceration were needed. Probation was an alternative, which proved effective in changing offender behavior. Probationers were identified as offenders who had been sentenced by the court to a term of probation. Individuals who were placed on probation were given an opportunity to make positive changes in their lives. The NCTI Crossroads Program was identified as a cognitive restructuring/life skills program, which was available to probationers supervised by the Maricopa County Adult Probation Department. This study investigated the effectiveness of successful completion of the NCTI Crossroads Program on return to custody and recidivism.

Reports from the United States Bureau of Census indicated that in 1990, there were 745,000 people incarcerated in prisons and 4,349,800 people under correctional supervision in the United States (1994). Probation supervision, a form of correctional supervision, was an alternative to incarceration. Probation provided offenders with the opportunity to participate in many programs which could be of benefit to their lives. Many programs designed to reduce recidivism focused on basic drug education, support group participation, additional schooling, job skills training and job opportunities. However, there was a need to systematically alter offender thinking and decision making in order to observe substantial changes in recidivism reduction and other behaviors.

Programs which tried to educate and then said, “Go, do no more wrong” didn't make a difference. Offenders had to learn what “wrong” meant (Robinson, 1994).

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

The research was conducted from records obtained between September 1993 and June 1996, from the Maricopa County Adult Probation Department. The sample consisted of 100 probationers. This included an experimental group of 50 probationers who successfully completed the 16-week, 60-hour Crossroads Program and 50 probationers who served as a control group and did not participate in the Crossroads Program. The experimental group consisted of probationers who were ordered by the court or directed by probation officers to participate in the program. The study examined various characteristics to determine the profile of successful participants with regard to recidivism. These characteristics included age, gender, ethnicity, educational level, whether the probationers were first time or repeat offenders, the category of crime they committed (property, violent, and drug or alcohol related offenses), and their risk score. The control group was selected based on these same characteristics, with as close a match as possible to the experimental group. Although data collected from this time period was analyzed for the purpose of completing a study which met the requirements of a master's degree in education at the University of Phoenix, the program continued to operate.

HYPOTHESIS

The research question that was answered to fulfill the purpose of this study was: What was the effect of successful completion of the Crossroads Program on the recidivism rate of probationers supervised by the Maricopa County Adult Probation Department?

The hypothesis posed by this research study was:

HA: Probationers who participated in the Crossroads Program, supervised by the Maricopa County Adult Probation Department, would have a lower recidivism rate than probationers who did not participate in this program.

Conversely the null hypothesis was:

HO: Probationers who participated in the Crossroads Program, supervised by the Maricopa County Adult Probation Department, would not have a lower recidivism rate than probationers who did not participate in this program.

RESEARCH METHOD

The experimental treatment was determined through a quantitative analysis. The quantitative analysis of the program consisted of information obtained from LEJIS to determine the recidivism rate of probationers in both the experimental and control groups. A quasi-experimental pre-test/post-test experimental design was utilized to conduct this study. The independent variable was the successful completion of the Crossroads Program, and the dependent variable was the recidivism rate of probationers. Records were obtained on the experimental group (50 probationers who successfully completed the Crossroads Program). Characteristics which were examined included age, gender, ethnicity, educational level, whether the probationer was a first-time or repeat offender, the crime the probationer committed (property, violent, and drug or alcohol-related), and their risk score. For the purpose of this study, the records of a control group (an additional 50 probationers, who did not participate in the Crossroads Program), were reviewed during the same time frame. Data for this study was obtained by reviewing court and arrest information in LEJIS.

Risk scores were considered based on the Offender Screening Tool (OST) which is used by the Maricopa County Probation Department to determine offender's community risk and need

scores. Each group consisted of 40 males and 10 females. The average risk score for the experimental group was 9 or “medium risk” and the control group was 11 or “medium risk”. The experimental group consisted of 17 individuals who were on probation for property-related offenses, 22 for drug/alcohol related-offenses, and 11 for violent/sex related-offenses; while the control group consisted of 19 individuals who were on probation for property related offenses, 19 for drug/alcohol related offenses, and 12 for violent/sex related offenses.

Two years after the last participant in the experimental group successfully completed the Crossroads program, another records search was conducted on both groups through LEJIS to determine: (1) if any individuals had been arrested for new crimes, (2) if any petitions to revoke probation were filed, and (3) what the probation status of each individual was. Two individual searches were completed. Booking information was obtained to determine if the participants were arrested, and if so, whether it was for a felony or a misdemeanor offense. Probation information was also gathered to determine the remaining two areas in question for this study: whether or not the participants’ probation officer had filed any petitions to revoke probation, and if so, was it a technical violation or a violation for a new crime been committed; and to determine the status of the participants’ probation.

STUDY OUTCOMES

Return to Custody and Recidivism Outcomes

Experimental Group: NCTI Crossroads Participation: The experimental group consisted of 68% of the participants not having petitions to revoke filed, 16% committed technical violations resulting in a petition to revoke, and 16% committing a new crime.

Control Group: Non-NCTI Crossroads Participation: The control group resulted in 42% of the participants not having a petition to revoke filed, while 28% had petitions to revoke filed for technical violations, and 30% committing new crimes.

Probation Grant Expiration Outcome

In the experimental group, 27 individuals (54%) remained on probation, 10 (20%) were granted an early termination, 2 (4%) expired successfully from probation, 3 (6%) expired with noncompliance to terms of probation, 1(2%) absconded from probation supervision and had an outstanding warrant, and in 7 (14%) of the cases the probation grant was revoked.

The control group consisted of 15 individuals (30%) who remained on probation, 12 (24%) received an early termination, 2 (4%) expired successfully, 2 (4%) expired with noncompliance, 6 (12%) had outstanding warrants, and in 13 (26%) of the cases the probation grant was revoked.

Those offenders who participated in the NCTI Crossroads Program fewer absconded from supervision or had an outstanding warrant (2%) than did the control group (23%), as well as, having a lower probation grant revocation (14%) rate than the control group (26%).

RESEARCH RECOMMENDATIONS

As a result of the literature review and research outcomes, this researcher recommended that the Maricopa County Adult Probation Department continue with cognitive restructuring programs for probationers. The literature review indicated this type of program is very effective with the high-risk offender population.

The Crossroads Program is based on the principles of cognitive restructuring; it also encompasses life skills training. From this research, it appears that while a strictly defined cognitive restructuring program is effective with high-risk offenders; the Crossroads Program is well suited for certain individuals as identified by the characteristics of the successful medium-risk participants. This researcher believes further studies are needed to determine the effectiveness of

the Crossroads Program as it relates to goal setting, employment, financial, and educational issues, as these areas are addressed by the program. It would appear that a large percentage of probationers can benefit from the Crossroads Program, and not all probationers are in need of the in-depth cognitive restructuring programs such as those identified for the “high-risk” offenders.

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**COURT UNIFIED TRUANCY SUPPRESSION PROGRAM (CUTS) AND
THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM AND TRAINING INSTITUTE
COGNITIVE PARENT CHILD CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTATION AND
COMMUNITY COLLABORATION:
AN EMPIRICAL STUDY; REVIEW OF THE DATA**

Hellen J. Carter, PhD, Jane L. Ball, MS, Alison Vines
August 2009

ABSTRACT

According to the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, truancy has been and continues to be a major problem in the United States that negatively impacts the future of our youth and costs taxpayers thousands of dollars. With daily absentee rates as high as 30 percent in some cities, it is not surprising that truancy is rated among the major problems facing schools. In 1996 the Maricopa County Juvenile Probation Department and the National Curriculum and Training Institute (NCTI) developed an innovative program of providing service to the truant and the school on the school campus. NCTI provided a cognitive based education program to both child and parent. Accountability was essential in the CUTS program.

From 1998 to 2000, four schools in the trial group showed significant reduction in dropout rates.

	<u>1998</u>	<u>1999</u>	<u>2000</u>
Trevor Browne High School	7.9%	6.7%	4.0%
Camelback High School		11.5%	7.4%
North High School		12.5%	7.7%
Alhambra High School		7.9%	6.7%

The rate of students remaining in school and the efficacy of the youth and parents processed through the system in less than 90 days was seen as a significant event.

INTRODUCTION

Historical Background

Compulsory education is mandated by law in all 50 of the United States. In general, an unexcused absence from school is an instance of truancy. To be branded as a truant, a student must intentionally miss school with absences that are unexcused at an age at which education is compulsory in the state in which the student resides. Teen truancy is of particular importance and interest because of truancy's link to other problems, the most obvious of those being failure to complete one's education.

According to the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, truancy has been and continues to be a major problem in the United States that negatively impacts the future of our youth and costs taxpayers thousands of dollars. With daily absentee rates as high as 30 percent in some cities, it is not surprising that truancy is rated among the major problems facing schools.

OJJDP reports the statistics speak volumes: In New York City's public school system, the Nation's largest, about 150,000 of 1 million public school students are absent on a typical day. School officials do not know how many of them are absent without a legitimate excuse. The Los Angeles Unified School District, the Nation's second largest public school system, reports an

average of 62,000 students, or 10 percent of its enrollment, are out of school each day. Of these, only half come back with written excuses.

In Detroit, 40 public school attendance officers investigated 66,440 chronic absenteeism complaints during the 1994-95 school years. Truancy may be the beginning of a lifetime of problems for students who routinely skip school. Because these students fall behind in their school work, many drop out of school. Dropping out is easier than catching up.

The Consequences of Nonattendance

Student nonattendance is a problem that extends much further than the school. It affects the student, the family, and the community. The Los Angeles County Office of Education identifies truancy as the most powerful predictor of delinquency. Police departments across the nation report that many students not in school during regular hours are committing crimes, including vandalism, shoplifting, and graffiti. When Van Nuys, California officials conducted a three-week sweep for truants on the streets, shoplifting arrests dropped by 60 percent (Garry 1996).

In a longitudinal study of African-American males, Robins and Ratcliff (1978) found that of those students who were often truant in elementary school and in high school, 75 percent failed to graduate from high school. Failure to graduate, in turn, is associated with diminished earning potential in adulthood and other negative outcomes.

Confusing Truancy Laws

Because state laws differ, a student who is considered truant in one state may not be truant in another state. For example, in states for which the upper limit of compulsory attendance age is 16, a teen of that age may drop-out of high school without legal issues, whereas in a neighboring state with the upper age limit of 18, that same adolescent would be truant.

It is important to have set national standards to determine truancy and to determine the age when a juvenile may or may not drop out of school. Without such national standards, parents move from state to state to avoid responsibility of their child attending school on a regular basis. There is no national data base of school attendance.

Causes of Truancy

Causes of truancy vary and there is no one cause for a student to be truant. Students are truant for different reasons. Students may be truant out of fear, or be needed at home to assist the family. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDCP) has reported that in 2003, 5.4 percent of high school students skipped a minimum of one day of school because they were concerned for their personal safety. Negative factors contributing to teen truancy are considered as originating in three areas: the teen's personal character and psychology, the teen's family and community environment, and the school.

Personal factors include poor academic performance; mental health issues; substance abuse; the demands of pregnancy or parenting; and lack of understanding about the importance of education.

Home and community factors include family situations that lead the teen to choose to work rather than attend school; a situation of abuse or neglect; parental substance abuse; negative role models; and disdain for education among role models.

School factors that can contribute to teen truancy include poorly designed and implemented attendance policies; policies that remove the student from school as punishment; poor instruction; poorly maintained facilities; an unsafe environment; and lack of quality special education for students in need.

CUTS/COURT UNIFIED TRUANCY SUPPRESSION PROGRAM

The **CUTS** Program was developed by the Maricopa County Juvenile Probation Department in 1996 to more appropriately respond to the growing issue of truancy in Maricopa County. The Juvenile Probation Department targeted truancy as one of the primary indicators that youth are at risk or are participating in risk taking behavior. CUTS is a diversion program that assists first and second time truancy offenders by providing services which educate and address the individual needs of the child and family. By addressing truancy issues at the juvenile's school with their parent/guardian and a school representative involved, the child is held responsible, the parent is empowered and communication barriers are removed to ensure that the juvenile is successful and receives an appropriate education.

In order to foster and promote long-term changes, consequences are specifically designed to educate and reintegrate the child back into school with the support of school officials. At a CUTS Hearing, a Juvenile Probation Officer, a juvenile, their parents/guardian and a school representative come together as a team in order to resolve a truancy citation. In order to be eligible, the juvenile must admit to being truant and be willing to take responsibility for missing school which includes discussing the issues surrounding their absences. The Probation Officer can then assess the case and provide an appropriate consequence. Possible consequences include truancy education classes, community service hours, and tutoring. The Juvenile Probation Officer may also intervene by assigning services such as counseling. Consequences and services are monitored by the Juvenile Probation Officer. The juvenile is held accountable if non-compliant by suspending their driver's license until 18 year of age, or requesting that a Court Hearing be set.

Specifics of the CUTS program

The CUTS program was developed to have the informal diversion process occur on the school campus.

Goal of the CUTS Program

From 1996 to 2004 over six thousand juveniles participated in the CUTS program operated within Maricopa County in 186 schools. Using a Countywide approach that includes prevention, intervention, diversion and enforcement, the goal was to increase the number of children attending school and ultimately the number of children that graduate from high school within the county.

Program Objectives

- Consistent application of the law
- Intervention
- Swift enforcement with complete follow up
- Centralized data collection
- Timely and accurate reporting
- Statistical analysis
- Communication between government agencies, schools, parents and diversion programs

Up to the time CUTS was developed and implemented, truancy was processed by way of a school making a referral to the Maricopa County Juvenile Court and subsequently processed by way of formal court action. This required a County Attorney; Defense Counsel and a Judicial Officer, as well as, the necessary adjunct court staff.

Due to lack of oversight, children as young as eight years of age were referred when in fact it was the parents who had the control, not the child. Under CUTS, any parent of a child under the age of ten years of age was cited to the adult court system for prosecution as a class three misdemeanor.

Of the youth assigned in the year 2000, the standard break out between the CUTS group and the control group of Non-CUTS cases was higher with the lower age group. In this instance, CUTS would refer the parent rather than the child to the program. In school year 2000, 1,200 Non-CUTS cases and 1,062 CUTS cases were processed under the truancy statutes.

The data break out are as follows:

	<u>CUTS Cases</u>	<u>Non CUTS Cases (Control)</u>
Age		
8-12	9.5%	34%
13-16	90.5%	58%
Missing	0%	8%

	<u>CUTS Cases</u>		<u>Non CUTS Cases (Control)</u>	
Gender	Male 55%	Female 45%	Male 50%	Female 50%

All Statistics for this presentation are based on the following:

- Truancy citations submitted to the Juvenile Probation Department during year 2000
- Only counted first-time offenders with offense of Truancy
- 1,200 Non-CUTS cases and 1,062 CUTS cases

The CUTS program was first attempted as a pilot program in the Trevor Brown High School in 1997 and by 2000 the program was in full operation. Trevor Brown High School was a proactive school where truancy was an issue and the administration wanted to stop the activity before it became more severe.

The goal of the CUTS program was to have students come before the juvenile court in a more effective fashion and not be left in the community not attending school. In 2000, of the 1,062 youth who participated in CUTS, 74% were successful in completing the program. The more successful number was the low dismissal ratio for the CUTS participants.

Of the 1,062 only 8% of the cases were dismissed as compared to the 1,200 Non-CUTS Control group which had 24% of its cases of truancy dismissed. Having a case dismissed reinforced for the youth the power they could have in not attending school. In the dismissals it was due to the school administration not being present or the parent talk their way out of the referral and placing the blame on the school.

An additional success for the CUTS program was the rapid fashion in which the case was processed and concluded. The CUTS participants were before their school hearing board and completed the process and program within 70 days. The Non-CUTS (Control) group required an average of 121 days from beginning to conclusion or five months longer to complete. In truancy, time is an integral factor.

2000 Truancy Disposition Statistics

	<u>CUTS Cases</u>	<u>Non CUTS Cases (Control)</u>
Successfully Completed Diversion	74%	56%
Probation	10%	8%
Dismiss	8%	24%
Reactivate	5%	9%
Other	3%	3%
Average Days to Final Disposition	70	121

With the implementation of the CUTS program within the Trevor Brown High School in 1997, the incident of dropping out of school had a significant impact. With the reduction in drop out rates the incident of daily attendance revenue increased for the school.

As Trevor Brown High School provided a picture of success to the schools within the Phoenix Union High School District, Camelback High School, North High School and Alhambra High School joined the process in 1998 and showed significant success in 1999 and 2000.

Phoenix Union High School District CUTS Program and School Drop-Out Rates

	<u>3/5/98</u>	<u>3/5/99</u>	<u>3/5/00</u>
<u>Schools</u>			
Trevor Browne High School	7.9%	6.7%	4.0%
Camelback High School		11.5%	7.4%
North High School		12.5%	7.7%
Alhambra High School		7.9%	6.7%

The National Curriculum and Training Institute (NCTI) was selected as the curriculum provider for CUTS and was the operator of the weekend parent child programming on the school campus using a cognitive based curricula. The Truancy Group Family Education program was specifically designed to help students make school studies relevant and to get students to set concrete goals for graduation. To do this, the program teaches students the skills they need to succeed in their studies. There is a great emphasis on the future and how today shapes it. The process of establishing and fulfilling goals is the main tool in accomplishing this important task. The parenting program assists parents in understanding why their children are behaving the way they are. It teaches parents how to counteract negative behaviors using methods that are non-threatening and effective, and that build responsibility.

For the Juvenile the NCTI goal was:

- To identify the factors and use the resource that will help one finish school.
- To understand how success in school will translate to success in work and in life.
- To gain the skills needed to succeed in school and in life.
- To create a vision of a future career.
- To learn how what is done today affects the future. (NCTI Curricula Manual 1996, 2007)

For the Parent, the NCTI goal was:

- To understand one's needs as a parent.
- To understand the process of changing negative behavior in children and motivating positive behavior.
- To develop a plan to be a more effective parent.
- To discover how children's attitudes affect their behavior. ((NCTI Curricula Manual 1996, 2007)

The CUTS program in conjunction with the NCTI cognitive curriculum had significant impact in reducing truancy in Maricopa County. School administrators agreed it was one of the most effective programs available.

CUTS Program Comments from School Administrators:

- Absences down from 2,500 last year to 1,500 this year
- 97% of students stopped ditching school after being in the program once
- Attendance rate increased from 92% to 97%
- 4-year graduation rate increased by 14%

SUMMARY

Truancy within Maricopa County was reduced by the use of an integrated approach to truancy. The parent, child, school, community provider and the court worked as a team to confront the issue of truancy. All assisted in the development of a solution.

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**NATIONAL CURRICULUM TRAINING INSTITUTE (NCTI)
LONGITUDINAL JUVENILE RECIDIVISM STUDY 2003/2004 TO 2006/2007
THE EFFECT OF COGNITIVE INTERVENTION**

Hellen J. Carter, PhD, Jane L. Ball, MS, Alison Vines
August 2009

ABSTRACT

The National Curriculum and Training Institute (NCTI) has delivered cognitive based programs to court agencies for over twenty-five years. NCTI has provided service to the Maricopa County Juvenile Probation Department since 1992 and provided cognitive based treatment programs to over 70,000 youth. During 2003 and 2004 10,148 juvenile offenders from Maricopa County participated in cognitive intervention programs under the direction of the National Curriculum and Training Institute (NCTI) and the Maricopa County Juvenile Court. The juvenile offenders were from medium low to high risk on the risk assessment scale utilized by Maricopa County Juvenile Probation. The medium and high risk offenders were sorted from the grouping of the youth who were considered diversion and those of higher risk and were on Probation. Data was collected at one and three years post NCTI participation to determine if any of the youth had been involved in additional delinquent activity.

INTRODUCTION

The research of Martinson (1974) indicated, "With few and isolated exceptions, the rehabilitative efforts that have been reported occurring in probation have not had an appreciable effect on recidivism." The "Nothing Works Doctrine" of Martinson led to a significant backlash against rehabilitation within the criminal justice system resulting in a significant effect on those agencies responsible for the rehabilitation of offenders. Due to the seminal report of Martinson concerning the lack of rehabilitation in the criminal justice system's failure to provide positive results and stop offenders from acting out against their community, legislatures around the United States traded incarceration for rehabilitation. Probation was given little credence and incarceration was embraced.

The concept of incarceration in lieu of rehabilitation and proactive probation was replaced with the building of brick walls to hold law violators as a means to stop the criminal behavior. Little thought was given to the impact on a community when offenders who had not received rehabilitation services were released to an unsuspecting community. In juvenile courts the concept of rehabilitation remained, but was ultimately replaced with youthful incarceration and early remand to adult court by the beginning of the 1990s. By the late 1990s more youth were remanded to adult court than in preceding years.

"Can intervention programs reduce recidivism rates among delinquents?" This question was reviewed in the research conducted by Lipsey (2002) and associates in their Meta Analysis of 200 programs used by criminal justice agencies in the United States. Research (Lipsey, Wilson, Cothorn, 2002) review of the statistical findings of 200 studies nationwide found that the average intervention effect was positive, statistically significant, and equivalent to a recidivism reduction of about 6 percentage points from a 50-percent baseline, but variation in effects across studies was considerable. The analysis of the 200 programs found that some of the interventions worked but others failed and in fact, promoted offender recidivism.

METHODOLOGY

A research model using a comparative quantitative method was used in determining outcome measures relating to recidivism among two groups of juvenile offenders who ranked in the medium to high risk categories in calendar year 2003 and 2004.

The youth who participated in the cognitive-based classes conducted by NCTI were referred by the Maricopa County Juvenile Court and the Maricopa County Juvenile Probation Department. Referral was based on the youth qualifying for diversion, or for those youth on probation who received a delinquent charge and/or a technical violation. The NCTI cognitive-based classes were used in lieu of incarceration or return to court for those youth who successfully completed the cognitive-based classes and remained referral free for the duration of their juvenile probation term. The goal of the Maricopa County Probation Department was to enhance intrinsic change in the juvenile offender and assist the offender to remain referral free and develop a pro-social lifestyle using the cognitive-based classes of NCTI.

The curriculum developed by NCTI is based on the *Building Blocks for Behavioral Change* that includes the concepts of:

1. The development of an individualized understanding of the relationship of values, attitudes and behaviors as they relate to the decision making process.
2. Use of a cognitive based curriculum that directs the learning process and ensures consistency of information and delivery.
3. Employment of an interactive learning process to ensure each individuals learning style is addressed.
4. Utilization of the Real Colors[®] Personality Instrument to enhance communication and understanding of the offender's temperament and learning style.
5. Use of asking open ended questions of the participants to allow the offender to instill his/her own thoughts of change.
6. Establishment of a supportive environment based on trust that allows for trial and error.
7. Creation of opportunities to practice newly acquired skills.

The *Building Blocks for Behavioral Change* of NCTI meets the specifics as outlined by the 8 Principles of Intervention and Change promoted by the National Institute of Corrections.

Juveniles referred by the Maricopa County Juvenile Court were required to attend the NCTI cognitive classes or face court action. For 2003, a total of 4,853 juveniles completed the cognitive classes. In 2004, a total of 4,552 juveniles successfully completed the cognitive classes. The groups who were placed in the NCTI cognitive classes consisted of both first time offenders and repeat offenders.

The juveniles were placed in two groups according to referral history. The first group or Group A was the delinquent youth who had no history with the court and as such were permitted to participate in Diversion. This group totaled 2,758 in FY 2003 and 2,320 in FY 2004. This was a total of 5,078 youth for both years (2003 and 2004).

Group B consisted of the delinquent youth who had a history with the juvenile court. The juvenile had been in either diversion or previously placed on probation. If the juvenile was placed on probation the NCTI program was used as a sanction intervention at the time of disposition. If the juvenile was on probation the NCTI program was used as a consequence sanction in lieu of a formal return to court.

Group B totaled 2,095 participants in 2003 and 2,232 participants in 2004. The group totaled 5,070 for both years (2003 and 2004).

The juveniles from all four groups participated in a 16 hour interactive cognitive class facilitated by NCTI certified facilitators. All of the NCTI certified facilitators had college degrees,

including bachelors, masters and PhDs, and had at a minimum two (2) years experience working with delinquent youth. The NCTI cognitive classes were conducted on consecutive Saturdays to ensure the youth did not miss school or other weekday activities.

OUTCOME; RESULTS

One and two years post participation, the juveniles were processed through the “Juvenile On Line Tracking System” (JOLTS) to determine if the juvenile had been involved in any delinquent activity that resulted in a new referral of a criminal offense. The NCTI cognitive-based program yielded significant positive results in the area of recidivism.

2003 EVALUATION RESULTS

In 2003 5,078 juveniles were assigned to NCTI’s cognitive classes. The population was divided into those who participated in a diversion process and those who participated in the program due to being on probation and the NCTI program was used as a consequence.

Group A which had been processed through the NCTI cognitive program in 2003 were evaluated in 2006 and found that within one year of their completing the course 500 youth out of 2,758 had received a new criminal charge and found themselves processed out of diversion and before the court in a formal manner. Of the group who had no prior knowledge of the system had a recidivism rate of 18% of the youth who were diverted from the court.

Group B which had been processed through the NCTI cognitive program in 2003 were evaluated in 2006 and found that within one year of completing the course, 758 of the 2,095 youth had received a new criminal charge and found themselves in violation of their probation. Of the group who had prior court involvement and was on probation, 36% of the population of youth was involved in a new crime. However, 64% of the youth in the Group B had no new referral to juvenile court and as such processed out of the criminal justice system successfully.

2004 EVALUATION RESULTS

In 2004, 5,070 juveniles were assigned to the NCTI Program. The population was divided into those who participated in a diversion process and those who participated in the program due to being on probation and the NCTI program was used as a consequence.

Group A which had been processed by way of the NCTI cognitive program were evaluated in 2004 were evaluated in 2007 and found that within one year of their completing the course 369 youth out of 2,320 had received a new criminal charge and found themselves in violation of their probation. Of the group who had no prior knowledge of the system had a recidivism rate of 16% of the youth who were diverted from the court.

Group B which had been processed by way of the NCTI cognitive program in 2004 were evaluated in 2007 and found that within one year of completing the course, 767 of the 2,232 youth had received a new criminal charge and found themselves in violation of their probation. Of the group who had prior court involvement and was on probation, 34% of the population of youth was involved in a new crime. However, 66% of the youth in the Group B had no new referral to juvenile court and as such processed out of the criminal justice system.

LIMITATIONS OF STUDY

NCTI was unable to interview the participants who took part in the NCTI cognitive program post participation. Follow up interviews would allow for discussion with the participant as to what worked most effectively in the program regarding change. While ethnicity was evaluated

as to participation in the program, demographic information of each participant was not tracked to determine what effect socio-economic conditions may have affected the outcome for each participant.

DISCUSSION

In reviewing the recidivism rates of court ordered delinquent youth (Group B1, B2) referred to the NCTI cognitive-based classes by Maricopa County Juvenile Probation in 2003, 64% of the youth who participated in the NCTI programs did not re-offend within a one year period of program completion and compliance. For 2004, the rate of reduced recidivism was enhanced to 66% of the delinquently adjudicated youth. Data was pulled from the data banks and processed for repeat offenses in 2006-2007.

For those juveniles involved in the NCTI cognitive based classes and assessed after reaching 18 years of age, 998 of the 10,148 participants received a referral to the adult system post NCTI participation for a rate of 9% recidivism. A total of 91% of the juvenile offenders who participated in the NCTI cognitive based classes did not return to court or receive a new offense three years post participation. This is a significant number.

The national study of Lipsey, et al (2002) produced a 40% reduced recidivism rate based upon the Meta analysis of 200 programs. The NCTI cognitive-based classes produced a more significant recidivism reduction rate than the programs reviewed in the study by Lipsey, et al (2002). The NCTI programs promoted a 64% and 66% reduced recidivism rate of probationary offender.

If 40% is considered significant by Lipsey, et al (2002), the achieved rates of the NCTI program are extremely significant in reducing recidivism among the offender population using a cognitive model. NCTI had a 64% and 66% enhancement in recidivism reduction than those programs reviewed by Lipsey, et al (2002) thus indicating the efficacy of the NCTI program with a large, diverse group of offenders.

In reviewing those offenders reviewed by the adult system, 91% did not return to the system which is even more significant. While Group A1, A2 and Group B1 and B2 were processed as an aggregate in the adult review of recidivism, the rating remained high for non-recidivism.

In this meta-analysis of Lipsey (2002), the types of treatment that were the most effective for juvenile delinquents were those that were cognitive based and were able to reduce recidivism by about 40%, a significant decrease per the study.

NCTI programs are cognitive based, criminogenic specific programs that target delinquent and criminal offenders. Each program is dosage specific and delivered in segments from 8 to 240 hours depending on the program and need of the individual.

The NCTI classes are delivered in a group process format, which research indicates is the best mode of delivery for juvenile and adult populations involved in the criminal justice setting. The group dynamics allow for discussion and dialogue between facilitator and offenders, as well as, learning from each other. The NCTI cognitive based classes meet the eight NIC Principles of Effective Interventions.

The concepts of Martinson (1974) have been shown to be skewed, but there is a long way for criminal justice departments to go to develop appropriate outcome research to provide the community information as to what works and how well it is working within their community. Research is vital to provide information to the community and particularly the legislature to illustrate that there are programs that do work and offenders who do make pro-social changes.

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**CHANGING DELINQUENT BEHAVIOR: A COGNITIVE EDUCATION
PROGRAM REVIEW OF THE DATA
A THREE YEAR LONGITUNIDAL STUDY OF JUVENILES
IN THE ADULT COURT SYSTEM 2006 - 2007**

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ABSTRACT

In 2003 and 2004, 10,148 juvenile offenders referred to Maricopa County Juvenile Court on delinquent charges participated in the National Curriculum and Training Institute's Crossroads® cognitive curriculum while pending the diversion process or on probation at the time of the educational activity. A comparative quantitative method was used in determining outcome measures relating to recidivism among the two groups of juvenile offenders based on a longitudinal evaluation based on their having reached the age of majority (18 years of age), and successfully completing the NCTI Cognitive curriculum. Group A for both 2003 and 2004 consisted of youth assigned to the Maricopa County Probation Department Diversion program and Group B for both 2003 and 2004 consisted of youth assigned to the Maricopa County Probation Department Probation Supervision.

In 2006 and 2007 the data of the juvenile offenders was separated into those youth who had reached the age of 17.5 years or older. The identifiers of the juveniles of both Group A and Group B who participated in the NCTI Crossroads cognitive curriculum were reviewed through the "Juvenile on Line Tracking System" (JOLTS) to determine if the juvenile had been involved in any delinquent activity post participation that resulted in remand to the adult court system and the Maricopa County Adult Tracking System to determine if any of the juveniles in either Group A or Group B had been arrested or convicted within the state.

Of 10,148 juvenile offenders who had reached their 18th birthday, 998 offenders or 9% of the population reviewed had been referred as adult offenders after participation in the NCTI Crossroads cognitive curriculum within the juvenile court. However, 9,150 youth or 91% rate of the juvenile offenders who participated in the NCTI Crossroads curriculum in 2003 and 2004 as an aggregate had not reoffended and were not listed as offenders in the adult court system. Research indicates cognitive education is effective in changing the thinking of offenders and the study appears to validate the past research.

INTRODUCTION

Nothing Works: Putting History in Perspective

Historically, the criminal justice community was developed and implemented to act as a barrier between those who elect to follow the rules (laws) of society and those who elect not to follow the rules (laws) of society. For those who fail to follow the rules or norms of society a separate classification of citizen was developed. This separate classification set the law breaking individual apart from the law abiding members of the community. The law breaking individual has been given the name "offender" for the adult population and "delinquent" for the juvenile population. Labeling of the law violator allowed the criminal justice community to monitor the individual and hold the individual accountable for behaviors that violated the norm.

The criminal justice community focuses on multiple activities and has a diverse role in attempting to assure the offender is brought to justice and ultimately receives a consequence for the

negative activity directed against the state or the law abiding members of the community. In most situations the offenders sanction is referred to as a “punishment”. There are thousands of laws on the books developed by city, county, state and Federal authorities directing individuals as to appropriate law abiding behaviors and setting consequences or punishments for criminal or delinquent behaviors.

Following the nationally prominent study known as the “Martinson” study or “What Works Study” (1975), communities as a whole demanded strict penalties for both criminal and delinquent offenses. The study indicated there was nothing that worked in bringing about pro-social offender or delinquent change and as such the only alternative was to have longer jail or prison sentences for those who violated the law. The study was the work of three researchers and completed in 1970 but not published until 1975. The study was developed by Dr’s. Lipton, Martinson and Wilks (1975). While Martinson has been the name most associated with the study, the fact is, he became involved in the research after the other two were well into the development of the data with the primary research agent being Dr. D. S. Lipton followed by Dr. J. Wilks. The study was published in 1975 as *The Effectiveness of Correctional Treatment: A Survey of Treatment Valuation Studies* by Praeger Press.

The 1975 “Nothing Works Doctrine” of Martinson led to a significant backlash against rehabilitation within the criminal justice system. There was significant negative effect on those agencies responsible for the rehabilitation of both adult and juvenile offenders and put many of them out of business. The idea that nothing worked in rehabilitating offenders appealed to both the Conservative Party and Liberal Party (Cullen and Gendreau 1989). Nothing works to bring about rehabilitative change gained prominence and as a result, punitive measures became the norm. Laws enacted during the 1980’s and early 1990’s provided enhanced sanctions for offenders and delinquents as to more punitive consequences for unlawful activities. In some states parole was eliminated in lieu of serving a set period of incarceration followed by a shorter community corrections period of supervision. Prison or lock up was considered the most viable form of making offenders change their negative behavior.

Legislatures in a number of jurisdictions had little confidence in the judicial system or probation department of the criminal justice system and limited confidence in the parole boards across the county. It was believed, based on the alleged research, locking the offender in a secure environment would stop criminal behavior and enhance community safety. Delinquent youth were remanded to adult court for offenses that previously had only included a stay in a state reform school to the age of 18 years of age (21years of age prior to 1979). The Legislature’s and community members believed if the youth was old enough to commit a crime they should be processed as an adult. The community and Legislative members were able to view an adult’s body occupied by a child who still had a child’s underdeveloped brain.

While jurisdictions were busy following the concepts that rehabilitation efforts did not work based on the Lipton,Wilks &Martinson report (1975). Few actually read the entire report or had knowledge as to the history of the publication. It is the history of the study that lends a more open perspective as to how the outcome of the study actually came to occur.

What Martinson wrote: (1974)

“... with few and isolated exceptions, the rehabilitative efforts that have been reported so far have had no appreciable effect on recidivism”. (1974: 25)

Moreover, “our present strategies ... cannot overcome, or even appreciably reduce, the powerful tendencies of offenders to continue in criminal behavior”. (1974: 49)

Martinson (1974) released the study without the final approval of his colleagues, Lipton and Wilks (1975). He was not the primary researcher and had no authority to release the study. While Martinson made the conclusive statement that “nothing works in rehabilitation”, the report

as authored by primary research analyst Lipton, was less direct and left open the ability to continue to review the data of programs that did appear to be having success with offender and delinquent populations. The published article of the three researchers presented a far more guarded conclusion, but left the door open for further rehabilitative optimism. Regardless of the research outcome as directed by Lipton and Wilks, Martinson hung on to his evaluation of the study that indicated nothing worked in rehabilitation. The community bought Martinson's ideas.

The professional research community at the time the document was released indicated the 1975 article was very well written and well argued. However, it can be shown to have had a number of flaws, principally in providing insufficient qualification for the conclusions reached. The study failed to separate those programs, regarded as failures by Martinson, which were simply underfunded and found to not have the ability to provide the services to the offender the program supposedly reported to have provided.

The research team of Lipton et al (1975) had made the decision to evaluate each program based on its 'success' or 'failure' based on re-arrest and conviction rates and did not consider the participants the programs accepted into the programs. There was no consideration of program claim or the risk and need of the offender or delinquent placed in the program. The study did not test 'program integrity or fidelity, a common tool in determining the worth of a program.

Martinson (1975) developed his conclusions selectively and independently from the broader study, using only the evidence that was unduly pessimistic (Lipton 1998: 3). He failed to acknowledge the information and ideas as posed by Lipton and Wilks. While Martinson came to the team after the research had begun and kept to a dour prospect of offender change, it makes suspect the rationale for his wanting to be part of the research team and what he hoped to accomplish from the very beginning.

The truly ironic issue of the Martinson information is the fact it was released via the 1974 study and recanted by Martinson in 1979. Martinson wrote in the *Hofstra Law Review* (1979) that the research presented in *The Effectiveness of Correctional Treatment: A Survey of Treatment Valuation Studies* (1975, Lipton et al) was flawed and there was a variety of rehabilitative models and programs that had proven effective with offenders.

Martinson (1979) wrote:

"... some treatment programs do have an appreciable effect on recidivism". (p.244) and, further, "[s]uch startling results are found again and again in our study, for treatment programs as diverse as individual psychotherapy, group counseling, intensive supervision, and what we have called individual/help (aid, advice, counseling)." (p. 255)

Unfortunately, the decision makers of the criminal justice community were not listening to Martinson as he recanted, the same way they failed to listen to either Lipton or Wilks when they attempted to report the actual data from the research. Those who had bought into Martinson's ideology without reviewing the data remained sure that nothing worked and the only option was to build more secure settings for both adult and juvenile offenders. Because of the ideology of Martinson and what appeared to fit with the climate of the time, little was done to right the misconceptions as set in motion by Martinson in 1975. A large number of community justice agencies and the general public continued to promote prisons and lock up facilities over rehabilitation.

The end of Martinson's life holds a tragic twist of events. Martinson felt a great deal of responsibility for the effect his "Nothing Works Doctrine" had on both offenders and professionals within the criminal justice system. The frustration of not being able to rectify this error, many believe, caused him to take his own life in 1982.

Post Martinson

At the same time as Martinson (1975) was announcing that very few things had any effect on recidivism, Palmer (1975) was reanalysing the same data and finding that more things worked than the original analysis showed (this position was also supported by Thornton's (1987) reanalysis of a selection of studies used by Lipton and co-workers in 1975). Similarly, Gendreau and Ross (1979) and Ross and Gendreau (1980) were reporting on research that documented positive outcomes based on treatment that directly countered the argument that nothing worked to bring about offender change. As previously stated, the most damaging blow to the 'nothing works' position was delivered by Robert Martinson himself when in 1979 he wrote a paper which acknowledged errors in the earlier reviews and reported on a number of new studies which demonstrated that some things did work

From 1973 to 1987 there were five studies covering approximately 200 data sets relating to program efficacy and rehabilitation (Gendreau & Ross, 1979, 1981, 1987; Ross & Gendreau, 1980; Ross & Fabiano, 1985). Cullen and Gendreau (1992), in their article "The Effectiveness of Correctional Rehabilitation," noted that a substantial body of literature not only supports the notion that treatment works for a variety of offenders, but, moreover, "it would be reasonable to hypothesize that a set of underlying principles can be taken from the literature which are predicative of successful programs" (p. 235).

Fogg (1992) observed that when Ross and Gendreau were studying effective treatment programs it was reported that: Nearly every notable program shared one common characteristic: some technique used in the program had an impact on the offender's thinking. Effective programs not only targeted the offender's environment, behavioral responses and skill development, they also sought to increase the offender's reasoning skills, problem solving abilities and expand the offender's empathy toward others, (p. 24)

Support for this conclusion was taken from outcome data of two statistically sophisticated research meta-analyses conducted by Garrett (1985) and Izzo and Ross (1987). Cullen and Gendreau (1992) detailed that effective programs tend to be characterized by specific theories such as "social learning; cognitive models; skills training; differential association and behavioral-systems family therapy" (p. 236), which in turn were linked to specific intervention strategies. The research of Cullen et al (1992) indicated "for an intervention program to be effective, it is necessary for the correctional counselor/probation officer to promote, as frequently as possible, the acquisition of pro-social attitudes and behavior on the part of the offender, to problem solve those behaviors that will aid and reward the offender for non criminal pursuits, and to utilize community resources that provide services suitable and relevant to the offenders needs". (Cullen & Gendreau, 1992, p. 236).

The report authored by Cullen et al (1992) did not look on offenders as having little or no responsibility for their actions. The offender had it made very clear that the program services provided had responsibilities the offender must meet and accountability requirements for the offender to abide by and agree to during the treatment programming.

Interventions: What the Research Indicates Works

Probation is an integral part of the criminal justice system. The goal of probation is its responsibility to adopt correctional interventions that lead to and/or promote offender change. As its primary goal, probation has a specific outcome which is the modification or change of behavior through a structured program of community supervision in lieu of incarceration. The effectiveness of a Probation Department is measured by the number of offenders and/or delinquents who successfully complete their supervision and are mainstreamed back into society as functioning, productive members of that society. Constructive and pro-social change in the offender is an observable indication that the system is working effectively. The ultimate outcome of probation is the enhancement of community safety by offender pro-social change and community behavior.

The research literature indicates many offenders fail to "acquire critical reasoning skills" (Ross et al., 1988, p. 45). While they may be able to rationalize and make excuses for their behavior, their reasoning process is flawed. Because they have developed set patterns of thinking errors that tend to support their belief in criminal behavior, they can justify their conduct. Edward Humes (1996), wrote about the juvenile justice system, provides a startling illustration of this type of thinking:

When I was growing up, I learned how to take another person's car without a key, how to drive it and sell it, or just leave it somewhere. I learned how to sit down low and look out the windows for the enemy. To see them before they saw me. And, finally, when I was growing up, I learned how to load bullets into a gun. I learned how to carry it and aim it. And I learned how to shoot the enemy, to be there for my homeboys, no matter what. These are the things I learned when I was growing up. (pp.16—17)

The research also indicates a large majority of offenders lack interpersonal problem-solving skills and manifest egocentricity. The offender is more concerned with his/her situation than that of the victim or their own family. Ross et al (1988) by way of the research indicated offenders "evidence shortcomings in any or all of the following cognitive functions:

- The ability to recognize the potential for problems when people interact;
- The ability to conceptualize the step-by-step means needed to reach their goals;
- The ability to see the cause-and-effect relationship between their action and other people's behavior" p. 45).

Ross et al (1988) indicated, when an offender's behavior and attitude is characterized by impulsiveness, a sense of powerlessness, conceptual rigidity, lack of interpersonal problem-solving skills, egocentricity, and low critical reasoning ability, you can reasonably assume that to some degree the offender is cognitively impaired.

Ross et al stated (1988)

"Advice, warnings or punishments often seem to leave little impact on them because they fail to reflect back on their behavior and its effects" (p. 45).

When an offender is cognitively impaired, they do not recognize the possibility that their behavior, attitudes, and thinking are linked significantly to and contribute to the problems they are experiencing. Ross et al (1988) related the cause of the offenders issues are outside of them and the ability to deal with the negativity of the situation is always someone else's fault. While Ross et al (1988) indicated it cannot be stated with full certainty that cognitive deficits are a cause of crime; there is ample evidence to indicate that individuals who are cognitively impaired are more susceptible to developing and maintaining criminal lifestyles. It is as if their cognitive thinking style is short circuited and they do not have a capacity to put forth cause and effect for their actions. Who would want to spend their life in prison? Only an individual with cognitive impairment in their thinking system.

Gendreau, Cullen, and Bontà (1994), as stated in Fitzsimons (1994), listed seven program strategies that lead to significant reductions in recidivism in the supervision of offenders. One of the principal program components was cognitive social learning strategies that 1) employ modeling, 2) cognitive re-structuring, and 3) explicit reinforcement of and 4) alternatives to antisocial styles of 5) thinking, 6) feeling, and 7) acting (Fitzsimons, 1994).

From review of the education and treatment programs available to offenders and delinquents in the 1990's, cognitive restructuring or cognitive education based on the work of Albert Ellis appeared to have the ability to effectuate offender pro-social change. In following up on the research of Gendreau et al (1994), Chavaria (1997) stated "Cognitive skills training/education as used in the criminal justice community or correctional setting is not designed to effect basic personality change; rather, it is an approach which seeks to equip offenders with pro-social thinking and behavioral skills that will allow them to avoid further criminal involvement" (p. 58). Enhancing cognitive thinking skills allows the offender/delinquent to remain in their

community but have a clearer outlook as to how to avoid situations that could result in illegal activity.

The research as indicated by Gendreau et al (1994) and Chavaria (1997) pointed out some very subtle facts concerning offender change. Both indicated it was important to understand most criminal behavior was not due to underlying psychopathology. Even those offenders with an active Axis I diagnosis, when treated with medication, continued to have cognitive deficits and no appreciation of how their behavior caused the crime to occur. There is no need for in-depth therapy of offenders for whom behavioral issues are the norm. It is integral, from the onset, that policy makers and probation personnel understand that a principal aspect of the cognitive skills protocol is the proposition that antisocial behavior is not a reflection of underlying mental illness. Instead, a basic assumption is that most offenders tend to be anti-social and lack the pro-social skills to effect a pro-social adjustment. The cognitive skills paradigm as reported in multiple research studies stresses education, not therapy. The use of therapy can be counterproductive to pro-social offender change due to the lack of insight and change in thinking errors.

Yochelson and Samenow (1996) report that thinking errors are the main issue of offender acting out. They described in their book *The Criminal Personality* (1976) while also drawing on the scholarly work and research insights of Piaget and Edward de Bono, *Cognition*, as a field of study, "is the study of the knowledge we possess, the organization of this knowledge, and the processes we have available to for using this information in the everyday activities of attention, learning, memory, comprehension and problem solving" (Small, 1990, p. 1).

Small (1990) relates, cognition is an approach which proposes that goal-directed behavior is a predicate of that process. Inherent to this approach is the notion that "humans process environmental information in a series of stages between the occurrence of the stimulus and the production of a response" (Small, 1990, p.8). As a result, when working with offenders, an important hypothesis of the cognitive model is that thinking determines behavior. Changing thinking, therefore, is a precursor to changing behavior. The change from unknown to known is understanding, and the mechanism that conveys change is the thought processes. The ability to think is a skill and the process involved can be taught much like college students can be taught to critically think through a theory that is outside their realm of understanding and be guided to a knowledge base of insight.

Small (1990) relates, thinking is that degree of time between experiencing a situation and knowing what to do about it. Important to teaching offenders cognitive skills techniques is recognizing that there is something practical that offenders can do to change the course of their life.

According to the University of Kansas Institute for Research in Learning Disabilities (1988), in cognitive education programming, offenders are facilitated to the belief that they have the ability to:

- recognize their own patterns of thinking, feeling, and perception;
- recognize how these patterns result in and support their dysfunctional/criminal behavior;
- make the personal decision to change their lives by changing these patterns; and
- follow the decision to change with a practical program of cognitive skills self-change.

The use of cognitive education is not restricted to probation populations. During a symposium given at the Federal Probation and Pretrial Services Academy in 1994, Professor Don Andrews of Carlton University presented research findings which indicated that when offenders are engaged in correctional interventions that include drug and alcohol treatment, employment assistance, and a structured program of cognitive skills building, recidivism is reduced by as much as 29 percent.

National Curriculum and Training Institute (NCTI): Developing the Curricula

During the late 1970's leading into the mid 1980s, The National Curriculum and Training Institute® (NCTI) discovered delinquent youth and offenders in the adult criminal justice venue

responded to certain modalities of intervention better than others to address the issues of criminal and delinquent behavior. NCTI found the use of cognitive group interventions to have a higher rate of success upon both adult and juvenile population of offenders than any of the other methods of psychological intervention.

In early work with offenders, NCTI began to use principles of temperament and behavior as a way to assist offenders in communicating with each other as well as gaining knowledge of themselves. Through the research of the work of Jung, Myers and Briggs and David Kiersey, and the early research of Skinner, Bandura and Matza, NCTI found significance in the way offenders related to cognitive interventions based on their temperament. NCTI found that offenders could come to a cognitive understanding of their behavior based on temperament and how it affected their actions and the actions of others. Through this understanding, the offenders were able to develop skills to modify the behavior to create the intrinsic change toward pro-social behavior. In keeping to the work of Lipsey, Gendreau and others during the late 1980s and 1990s, NCTI developed a group cognitive process that allowed both juvenile and adult offenders to explore their attitudes, values and behaviors. By doing so, the offender could understand the cognitive dissonance between actual behavior and their values which in turn caused an exploration of their belief and behavior system which in turn led to an intrinsic change in attitude.

The research presented in this study is based on the NCTI Crossroads curriculum and those youth who participated in the NCTI programs as offered in 2003 and 2004 due to their involvement with the Maricopa County Juvenile Court.

METHODOLOGY

An empirical research model using a comparative quantitative method was used in determining outcome measures relating to recidivism among two groups of juvenile offenders who rated in the diversion and probation categories during the calendar years of 2003 and 2004.

The youth who participated in the cognitive-based classes conducted by NCTI were referred by the Maricopa County Juvenile Court and the Maricopa County Juvenile Probation Department. Referral was based on the youth qualifying for diversion, or for those youth on probation who received a delinquent charge and/or a technical violation. The NCTI cognitive-based classes were used in lieu of incarceration or return to court for those youth who successfully completed the cognitive-based classes and remained referral free for the duration of their juvenile probation term. The goal of the Maricopa County Probation Department was to enhance intrinsic change in the juvenile offender and assist the offender to remain referral free and develop a pro-social lifestyle using the cognitive-based classes of NCTI.

The curricula developed by NCTI are based on the *Building Blocks for Behavioral Change* that includes the constructs of:

1. The development of an individualized understanding of the relationship of values, attitudes and behaviors as they relate to the decision making process.
2. Use of a cognitive based curriculum that directs the learning process and ensures consistency of information and delivery.
3. Employment of an interactive learning process to ensure each individuals learning style is addressed.
4. Utilization of Real Colors instrument to enhance communication and understanding of the offender's temperament and learning style.
5. Use of asking open ended questions of the participants to allow the offender to instill his/her own thoughts of change
6. Establishment of a supportive environment based on trust that allows for trial and error.
7. Creation of opportunities to practice newly acquired skills

The *Building Blocks for Behavioral Change* aligns with the eight Principles of Effective Interventions promoted by the National Institute of Corrections.

Juveniles referred by the Maricopa County Juvenile Court were required to attend the NCTI cognitive classes or return to court. For 2003, a total of 4,853 juveniles completed the cognitive classes. In 2004, a total of 4,552 juveniles successfully completed the cognitive classes. The groups who were placed in the NCTI cognitive classes consisted of both first time offenders and repeat offenders.

The Group A1 (2003) and A2 (2004) consisted of low risk youth not on probation. The group was pending diversion. The Group B1 (2003) and B2 (2004) consisted of higher risk youth who were on probation.

OUTCOME RESULTS

One and two years post participation in the NCTI cognitive based classes yielded significant positive results in the area of recidivism. Criminal record checks were conducted using the National Crime Reporting System and JOLTS, the Maricopa County Juvenile Probation and state probation tracking system.

In 2005 and again in 2006 the juveniles who participated in the NCTI cognitive-based classes were processed through JOLTS and the National Crime Reporting System to determine if the juvenile had been involved in any delinquent activity that resulted in a new referral of a new criminal offense, misdemeanor or felony.

ADULT DATA EVALUATION

2006 and 2007 Data Analysis of Delinquent Recidivism of 2003 and 2004 Aggregate Data

In 2006 and 2007, records of those juveniles who had participated in the 2003 and 2004 juvenile recidivism study of the participants in the Crossroads classes and who had reached 17.5 years of age were reviewed by Maricopa County Adult Probation Department through the state wide Adult Data Base of Offenders.

The two groups of participants from Group A1, 2003 and A2, 2004 which were the low risk diversion offenders and the two groups of participants from Group B1, 2003 and B2, 2004 was sorted to remove any youth who had not reached the age of 17.5 years. Those youth who remained were processed to determine if there were any new offenses in the adult criminal justice system or offenses in the juvenile justice system that would result in their being remanded to adult court for criminal processing.

Of the 10,148 juvenile offenders in the aggregate of Groups A1, A2, B1 and B2, only 998 offenders had been referred as adult offenders three years after participation in the NCTI cognitive curriculum. The positive effect was a 91% rate of non return to the adult court system or a 9% recidivism rate three years' post participation in the NCTI cognitive class. Ninety-one percent (91%) of the participants in Group A1, B1 (2003) and A2 and, B2 (2004) remained free of arrest and conviction as adults.

LIMITATIONS OF STUDY

NCTI had full access to all raw data as presented by the Maricopa County Juvenile Probation Department and the Maricopa County Adult Probation Department but did not have the ability to process any data outside the requested information to both agencies.

The data sets received from the Maricopa County Juvenile Probation Department (MCJPD) was developed by MCJPD based on the request of NCTI. The request was made by NCTI to have data sets on all juvenile clients who had participated in the NCTI cognitive classes during 2003 and

2004. The data sets were refined to include those clients separated by risk issues relating to the juvenile being on probation or diversion only. Based on the data received by MCJPD the raw data was sifted for those individuals who had aged out of the system or who were over the age of 17.5 years of age by end of year 2007. The data was presented to the Maricopa County Adult Probation Department for analysis and processing through the online system to determine any recidivism post 17.5 years of age. NCTI was unable to run finer data set information based on not having access to the information systems of either probation department.

One area NCTI requested but was unable to achieve was to have only those youth in the 2003 and 2004 Group B (probation) to be sorted by those youth who had no other service other than NCTI. This was not accomplished due to computer limitations and as such a portion of the youth may have had other services such as counseling or adjunct service that assisted in their remaining referral free post probation release.

NCTI was unable to interview the participants of Group A1, A2, B1 or B2 who took part in the NCTI Cognitive curriculum post participation. Follow up interviews would allow for discussion with the participant as to what worked most effectively in the program regarding change and to what extent the participant would credit their involvement to their learning while participating in the NCTI cognitive curriculum.

While ethnicity was evaluated as to participation in the program, demographic information of each participant was not tracked to determine what effect socio-economic conditions may have affected the outcome for each participant in the study.

DATA DISCUSSION

For those juveniles involved in the NCTI Cognitive curriculum program and assessed after reaching 18 years of age, 998 or 9% of the 10,148 participants received a referral to the adult system post NCTI participation for a rate of 9% recidivism. However, 9150 youth did not receive a post participation arrest or conviction as an adult or 91% of the juvenile offenders who participated in the NCTI cognitive curriculum did not return to court or receive a new offense three years post participation. This is a significant number.

The national study of Lipsey et al (2002) produced a 40% reduced recidivism rate based upon the Meta analysis of 200 programs. The NCTI programs produced a more significant reduced recidivism rate than the programs reviewed in the study by Lipsey et al (2002). The NCTI cognitive program promoted a 91% efficacy rate of non-offending three years post participation for both low and higher risk delinquent youth. It can be postulated, if 40% is considered significant by Lipsey et al (2002), the achieved rates of the NCTI program are extremely significant in reducing recidivism among the offender population using a cognitive curriculum model.

In reviewing those offenders reviewed by the adult system, 91% did not return to the system which is even more significant. Groups A1, A2 and Group B1 and B2 were processed as an aggregate in the adult review of recidivism post three years participation. Of 10,148 youth that participated in the NCTI curriculum as an aggregate of both probation and diversion to have a limited number of 998 engage in further criminal activity as an adult is significant as far as offender change and community enhancement.

In the meta-analysis of Lipsey (2002), the types of treatment that was the most effective for juvenile delinquents were those that were cognitive based and were able to reduce recidivism by about 40 percent, a significant decrease per the study. In the NCTI (2003-2004) study 91% did not return to known criminal activity as reported in arrest or conviction.

SUMMARY

NCTI programs are cognitive based, criminogenic specific curriculum that target delinquent and criminal offenders. Each program is dosage specific and delivered in segments between 8 and 240 hours depending on the risk and need of the delinquent or offender group. The NCTI programs are delivered in a group process which research indicates is the best mode of delivery for the juvenile and adult population involved in the criminal justice setting. The group dynamics allow for discussion and dialogue of facilitator and offenders as well as learning that occurs from each participant to the next. The NCTI cognitive based curriculum meet the Eight (8) NIC Principles for Effective Intervention as related in the *Building Blocks for Behavioral Change* developed pre-NIC recommendation.

The concepts of Martinson (1974) have been shown to be incorrect but there is a long way for criminal justice departments to go to develop appropriate outcome research to provide the community information as to what works and how well it works within the community. The research is vital to provide information to the community and particularly the legislature to allow awareness that programs exist that do work and offenders do make pro-social changes and graduate back to society.

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