

CORRECTIONAL SCIENCE BULLETIN 2025

**A COMPILATION OF RESEARCH & EVALUATION WORK OF THE
SINGAPORE PRISON SERVICE**



**SINGAPORE
PRISON SERVICE**

FOREWORD

It is with great pleasure that I introduce the inaugural edition of the Correctional Science Bulletin from the Singapore Prison Service (SPS), edited and published by the Psychological & Correctional Rehabilitation Division (PCRD).

This publication represents the collaborative efforts of our SPS staff from PCRD, Community Corrections Command (COMC), and Cluster C. It exemplifies our commitment to evidence-based practices and passion for continual improvement in correctional services. Evolving from our previous Year-In-Review series, this inaugural bulletin showcases research and evaluation studies conducted between 2022 and 2023, highlighting SPS's dedication to excellence in correctional research and practice.

The research studies presented here explore the diverse profiles and needs of our offenders, each with unique characteristics and circumstances. From youths to incarcerated mothers, we had conducted studies to provide us with valuable insights on offender rehabilitation. Our research efforts have also investigated critical areas such as correctional staff wellness and the effectiveness of family interventions, underscoring the importance of various stakeholders in the rehabilitation journey.

Our evaluation studies also generate crucial insights into the effectiveness of current policies, regimes, and rehabilitation programmes. Regime-level studies, such as the examination of compulsory savings in one of our community supervision regimes for long term prisoners (i.e., the Long-Term Imprisonment-Work Release Scheme) assess the relevance of our strategies in facilitating community reintegration. Programme-level evaluations explore our breakthrough in correctional approaches in recent years, including Empatherapy groups facilitated by inmate peer supports, trauma-informed engagement approaches in women's prison, as well as transformational environments in aftercare facilities like the Selarang Halfway House. These studies provide valuable evidence to validate the rehabilitation and reintegration efforts of the SPS. Results from the evaluation studies inform the implementation plans and processes of the various initiatives and regimes.

SPS believes that research is vital in shaping the effectiveness of our correctional practice. We also emphasize the importance of sharing research evidence and communicating through diverse platforms to enhance understanding and foster collaboration in correctional practices with local and international counterparts, as documented in this publication. This approach keeps SPS at the forefront of evidence-informed correctional practices while learning from and contributing to international best practices.

I would like to commend all the authors for their outstanding contributions. The diversity of research presented in this bulletin is truly inspiring and underscores SPS' culture of research and development. I hope it encourages further collaboration with researchers and practitioners, as we strive to develop a correctional system that effectively meets the needs of individuals, communities, and society as a whole.



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RESEARCH STUDIES

This section contains summaries of research projects, detailing the background, methodology, analysis, results, and a discussion of findings.

Understanding the Challenges of Female Youth Recallees

COMPLETED BY: MARILYN LEE & SERENE LOW (CORRECTIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES BRANCH - WOMEN/PCRD)

BACKGROUND: Female offenders present with specific needs and challenges that differ from those of male offenders, affecting their likelihood of desistance. This highlights the need for a greater focus on gender-specific risk and needs. Currently, interventions for female youth offenders do not adequately consider the specific developmental needs associated with their age. Specifically, in Singapore, the developmental needs of female youth offenders on supervision require further understanding to inform provision of Gender-Responsive (GR) interventions. **AIMS:** To investigate unique challenges faced by female youth recallees that hinder successful reintegration into the community. To provide evidence-based recommendations to enhance current programmes, improving the reintegration process for female offenders and reducing recall rates among female youth offenders.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS:

1. What risk factors have contributed to the recall of female youth offenders who were emplaced on Community Based Programme (CBP) or Release on Supervisor (ROS)?
2. What have helped to facilitate the reintegration of female youth offenders during their CBP/ROS?
3. How effective are existing programmes in preparing recallees for their release on supervision?

WHY WE
DID THIS
STUDY

SAMPLE: 12 female youth recallees from Institution A4, comprising 6 recallees from the Drug Rehabilitation Centre (DRC) and 6 recallees from the Reformatory Training Centre (RTC), participated in the study. They were 21 years and below upon their date of recall. Purposive sampling was employed to identify key themes.

METHOD: A qualitative semi-structured study design was employed to capture the diverse narratives and experiences of female youth recallees. Interview questions were designed to explore the challenges participants encountered during their Community-Based Programmes (CBP) or Release on Supervision (ROS) that contributed to their recall. Interviews were conducted via secure video conferencing, with two interviewers assigned to each participant.



WHAT
WE DID

WHAT WE
FOUND

1. The top risk factors that had contributed to their recalls were **Maladaptive coping** (84%), **Parenting styles** (67%), **Lack of consequential thinking** (67%), **Stress from relation with intimate partner** (58%), **Influence from intimate partner** (58%) and **Traumatic experience** (50%). Several of these risk factors were found to be aligned to GR theories where relationships and history of traumatic experience of a female had a significant impact on their offending and desistance journey.
2. The top strength factors that had facilitated female youth recallees' reintegration during ROS or CBP were **Family support** (92%), **Supportive and approachable ROs** (83%), **Self-reflection** (75%), **Supportive friends** (58%), **Adaptive coping** (58%) and **Being able to apply lessons from Psychology-Based Correctional Programmes** (58%).

With a better understanding of the risk factors faced by female youth recallees and the protective factors that they possess, it is important for SPS to align current female offender engagement strategies to their needs:

- 1) As traumatic experience is one of the risk factors that contributed to their recall, it is useful to use trauma-informed practice, by tapping on T-CARE intervention for youths, role modelling 7 habits and including GR application practices for staff.
- 2) Targeting consequential thinking, scaffolding self-reflection and practicing concepts through role-play in rehabilitation modules for female youths.
- 3) Ensuring a differentiated approach in family engagement by having a tiered model to target female youth offenders' different family dynamics (e.g., recallees with conflictual family dynamics will be referred to Family Service Centres).



WHAT IT
MEANS

Coping Strategies Used by Female Offenders During Incarceration and Post-Incarceration

COMPLETED BY: JESSLYN TAN & NUR AIN ALAUDIN (CORRECTIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES BRANCH - WOMEN/PCRD)



WHY WE
DID THIS
STUDY

BACKGROUND: Female offenders have risk/needs differ from male offenders, as evidenced by their unique pathways to criminal behaviour, and their unique needs relating to substance use, mental health, victimization and/or abuse, and relationship issues. This current study aimed to explore the coping strategies in addressing the challenges faced by female offenders during and after incarceration. This could inform SPS's gender-responsive treatment of female offenders.

AIM: To explore the types of coping strategies used by female offenders (desistors and re-offenders) when faced with challenges.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS:

1. What are the coping strategies of the participants when faced with challenges?
2. Are there differences in the narratives between the desistors and re-offenders?
3. What are the differences in the narratives between desistors and re-offenders?



WHAT
WE DID

SAMPLE: 11 desistors, defined as those who had not returned to the correctional system for at least 4 years and 20 re-offenders, defined as those who had prior incarceration and returned to the correctional system.

METHOD: Semi-structured interviews were conducted, audio recorded, and transcribed verbatim. Transcripts were then analysed through open coding and thematic analysis with MAXQDA.



WHAT WE
FOUND

1. Overall, although the coping strategies used by desistors and re-offenders are similar, the manner in which these strategies are used often differ.
2. Desistors demonstrated a greater sense of agency to make intentional choices and exert control over their own lives as compared to re-offenders.
3. From the narratives, it was gleaned that desistors also tended to have stronger, more positive relationships with their social networks as compared to re-offenders.



WHAT IT
MEANS

While the current gender-responsive treatment were in line with our findings, such as improving self-efficacy and family support of female offenders, more could be done to encourage self-reflection and improve self-efficacy through staff's engagement with the female offenders. Quality of family support and social capital available to the female offenders could also be improved during their in-care phase by exploring the use of family conferences or other family initiatives. Overall, it would be beneficial to equip the female offenders with a variety of coping strategies to manage challenges they encounter, tailoring them to the unique needs of the individual.

Proactive Rehabilitation to Improve Intergenerational Maternal and Child Health Equity (PRIME) Study

COMPLETED BY: FANN JIANG, DEVNI WIJAYARATNE & EUAN TAN (CORRECTIONAL RESEARCH BRANCH/PCRD), IN COLLABORATION WITH KK WOMEN'S AND CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL



WHY WE
DID THIS
STUDY

BACKGROUND: Previous research has revealed gender-specific differences between female and male offenders, the importance of addressing the needs of incarcerated women, as well as the prevalent mental health challenges faced by them. Motherhood has also been recognized as a gender-specific factor which supports desistance among women. This study was conducted in collaboration with the KK Women's and Children's Hospital.

AIM: To understand the relationships between the incarcerated mothers' adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) with their children's ACEs as well as other mental health status, with the hope of reducing intergenerational criminality and enhancing the well-being of incarcerated mothers and their children.



WHAT
WE DID

SAMPLE:

74 incarcerated mothers (IMs), 111 children of these IMs, 16 community caregivers of these children, 44 staff and senior management from SPS.

METHOD:

The study adopted a mixed methods approach which involved the use of questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. The questionnaires consisted of questions about mental health status, adverse childhood experiences, level of parenting stress, and social-emotional development.

The interviews for incarcerated women explored topics such as their identity as mothers, the quality of parent-child relationships, the support provided by prison protocols, and their current emotional and mental health needs during imprisonment. For the staff of SPS, the interviews focused on their perspectives on providing trauma-informed care for incarcerated women within the prison as well as identification of gaps observed in current practices and assessment of organizational readiness to implement trauma-informed care within the prison system.

Proactive Rehabilitation to Improve Intergenerational Maternal and Child Health Equity (PRIME) Study – Continued



WHAT WE FOUND

- Incarcerated mothers had higher prevalence rate of ACEs compared to the local general population.
- IMs have higher prevalence rate of traumatic stress symptoms compared to general and incarcerated populations overseas.
- Prevalence rate of ACES in IM's children was similar to the general population overseas.
- There was a significant relationship between IM and their children's trauma levels.
- IMs reported better mental health status than incarcerated population overseas.
- IMs who are closer to their children reported better mental health symptoms (e.g., parenting stress, anxiety)
- IMs reported lower parenting stress compared to the local general population and overseas incarcerated populations.
- IMs closeness with their children mediated the relationship between amount of contact with their children and parenting stress.
- SPS A4 staff are trained in trauma-informed practices but support and supervision can be enhanced.

Given the high rates of ACEs in IMs and their children, this study emphasizes the importance of continuing efforts on training staff on gender-responsive and trauma-informed interventions as trauma-informed correctional care would help to alleviate the intergenerational transmission of ACEs, as well as enhance rehabilitation in incarcerated women with past traumatic experiences. The findings of the study also recommend stronger mental health support for incarcerated mothers (e.g., early screening for common mental health problems, such as depression and anxiety). In addition, it also highlights the need for SPS to facilitate more quality contact time between IMs and their children during visitations, to help them foster stronger bonds with their children during incarceration.



WHAT IT MEANS

The 99th Percentile: Exploring the Personality Profiles of Persistently Disruptive Offenders

COMPLETED BY: CHARMAINE CHEE, CHUA HUI WEN, DAWN ONG, GEORGINA TAY, DION NG & CHLOE MEAD
(PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES BRANCH/PCRD)

BACKGROUND: This study focuses on the topmost percentile amongst offenders deemed to be persistently disruptive and whom frequently engage in aggression that disproportionately disrupts prison operations. These disruptive behaviours can pose a threat to the safety of both staff and inmates as well as puts a strain on thinly stretched prison resources. Identifying the associations between personality trait difficulties, prison maladjustment and persistent prison misconduct can provide insight to key criteria to screen offenders and cater specific regimes to them. Early identification can also minimize negative impact on staff, inmates and the overall climate of the prison and reduce strain of scarce prison resources. Current literature has consistently suggested the higher prevalence of personality disorders and mental health difficulties amongst the forensic population. More specifically, personality disorders, especially antisocial and unstable personality disorders are related to externalizing behaviours, including use of violence and other misconduct (Fountoulakis et al., 2008). Current models (i.e., deprivation model, importation model and situational model) used to explain prison misconduct are only able to partially explain why some inmates are better adjusted and conform better to the prison environment.



WHY WE DID THIS STUDY

AIMS:

1. Clarify if personality trait deficits and maladjustment to the prison environment differentiate the group of offenders deemed to be persistently disruptive in prison, from those who are not. It also aims to identify the specific elevated personality trait deficits that are common amongst offenders who are persistently disruptive.
2. Examine how personality traits of inmates, often overlooked in traditional risk assessments, influence their behaviour within the prison context. This includes examining psychological predispositions and how these inmate traits interact with the unique pressures of prison life.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS:

1. How do the personality profiles of disruptive offenders differ from that of the mainstream, offenders? Which traits are significantly elevated?
2. Compared against the mainstream prison populations, which personality traits identified in the literature review, significantly influence persistently disruptive behaviours?
3. Are there any pathological disorders that may account for the persistently disruptive behaviours? Which disorders do their personality profiles correlate to?
4. How does maladjustment differ between the persistently disruptive offenders and mainstream offenders?

The 99th Percentile: Exploring the Personality Profiles of Persistently Disruptive Offenders - Continued

SAMPLE:

Non-proportional quota sampling, 43 participants, 19 in the misconduct group and 24 in the control group. Misconduct was defined as inmates who were housed separately from mainstream population for causing disruptions to regular prison operations. Committed at least 10 institutional offences and have been highlighted by intel. The control group matched the conduct group across several demographic variables including offence category, age, race and gender.

METHOD:

Quantitative research methods using 2 assessments; 1. Personality Assessment Inventory (PAI) and 2. Measuring Quality of Prison Life (MQPL) Questionnaire, 28 questions (Professionalism and Wellbeing & Development Domains)

Quantitative data was collected from participants through demographic and construct specific questionnaires. Other descriptive and demographical data was retrieved from prison administrative database.



WHAT WE DID



WHAT WE FOUND

- Offenders in the misconduct group scored significantly higher on a probabilistic measure of Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD), compared to SPS's mainstream offenders and international correlational population.
- Offenders in the misconduct group had significantly elevated scores across all personality traits identified in the literature (i.e., Aggression, Antisocial behaviours, Borderline, Paranoia, Stressors, Anxiety), consistent to what was hypothesized.
- In addition to the findings above, offenders in the misconduct group also scored significantly higher on Anxiety-related Disorders, Somatic Complaints, Negative Impression Management, Non-Support, Suicidality, Schizophrenia, Mania, Drug-use, and Depression, although they scored significantly lower on Positive Impression Management.
- Contrary to what was hypothesized, offenders in the misconduct group did not score significantly higher on the MQPL, compared to mainstream offenders.



WHAT IT MEANS

- Personality trait differences have the potential to distinguish between individuals who are persistently disruptive and those who are not. What this means that personalised management plans can be developed, and rehabilitation programs can be customised to the need of offenders.
- ASPD does not differentiate an individual who is persistently disruptive to prison operations from those who conform to prison rules. Instead, BPD is highly correlated and individual traits, such as elevated Anxiety (ANX), Paranoia-Persecutory Thoughts (PAR-P), Aggression (AGG) and Suicidality (SUI), among personality trait disturbances. Intervention strategies should be tailored to address specific borderline traits, including the adoption of a moderated appraisal of self and environment, emotional regulation, self-directedness and interpersonal effectiveness. A relational security or care approach should be adopted to validate the individuals' feelings and experiences and to also maintain the relationship even when they are posing difficult behaviour.
- Traumatic stress stands out as a key factor in the elevated anxiety observed in individuals with disruptive behaviours-potentially from childhood abuse of other adverse experiences (i.e., complex trauma). Its implication for treatment is that there needs to be trauma-informed practices, relational security approaches as well as methods to mitigate the effects of BPD.
- There is significant presence of somatic complaints, amongst persistently disruptive offenders coupled with a high likelihood of BPD diagnosis. This suggest that there needs to be comprehensive psychological assessments in the correctional settling as well as a need to address the potential underlying mental health issues and not just overt disruptive behaviours.

The Prevalence of Family Archetypes in Singapore Adult Male Offending Population

COMPLETED BY: FANN JIANG, DEVNI WIJAYARATNE, SHALENI VITHYA VIJAYAKKUMAR & JOCEYLN CHOO (CORRECTIONAL RESEARCH BRANCH /PCRD)



WHY WE DID THIS STUDY

BACKGROUND: Past research indicated that family structure and family processes both influence re-offending behaviours (Musa et al., 2019), but there has been limited research that investigated the interplay of both factors on recidivism rate. Glaser et al. (1993) proposed a family typology based on a continuum of family functioning that offers a framework to examine these dynamics. Within this typology, Abusive families show evidence of abuse perpetrated by parents residing in the same household as the child. Distressed families are characterized by high familial disruption and poor parenting, giving rise to familial dissatisfaction or poor communication. Lastly, while functional families may also experience family problems, they are generally less serious compared to the other archetypes and do not meet the criteria for either abusive or distressed families. Glaser et al.'s (1993) typology was employed in this study to gain insights into the prevalence rates of our offenders' families and identify their corresponding needs.

AIM: To gain an exploratory understanding of the prevalence and reintegration needs of different types of family archetypes in Singapore's local adult male offending population.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS:

1. What is the prevalence of different family archetypes in our local adult male offending population?
2. What are the reintegration needs associated with the different family archetypes?

SAMPLE:

The sample comprised 505 adult male offenders from 6 sentence types: Long Sentence (n = 103), Short Sentence (n = 25), Long-term Imprisonment (LT)1 (n = 101), LT2 (n = 105), Drug Rehabilitation Centre (DRC) 1&2 (n = 65), and DRC 3&4 (n = 105). These inmates were recruited via convenience sampling from August 2022 to August 2023.

METHOD:

Quantitative data: The questionnaire was designed based on adaptations from extant literature and conducted in a small group setting with about 10 offenders per group. The questionnaire consisted of six domains: Family Structure (self-developed); History of Abuse [adapted from the Partner Abuse Scale – Physical and Non-Physical, Physical and Non-Physical Abuse of Partner Scale, and Parent-Child Conflict Tactics Scale (Straus et al., 1998; Hudson, 1992)]; Child/Personal Protection Orders (self-developed); Family Communication and Satisfaction Scale [(adapted from Family Adaptability and Cohesion Evaluation Scale, Short Form (Olson, 20); Reintegration Needs (self-developed); and Offense History (self-developed).



WHAT WE DID

The Prevalence of Family Archetypes in Singapore Adult Male Offending Population – Continued



WHAT WE FOUND

1. The prevalence rate for the Abusive archetype was 35.5%, the Distressed archetype was 28.4%, and for the Functional archetype, it was 36.1%.
2. Each family archetype reported comparable rates of criminality of about 50% in their family unit.
3. Each family archetype identified a unique set of prominent (i.e., top 3) reintegration needs as follows:
 - **Abusive archetype** placed emphasis on employment assistance needs which included work release opportunities and training skills for employment. They also highlighted the importance of family relations; specifically, seeking more opportunities to interact with their family members while in prison.
 - **Distressed archetype** also emphasized the importance of work release opportunities within employment assistance. Additionally, they expressed the need for post-release befriending services (peer relations) and counselling to talk about their problems (individual counselling).
 - **Functional archetype** focused on employment-related needs, prioritizing training skills for employment and work release opportunities. They were also interested in educational courses for their self-development need.

This study's findings suggest that amongst the local adult male offenders, there was a higher prevalence for Abusive and Functional family archetypes, and that criminality within one's family unit is prevalent irrespective of family classification. Moreover, although all three family archetypes underscored certain reintegration needs as important to them, variations exist in the demand for other reintegration needs. Thus, family work should be tailored to address the specific set of reintegration needs perceived as important by each family archetype.



WHAT IT MEANS

Resolute Correctional Unit (RCU) Perception Survey

COMPLETED BY: ALICIA TAN & CHEN LAN (CORRECTIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES BRANCH - PENAL/PCRD),
IN CONSULTATION WITH PROGRAMME DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION BRANCH/PCRD & RCU



WHY WE
DID THIS
STUDY

BACKGROUND: The Resolute Correctional Unit (RCU) is a new pilot regime which was implemented to support renounced inmates towards gang desistance as well as to encourage desistors to become advocates of change. As the RCU was a new initiative, a survey was administered to gather feedback on inmates' perception towards and experience of the RCU, specifically in five main domains – Purpose, People, Processes, Programmes and Place. The information gathered will go towards the review and adjustment of the RCU.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS:

1. How satisfied are the inmates in the RCU in the five main areas?
2. How helpful is the RCU in motivating inmates to desist from gangs?

SAMPLE: 20 inmates from the RCU

METHOD: Two sets of questionnaires were administered, with each item being rated on a 5-point Likert scale.

To understand participants' level of satisfaction towards the RCU, a 5-point Likert scale with smiley icons was used. The participants circled on the icon that best describes their level of satisfaction for a particular item: 😊 like it a lot; 😃 like it; 😐 neutral about it; 😕 do not like it; and 😞 do not like it a lot.

To understand RCU's perceived helpfulness in inmates' change, a 5-point Likert scale with star icons was used. The more helpful a certain domain of RCU was in the process of facilitating desistance, the more stars the inmates would circle.



WHAT
WE DID



WHAT WE
FOUND

Purpose: It was found that inmates resonated with the Vision, Mission, and Values of the RCU.

People: 90% of participants indicated that they were very satisfied with RCU staff and 80% of participants perceived RCU staff to be the most helpful in facilitating desistance. Volunteers and in-house desistors were perceived to be the next most helpful. The renounce community in the RCU was perceived to be least helpful, with only 50% of participants rating fellow renouncees as helpful in their change.

Processes: 'Communal Time', defined as structured time where former gang members engage in to foster social connections and build trust, received the highest ratings, with 85% of participants being satisfied and 65% perceived it to be helpful in their change. 'Community Day', 'Community Care', and 'Contact Time with CRS' were also well-received. 'Cohort Meetings' received the lowest ratings.

Programmes: 'Religious Counselling' and 'Inspiration Talk' received highest ratings in terms of satisfaction and helpfulness. Next were Labour at Printshop, Rehab-tainment, Trainings, Self-Directed Project Work, and Circles.

Place: Most participants were satisfied with the learning and living environment of the RCU.

The findings of the RCU Perception Survey were shared with the RCU staff to enhance their understanding of inmates' receptiveness to current initiatives. The insights also informed the planning of new initiatives and aided in resource allocation.



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Singapore Prison Service's Mental Wellness Study

COMPLETED BY: CINDY TOH & SEAH YUN HAN (OPERATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY BRANCH /PCRD)



WHY WE DID THIS STUDY

BACKGROUND: Research indicates that correctional officers face significant stressors and are at elevated risk of mental illnesses. This has also been further exacerbated by the prolonged impact of COVID-19 on psychological well-being. This study was conceptualized to proactively understand the current state of psychological well-being among SPS staff to adopt a data-informed approach towards workplace mental health interventions in SPS.

AIM: To identify relevant external and internal factors that contribute to personal and organizational outcomes for SPS staff, which will inform the development of recommendations and interventions tailored to the department and specific divisions, with the aim of enhancing staff mental health and work engagement, as well as reducing staff burnout.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS:

1. What are the predictors for mental health in SPS staff?
2. What are the predictors for burnout in SPS staff?
3. What are the predictors for work engagement in SPS staff?

SAMPLE: 1441 SPS staff (61% of SPS' staff population) participated in this study. The sample comprised 1224 uniformed officers, 207 civilian officers, and 10 contract/temporary staff.

METHOD: Participants were required to complete an online questionnaire once they had provided informed consent to participate in this research study. Participants responded to 11 scales, with 147 questions in total. Regression analyses were conducted while controlling for gender, scheme of service, years of experience, and years in current posting.

WHAT WE FOUND

- Job stress, role conflict, role ambiguity, perceived organisational support, psychological capital, and coping self-efficacy were found to predict staff's mental health.
- Job stress, correctional officer job demands, psychological capital, and coping self-efficacy were found to predict most of the domains of burnout (emotional exhaustion, personal accomplishment, depersonalization).
- Job stress, perceived organisational support, psychological capital, and coping self-efficacy predicted SPS staff's levels of work engagement.

Overall, Job Stress, Psychological Capital and Coping Self-efficacy were the top 3 predictors for most of the personal and organizational outcomes measured. Hence, workplace interventions should focus on these factors to effectively enhance mental health, reduce burnout, and increase work engagement in staff. Key findings and recommendations were shared with SPS leadership and staff through various modalities. Consultations and collaborations with specific divisions took place on a request basis to provide further support and clarity.

Continued longitudinal tracking of well-being indicators will provide valuable insights on the changes in well-being indicator levels over time, monitor the progress of implemented workplace mental health recommendations, and allow for a timely identification of at-risk factors so that appropriate intervention can be facilitated.



WHAT WE DID



WHAT IT MEANS



EVALUATION STUDIES

This section contains summaries of evaluation projects, detailing the background, methodology, analysis, results, and a discussion of findings.

Evaluation of Blended Learning of FRAMES in Drug Rehabilitation Centre (DRC)

COMPLETED BY: TEO CHUAN ANN, EMMELINE CHUA, KEONZ QUEK, & LIM TSE NAN (CORRECTIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES BRANCH - DRUGS/PCRD)

BACKGROUND: FRAMES is an in-house model that was developed to engage unmotivated persons in substance abuse interventions based on the principles of Motivational Interviewing (Miller & Sanchez, 1994). It revolves around the elements of Feedback, Responsibility, Advice, Menu of Options, Empathy and Self-efficacy (FRAMES). A 13-weeks blended-learning training course on FRAMES was developed and conducted between March and August 2022 for Correctional Unit Officers (CUOs) deployed in the Drug Rehabilitation Centre (DRC). The course is made up of eight instructional videos and four face-to-face sessions during which participants received feedback on their FRAMES skills. Summative evaluation was administered to assess the effectiveness of the training, and whether it meets the objectives as well as participants' receptiveness towards it.

AIMS:

1. Assess the effectiveness of blended learning approach in conducting FRAMES training to participants
2. Understand officers' competency level, motivation, and confidence in applying FRAMES after attending the training

EVALUATION QUESTIONS:

1. Do participants find the blended-learning training approach favourable, engaging, and relevant to their work?
2. What are participants' competency level after attending the training?
3. What are participants' levels of confidence and motivation in applying FRAMES with drug inmates after attending training?

WHY WE
DID THIS
STUDY

WHAT WE
FOUND



WHAT
WE DID

SAMPLE: 21 out of 30 participants (70%) responded to the online evaluation form that was administered upon the completion of the training

METHOD: Questions in the evaluation form were developed using Kirkpatrick's four-level model (Kirkpatrick & Kirkpatrick, 2006). Participants' feedback on two aspects of the training were gathered. The first was on their satisfaction towards the blended learning approach. Second was on participants' competency and level of confidence and motivation in using FRAMES.

1. Most participants reported **positive experience**. They said that the training was engaging, and the content covered were relevant to their work and would recommend the training to other colleagues.
2. Most participants appraised themselves as having attained at least **intermediate level of competence** in using FRAMES after they had completed the training. They also reported having acquired the relevant skills, attitudes, and knowledge. For instance, they reported they could identify the purpose of each component in FRAMES.
3. Most participants said that they were more **motivated and confident in applying FRAMES** in their engagement with drug inmates. The mean confidence level is at 3.05 out of 5.00 while that of motivation level is 4.24 out of 5.00.

This study highlights the effectiveness of blended learning as a training approach. By and large, participants were receptive towards the training. They found that FRAMES was useful and relevant to their daily work. To maximize effectiveness, materials for such training should be engaging, bite-sized, easy to understand, and applicable for the participants.



WHAT IT
MEANS

Empatherapy – Building Communities of Support in the Singapore Prison Service

COMPLETED BY: CHUA YI GANG & CHAN SOOK WEI (CORRECTIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES BRANCH - PENAL/PCRD)



WHY WE
DID THIS
STUDY

BACKGROUND: The Empatherapy Programme (ETP) is a ground-up initiative by Institution B1. ETP is a collaborative group process that uses principles from Restorative Practice (RP) to promote and foster the objectives of Accountability and Responsibility, Contrition, Empathy, and Sense of Community and Rapport among inmate communities. The lack of studies on the operationalisation of RP within prisons presented an opportunity to review the effectiveness and implementation processes in an institutionalized setting.

AIM: This evaluation study examined the impact of ETP, in terms of its outcomes, effectiveness, and implementation processes.

EVALUATION QUESTIONS:

1. What is the impact of ETP?
2. How is the implementation of ETP?

SAMPLE: 10 ETP inmate participants, 10 ETP Peer Supporters (inmate facilitators), 4 staff facilitators and B1 CU1 officers

METHOD: Qualitative data was obtained via individual interviews and 3 focus group discussions (FGDs) with inmate participants, inmate facilitators and staff facilitators. The FGDs were audio-recorded, and recordings were transcribed for data analysis using a grounded theory approach. Additionally, a staff survey was disseminated to all B1 CU1 officers to gather their sentiments on the continuity of ETP and whether they would recommend being an ETP staff facilitator.



WHAT
WE DID

Participants who have attended ETP were better able to build positive relationships with other inmates and Correctional Unit Officers.

Participants agreed that ETP has helped them develop better interpersonal skills such as active listening, empathy, and respect for others.

Correctional Unit Officers reflected better inmate behavioural management. ETP participants were relatively more cooperative in disciplinary processes and more likely to resolve their issues before any staff intervention. Incident rates tracked 1 year before and after the implementation of ETP have shown a 55% decrease in the number of informal minor demeans reported and 70% decrease in the number of formal disciplinary reports submitted.

Majority of staff recommended ETP as it facilitates rapport building with inmates, while some cited challenges in continuing to facilitate ETP due to operational constraints.

The decision to use RP in SPS presents a profound shift beyond focusing on inmates' rehabilitation journey to building a restorative culture within the environment. For the positive outcomes of ETP to be sustainable, it requires the leadership and staff to be committed in creating an environment that promotes positive interactions and a sense of meaning and belonging, and to allocate the resources needed to improve the quality of the rehabilitation efforts.



WHAT IT
MEANS

Peer Supporter Academy Evaluation Study

COMPLETED BY: DEEPTI MANIMURUGAN AND ALICIA TAN (CORRECTIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES BRANCH - PENAL/PCRD)



WHY WE
DID THIS
STUDY

BACKGROUND: Peer Supporter Academy (PSA) is a ground-up initiative to equip, empower, and enable inmates to serve as Peer Supporters during their incarceration. The PSA officially expanded its recruitment of inmates beyond Institution B1 in September 2022 and has since conducted eight runs as of December 2023, developing 88 inmate peer supporters.

AIM: To gather feedback from participants on the peer supporter training and assess the outcome and application of the knowledge and skills learnt at PSA.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS:

1. How do PSA participants find the training? What do they like and dislike about the training content/topic?
How effective do they find the trainers to be?
2. How has the training equipped, empowered, and enabled change in their personal lives and how have they applied what they learnt in their roles as peer supporters?

SAMPLE: 59 participants took part in the post-training survey. 29 participants across B1, RCU, A1 attended a Focus Group Discussion (FGD).

METHOD: The evaluation employed a mixed-methods-approach, combining post-training surveys and focus group discussions to holistically capture participants' perspectives. The data collected from these two sources were analysed using descriptive statistics for the Likert scale questions and thematic analysis for the qualitative data.



WHAT
WE DID

WHAT WE
FOUND

- **Training content was beneficial and applicable:** This prevailing theme focus on the perceived benefits and practical applicability of the training content, with a particular spotlight on Restorative Practices.
- **Trainers were inspiring:** Participants valued having both staff and inmate trainers and perceived them to be good role models who demonstrated exemplary teamwork.
- **Participants suggested longer and more in-depth training:** Participants consistently indicated that the existing program, while valuable, left them wanting more extensive exploration and practice.
- **Participants recommended PSA training for everyone:** This theme highlights participants' recognition of the training's relevance beyond the specific role of a peer supporter.
- **Participants observed Intrapersonal growth and Interpersonal development:** This is a central theme, highlighting the transformative potential of the PSA in fostering personal and relational development.
- **Participants noticed benefits of their peer supporter role:** This theme uncovers participants' recognition of the tangible benefits derived from serving as peer supporters.
- **Participants experienced challenges:** Peer supporters faced resistance from inmates and lack of staff support.

Evaluation findings indicate a positive reception of the PSA training, with participants finding the content beneficial and applicable; trainers inspiring. Additionally, the findings highlight transformative changes amongst the peer supporters and their community, emphasizing the broader significance of developing peer supporters in prison.



WHAT IT
MEANS

Evaluation of Trauma-Informed Engagement Tool in Women's Prison

COMPLETED BY: PRIYATHANAA SUNDARAM, MARJORIE TAY & WAN HAZIRAH JAMSARI (PROGRAMME DESIGN AND EVALUATION BRANCH/PCRD)



WHY WE
DID THIS
STUDY

BACKGROUND: Research has highlighted significantly higher adverse childhood experiences among female offenders, contributing to emotion regulation difficulties and challenging behaviours in prison (Konecky & Lynch, 2019). T-CARE is a trauma-informed engagement tool to help offenders manage their stress reactions, contributing to enhanced offender management. A small-scale T-care pilot was implemented in women's prison and evaluation findings of the pilot are shared in this brief.

AIMS:

- To understand the impact of T-CARE on offenders and officers' stress and mental health
- Identify the facilitators and barriers towards implementation of T-CARE in the women's prison.

EVALUATION QUESTIONS:

1. What is the impact of T-CARE on offender and officers' stress and mental health?
2. What factors influence the effective implementation of T-CARE?

SAMPLE:

18 offenders and 4 officers in the women's prison participated in the T-CARE pilot from January to August 2023.

METHOD:

Quantitative Self-reported questionnaires were administered at pre and post timepoints. Offenders' level of depression, anxiety, stress, hopelessness, and distress were measured on the Depression Anxiety Stress Scale 21 (DASS-21), Beck Hopelessness Scale (BHS) and Impact of Event Scale (IES) respectively. Officers' level of job stress, overall level of stress and mental well-being were measured on the Job Stress Scale (JSS), Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) and Mental Health Continuum-Short Form (MHC-SF) respectively.

Qualitative Focus group discussions were conducted with offenders and officers at the end of the pilot.

Analysis Non-parametric tests and reflexive thematic analysis were utilized to analyse the quantitative and qualitative data respectively.



WHAT
WE DID



WHAT WE
FOUND

- There were significant reductions in offenders' sense of depression, stress, and hopelessness. Qualitatively, offenders expressed increased hope, awareness of their stress triggers and ability to manage stressors using T-CARE strategies.
- There were no significant differences in officers' stress and mental health scores. However, officers reported an increased awareness of own triggers and had applied T-CARE strategies.
- Officers perceived an increase in offenders' ability to manage stressors in the institution and had better understanding of and connection with offenders, which contributed to improved offender management.
- Management support, effective delivery of the sessions and safe space provided by the officers contributed to effective implementation of T-CARE. However, time constraints and having to manage difficult inmates added to officers' stress.
- Providing protected time for sessions and increasing both frequency and intensity of sessions were highlighted to enhance the implementation of T-CARE.

The findings indicated that T-CARE helped female offenders identify and manage stress and mental health more effectively, which led to more effective offender management. Implementation of T-CARE could be further enhanced by refining support structures to suit the operational environment and participants' needs such as providing protected time and allowing extended and in-depth sessions.



WHAT IT
MEANS

Evaluation of the Implementation of the Resolute Correctional Unit

COMPLETED BY: SARAH LAVINIA JOSEPH, QUENTIN LEE, LENIS LOH & PRADHEEBA RAVI SARMA (PROGRAMME DESIGN AND EVALUATION BRANCH/PCRD)



WHY WE
DID THIS
STUDY

BACKGROUND: The Resolute Correctional Unit (RCU) is a regime designed to provide a transformational environment that encourages offenders who have renounced from their gangs to change and develop a new identity outside of gang culture. It was launched in January 2022 at Institution B3 and is now relocated to B4.

AIM: An implementation evaluation was conducted over three timepoints to identify facilitators and barriers to the effective operationalization of RCU, and to inform on emerging outcomes from the implementation.

EVALUATION QUESTIONS:

1. What are the implementation drivers, barriers, and outcomes in operationalizing the new RCU transformational environment?
2. How has the regime provided a conducive environment to facilitate change?

SAMPLE:

- Interviews and/or surveys with 40 RCU renouncees.
- Interviews with 8 renouncees who had left RCU voluntarily.
- Focus Group Discussions (FGD) with 4 RCU Officers, 4 Correctional Rehabilitation Specialists (CRS) forward deployed to RCU, and 24 renouncees.

METHOD:

A **mixed-methods approach** was adopted in the evaluation of the RCU regime:

- Quantitative data comprised perception surveys and pre- and post-intervention questionnaires to measure renouncees' experiences and perceived changes in their thinking and behaviour.
- Qualitative data comprised interviews with selected renouncees presently in RCU, those who had left, and FGDs with Officers, CRSes, and renouncees to gather their perspectives on the implementation factors of the RCU regime.



WHAT WE
FOUND

- **Place:** RCU's physical space and communal concepts contributed to positive changes in renouncees' thinking and behaviour.
- **People:** The involvement of many different stakeholders in the daily running of RCU created a supportive environment and allowed renouncees to be meaningfully engaged.
- **Programmes:** The varied programmes and regime activities reinforced gang desistance and facilitated self-development.
- **Implementation:**
 - Challenges with programme sustainability led to renouncees' perceptions of hindered self-development.
 - The inadequate integration of new renouncees led to the disruption of community bonds.
 - Multiple changes made to the status quo during the move from Institution B3 to B4 decreased renouncees' motivation to participate in co-creating their environment.



WHAT
WE DID

The implementation evaluation of RCU was able to identify key drivers for its successful operationalization and highlight barriers that arose especially as RCU scaled up. Tapping on the findings and recommendations from the study, the RCU staff are reviewing the regime to improve how new renouncees are integrated into the community, ensure the sustainability of the many-hands approach and of new programmes, and manage renouncees' expectations during transitions. The staff are also looking to expand the role of renouncees by giving them the opportunity to contribute back at RCU as programme facilitators and advocates of change.



WHAT IT
MEANS

Understanding the Implementation and Impact of Compulsory Savings in the Long-Term Imprisonment (LT2)-Work Release Scheme (WRS) Regime

COMPLETED BY: CHERYL CHER, JORRYN LEE & SITI IDAHYU RAPIE (COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS - HALFWAY HOUSE & HOME DETENTION/COMC)



WHY WE DID THIS STUDY

BACKGROUND: The LT2-Work Release Scheme (LT2-WRS) trial first started at Admiralty Community Supervision Centre (ACSC) in January 2017 as part of MHA's review on community-based programmes for inmates with long-term imprisonment sentences (LT). As part of the trial, compulsory savings was introduced to cultivate good money management habits. By saving a portion of their income, supervisees are encouraged to prioritise on long term goals and it creates an additional consideration that may deter abscondment. The scheme was subsequently implemented at Lloyd Leas Community Supervision Centre (LLCSC) in February 2019 and continued when the Community Corrections Command (COMC) shifted to Selarang Park Community Supervision Centre (SPCSC) in July 2020.

AIM: To evaluate the impact of compulsory savings on the rehabilitation of supervisees serving the LT2-WRS as well as to identify challenges in implementing compulsory savings. The findings of this study will provide insights on whether compulsory savings as a programme requirement is effective for rehabilitation and whether it justified the resources (e.g., manpower) channelled towards the operation of ensuring compulsory savings among supervisees.

EVALUATION QUESTIONS:

1. Does compulsory savings cultivate proper money management habits?
2. Does compulsory savings accumulate savings for supervisees' use upon release?
3. Does compulsory savings deter abscondment?
4. What are the challenges in implementing compulsory savings?



WHAT WE DID

SAMPLE: 138 LT2-WRS supervisees (emplaced in August 2020 and completed in August 2021) who participated in compulsory savings, and 9 staff who were involved in the implementation of compulsory savings were surveyed and interviewed.

METHOD: 138 LT-WRS supervisees' prison savings records were retrieved from Prisons Operations and Rehabilitation System (PORTS) II for analysis. Phone calls and online questionnaires were administered to understand the experiences of supervisees and staff who were involved in the operations of compulsory savings.



WHAT WE FOUND

- 43% of supervisees indicated that compulsory savings helped them pick up the habit of saving.
- Some supervisees cited that it was challenging to meet the minimum amount of monthly savings (i.e., \$200) because they were financially unstable (e.g., no fixed salary, having additional commitments).
- No correlation was found between supervisees' participation in compulsory savings and whether they absconded from or remained in programme, hence compulsory savings did not seem to be effective in deterring abscondment.
- Operational challenges faced in implementing compulsory savings included the additional manhours needed to engage supervisees who did not contribute or who were on long home leave.

Compulsory savings alone did not reduce or deter abscondment. This finding is consistent with existing literature that multiple factors contribute to abscondment.

Additionally, the challenges in maintaining compulsory savings surfaced from this study led to a review of programme conditions for supervisees emplaced under the new Employment Preparation Scheme (EmPS) introduced in 2022 for LT2 inmates. Specifically, the amount and frequency of compulsory savings were adjusted to support supervisees who had difficulties saving and to allay the number of manhours needed to maintain the operations of compulsory savings.



WHAT IT MEANS

Evaluating the Compliance Roles of Correctional Rehabilitation Specialists on the Release-On-Supervision (ROS) Trial

COMPLETED BY: ANGELINE TAY, PARVIN KAUR SANDHU, DAENG NORASHIDA, DOROTHY TAN & GOH RUO TING (CORRECTIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES - REFORMATIVE TRAINING/CLUSTER C)



WHY WE
DID THIS
STUDY

BACKGROUND: Traditionally, Correctional Rehabilitation Specialists (CRSes) would provide counselling intervention to Reformatory Trainees (RTs) during their incare phase, while the Release-on-Supervision (ROS) team and Case Managers (CMs) supervise them after release. To address the complex supervision challenges of RTs, a trial for CRSes to take on compliance tasks of the ROS team in addition to their existing roles in providing interventions was implemented from October 2021 to March 2022.

AIMS:

1. To understand the experiences of CRSes who took on intervention and compliance roles concurrently.
2. To determine the effectiveness of the CRS ROS trial

EVALUATION QUESTIONS:

1. What are the elements to consider when working with youths in community rehabilitation?
2. What are the experiences of RTs and CMs who went through the CRS ROS trial?
3. How does the dual role affect CRSes' wellbeing and work?

SAMPLE: A total of 35 RTs participated in the trial. The participants were divided into three distinct groups based on the type of supervisor(s) assigned to them:

- Group 1: 8 RTs who were supervised by a Rehabilitation Officer (RO) and a Correctional Rehabilitation Specialist (CRS),
- Group 2: 7 RTs who were supervised by a CRS only
- Group 3: 20 RTs who were originally supervised by a RO and a CRS but transited to be supervised by a CRS only.

METHOD: Semi-structured interviews were conducted with a subset of 8 RTs on their experiences of the trial. Qualitative survey was administered to 10 case managers who worked with the three groups of CRS and RO combinations to understand their experiences and perceptions of the trial. Qualitative survey (based on the Maslach Burnout Inventory) and semi-structured interviews were conducted with 4 CRSes on their well-being after the trial and their experiences of the trial.



WHAT
WE DID

- Genuine relationships with supervisors (ROs or CRSes) supported RTs' change.
- Supervision approaches that were flexible, consider the complex needs of RTs, and reinforce change with rewards were helpful.
- With the dual roles, CRSes experienced increased mental load, but were provided with an enhanced lens to look at supervision behaviours of RTs.
- CMs perceived ROs and CRSes to have different expertise, i.e., ROs were firmer while CRSes were more understanding.
- CRSes adjusted to the dual roles over time with a manageable workload.
- Support system for staff was critical in managing RTs in the community.

WHAT WE
FOUND

Despite the challenges faced by CRSes, they were able to perform the dual roles effectively. The CRS ROS trial was a success and CRSes could continue to take on the dual roles. The results from the present study can also help to inform and provide recommendations for an aftercare model for the supervision of young offenders, as well as to inform how staff are trained and developed for ROS work.



WHAT IT
MEANS

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The Impact of the Selarang Halfway House Transformational Environment

COMPLETED BY: CHAN SOOK WEI & ABIGAIL LEE (COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS - MANDATORY AFTERCARE SCHEME/COMC)



WHY WE
DID THIS
STUDY

BACKGROUND: The Selarang Halfway House (SHWH) is a secular residential step-down facility set up to offer a residential programme for ex-offenders to facilitate their rehabilitation and gradual reintegration into the community upon their release from prison. A series of activities and initiatives were introduced at the SHWH in 2022 to foster a sense of community among the residents of the halfway house. This study seeks to investigate whether these initiatives have improved the experiences of the residents and increased their individual agency for change.

EVALUATION QUESTIONS:

1. How helpful was the Transformational Environment (TE) initiatives in building a sense of community among the residents?
2. How helpful was the TE initiatives in increasing residents' agency for change?

SAMPLE & METHODS: To understand residents and staff's perceptions and experiences of the implemented initiatives, a survey was conducted with 57 SHWH and COMC staff as well as 11 SHWH residents. 1 focus group discussion was conducted with 11 SHWH case managers to gain a deeper understanding of their responses.



WHAT
WE DID



WHAT WE
FOUND

1. Encouraged residents to utilize their time more meaningfully in the HWH
 - One of the initiatives, the Living Unit Circles is a monthly resident engagement platform facilitated by Reintegration Mentors and Case Managers. During these circles, staff check in on the residents' well-being, concerns, or issues they require assistance with. This structured engagement also provided residents with opportunities for more meaningful discussions on prosocial topics.
2. Created more opportunities for residents to engage in prosocial socialization
 - Participation in initiatives such as support groups and serving in the Community Service Project (SUNDAC) generated discussions on important aspects of the residents' reintegration and provided a platform for them to share with their experiences of desistance with one another.
3. Increased residents' access to important resources to aid in their reintegration
 - Another initiative was to bring in community partners such as ISCOS and NAMS into the halfway house to share resources directly with the residents. It was found that the increased accessibility to such information equipped residents with the relevant knowledge to address their own reintegration needs, increasing their sense of autonomy.

The concept of a Transformational Environment is not new to SPS but the study of its application to SHWH is the first of its kind. This study yields consistent results that a TE can (a) enhance rehabilitative outcomes, (b) foster quality interactions and prosocial learning among residents and (c) form safe and supportive social networks. The findings suggest that TE initiatives should be continued in SHWH for staff and residents to benefit from working and living in a TE. Other implications also include challenges in implementing these TE initiatives, such as the low attendance rate amongst MAS residents due to their employment. Recommendations were also made for implementation to be more sustainable by empowering residents to facilitate some of these initiatives instead of SHWH staff.



WHAT IT
MEANS

LITERATURE REVIEWS

This section contains analyses of published research work in a particular domain of interest in the correctional field.

Fatherhood Attitudes Amongst Men Who Perpetrate Family Violence

COMPLETED BY: RASHIDA MOHAMED ZAIN & JANE QUEK (PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES BRANCH/PCRD)



WHY WE DID THIS REVIEW

AIM: Family violence perpetrators form a subset of the violent inmate population in the Singapore Prison Service. A literature review on men who perpetuate family violence helped the General Violence Unit to gain insight into the attitudes and beliefs on fatherhood among family violence perpetrators for consideration of intervention needs of these men.

VIOLENCE AND FATHERHOOD: Despite committing violence against their loved ones, perpetrators of family violence expressed desire to continue caring for their children, and are likely to continue their relationships or return to their families after incarceration.

Lack of awareness on the impact of violence on their children. Perpetrators have little awareness of the long-term impact of their family violence on their children. They believe that their children are either too young or absent ("not around or asleep") to comprehend the violent acts, or thought that the violence they inflicted was not severe enough to affect their children (Bourassa et al., 2016).

Romanticised ideals when it comes to parenting. While they agreed on what it meant to be a 'good' father (e.g., provision of financial stability, protection, and emotional connection with their children), most of them struggled to achieve this ideal.

Conflict in gender roles within the household. Friction over household tasks and childcare practices could lead to resentment towards partners, and in serious cases, domestic violence. Unstable marital relationships tended to impact the fathering relationship, as men chose to withdraw from their children during marital conflicts.

Lack of knowledge in child development. Perpetrators found it challenging to understand their children's needs, and perceived disobedient behaviours as deliberate provocation or undermining of their authority. This led to frustrations and meting of harsh punishments. Despite having poor understanding of their children's perspectives and developmental needs, as well as being poorly equipped in parenting knowledge, these men desired to provide 'unconditional love' through regular contact with their children, indicating their desire to fulfil fatherly roles.

NEW VS TRADITIONAL FATHERHOOD: Veteläinen and colleagues (2013) categorised two types of parenting styles amongst fathers that reflected the attachment styles between fathers and their children:

TRADITIONAL TYPE 1: PASSIVE,

AVOIDANT FATHERHOOD

- Avoid responsibility towards their children.
- See themselves as being 'forced' into the disciplinarian role by their partners/ spouses.

TRADITIONAL TYPE 2: DISTANT, INDIFFERENT FATHERHOOD

- Physically and emotionally distant from children.
- Reinforced by long working hours that they are unable to spend time with their children.
- Fathers in this group often choose to spend their time outside of home without their family.

TRADITIONAL TYPE 3: AUTHORITATIVE,

CONTROLLING FATHERHOOD

- See themselves as the head of the family responsible for keeping the family together and making important family decisions.
- Perceive control as obligatory.
- Control is justified as protection for children against development of bad habits.

NEW FATHERHOOD: SECURE

- Parenting roles are not defined by gender.
- Fathers have a strong sense of shared parenting with their partners/ spouses.
- Ability to exhibit 'soft' skills such as empathy and emotional expression when relating with their children.
- Emotionally invested in the relationship with their children.

DESIRE TO BE 'GOOD' FATHERS

The study by Veteläinen et. al., (2013) found that the 'new' fatherhood parenting style surfaced an idealised state of fatherhood espoused by perpetrators. Most desired emotional closeness with their children. However, perpetrators found it difficult to achieve their idealised style because of unfamiliarity and discomfort with using 'soft' skills, which they perceived to undermine masculinity and authority. While perpetrators desired to be 'good' fathers, there remained a gap between their current behaviour and ideal vision of fatherhood, and they struggled to reconcile this dissonance. This could explain the incongruence between wanting to be a good father and difficulty in controlling or stopping the use of violence towards family members.



WHAT IT MEANS



WHAT WE FOUND

Denial in Individuals Convicted of Sexual Offences

COMPLETED BY: NICOLE YANG & KENNY ANG (PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES BRANCH/PCRD)



BACKGROUND: Denial in individuals convicted of sexual offences (ICSO) is a highly prevalent issue. However, there remains a lack of understanding in the function of denial for ICSOs, the association between denial and risk of recidivism as well as the need to challenge denial during treatment.

WHY WE DID THIS REVIEW

AIM: A literature review was conducted to understand the functions of denial, its presentation in assessments and the relative importance of addressing denial in treatment would help inform approaches for assessments and treatment.

FINDING 1: Nature of Denial

- Denial of responsibility by ICSO is a frequent occurrence; about 6 in 10 ICSO engage in some minimisation of their offending behaviour.
- Denial is viewed as dichotomous (denier or admirer), viewed on a continuum, or in the form of categories (e.g., denial of planning, deviant fantasies, responsibility).
- ICSO may intentionally deny for a myriad of reasons – to preserve self-image, cope with shame or maintain social networks. They may also unconsciously do so due to a lack of insight or cognitive distortions.

FINDING 2: Denial and Recidivism

- There is no consistent evidence proving that denial leads to recidivism. In fact, denial may lead to reduced recidivism due to cognitive dissonance in play, which prompts behaviour alignment with a positive non-offender self-identity.
- Recidivism could depend on the type of sexual offence committed. For example, denial predicted recidivism for intrafamilial but not extrafamilial sexual offences.

FINDING 3: Assessment and Treatment Considerations

- Deniers are likely to be dishonest about both the circumstances of the offence and extent of their needs. Hence, discrepancies between the denier's accounts and information from other sources should be explored for a meaningful evaluation of the individual's risk and needs. Pushing for guilt admission can instead hinder cooperation for the rest of the assessment.
- Deniers are generally less participative during interventions and practitioners should avoid confronting ICSO's denial as overcoming denial may not necessarily lead to desirable treatment outcomes (e.g., affect therapeutic alliance negatively).
- General treatment for deniers involves three phases. Important elements throughout treatment are trust building, promoting self-esteem, reducing shame, and utilising a strength-based approach.
- It is beneficial to conduct treatments in groups consisting of both deniers and admirers, as it would allow deniers to exchange questions and feedback with admirers. Admirers can also provide some encouragement for deniers to accept responsibility over time. However, deniers may feel disruptive, alienated, or uncomfortable when placed in a group of admirers.



WHAT WE FOUND



WHAT IT MEANS

Assessors should **not focus on pushing for guilt admission** but aim to evaluate the individual's risk and needs and understand reasons as to why disparities may arise. A comprehensive understanding of the denier's risk and needs would serve to better inform treatment approaches. Practitioners should acknowledge that **desirable treatment outcomes do not depend on reducing denial**, since resistance to treatment poses a bigger risk factor. Inclusion of denial as an intervention target should only be used if the individual poses low resistance to treatment. Practitioners should also adopt a **strength-based approach for treatment**, emphasizing trust-building and self-esteem for successful treatment of deniers. Group interventions, albeit in smaller sizes are recommended but practitioners should ensure an **even balance of admirers and deniers for group treatments**. Avoid a denier-dominant group to prevent reinforcing denial resistance to treatment, or an admirer-dominant group to prevent feelings of detachment from the group.

Reintegrating Recalled Youth Offenders into Society: What Works?

COMPLETED BY: MEGAN WEE (CORRECTIONAL REHABILITATION SERVICES - REFORMATIVE TRAINING/CLUSTER C)



WHY WE
DID THIS
REVIEW

BACKGROUND: Reformative Trainees (RTs) undergo a mandatory Release on Supervision (ROS) phase after a period of institutional stay in the Reformatory Training Centre (RTC), and RTs on ROS are recalled back to RTC if they show signs of poor progress. As ROS is mandatory, recalled RTs would be re-emplaced onto ROS before RTs are discharged from the RT sentence. The Correctional Rehabilitation Services (Reformatory Training) team intended to review the regime for our population of recalled RTs to impact the recidivism rate of the RTs.

AIM: This literature review aimed to identify typical needs of re-incarcerated youth offenders and effective evidence-based interventions targeting their subsequent reintegration into society. This literature review also aimed to investigate the experiences of recalled offenders, and effective methods in managing and reintegrating them into society. By consolidating these literature findings, recommendations were made in areas of RT regime enhancements.

FINDING 1: Effective Interventions for Reintegrating Youths into Society

- Emphasising on the continuity of care for working with youths, establishing tight links between residential and aftercare services (Altschuler, 2008) and ensuring collaborative case management involving multiple involved stakeholders are important for the reintegration of youths into society (Michigan Council on Crime and Delinquency, 2011).
- While Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) has been widely implemented across most rehabilitation programmes (Altschuler, 2008), family therapy models such as Multi-systemic Therapy/Functional Family Therapy (Pappas & Dent, 2011) and programmes focusing on interpersonal skills training (Lipsey & Wilson, 1998) were found to be effective in reducing recidivism for youth offenders.
- It is important to have effective staff equipped to work with youth offenders, which can be achieved through targeted training. Cross training should be provided to both residential and aftercare staff (Altschuler, 2008), as well as training on collaborative case management and on motivational interviewing techniques (Michigan Council on Crime and Delinquency, 2011).

FINDING 2: Principles of Working with Recalled Offenders

- Recalled offenders tend to have a poor understanding of the reasons behind their recall. It is vital to ensure staff knowledge of the recall processes and for staff to meet with the recalled offenders shortly after their return to custody to process the recalled experience with them. It is also important for close collaboration between multiple stakeholders while working with recalled offenders.
- There is a need to proactively review each recall case for good progress to enable their re-release at a suitable timepoint. Identifying offenders who had made significant progress towards change and re-releasing them at an earlier timepoint than previously mandated, enhances their chances of continued progress into the society.
- Recalled offenders expressed that they received limited help in working towards re-release. It is essential to identify and address their specific risk or needs, forming a clear, realistic plan for each individual while leveraging on resources to provide intervention. It is vital to recognise and reinforce their progress as well.



WHAT WE
FOUND

Reintegrating Recalled Youth Offenders into Society: What Works? – Continued



WHAT IT
MEANS

In the search for literature relating to recalled youth offenders, we did not find journal articles for this specific population. Related grey literature referencing youth offenders and recalled adult offenders were studied and compiled. Findings from the literature were discussed with experienced Correctional Unit Officers (CUO) and Correctional Rehabilitation Specialists (CRS) who worked closely with recalled RTs in RTC. The implications below were further extrapolated based on the existing RT regime for recalled RTs.

FINDING #3: Collaborative Case Management and Effective Staff

For effective continuity of care, aftercare staff should be involved early in the process of preparing recalled RTs for their community supervision. Case conferences between multiple stakeholders (e.g. CRSes, Reintegration Officers, Case Managers) should be held regularly. For staff to be effective, both the incare and aftercare teams should be cross trained on their respective work, as well as in collaborative case management, facilitating understanding of the throughcare continuum. Providing training on motivational interviewing techniques would equip staff to be more effective in encouraging change within the RTs.

FINDING #4: Reinforcing Skills and Motivation

It is important to identify the specific risks and needs of recalled RTs and tailor the rehabilitation programmes to address them accordingly. Interpersonal skills training and navigating family dynamics had shown to be effective in interventions for youths. There is also a need to explore effective engagement of the recalled RTs on their motivation levels for change.

FINDING #5: Reviewing Recalled RTs for Earlier Release

In maintaining close links between the incare and the aftercare, it would be pertinent to explore reviewing each recall case for an earlier release regularly, based on their progress towards change. This also recognised the recalled RT's motivation levels and when it was low, for support to be provided to help them progress towards release, such as through an incentive system geared towards readiness for re-emplacement.

Effectiveness of Family Interventions in Offender Rehabilitation

COMPLETED BY: VENNA AMMEL NG & PRIYATHANAA SUNDARAM (PROGRAMME DESIGN AND EVALUATION BRANCH/PCRD)



WHY WE
DID THIS
REVIEW

BACKGROUND: Given the consequences of parental incarceration, family focused initiatives and processes play a significant role in the criminal justice systems (Myers et al., 2017). However, there are limited studies on the effectiveness of family interventions within the correctional settings.

AIM: To investigate the different types of family interventions provided in correctional settings and their effectiveness, and to identify recommendations for the local context.

Finding 1: Two Main Types of Family Interventions in Correctional Settings

- Within correctional settings, the two main types of family interventions were enhanced visitation and parenting education programmes.
- Enhanced visitation programmes help to improve relationship between parents and children and provide incarcerated parents opportunities to apply their newly learned parenting skills (Hoffmann et al., 2010).
- Parenting education programmes include family literacy programmes, general parenting education programmes, and theory-based parenting education programmes. These programmes provide necessary education and training to learn adaptive parenting behaviours. An example of such a programme would be Parenting Inside Out (Eddy et al., 2013)

Finding 2: Family Interventions are Linked to Some Positive Outcomes

- Current research on family interventions do not typically identify reduction in recidivism as an outcome.
- Family interventions contribute to improved parenting skills, reduced parental stress, improved communication and interaction with child/family, increased life satisfaction, increased self-esteem, and reduced behavioral problems of child.
- Although further research is needed to establish a compelling link, these intermediate outcomes could contribute to the process of reducing recidivism through improved parenting and interactions (Purvis et al., 2013).



WHAT WE
FOUND

Finding 3: Gaps in Literature

- The enhanced visitation and parenting education programmes identified have good evidence in leading to positive outcomes. However, the literature acknowledges that there are other family interventions in corrections that have not been evaluated with such rigor (Hoffmann et al., 2010). Hence, the effectiveness remains unclear without appropriate evaluations.
- Another gap in literature is the lack of family interventions that cater to various types of family needs. Utilizing frameworks like Pyramid of Family Care (POFC) can help to identify more specialized interventions to compartmentalize family interventions based on different needs and intensity required by offenders and their families (Mottaghipour & Bickerton, 2005).



WHAT IT
MEANS

In SPS, the combination of family interventions with Psychology-based Correctional Programmes has been found to have the strongest effect in reducing recidivism (SPS, 2021). The positive impacts of family support on desistance in offenders underscores the need to focus on developing family interventions. Additionally, it is also imperative that the appropriate level of intervention is provided to match the needs of offenders and their family. Adopting POFC can help to allocate specialized interventions that would be appropriate based on needs.

Reviewing the Use of Historical Clinical Risk Management-20 (HCR-20) Tool

COMPLETED BY: RASHIDA MOHAMED ZAIN & LIM JIA YUN (PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES BRANCH /PCRD)



WHY WE DID THIS REVIEW

AIM: To examine the international literature regarding the relevance of structured professional judgement violence risk assessment tool (HCR-20) and to review the effectiveness of other available violence assessment tools that equally or better inform practitioners of violence risk.

EFFECTIVENESS OF THE HCR-20

HCR-20 is a widely-used violence assessment tool internationally. Extensive research has demonstrated the validity of HCR-20 in predicting community and institutional violence (O'Shea et al., 2013; Singh et al., 2011). Many studies have found good to excellent interrater reliability for the HCR-20. The Historical subscale was found to be predictive of violent offences and future re-offending. The predictive efficacy of HCR-20 was also found to be highest for short periods lasting not more than a year, and was less effective over longer periods of five years and above (Gray et al., 2018).

Regarding cross-cultural validity: while past studies (2005) found predictive accuracy of HCR-20 across a significant range of cultures – including Asian-American, Native-Hawaiian, Euro-American, and Japanese – there was a noticeably reduced predictive validity highlighted by studies conducted in China (Zhou et al., Singh et al., 2011).

EFFECTIVENESS OF OTHER VIOLENCE TOOLS

The two other violence assessment tools below, when used in conjunction with HCR-20, can better inform practitioners of violence risk:

- a. Structured Assessment of Protective Factors for Violence Risk (SAPROF). SAPROF exhibited incremental validity when used together with HCR-20. It has good interrater reliability and reliability in predicting validity for desistance. The tool attempts to balance risk factors with protective factors and tends to be used in conjunction with a structured risk assessment tool. The focus on protective factors in accordance with the Good Lives Model can result in more motivating perspectives for both offender clients and therapists.
- b. Violence Risk Scale (VRS). VRS places emphasis on dynamic factors. The measurement of risk reduction using the dynamic VRS predictors was significantly correlated with the reduction of violence recidivism (Lewis et al., 2012). There is high interrater reliability and cross-cultural validity.



WHAT IT MEANS

HCR-20 remains the most widely utilised tool for violence risk assessment due to its predictive validity and practical utility. Specifically, it enables practitioners to formulate treatment plans and case prioritisation. However, the lower predictive validity noticed amongst Chinese samples brings to question if the cross-cultural validity may similarly be less robust in the Singapore context. Past studies have recommended HCR-20 be used in combination with other violence risk assessment tools, namely the SAPROF and VRS, which improved the violence assessment's overall validity.



WHAT WE FOUND

Review of Personality Disorder Assessment Tools in Forensics Setting

COMPLETED BY: GEORGINA TAY & JASMINE TAN (PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES BRANCH /PCRD)



WHY WE DID THIS REVIEW

BACKGROUND: Personality Disorders (PDs) are characterised by persistency in unhealthy patterns of thinking, interpersonal functioning, and often culturally deviant behaviours, and its prevalence in the prison setting is estimated to be more than 10 times that of the general population (NICE, 2014). Interview-based assessment tools are the gold standard for formal diagnoses (Clark & Harrison, 2001), because self-report measures tend to produce an inflation of symptoms (Willmot, 2011) and show promise only in screening processes. Till date, no one tool has proven superior over others, and appropriate diagnoses are less common than expected.

AIM: To identify the commonly used PD assessment tools and examine their utility in forensic or secure settings.

The 5 criteria for evaluating which tools are useful in forensic settings are:

1. **Adequate standardisation:** clear specification of the conditions under which the test is to be administered, scored, and interpreted.
2. **Reliability and validity:** having established evidence from peer-reviewed journals indicating acceptable levels of reliability or replicable levels of validity across studies.
3. **Availability of norms:** the availability of normative data for comparison to interpret scores amongst the forensic or correctional population (and not just clinical populations).
4. **Cross-cultural / ethnic approaches:** the extent to which validity of scores are expected to vary as a result of cultural differences.
5. **“General acceptance within the field”:** a decision retained in the Daubert Supreme Court, and refers to tools which are widely accepted in the correctional setting.



HOW WE REVIEWED



WHAT WE FOUND

PD ASSESSMENT TOOLS IN FORENSIC SETTINGS

SELF-REPORT MEASURES

MINNESOTA MULTIPHASIC PERSONALITY INVENTORY (MMPI): The most well-studied tool, and a useful adjunct in violence risk assessments, particularly in complementing assessment of dynamic risk factors (Sellbom & Wygant, 2018, as cited in Sellbom et al., 2022). There are many international trainings on use of MMPI in forensic settings by tool developers.

MILLON CLINICAL MULTIAXIAL INVENTORY (MCFI): MCMI does a good job of modelling the expert judgments of intake workers (i.e. at triage), and may be used as a guide for information gathering at point of triage and further clinical interviewing is necessary to diagnose an individual. However, MCMI scores are not suitable as a diagnostic assessment of PD, as it may underreport the true number of PDs by more than half (Retzlaff et al., 2002).

PERSONALITY ASSESSMENT INVENTORY (PAI): PAI is viewed as a good screening tool and can be used to determine risk in the forensic setting (e.g. PDs, substance abuse, psychiatric disorders, treatment planning). However, may not be suitable for diagnostic assessment of PDs. It only has 2 scales – BOR (borderline) and ABT (antisocial) – which only screens for two types of PDs. It has also been found that elevated BOR scores do not necessarily imply Borderline PD.

PERSONALITY DIAGNOSTIC QUESTIONNAIRE (PDQ): The PDQ is not 100% accurate in distinguishing between positive and negative diagnoses ($AUC=0.83$; where $AUC=1$ denotes a perfect prediction model and $AUC=0.5$ denotes chance levels of prediction); suitable as a screening tool for PD, but not reliable for diagnosing specific subtypes of PD (Davison et al., 2001).

INTERVIEW-BASED MEASURES

INTERNATIONAL PERSONALITY DISORDER EXAMINATION (IPDE):

The IPDE is an extensive semi-structured diagnostic interview with a strong clinical utility; elevations on PD dimensions scores predict higher risk of repeated interpersonal aggression. It is predictive of Antisocial PD, Borderline PD and Histrionic PD (Langton et al., 2011).

STRUCTURED CLINICAL INTERVIEW FOR DSM-5 (SCID-5): SCID assesses each PD at a time which is a strength in clinical practice, because administration can be customized to meet the unique needs of the user. Only domains that are scored with a pathological direction in the self-report questionnaire require further investigation through the semi-structured interview, reducing administration time.

PSYCHOPATHY CHECKLIST – REVISED (PCL-R):

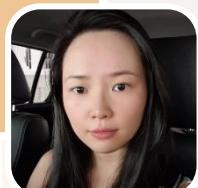
The PCL-R comprises two factors; only Factor 1 (interpersonal/ affective features) was found to be predictive of use of imminent interpersonal aggression, which is common behavioural instability demonstrated by persons with PD.

RESEARCH ACTIVITIES

This section contains presentations of research work at local and international platforms

Study 1: Understanding Factors Critical for Long Term Desistance in Male Drug Abusers

Presented by: Fann Jiang (Lead Psychologist, Correctional Research Branch/PCRD)



PRESENTED AT:

5TH ASIAN CONFERENCE OF CRIMINAL & OPERATIONS PSYCHOLOGY (ACCOP) 2022

The theme for ACCOP 2022 was 'The role of behavioural sciences in emerging issues of crime, safety and security'. Fann was invited to present on the processes and factors related to long-term desistance in both male and female desistors.

AIM OF PRESENTATION

This presentation highlighted the findings of a research study conducted to understand why drug abusers relapsed or desisted in the long-term and identify factors related to relapse, shorter-term desistance and longer-term desistance. The study involved 92 drug abusers - 37 had relapsed within the year, 25 relapsed within 2-5 years and 20 had desisted for over 5 years.

IMPLICATIONS

KEY FINDINGS

The following findings were shared during the presentation:

- Desistors surrounded themselves with prosocial others and have stronger sense of agency that sustained their motivation.
- Desistors persistently avoided antisocial peers and replaced them with prosocial family and peer groups.
- Desistors continued to be watchful of their triggers and high-risk situations.
- Desistors learnt multiple adaptive ways of coping.
- Desistors have overall positive shift in attitudes.
- Both desistors and those who relapsed found counselling to be beneficial and motivating.

IN-CARE

- Implement programs that help to expand abusers' prosocial connections, such as mentorship programs, support groups, and family reunification initiatives.
- Provide mindfulness training and other stress reduction programs to increase abusers' toolbox of adaptive coping strategies
- Share these findings with correctional staff and upskill them in relapse prevention planning to support abusers under their charge in their desistance journey.

PRE-RELEASE

- Create comprehensive re-entry plans that connect drug abusers with community resources, support groups, and positive social networks.
- Involve family members and community organisations in the abusers' release preparation plans.

AFTER-CARE

- Provide ongoing skills training and opportunities for personal development to reinforce abusers' self-efficacy.
- Align community partners towards a common mental framework and language for supporting desistance.

Study 2: The Process of Desistance for Female Drug Abusers

AIM OF STUDY

This presentation shed light on the process of desistance for female drug abusers and their needs for desistance.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 10 repeat drug offenders and 10 long-term drug desistors to identify factors associated with successful desistance specifically for female desistors.

KEY FINDINGS

Compared to **MALE** drug desistors, **FEMALE** drug desistors reported more relational factors for change, such as:

- Motivation to change for family & children
- Emotional & financial support from significant others
- Supervision provided by significant others

Compared to long-term offenders, female desistors have:

- Better coping & reasoning skills
- Supportive social relationships
- Meaning in & contentment with life
- More interest in developing themselves

IMPLICATIONS

When working with female drug abusers,

- Tap on relational factors to motivate them to change
- Help them build a strong social support system
- Tailor interventions that meet their multiple needs
- Set realistic goals and be encouraging as they are often faced with multiple and complex needs.



Understanding the Social Ecological Perspective & Role of Technology for Youths Who Sexually Offended: Implications for Practice

Presented by: **Kenny Ang** (Psychologist, Psychological Services Branch(PSB)/PCRD) & **Bleston Low** (Psychologist, PSB/PCRD)

PRESENTED AT:

5TH ASIAN CONFERENCE OF CRIMINAL & OPERATIONS PSYCHOLOGY (ACCOP) 2022

The theme for ACCOP 2022 was 'The role of behavioural sciences in emerging issues of crime, safety and security'. Kenny & Bleston were invited to present a review on the multi-faceted nature of sexual offending and its effects on victims, families & the community.

AIM OF PRESENTATION

Sexual offending is a multifaceted and significant social problem with ripple effects on victims, families and the community. With the increase in sexual offending cases among youths in Singapore between 2016 – 2020, it is imperative to understand the possible reasons for this problem. Drawing from literature, this presentation highlighted contributing factors of youth sexual offending and motivations that may be linked to the commission of technology-facilitated sexual violence (TFSV) e.g., voyeurism. This presentation also reflected on the possible protective factors that may reduce the likelihood of future sexual reoffending amongst youth offenders. Lastly, considerations and strategies in working with these youths in the community were also discussed.

KEY FINDINGS

- Youths who sexually offended differ in multiple characteristics (e.g., victim type, relationship with victim, degree of sexual contact, delinquent history, and other personal factors).
- Youths sexually offend for a variety of reasons including modelling antisocial behaviours after their peer groups.
- Protective factors such as willingness to undergo treatment and healthy coping mechanisms reduce unhealthy sexual behaviours.
- Being in an exploratory phase in their development, youths could be motivated to commit TFSV to gain sexual pleasure, for monetary gains, to build social status or resort to TFSV to compensate for negative emotions and low self-esteem.
- The approach for youths who sexually offend should be distinct from adults who sexually offend because of their developmental differences, the nature of their offending (i.e., opportunistic vs planned) as well as the greater influence of peers.
- Youths who sexually offend were found to share similar risk factors to youths who engaged in non-sexual offending (e.g., behavioural maladjustment, antisocial attitudes and beliefs, family difficulties). However, the distinction should be made between youths who commit sexual and other types of offences ("Generalists") and youths who commit only sexual offences ("Specialists").
- Treatments involving multisystemic and cognitive-behavioural approaches were most effective in reducing the recidivism rates. To better engage youths, the use of a strengths-based approach during interventions is recommended, where the emphasis is on positive goal attainment rather than eliminating deficits or problem behaviours.
- Individually tailored intervention plans should be adjusted or reviewed according to the youth's progress. These interventions should also include a comprehensive prevention plan that addresses significant risk factors present in the youth's offending cycle.

IMPLICATIONS

- No single risk or protective factor is responsible for best predicting a youth offender's propensity to sexually offend or desist, and it is essential to address potential risk factors (e.g., childhood maladjustment, weak legal sanctions) across a youth's social ecology (individual, relationship, community, societal domains).
- Support from all stakeholders in the youth's ecosystem is necessary for their development of a healthy perspective of sexuality and in mitigating their risk of sexual offending.



Understanding Intrafamilial Sexual and Physical Violence: How Social Systems can Support Persons Causing Harm (PCH) and Victims in The Community

Presented by: **Arvina Manoo** (Lead Psychologist, Psychological Services Branch(PSB)/PCRD), **Rashida Mohamed Zain** (Lead Psychologist, Operational Psychology Branch/PCRD), **Jane Quek** (Senior Psychologist, PSB/PCRD) & **Charmaine Ch'ng** (Psychologist, PSB/PCRD)

PRESENTED AT:

NATIONAL FAMILY VIOLENCE NETWORKING SYSTEM (NFVNS) 2022

The theme for NFVNS Conference 2022 was 'Breaking the Cycle of Violence | Restoring Safety: Insights into Working with Persons Causing Harm'. Arvina, Rashida, Jane & Charmaine were invited to present a review that elucidated the risk factors of intrafamilial violence, how they could be addressed, as well as the value of reinforcing factors of desistance in persons causing harm (PCH).

AIM OF PRESENTATION

Drawing from international literature and clinicians' experiences, this presentation elucidated the risk factors that contributed to intrafamilial violence, how they could be addressed, as well as the value of reinforcing factors of desistance in persons causing harm (PCH).

KEY FINDINGS

CHARACTERISTICS OF INTRAFAMILIAL PCH

Intrafamilial PCH tended to commit sexual abuse against younger female victims and had lower recidivism. PCH tended to be men, although abuse by women also occurred.

RISK FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO INTRAFAMILIAL OFFENDING

Factors contributing to sexual violence in the family include a desire to fulfil emotional intimacy and/or sexual gratification, individual-related risk factors, and difficult family dynamics.

PRINCIPLES AND BEST PRACTICES FOR TREATMENT OF PCH

- Whole of community approach is important in detection, prevention, and treatment of intrafamilial violence cases in community.
- Family-focused interventions should take place as early as possible while PCHs are incarcerated to facilitate family reunification, if assessed to be suitable.
- Continuity of care, monitoring & supervision should be ensured for PCHs upon their release to address their needs and mitigate their risk, especially for higher risk PCHs.
- Continue to support victims in ensuring they have physical and emotional security (e.g., regular follow-ups).

IMPLICATIONS

PRINCIPLES AND STRATEGIES FOR COMMUNITY MANAGEMENT

- Always check if:
 - a. The victim and family are ready for reunification.
 - b. There are barriers to independence.
 - c. There are feasible victim safety plans & protocols.
 - d. There are risk-monitoring & supervision strategies imposed on PCH.
 - e. There are secondary victim(s) who may require support.

The Next Lap in Community Corrections: The Singapore Experience

Presented by: **Haslindah Shonib** (Lead Correctional Rehabilitation Specialist, Community Corrections Policy & Planning/COMC)



PRESENTED AT:

INTERNATIONAL CORRECTIONS AND PRISONS ASSOCIATION (ICPA) ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2022

The theme of the annual conference organized by the International Corrections & Prisons Association (ICPA) in 2022 was "Excelling Beyond the 'Old' Normal: Corrections after the Global Pandemic". Haslindah was invited to present on SPS's initiatives in enhancing the rehabilitation and reintegration efforts in community corrections.

AIM OF PRESENTATION

With legislative and policy changes such as the amendments to Misuse of Drugs Act, the revised Reformative Training Legislation as well as the expansion of Community-Based Programmes (CBP), more offenders are eligible to serve part of their sentence in the community. This is evident in the increase of the aftercare population under the management of the Community Corrections Command (COMC) from 2,103 to 3,402 between 2016 to 2021. Given the backdrop of changes, this presentation provided an overview of the plans and strategies to enhance the rehabilitation and reintegration of offenders who are supervised in the community.

PLANS & STRATEGIES

Increase Captains of Lives' (COL) Competency

1. Scale up Captains of Lives (COL) competencies through Professional Certificate in Correctional Management
 - Development of a Professional Certificate in Correctional Management in collaboration with the National University of Singapore
2. Development of the Rehab Coaching framework and structure to support rehabilitation skills development in COMC.
 - Develop and conduct regular evaluation on coaches and staff to ensure adherence to evidence-based practices and approaches

Address Supervisees' Various Reintegration Needs

1. Transform Institution S2 into a therapeutic environment for supervisees to reside in
2. Increase supervisees' employability by allowing them to undergo skills training and education in addition to working in the community under the Employment Preparation Scheme (EmPS)
3. Facilitate an environment of change by adopting Restorative Practices (RP) in community supervision (e.g., providing RP kit for halfway houses, using proactive conversation cards)

Enhancing Processes

1. Voluntary Supervision Support Programme (VSSP): Supervisees assessed with flight risk could opt for temporary breaks from CBP and reside at Institution S2 for up to 14 days as an abscondment mitigation strategy.
2. Enhanced Surrender Programme: Supervisees are given 3 days of leeway to report back to avoid being charged for abscondment, and instead will get a reduced charge, preventing them from being recalled to prisons.

Leverage On Technology

1. Prisons Automated Screening System: The use of a complete automated urine screening system which is unmanned and operational 24/7 makes it more convenient for supervisees to submit their urine samples.
2. Electronic Monitoring System (EMS) 2.0 allows for more effective tracking and monitoring of supervisees in the community. The use of wrist tags as alternative tracking device also reduces discrimination from supervisees.
3. Self-Help and Rehabilitation E-application: Supervisees are given access to rehabilitation resources on their own devices. This can also facilitate supervisees' ownership of their rehabilitation journey.



Uplifting Captains of Lives with WeWorkWell

Presented by: **Wayne Ferroa** (Principal Psychologist, Operational Psychology Branch(OPSYB)/PCRD), **Cindy Toh** (Psychologist, OPSYB/PCRD), **Seah Yun Han** (Psychologist, OPSYB/PCRD), **Angeline Chua** (Psychologist, OPSYB/PCRD), & **Chua Hong Lin** (Psychologist, OPSYB/PCRD)

AWARDED:

INTERNATIONAL CORRECTIONS AND PRISONS ASSOCIATION (ICPA) CORRECTIONAL EXCELLENCE AWARDS 2022

The ICPA Correctional Excellence Awards have been established to recognise outstanding progress and excellence with respect to the mission of the ICPA, particularly achievements which advance humanitarian approaches and advance professional corrections. Wayne and his team of psychologists, Cindy, Yun Han, Angeline & Hong Lin were awarded the Staff Wellbeing and Development Award (Gary Hill Award) for developing excellent programmes that promote a healthy workplace and continuous learning for effective prisons operations.

AIM OF PRESENTATION

In this presentation, psychologists from the Operational Psychology Branch, Psychological and Correctional Rehabilitation Division introduced the WeWorkWell framework that was launched to create a mentally healthy workplace in which staff's well-being is the priority.

CHARACTERISTICS OF FRAMEWORK

The WeWorkWell framework is based on an all-encompassing approach to ensure staff well-being with a variety of individual and team-based mechanisms that look at addressing staff's social, financial, physical, and psychological well-being. It complements efforts from Strategic Planning Division (e.g., Employee Engagement surveys), Staff Development Division (e.g., improving staff's literacy in financial management, learning and development incentives), and Community Corrections Command (e.g., Joy-in-work initiatives).

Through its comprehensive five-pronged approach (i.e., Promote, Prevent, Intervene Early, Support Recovery, Research & Evaluation), the WeWorkWell Framework aids the team to support staff's mental health holistically through proactively identifying gaps and ensuring effective interventions and services for staff are provided.

APPLICATIONS

Under the WeWorkWell Framework, interventions and services rolled out in SPS include providing timely information to help staff to cope effectively with stress in the early days of the pandemic, expanding accessibility of help-seeking avenues to address mental health challenges, launching a mental health de-stigmatisation campaign involving staff and leaders to normalize mental health issues and promote help-seeking, as well as conducting an SPS-wide mental wellness study to examine how individual factors and organisational stressors affect organisational outcomes.

Resources and materials from these interventions and initiatives were shared with international counterparts during a 2020 webinar organised by the International Association for Correctional and Forensic Psychology (IACFP), and locally with other national safety and security departments within the Ministry of Home Affairs.





Proactive Staff Conversations

Presented by: **Ngo Kau Wee** (Manager, Community Corrections - Mandatory Aftercare Scheme(CMAS)/COMC) & **Abigail Lee** (Correctional Rehabilitation Specialist, CMAS/COMC)

PRESENTED AT: SPS RESTORATIVE PRACTICES SEMINAR 2022

The theme of the inaugural Restorative Practices (RP) Seminar 2022 was "Celebrating Conversations, Inspiring Connections". In line with the theme, the RP Competency Team from Community Corrections Command (COMC) shared about RP initiatives within COMC as well as the importance of proactive staff conversations, facilitated by the use of Proactive Conversation Cards.

AIM OF PRESENTATION

Reflective conversations do not always occur naturally in the workplace. The Restorative Practice Competency Team in Community Corrections Command (COMC) gave a presentation on initiatives that are implemented in COMC to help staff facilitate these conversations.

KEY FEATURES

The presenters shared the following principles of Restorative Practices:

1. The use of Proactive Practices can build authentic relationships, trust, and social capital.
2. Responsive Practices can repair harm and restore relationships when conflicts occur.

Using these principles, the COMC RP Competency Team launched the COMC Proactive Conversation cards named "Warming Up Between Us" to facilitate the sharing of personal stories, feelings, and affirmation between staff.

The card deck features two types of cards: "Sharing is Caring" and "Gratitude and Appreciation" cards. Both types of cards provide short questions and group activities which allow for staff to get to know each other better, or to share gratitude for the people and things around them.

Running out of check in questions and team bonding ideas?

Our cards can be used for check in, check out, team bonding, formal and informal meetings. Easy and seamless!

- Use the blue **Sharing is Caring** cards to learn about each other.
- Use the purple **Gratitude & Appreciation** cards to affirm one another.



Use it anywhere you want!

Use our conversation cards anywhere you want!
Scan here for our e-version!



WARMING UP BETWEEN US RP PROACTIVE CONVERSATION CARDS

Not enough time during meetings?

We hear you! Choose your questions and activities based on the duration you have!

Our activities range from 1 to 15 minutes per person!



No preparation of materials required!

We prepared all materials for you!
You will find everything you'll need within our handy RP box!

Available from 14 Oct 2022 at:
SPCSC L2
Selarang Park
meeting room!



Brought to you by: Restorative Practice SME Advocacy Team

A broadcast to use proactive conversation cards to practise reflective conversations in their line of work.



Finding and Strengthening Connections & Friendships: “Brotherhood” for Violent Offenders

Presented by: **Wong Shi Ning** (Psychologist, Psychological Services Branch(PSB)/PCRD), **Joella Elsie Panthradil** (Psychologist, PSB/PCRD) & **Iris Li Xiao Yan** (Senior Social Worker, Thye Hwa Kwan Moral Charities)

PRESENTED AT: SPS CORRECTIONAL PRACTICE & RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM 2023

The SPS Correctional Practice & Research Symposium (CPRS) serves as a platform to exchange research and best practices conducted by SPS staff and its partners. It aims to foster a culture of research collaboration and inspire all participants to delve into new areas of inquiry. The theme of the symposium was "Transforming Corrections; Strengthening Partnerships" and encouraged the adoption of evidence-informed approaches and close collaboration with community stakeholders.

AIM OF PRESENTATION

- Currently, offenders who have committed violent offences attend the violence intervention programmes (i.e., HERO) in the Violence Transformational Environment (VTE) for their rehabilitation.
- International studies have indicated that interventions need to be carried out through professional and social relationships, both during in-care and aftercare.
- While offenders receive psychological interventions that can help to mitigate their risk of reoffending during their in-care phase, these interventions are often discontinued upon the offenders' release from prisons.
- Offenders also face reintegration challenges in the community and do not know where to seek support from after their release.
- To strengthen the support system for violent offenders in the community, the team has reached out to Thye Hwa Kwan (THK) Brotherhood, one of the few support groups in the community tailored for men struggling with aggression in Singapore.
- This presentation aimed to highlight the success story of collaboration with THK Brotherhood, where the desistors from the support group were involved in the VTE to share their personal journey of desistance.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

1. Collaboration with community partners is critical in building the social capital and supporting the rehabilitation of violent offenders.
2. Relationship between the offenders and the community partners needs to be built from incare, which will increase the chances of them continuing to receive the support when they are released.
3. The sharings from the desistors in the support group help in fostering hopes and opportunities, and shaping the offenders' pro-social identity.

The Correctional Science Bulletin is a testament to Singapore Prison Service's commitment to evidence-informed correctional and rehabilitative practices. The breadth of the research topics covered is impressive and it demonstrates SPS's understanding that achieving the common goal of a safe and secure Singapore is complex; it requires the effort of multiple stakeholders to support offenders at various phases and in different domains of their lives. This Bulletin showcases how the different stakeholders can play a part towards contributing to a safer society for all. It is heartening to be a part of this effort, where science is translated into meaningful impact, changing and shaping lives.

Dr Adaline Ng

Lecturer (Clinical Psychology), James Cook University

Correctional Science Research Network (CSRN) Member

Having browsed through the "Correctional Science Bulletin 2024", I cannot but be impressed by the quantity and quality of the research and evaluation work undertaken by Singapore Prison Service (SPS) colleagues, and at times with other collaborators e.g. KK Women's and Children's Hospital. The diversity of research endeavours and evaluation studies speak volumes of the passion of the officers, the entrenched research culture in SPS, and the organisational support and infrastructure to facilitate an evidence-based and data-driven approach to "do good" and understand "what works".

Mr Jimmy Fan

Deputy Director (Criminology Unit), Ministry of Law

Correctional Science Research Network (CSRN) Member

THANK YOU TO ALL THE CONTRIBUTORS OF CORRECTIONAL SCIENCE BULLETIN 2025!

If you would like to know more about any of the studies listed in this bulletin, please contact us at the email address below.

STUDY ENQUIRIES



General queries or queries on research studies listed in this review:

PRIS_Research_Evaluation@pris.gov.sg

If you are keen on conducting studies in SPS, drop us an email and our friendly researchers will get in touch with you. Alternatively, you can visit our website below for more details.

RESEARCH REQUESTS

Interested Applicants:

SPS_research_requests@pris.gov.sg



Website:

www.sps.gov.sg/learn-about-corrections/sps-research/research-requests/

