



ASSOCIATION OF PAROLING AUTHORITIES INTERNATIONAL

APRIL 2012

FROM THE PRESIDENT:

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- APAI CRIME VICTIM SURVEY AND A MODEL PROTOCOL** 2
- BEST PRACTICES IN CRIME VICTIM SERVICES** 2
- CANADA'S REGIONAL COMMUNICATION OFFICERS** 3

THINGS TO DO IN 2012

- **Renew APAI Membership**
- **Register for the 2012 Annual Training Conference, May 20 - 23 in Orlando, FL**
- **Serve on an APAI Committee**
- **Convince a colleague to join APAI.**

Dear Friends and Colleagues:

The 28th Annual Training Conference in beautiful, sunny Orlando, Florida is just a few short weeks away. APAI will honor some very deserving colleagues in the field of parole and community corrections with our awards. An election will be held for President and Treasurer. It will be so great to see all my friends from around the nation and the world at this event.

This year's training program will once again have something for everyone. You will find more about the training program and can register at the APAI website.

There will be many concurrent workshops to choose from that will allow participants to tailor their conference experience to their specific needs. This great program content is made possible by the generosity of the National Institute of Corrections, the Pew Center on the States, SAMSHA, the Florida Department of Juvenile Justice and the many member presenters who volunteer their time to share their experience with their colleagues. A heartfelt thank you goes to all of them.

We are pleased to be able to

collaborate with our colleagues at the National Parole Resource Center to bring you the two-day training program that precedes the conference this year. Our thanks to the Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) for supporting this event.

International Section Vice President Renee Collette has once again done an excellent job of garnering support for the conference across the world. We can all learn so much from this section of our organization. This year she has arranged an extraordinary speaker for the "International Perspectives" General Session. Justice Marion Frater, Vice Chair of the Parole Board of New Zealand will share her perspective on parole and restorative justice

On Sunday afternoon, May 20, the Council of Paroling/Releasing Authorities will meet. This group is made up of the Chief Officer or Chair of the Paroling/Releasing Authority members of the Organization and advises the Executive Committee on matters affecting the Association.

The Host Committee, under the leadership of Chair Tena Pate of the Florida Parole Commission, has done a phenomenal job of hosting

this event, particularly lining up sponsors for the various conference events and exhibitors for our exhibit area. They are also coordinating what promises to be an exciting general session for the exchange of innovative practices.

I cannot close this message without acknowledging that this is my last newsletter and will be my last conference as President of APAI. Where has the time gone? It has truly been an amazing four years. I would like to take the opportunity to thank the men and women of the Executive Committee that I have had the pleasure of serving with, the membership that has granted me the privilege to serve and the many colleagues with which I have worked.

Hope to see you in Orlando,

With Warm Regards,

Charles Traughber
President, Association of
Paroling Authorities
International

PAROLE REVOCATION IN GEORGIA

Parolee behavior is of central concern to the Georgia Parole Board, and effective supervision should promote pro-social behavior that increases public safety and reduces recidivism. Successful parolee behavior should include a law abiding and self-sufficient lifestyle, stable employment, supporting dependents, and abstaining from substance use and/or abuse. Parole officers should identify positive or negative behaviors, then apply an appropriate response with prompt and proper documentation.

Scientific evidence suggests that reinforcing desired behaviors is four times more effective than punishing negative behavior. Studies also suggest that reinforcement of positive behavior increases the frequency of that behavior in the future. This is consistent with effective parole supervision. The

use of verbal praise, such as “keep up the good work”, has a significant impact on reinforcing behavior. Parole officers should utilize this type of reinforcement at every opportunity. There are also material reinforcers, such as letters of recognition or certificates, and activity reinforcers, such as extended curfew hours or the request for a commutation. When utilizing reinforcers it is essential that the parolee is aware that the reinforcer is a consequence of the desired behavior. To recognize and reward desired behavior, the Board created four achievement awards for presentation to parolees upon meeting certain requirements:

Certificate of Progress - awarded at six month or one year intervals with no parole violations

Mr.(Ms.) Clean Award - awarded at six month intervals to those on a substance abuse track with no positive drug screens

Stability Award - awarded at six month intervals for maintaining stable employment and residence

Lifestyle Commitment Award - along with stable residence and employment, awarded for documented involvement in pro-social activities such as volunteer work, church affiliation, etc.

When responding to violations and other undesired behaviors it is important that the parole officer respond swiftly. The failure to respond to any undesired behavior effectively reinforces the behavior. To deter violations from occurring, the parole officer should demonstrate that all

detected violations will have a swift and appropriate response. Violation responses should be tailored to the severity of the violation and the risks posed by the parolee.

A complete and comprehensive behavioral index is prohibitive due to many possible behaviors and extenuating circumstances. However, a generalized list of some common behaviors with a suggested response is listed in the *Behavioral Response Guide*, shown below. Officers and supervisors should use this listing only as a guide. Sometimes a simple statement of praise or a reprimand will produce the desired effect.

For further information about this innovative practice contact Richard Oleson, Richard.Oleson@pap.stat.ga.us

PAROLE REVOCATION IN WYOMING

In the last several years, Wyoming has developed revocation policies that adopt many of the evidence-based practices that are gaining acceptance in the parole world. In 2008, the Wyoming Legislature granted the Wyoming Department of Corrections (WDOC) the authority to impose administrative sanctions in lieu of parole revocation in response to

offender violations.

In 2010, the WDOC also created a sanction matrix entitled PRISM, which is an acronym for Positive Reinforcements, Incentives, and Sanctions Matrix (PRISM). The matrix is in grid form and identifies common offender behaviors, both positive and negative, and provides responses to both. PRISM incorporates

the identification and use of positive incentives to reward positive behavior.

Under PRISM, each offender meets with his or her parole agent and a specific case plan is created to foster the offender’s motivation to change. The case plan is crafted in partnership with the offender to identify goals with associated desired behaviors to

maximize the offender’s focus on achieving pro-social changes. Positive reinforcement is utilized when progress toward change is realized and may include awards, increased liberties, reduction in supervision levels and earned early discharge.

Conversely, and in light of the new legislative

PAROLE REVOCATION IN WYOMING

authority, undesired behaviors and violations are addressed through a series of graduated sanctions which may range from a verbal reprimand, increased agent contact, written assignments, curfews, travel restrictions, and an increase in supervision levels. In specific situations, the agents may also request a sanction from the Board of Parole of up to thirty (30) days in jail or sixty (60) days at a work-release center. All of

the aforementioned sanctions are available as alternatives to revocation. PRISM requires that sanctions be consistent, address specific undesired behavior and violations that necessitate change and require the offenders' assent and collaboration in the form a signed sanction agreement, making the sanction meaningful and relevant to the offender.

To effectively implement PRISM, Wyoming agents

have been trained in motivational interviewing (MI), knowledge of change principles, and cognitive behavioral interventions. PRISM and alternative sanctioning for offenders has had a positive effect on success rates to this point. For example, in 2010, the Wyoming Board paroled 465 inmates, conducted 136 parole revocation hearings and re-incarcerated 78 of those offenders. In 2011, the Board paroled nearly 100 more inmates, 551, yet

heard only 115 revocations and re-incarcerated 67 of those parolees. Based upon those numbers, from 2010 to 2011, Wyoming experienced a 15% reduction in the total number of revocations while paroling 18% more inmates.

For more information about this innovative practice contact Dan Fettsco at daniel.fetsco@wyo.gov or (307) 777 – 5444.

PAROLE REVOCATION IN NEW ZEALAND

A primary justification for any parole system lies in the international research which shows that managed release on parole with a right of revocation is between three and four times more successful in preventing re-offending than automatic release at the end of sentence. A key component here is contained in the words "right to revocation".

There are some jurisdictions where up to a third of serving prisoners at any one time can be those who have been released on parole, had their licence revoked and then been returned to prison, often for trivial or technical breaches.

In New Zealand revocation is commenced by the Community Probation Service filing an

application with the Parole Board asking for the prisoner to be returned to prison. The obligation of the Panel Convenor (Judge) who receives the application is to make an interim order revoking parole if there is risk to community safety.

If an interim order is made, within strict timelines, there has to be a full hearing on the merits. We hold most of these hearings by video conference.

It is not infrequently the case that more information is available at the hearing than was available on the papers and then the Board allows, sometimes with variations, the parolee to continue in the community.

We have however been concerned to avoid technical breaches where safety considerations for the community are not in issue.

This has been tackled in three ways:

The Community Probation Service has now developed a dynamic risk assessment tool for assessing the risk of the parolee before making an application to the Board. It looks at risk factors, focusing on likelihood of re-offending and risk of harm to others, and the protective factors which may negate the risks and evaluates them. It is intended to be a robust screen to prevent revocation action being taken by the Service when other options for managing an offender exist. The Service first

establishes if one of the grounds for recall has been reached (e.g. breach of conditions, re-offending, or behaviour that presents a risk) and then assesses whether or not the breach constitutes an *undue* risk to the community. This is not an exact science and there are times when the Services seeks a recall in order to test the grounds for undue risk applying in a particular circumstance.

Next there is case law binding on the Parole Board which makes it very clear that the final test for the Board is one of safety. There is a two-staged process. The first stage is for the Board to be satisfied that there is a ground made out by virtue of a breach of conditions, risky behaviour, etc. The second, having established a ground, is to consider whether the

PAROLE REVOCATION IN NEW ZEALAND, CONT FROM PAGE 3

safety of the community requires a prisoner to be returned to the prison or whether that can be achieved by some altered arrangement on parole – e.g. a new address or extra conditions relating to drugs and alcohol.

If a parolee has simply breached a condition to report or done some other things which are annoying but do not get to a threshold of risk then a

return to prison is not one of the options.

And there is a third step taken in order to enhance the community interest in the successful rehabilitation of prisoners. It is to be found in a policy decision of the Parole Board. Our policy is that when someone is the subject of a final revocation order then (unless the Board makes a decision to the contrary) there will be an automatic

review of release in three months time to reassess safety issues.

In these three brief ways, the New Zealand Parole Board and the Department of Corrections here have tried to manage the difficulties experienced when parolees strike obstacles, as is often to be expected, and to make sure that return to prison is the last option to be exercised.

I offer these few thoughts in the hope that they might be of service to others who struggle in this most difficult, complex but satisfying work which we all do on behalf of the communities of our countries.

For more information about this innovative practice contact Alistair Spierling at alistair.spierling@correctionns.govt.nz

www.apaintl.org

[APAI has a BLOG!!!](#)

Make sure and check out the [APAI Blog with up-to-date articles and news from around the world!](#)

www.apaintl.blogspot.com

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Georgia State Board of Pardons and Paroles
Behavioral Response Guide

POSITIVE BEHAVIOR	⇒ SUGGESTED RESPONSE	NEGATIVE BEHAVIOR	⇒ SUGGESTED RESPONSE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 90 days clean • 90 days employed • 6 months stable residence • Completed 1st semester school or 30 days regular GED attendance • 30 days EM violation free • 2 months perfect cog. skills attendance • Complete out- patient program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verbal recognition • Letter of recognition • 6 month certificate of progress • Letter of recognition from parole officer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive drug screen(s) • Substance abuse assessment non-attendance (minor) • Program non-attendance • Failure to report • EM Violations (minor) • Fail to support dependents • Unemployed (short period) • Special condition violation (minor) • Fee arrears \$60.00 or less • Technical violation (other) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verbal warning • Specific issue hearing • Outpatient program • Self help program • PO verbal reprimand • PO letter reprimand • Increase drug screening • Increase reporting
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12 months stability (employment & residence, few to no violations) • 6 months clean • 2 months perfect cog. skills class attendance • Completed 1 year of school or 6 months regular GED attendance • 90 days no EM violations • Out-patient program completion • Completed cognitive skills course 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letter of recognition • 1 year cert. of progress • Mr. Clean Award • Stability Award • EM early termination • Chief recognition • Reduce reporting • Reduce supervision level • Cognitive skills graduation ceremony 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High profile precursors, a combination of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Unemployment ➢ Drug use / fail to attend substance abuse counseling ➢ Unstable residence ➢ Unlawful acts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Request warrant & evaluate option to recommend continuance or revocation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 24 months stability • Completed GED or school • 12 months clean • Volunteer work, church affiliation, pro-social activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commutation request if eligible • Donated Gift Cert. (GED or graduation of school) • Lifestyle Commitment Award • 2nd Mr. Clean Award • 2nd Stability Award • Reduce supervision level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Felony Arrest • Violent misd. arrest or DUI • Positive drug screens (critical) • Program non-attendance (critical) • Sex Off. violations (serious) • EM Violations (critical) • Possession of Weapon • Absconding / TRW (warrant) issued • Failure to attend Admin. Hearing • Unemployed (critical) • Fee arrears more than \$100 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short term incarceration • EM / EM extension • Admin. Hearing • In-house program • Out Patient program • Parole revocation center • Transition center • Day reporting center • Parole reporting center • Pursue revocation