

OFFENDER REHABILITATION IN PRACTICE Implementing and Evaluating Effective Programs

Edited by

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OFFENDER REHABILITATION IN PRACTICE

WILEY SERIES IN FORENSIC CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY

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To my wife Patti and our boys Benjamin and Christopher who, as well as tolerating many work-related absences due to travel demands, also taught me that a sense of justice without compassion would not move us along as a culture committed to assisting young people and their families in need. — A.L.

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Gary has devoted over 20 years teaching and supervising those who serve youth with multiple and severe problems. He has managed a range of children's services (child welfare, mental health, young offenders and developmentally handicapped) in both residential and community settings. He spent over 8 years developing and refining one of the first cognitive-behavioral and ecological family preservation programs in Canada for high-risk young offenders. He also was a psychologist for 3 years at Bath Institution of Correctional Services Canada.

Gary is a community educator with over 100 presentations to his credit. He is an experienced consultant and a program evaluator with experience evaluating multi-site, province-wide programs, in the children's services field. He has a number of publications and manuals in the area. As an Adjunct Assistant Professor in the Psychology and Education Departments at Queen's University, he teaches courses on developmental psychopathology and on at-risk adolescents.

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SERIES EDITORS' PREFACE

ABOUT THE SERIES

At the time of writing it is clear that we live in a time, certainly in the UK and other parts of Europe, if perhaps less so in other parts of the world, when there is renewed enthusiasm for constructive approaches to working with offenders to prevent crime. What do we mean by this statement and what basis do we have for making it?

First, by “constructive approaches to working with offenders” we mean bringing the use of effective methods and techniques of behaviour change into work with offenders. Indeed, this might pass as a definition of forensic clinical psychology. Thus, our focus is application of theory and research in order to develop practice aimed at bringing about a change in the offender’s functioning. The word *constructive* is important and can be set against approaches to behaviour change that seek to operate by destructive means. Such destructive approaches are typically based on the principles of deterrence and punishment, seeking to suppress the offender’s actions through fear and intimidation. A constructive approach, on the other hand, seeks to bring about changes in an offender’s functioning that will produce, say, enhanced possibilities of employment, greater levels of self-control, better family functioning or increased awareness of the pain of victims.

A constructive approach faces the criticism of being a “soft” response to damage caused by offenders, neither inflicting pain and punishment nor delivering retribution. This point raises a serious question for those involved in working with offenders. Should advocates of constructive approaches oppose retribution as a goal of the criminal justice system as incompatible with treatment and rehabilitation? Alternatively, should

constructive work with offenders take place within a system given to retribution? We believe that this issue merits serious debate.

However, to return to our starting point, history shows that criminal justice systems are littered with many attempts at constructive work with offenders, not all of which have been successful. In raising the spectre of success, the second part of our opening sentence now merits attention: that is, "constructive approaches to working with offenders *to prevent crime*". In order to achieve the goal of preventing crime, interventions must focus on the right targets for behaviour change. In addressing this crucial point, Andrews and Bonta (1994) have formulated the *need principle*:

Many offenders, especially high-risk offenders, have a variety of needs. They need places to live and work and/or they need to stop taking drugs. Some have poor self-esteem, chronic headaches or cavities in their teeth. These are all "needs". The need principle draws our attention to the distinction between *criminogenic* and *noncriminogenic* needs. Criminogenic needs are a subset of an offender's risk level. They are dynamic attributes of an offender that, when changed, are associated with changes in the probability of recidivism. Non-criminogenic needs are also dynamic and changeable, but these changes are not necessarily associated with the probability of recidivism. (p. 176)

Thus, successful work with offenders can be judged in terms of bringing about change in noncriminogenic need *or* in terms of bringing about change in criminogenic need. While the former is important and, indeed, may be a necessary precursor to offence-focused work, it is changing criminogenic need that, we argue, should be the touchstone of working with offenders.

While, as noted above, the history of work with offenders is not replete with success, the research base developed since the early 1990s, particularly the meta-analyses (e.g. Lösel, 1995), now strongly supports the position that effective work with offenders to prevent further offending is possible. The parameters of such evidence-based practice have become well established and widely disseminated under the banner of *What Works* (McGuire, 1995).

It is important to state that we are not advocating that there is only one approach to preventing crime. Clearly there are many approaches, with different theoretical underpinnings, that can be applied. Nonetheless, a tangible momentum has grown in the wake of the *What Works* movement as academics, practitioners and policy makers seek to capitalize on the possibilities that this research raises for preventing crime. The task now facing many service agencies lies in turning the research into effective practice.

Our aim in developing this Series in Forensic Clinical Psychology is to produce texts that review research and draw on clinical expertise to advance effective work with offenders. We are both committed to the ideal of evidence-based practice and we will encourage contributors to the Series

to follow this approach. Thus, the books published in the Series will not be practice manuals or "cook books": they will offer readers authoritative and critical information through which forensic clinical practice can develop. We are both enthusiastic about the contribution to effective practice that this Series can make and look forward to it developing in the years to come.

ABOUT THIS BOOK

It is a fact of life that researchers can produce as much high-quality research as they wish, but, unless there are those who can span the ravine between research and practice, the books and journal articles are only so many words on paper. The truth of this harsh fact is particularly apparent when considering the field of working with offenders. The rapid development throughout the 1990s of evidence-based programs to reduce offending, in both prisons and in the community, did not happen by accident. As events unfolded, a number of committed researchers were willing to take messages from research out into the field, challenging not only the notion that nothing works but also calling in question the effectiveness of much current practice. The assumption is often made that the conceptual struggle is with those who are sceptical about the effects of intervention. However, there are many of us who would rather face legions of sceptics than have to try and convince hardened professionals that they need to change their practice!

In the early stages of delivering the messages from research, researchers are often involved in conference and seminar presentations to service agencies, such as prisons and probation services. For researchers, this is usually a reasonably comfortable task: most researchers see presentation of research as part of their role, and they have the skills necessary for this type of work. However, the acid test for researchers emerges when the agencies begin to be convinced and want to buy into the research: the researcher then faces the hard question: So, how do we make this happen in practice? This question moves the debate into a new arena, the implementation of research findings. As anyone knows who has worked in the field, implementation of new practice is the biggest challenge of all. The researcher who treads in the deep waters of implementation needs a daunting range of attributes spanning policy formulation, developing treatment procedures, tact and diplomacy (lots!), management awareness, training skills, political awareness, practice skills, and committee and consultancy skills. With successful implementation comes the need for evaluation: which rather suggests that implementation is something researchers should take very seriously!

The editors of this book have, to their credit, seen clearly the issues of implementation as they are emerging at present. They have gathered a

distinguished group of contributors who can speak to the relevant issues. It is illuminating to read the work of those people who are genuinely shaping their field, and to see the creativity and understanding that they bring to bear on very real issues. There is a great deal to be taken from this book by researchers, policy-makers, managers and practitioners: in time to come, we hope this text is seen as a landmark publication in bridging the divide between research and practice.

June 2001

Clive Hollin and Mary McMurren

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PREFACE

The impetus for this book grew from the disparate viewpoints of research and practice. Ultimately, these converged to spur the development of this book. *Researchers* in the field of corrections in the 1990's were inundated with information from meta-analytic studies and at conferences delineating the key ingredients of effective correctional practice. Books published in the mid-1990s, in both adult corrections (Hollin, 1996; McGuire, 1995) and youth corrections (Glick & Goldstein, 1995; Hollin & Howells, 1996), focused almost exclusively on "what works". What was needed was a book that would capitalise on this important knowledge base and take it one critical step further by confronting and overcoming the "real world" challenges of program replication and program implementation.

Practitioners have always had to operationalise critical program-related concepts (e.g. treatment integrity) that have been only described superficially in most academic studies, and to cope with the day-to-day "push-pull" of correctional practice. They have had to balance what the research literature has to offer against the demands of administrators, policymakers and funders—not to mention the "counter control" of offenders. Moreover, those working with offenders have lacked an effective guidebook on how to cope with the pragmatic organizational and systemic issues which impact on their implementation of "state of the art" programs in the field.

Overall, what has been missing in the corrections field is a means to reconcile the perspectives of researchers and practitioners and thereby narrow the gap between what we *desire* from our rehabilitation programs and what we actually *deliver*. Thus, the idea for this book was born out of our commitment to provide a reference volume for both researchers and practitioners, which would review and report on the experience worldwide of *effective implementation* of offender rehabilitation programs that work. We

believe that the utilization and extension of knowledge, what is popularly referred to as *technology transfer*, is the next level of systemic intervention in criminal justice. This volume is the first to be concerned with that transfer of knowledge. Prominent researchers and practitioners in the criminal justice field contribute their knowledge of what it takes to implement effective correctional practices with *ecological integrity*.

In order to accomplish our purpose, we have organized this volume into three parts. After an introductory chapter, Part I discusses key issues in correctional effectiveness. Part II details implementation issues arising in specific programs for youth and adults in corrections. Part III takes a much broader view by reviewing the experiences of those implementing, evaluating and consulting to correctional programs across multiple sites.

Personal thanks follow:

To Dean Fixsen and Karen Blase who have been pioneers in the field of program replication and model dissemination. Their own work developing the Teaching-Family Model has epitomized a multilevel, integrated and dynamic systems approach to treatment implementation. To Merice Walker Boswell, mentor, for teaching me so much about the value of a low profile and “positive persistence” in program delivery. To Leonard Harris, my best friend, for his faith in me and what this book represents. To the managers and staff of St Lawrence Youth Association, for their support of the Teaching-Family Model, and to Mary Lynn Cousins-Brame, for her exceptional efforts in implementing the model. — G.B.

To the many skilled and dedicated clinicians and researchers of the London Family Court who provided knowledge and friendship beyond their wildest imaginings. To the leaders in Canadian criminal justice research who not only mentored, but also befriended a somewhat naive clinical psychologist over two decades ago and reminded me that the literatures of other disciplines were also relevant to understanding the issues in juvenile justice. Most notably, the leadership of Don Andrews, Paul Gendreau, Peter Jaffe and Jim Bonta have been inspirational. — A.L.

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INTRODUCTION

Chapter 1

IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES

ALAN W. LESCHIED,^{1,*} GARY A. BERNFELD[†] AND DAVID P. FARRINGTON[‡]

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TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER IN THE HUMAN SERVICE FIELD

The transfer of knowledge in the social and human services from what has largely been an academic-based knowledge to applied settings is challenging not only to correctional professionals but also to practitioners in a variety of human service settings. The literature chronicles numerous examples of programs that were either well conceived and poorly implemented or well implemented but poorly sustained (Bauman, Stein & Ireys, 1991). Of course, there is also the suspicion that the failure to implement or sustain programs that have demonstrated effectiveness in research may be tied to the more insidious, cynical intentions of some policy and program "experts". This has more to do with the unwillingness of such administrators to disavow the knowledge base in a given area and indeed purposefully undermine the integrity of that knowledge. Andrews and Bonta (1998) refer to this intentional undermining as *knowledge destruction*, a fact identified in both the

¹ Portions of this chapter written by the first author appeared in a compendium produced through Correctional Services Canada.

young offender (Leschied, Jaffe, Andrews & Gendreau, 1989) and substance abuse literature (Gendreau, 1996). Techniques of knowledge destruction are characterized by the seeming sophistication of argument in using scientific principles to negate scientific fact. Often, the use of such techniques reveals the negative beliefs and attitudes on the part of these commentators. Reductionism is the essence and dismissal is the intent. In the beginning, a careful reading of what is known about successful programs is paramount to successfully planned program implementation.

In an excellent review of the lessons learned from the literature on successful program implementation Lisbeth Shorr (1989) noted that the implementation of programs is "shaped by powerful forces" that are not easily modified even by "new knowledge". Indeed, Shorr's summary of factors necessary in successful implementation include the necessity of a climate that is "created by skilled, committed professionals respectful and trusting of the clients they serve . . . *regardless* of the precepts, demands and boundaries set by professionalism and bureaucracies" (p. 257). The necessity of providing caring programs that are coherent and easy to use, providing continuity and circumventing the traditions of professional and bureaucratic limitations were absolutely the prerogative of such effective programs. Paul Gendreau (1996), of course, would add that a senior advocate in an organization who is willing to champion the cause of such a program is an essential ingredient as well.

"Powerful forces" as Shorr calls them are certainly at work in the corrections field when it comes to transferring knowledge to practice on a broad scale. Political beliefs that have shaped correctional practice have in many cases been antagonistic to the lessons learned from the literature on effective corrections. Deterrence, sanctions and punishment-based correctional practices and policies have been pre-eminent in the last two decades. This is despite what Palmer (1996) amongst others indicates has been a failure of such programs to demonstrate reductions in offending. Yet, juxtaposed to this emphasis on punishment reflected in correctional policy has been the extraordinary growth in knowledge in the area of effective treatment.

THE NECESSITY OF A KNOWLEDGE-BASED APPROACH

Cullen et al. (1998) cite data suggesting that there continue to be many, both within and outside the corrections profession, who have failed to recognize the growing literature on effective treatment with offender populations. Despite this disappointing lack of awareness, the literature continues to grow, documenting not only progress with regard to the accumulation of evidence of effective interventions, but also summaries from numerous meta-analyses that now speak to the *patterns* of effectiveness being

documented *across* studies. Numerous researchers and practitioners now speak about the need for examining “technology transfer”; the application of what research has suggested can be effective and translation of that knowledge into routine correctional practice. This chapter focuses on the factors related to implementation of programs that attempt to comply with the principles of effective service. Though few in number, there are now studies that report on evaluations that *monitor* the *implementation* of programs at both the practitioner level—referred to as *treatment adherence*—and the broader program, service and system level—referred to as *program compliance*.

Coupled with the move to monitor and measure adherence is the growing emphasis on *dissemination* of information regarding effective programs. Training is pivotal, combining both the communication of program findings along with the kinds of support and consultation required to ensure the effective replication of those programs. Some of the more well-articulated interventions such as Multi-Systemic Therapy—see Chapter 5—have developed, along with field input and support, detailed practitioner and supervisor manuals that can assist successful dissemination, although it must be acknowledged that such higher level dissemination efforts that are also being evaluated are still relatively rare in the human services and corrections fields.

Fixsen, Blase, Timbers and Wolfe—see Chapter 7—summarize over 15 years of replication of the Teaching-Family Model across a continuum of residential and in-home programs for delinquents and other troubled youth by suggesting that the critical elements of implementation are now largely known. These include well-integrated clinical, administrative, evaluative and supervisory systems to ensure treatment integrity and quality.

The present chapter presents current findings related to program implementation and the replication of successful programs. Major findings from the meta-analyses are provided in the context of their significance to implementation issues. Implementation issues that relate to both community and residential programs are provided along with the organizational requirements that are necessary to support successful implementation efforts. Finally, there is discussion of the policy relevance in corrections of successful implementation and the future of research efforts in this area.

OVERVIEW OF MAJOR FINDINGS FROM THE META-ANALYSES

In the mid and late 1970s reviews of the program literature in corrections contributed to an extraordinary discussion that became the touchstone to a generation of corrections professionals. The *nothing works debate*, as it is been popularly known, not only became a matter for social scientists to consider

but also played into the hands of policy makers and politicians in criminal justice. Depending upon their particular political leaning, decision makers used the results of such reviews to either proclaim the failure of rehabilitation, thereby perhaps unwittingly heralding the expanded use of “get tough” measures, or used them to develop the growing science of prediction and treatment in the corrections field. Followers of the debate will now be familiar with the names of Robert Martinson (1976) in the USA and in Canada, Jalal Shamsie (1979) whose titles of qualitative reviews of the literature so provocatively proclaimed that “Nothing worked” and that “Our treatments do not work: Where do we go from here?”. And, with each provocation, there was a Paul Gendreau and Robert Ross (1979) or Ted Palmer (1996) who suggested that a more careful reading of the outcome literature would provide “bibliotherapy for cynics”.

Two decades have now passed, and with more sophistication in providing *quantitative reviews* of the prediction and outcome literature, meta-analyses have assisted in developing a *science of criminal conduct*. Such a science draws not only on linking factors that help in the understanding of *criminogenic risk levels* of certain individuals—nature and strength—but also on the literature regarding treatments or systems of service delivery that can promote effective outcomes in correctional practice. The following subsection highlights some of the major findings from the meta-analyses that relate to implementation.

Contributions from the meta-analyses

There have been a number of contributions to the meta-analyses on correctional treatment. Perhaps the most well known are those authored by Don Andrews et al. (1990) and by Mark Lipsey (Lipsey 1995; Lipsey and Wilson, 1993). Technical understanding of the approach taken by these authors will not be provided here. Suffice to say that the quality and nature of the meta-analyses that are reported reflect the quality and number of the studies in the field. Hence, the nature and quality of knowledge could not have been achieved and reported on by Andrews et al. (1990) and Lipsey were it not for the efforts of so many who contributed to that knowledge base. Indeed, Leschied and Cunningham (1999) report that the accumulation of published accounts of outcome studies in the youth corrections field had *more than tripled* in the past 10 years (1989–1998) when compared to the years prior to 1988.

Major assessment issues

Both cross-sectional and longitudinal studies have identified factors that link past or current conditions that place individuals at increasing risk for

criminogenic involvement. Andrews and Bonta (1998) summarize that these studies support a *social-psychological understanding* of criminogenic risk; that is, individuals may cognitively process certain conditions in their environment that develop or reward certain styles or content of thinking that are reflected in antisocial behavior. Those system variables that influence risk to a greater extent include families of origin, peer associates and school or working conditions. Data has also supported the link between antisocial behavior and substance use in the understanding of crime cycles (Huizinga, Menard and Elliott, 1989). Measures of those factors that contribute most significantly and seem to be attracting the greatest attention in the literature include multifactorial indicators as measured by the Level of Service Inventory (Andrews and Bonta, 1998), criminal sentiments (Simourd & Van de Ven, 1999) and psychopathy (Hare, 1991).

Accurate and relevant assessment of criminogenic risk is tied to the major outcomes from the meta-analyses on effective treatment. While Lipsey has identified the major *general* contributors to successful correctional programs the principal contribution of Andrews et al. (1990) rests in the refining of understanding regarding the appropriate targets of intervention. While Lipsey's results were encouraging regarding the average effect sizes supporting reductions of 10–30 per cent in reoffending within particular types of programming (i.e. behavioral over psychodynamic), Andrews et al. (1990) showed that certain program components targeted to specific criminogenic risk factors—referred to as clinical relevance—could improve outcomes by an even greater extent. Hence, Andrews et al. (1990) articulated the *risk principle of case classification* as a critical component of effective service thereby linking assessment with service delivery in the overall approach to effective correctional treatment. These findings therefore suggest that assessments of appropriate risk relevant to criminal justice involvement are a necessary and fundamental part of successful program implementation.

TREATMENT IMPLEMENTATION/INTEGRITY AS A "FIELD" IN ITS OWN RIGHT

With advances in the empirical understanding of assessment and treatment of offender populations, the next challenge appears to be the dissemination and application of the known principles of effective correctional treatment. While having a much briefer history, there is a growing literature on the dissemination and support for translating successful programs to different jurisdictions and service delivery systems. This section will highlight some of the more salient findings from that literature.

Hundert (1999), in describing the challenges and potential for losing good ideas as programs are disseminated, uses the "Bermuda Triangle" as a fitting

analogy to describe implementation. Bauman et al. (1991) suggest there are at least three levels of development in the implementation of programs in the human services field including (a) building a generative knowledge base, (b) developing new programs and (c) disseminating effective programs for others to use. McCarthy (1989), for example, identified critical structural and systemic supports for planned organizational change across a large service delivery system. This summary identifies seven critical elements to dissemination:

- the decision at the senior level of government that a *sustained effort* at service delivery is needed;
- the need to actively foster *multilevel ownership* of innovation;
- *seeding* the service delivery system with several pilot programs or to foster interest and demonstrate efficacy;
- ensuring that the *centres of excellence* are given *long-term fiscal support* and are led by competent champions of innovation;
- the recognition that *leadership* from the “top” must be provided and maintained over time in order to neutralize the forces of counter-control which are expected to develop;
- building *community investment* in the innovation, so that its longevity is not limited to the initial supporters;
- *top to bottom training* of staff to foster their familiarity with and support of the innovation.

While Hundert, McCarthy and others have identified the seemingly overwhelming challenge of dissemination and implementation, enough is now known to begin to look at implementation within a structural, organizational framework. The following section sets forth a multilevel systems perspective in looking at a comprehensible model of understanding human service program implementation around which the balance of this book is organized.

A MULTILEVEL SYSTEMS PERSPECTIVE

This section provides a rationale and working framework within which most of this book is organized. Bernfeld, Blase and Fixsen (1990) examined the delivery of human services within the context of a systems perspective. Their rationale for adopting such a perspective was that competing variables in multilevel systems often account for program failure, so that the identification and manipulation of these implementation variables is a prerequisite for program success. They contend that these variables operate at multiple levels and interact in a reciprocal and dynamic manner. Bernfeld et al. propose a “behavioural systems perspective”, which integrates the optimal qualities of