

2018 CSAC CHALLENGE AWARD ENTRY
Issue Area: Administration of Justice & Public Safety
Population: Suburban County Category

MONTEREY COUNTY JUVENILE HALL ABC PROGRAM

Overview: Monterey County developed and implemented a Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS) based behavior modification program to effectively manage youth behaviors within Juvenile Hall.

Challenge: In anticipation of Senate Bill 1143 (SB 1143) being passed by the State Legislature, which essentially eliminated the use of room confinement as a disciplinary response to negative behavior in youth detention facilities, the Monterey County Probation Department set out to create a PBIS based behavior management system that could effectively respond to negative behaviors and engage youth in prosocial problem solving, reduce the criminogenic risk factors that contribute to delinquency, exceed both State and Federal minimum mandates regarding the use of sanctions, and improve both the behavior of youthful offenders and the safety of the facility staff. While a lofty program development challenge in and of itself, the program was to be created with little or negligible impact to the facility budget.

Innovative Solution: After evaluating the use of various control programs and acknowledging institution staff's understanding of the responsivity principle in delivering rehabilitative interventions, an incentive based program was designed, utilizing individualized support plans to focus on the root causes of negative conduct and to phase out separation techniques as a sanction for poor behavior. Internal incentives were developed for youth displaying positive behaviors, including the creation of a token economy and commissary. Responsivity activities were developed for youth displaying behaviors in need of correction, focusing on the specific

causes of those behaviors through meetings with staff, behavior intervention techniques, and referrals to Behavioral Health support staff. The goal of any imposed sanction was to increase prosocial behavior and impose the least restrictive level of discipline, while conducting daily reviews of youth behavior to identify both positive conduct and problems that could be addressed through behavior intervention techniques.

Originality: The ABC Program is unique to our suburban population category and has been recognized by the California Association of Probation Institution Administrators (CAPIA) for its innovation.

Cost Effectiveness: The financial impact to the department was nominal, primarily consisting of internally training staff in conflict resolution, cognitive behavior techniques and tools, and crisis intervention skill building. It is anticipated that the reduction in negative and violent behaviors will result in an overall cost improvement in staffing management issues.

Results: The ABC pilot program was found to have positively impacted the behavior of the involved youth, which demonstrated that PBIS strategies could effectively be utilized within the Juvenile Institution setting. It has helped shift the culture of the institution from being sanction based to incentive based, utilizing Evidence Based Practices (EBP) to challenge youth to contemplate and recognize how their attitudes, thoughts and beliefs shape their behaviors. Based on the laudable success of the pilot program, the department implemented the ABC Program facility wide in October of 2017, ahead of the January 1, 2018 effective date of SB 1143.

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