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## Stop the Spread of Infectious Disease

By Dawn Shoemaker and Robert Kravitz

**Published: 10/05/2009**



Dr. Joseph Bick has established quite a name for himself in the corrections industry. When Bick, an infectious disease specialist, became the chief medical officer at the California Medical Facility, Vacaville, CA, in 1993, he discovered a chaotic situation: years of neglect of inmates and prison facilities, a medical staff that was demoralized, and HIV-positive inmates whom he described as being in “open rebellion” due to poor medical care as well as a lack of access to treatment drugs.

Over the years, he has helped improve the facility considerably, according to most accounts, some say even making it a

model prison for the treatment and prevention of various diseases. He implemented prevention strategies to help stop the transmission of illnesses common in prisons, such as Hepatitis A and C, as well as other infectious diseases, some of which, such as MRSA,\* were likely not even an issue when Bick started his career.

According to Bick, prisons and jails provide an ideal environment for the transmission of contagious diseases. This is due to a variety of factors, some of which are beyond administrators' control. One such factor is the transient status of inmates in many facilities. They are often moved from one location to another, increasing the likelihood of an illness spreading and making it hard to isolate the origin of the outbreak.

Additionally, there are a number of hygiene issues that can spread disease in facilities if protocol is not followed properly. Fortunately, many of these--from the wearing and proper use of gloves to increased hand washing by staff and inmates to more thorough, hygienic cleaning--can help slow the transmission of disease and benefit and protect the health of inmates and, because most of the inmates will eventually be released, the public at large.

### **Proper Use of Gloves**

Most corrections administrators, health care providers, and staffers are well aware of the importance of wearing gloves. Unfortunately, in prisons, just as in medical facilities, gloves are often not worn as frequently as they should be or as required.

Gloves should be worn whenever one is likely to come in contact with blood or other bodily fluids, including cuts and bruises on the skin of inmates and staff members. Gloves should also be worn when touching contaminated surfaces. These guidelines apply to both health care administrators in the prison as well as correctional staffers.

According to Bick, the proper selection of gloves is also critical, and the type chosen depends on where and how they are to be used. For instance, he suggests the following:

- Thick utility gloves should be worn when handling, examining, or cleaning potentially infected surfaces. These gloves also provide an added measure of protection when searching inmates' cells.
- When handling used linens, towels, and similar items, examination gloves should be worn. Often used in medical settings, these are vinyl gloves that are worn once and then disposed of.
- If examining a wound, a sore, or open tissue on an inmate or staff member, sterile or surgical gloves are called for. These gloves provide an added level of protection, have more precise sizing than other types of gloves, and are typically made of latex powdered with cornstarch to lubricate the gloves. These are also single-use gloves.

Removing the gloves can be almost as important as wearing them in the first place. If proper removal procedures are not followed, hands can become contaminated, potentially spreading disease. The proper way to remove gloves is as follows:

1. Grasp the outside edge of the left-hand glove at the highest point near the wrist.
2. Peel the glove off the hand, essentially turning the glove inside out.
3. Keep the removed glove in the gloved right hand and discard.
4. For the right-hand glove, slide the index finger under the glove at the highest point near the wrist.
5. Peel the glove off from the inside and then discard.
6. Wash hands using soap and water.

## **The Importance of Hand Washing**

It cannot be overstated how important proper hand hygiene is in a prison setting. Washing with warm, soapy water for approximately 20 seconds is recommended. Additionally, rubbing fingernails against the palm of the opposite hand helps remove bacteria lodged under the nails.

Along with proper hand washing, it is vitally important to use alcohol-based hand sanitizers. However, hand washing and the use of sanitizers are not the same. Hand washing removes soils and contaminants from hands. Sanitizers kill germs and bacteria, but they do not clean hands. They should be used as an interim, temporary measure to supplement frequent hand washing.

Additionally, to stop the spread of disease in a crowded prison setting, inmates must also be educated about the importance of washing their hands frequently. Unfortunately, many correctional facilities lack adequate facilities for washing hands with soap and water—making frequent and proper hand washing by inmates and staffers difficult.

## **Health-Based Cleaning**

Proper housekeeping procedures and cleaning systems are paramount in a correctional facility, and this is of even greater importance today than in the past. According to Peter Sheldon, veteran of the building service contracting industry and vice president of operations for Coverall Cleaning Concepts, health-based or hygienic cleaning typically found in health care settings to control the spread of infection should now be considered in other types of settings, from schools and office buildings to correctional facilities. “Because of the growing number of pathogenic threats showing up in these facilities, it has become clear that there is a significant need for this type of microbial-focused cleaning to extend to all facilities.”

Sheldon explains that some of the most crucial elements to a health-based or hygienic cleaning system include:

- Strict color-coding methodology in all cleaning to avoid cross-contamination. This system designates different-colored microfiber cleaning cloths, for instance, for specific cleaning tasks.
- Microfiber technology in all cleaning cloths and mopping programs to increase soil and matter containment and removal. Additionally, one manufacturer markets flip and fold “smart-towel” microfibers cloths. These allow the user to fold the towel into quadrants so a fresh surface is always readily available.
- Flat mopping technology to increase efficiency, improve soil removal, and further eliminate cross-contamination.
- Hospital-grade disinfectant chemistry in all cleaning compounds.
- The use of spray-and-vac cleaning systems wherever possible. According to Wikipedia encyclopedia, with these systems, surfaces do not need to be touched by the custodial worker. The equipment applies a chemical to surfaces to be cleaned and is then rinsed away. Select machines have a built-in wet-vac system to remove liquids and contaminants and expedite drying time.

## **The Recession, Correctional Facilities, and Health**

As states around the country prepare their budgets for the coming fiscal year, one after another is looking for ways to cut costs related to correctional facilities. One state, California, would even like to sell one or more of its prisons, in the hopes that private industry might be able to run them more efficiently and less expensively.

However, with these cuts and proposals, questions are arising about the impact on the health of the inmates incarcerated in these facilities. And according to Bick, this is more than just a correctional-facility issue. Because most inmates will eventually be released, focusing more attention on the health of those incarcerated as well as the health and cleanliness of correctional facilities will help prevent the spread of disease to the general public as well.

### **Sidebar:**

#### **Worker Productivity Issues**

With budget cuts, correctional managers are not only looking to clean more hygienically, but to find ways to improve worker productivity. According to a study conducted at North Carolina State University, which has more than 32,500 students and 10 million square feet of campus facilities, using spray-and-vac cleaning systems were two-thirds faster than the conventional cleaning systems • mops, buckets, cleaning cloths - used previously.

This corresponds with studies conducted by ISSA, the leading trade association for the professional cleaning industry. Their studies found surfaces could be cleaned in approximately a third the time using a spray-and-vac cleaning system.

\*Methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus

Dawn Shoemaker and Robert Kravitz are writers for the professional cleaning industry. They can be reached at [info@alturasolutions.com](mailto:info@alturasolutions.com)

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## Two Sheets of Music

By *Caterina Spinaris Tudor, Ph.D.*

**Published: 08/10/2009**



Recently two correctional workers and I were discussing what helps staff stay “sane.” Without hesitation both said, “Correctional workers must be able to switch their mindset from work to home.” One added, “I learned how to live in two very different worlds and still not lose ‘me’.”

Indeed, corrections personnel live in two worlds. These worlds are like two sheets of music. Daily staff is asked to switch from one tune to the other. These two worlds involve very different assumptions about what is expected, how people must behave, and what constitutes a “good day.”

At work corrections staff knows that danger is always lurking in the background. They get trained to be always on their guard and to have their psychological shield up. Safety and security are top priorities. The general expectation is that people will lie, manipulate, steal or kill to get what they want. Staff learns to assume that what they witness may be a game. To avoid getting “conned,” staff learns to suppress natural tendencies toward caring or being helpful. So corrections staff becomes overly cautious (paranoid may not be far off), mistrusting and “hard.” And a good day is when all staff goes home alive and intact.

At home though, corrections staff are confronted with a very different set of assumptions and requirements. Loved ones expect them to be trusting, compassionate and forgiving, willing to share both power and responsibilities. In the “free” world most people assume others to be law-abiding, peace-loving, and caring. A good day on the outside is when people enjoy life, and love and support one another.

Problems ensue when corrections personnel cannot quite make the switch from work to home, when the staff’s negative outlook and cynicism come home with them, often with heartbreaking results.

How can staff learn to switch their tune, to transition between the inside and outside worlds more effectively? Here are some ideas on this.

1. It is crucial to remember that the two sheets of music are to be played by the same musician. The same

person goes to work and returns home. Their core remains the same—their values and principles. That core needs to be the foundation of their operating in both worlds. What does that core need to be like to make the transition successful?

In my opinion what it takes is embracing worthy, positive values to guide one's choices and actions consistently, no matter what the setting. That makes switching between sheets of music easier.

Examples of such values and principles are honesty, respect, fairness, self-control, trustworthiness, willingness to acknowledge one's errors and to make amends, caring for the common good, and the ability to forgive/let go and not succumb to hatred. Such values make it possible for staff to behave wisely and constructively both at work and at home.

2. Staff needs to also have concrete markers to remind them that indeed they have switched from one sheet of music—one world—to the other. To help them come out of their corrections role when they get home, staff can use routines and rituals. They may take a shower and change into casual clothes. They may talk with loved ones about each other's day or vent for a time before focusing on their home life. They may work out, spend time with their children, tinker in the garage, garden, feed their animals, volunteer somewhere, or take the dog for a walk.
3. Staff need to frequently correct their thinking and remember that what may be common on the inside often does not apply as much, if at all, on the outside. For example, they need to remind themselves that, "I'm not just a cop. I'm also a parent, spouse, friend." "There ARE decent, kind people out there." "Kindness is not weakness." "I can keep an open mind and give people a chance to earn my trust."
4. Letting loved ones in on this whole tune-switching process can make it much easier. Staff can share with them about struggles and successes regarding adapting from the inside world to outside realities. They can ask for help (yes, you can) through patience, understanding and reminders that the free world is very different on the average than the corrections world.
5. On the other hand, when one is ready to go back to work, it is important to remind oneself of certain basic corrections-related principles. Safety first. Be on the lookout for trouble. Complacency can kill. Have each other's back. Weigh the legitimacy of offenders' requests. LISTEN. Leave personal needs at home.

Yes, this all takes intention and effort. On particularly tough days when work incidents are branded in your mind, heart and brain, it takes extra time and energy to switch between the two sheets of music.

However, this switch can and needs to be made if you are to maintain your sanity and your quality of life in both worlds.

[Visit the Caterina Tudor page](#)

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### 1. **Kellie** on 08/12/2009:

I totally agree that Corrections Officers must be involved with anything but crime and law

enforcement when you are not at work. I don't watch TV, rarely watch the news. This field can become so all consuming that it is dangerous. We live a higher level of awareness for long periods of time. I don't think most of us even realise that when we feel relaxed we are at a level of awareness that most people find "keyed up" which is far from normal. You must surround yourself with people that you can trust and become involved in activities that make you single task because it is so task loaded that you have to think of nothing but the task at hand...climbing is an example. Surround yourself with people who are positive and have nothing to do with the criminal justice system. Read books, listen or play music, become involved with children, charity, hard workouts....I could go on for hours. This is my personal policy.....I limit my time spent with co-workers when not at work. I do not want to talk shop when I am not at work. I don't tell people what I do for a living as it forces you to be the center of attention and everyone wants war stories. I like to be with people that have nothing to do with the system. I am very careful how I spend my free time. It must be positive, improve me in some way, or improve my community. I have to be reminded that there are good people out in the world. I have to fight the "everyone has been to jail" syndrome. That is my sign that I am past the realistic line in my head. I also advocate for massage therapy. Find a massage therapist that you totally trust and get a massage at least once a month. I use to get a massage every week, monetary issues have changed that, but it really helps.

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## 2. **Best Jail.com** on 08/12/2009:

Sometimes its very hard to switch modes. I find myself riding around in my car in that on guard mode, ready to snap at other drivers that do dumb stuff or don't get out my way quick enough. You get use to giving orders and expecting people to follow them. Even other officers with their attitudes sometimes push you to your boiling point and you go off on them just like you would an inmate. Its like I know you didn't try me. We are use to never backing down especially if you are a female in a man"s world. When I get like that I need a vacation or I have to put myself in check before I get into a confrontation that could end my life or make me lose my job. Sometimes my kids have to put me in check and say hey mom this ain't good you keep having these altercations with people you need to check yourself. My grand kids are really the ones that make me switch modes because I do have to be loving understanding and patient. I been doing this now for 17 years and I got 7 more that I'm doing. I'm sure it will continue to be a struggle but thats just the way it is in law enforcement.

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3. **Neal** on 08/06/2009:

This is one of the unspoken factors that drives good people from the field. You go home beat, often discouraged, still in protective mode, keyed up from a day in corrections, and then your family needs you to be emotionally available for them. It's hard to turn off what you have been involved in all day. I think if we had a sense that what we were doing was really making a difference, it would be easier to let go of it at the end of the day. The other issue that makes letting go hard is that the job never seems to stop. There is always the possibility of getting a phone call sometime during the night, something has hit the fan, and you are back in work mode. It slowly chips away at you. I found that my best way to cope was to immerse myself in things that have absolutely nothing to do with crime or corrections when I got home, which includes turning off the TV, with its constant stream of violence, cop shows, murder mysteries, etc. Certainly don't need any more of that!

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4. **Sgt. NO** on 08/05/2009:

This is so true. I've been in this business for 16+ years. I've seen many good people get into trouble because, the line between work and home becomes blurred. When family members noticed the change in me, I took heed to the warning. Now, I de-escalate myself on the way home from work each day. For those who are finding it hard to keep work and home separated, one thing that helps me is music. Music is a universal language, it can relax the mind and put things into perspective. Of course, I'm not as trusting of people I don't know, when we go into a restaurant I still have to see who's coming and going (It drives my wife crazy). But that's the nature of this business, always aware of your surroundings. I do enjoy my time away from work and time with my family. Family time is the most important part of the day, that's one aspect of my life that I cannot nor will not give up.

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## Key Roles of Law Enforcement in Sex Offender Management

By *Center for Sex Offender Management*

**Published: 08/10/2009**



### Introduction

Law enforcement officials have always played a pivotal role in promoting community safety through crime response, public education, and crime prevention activities. Currently, safety concerns are particularly high with respect to the presence of sex offenders in local communities. Highly publicized violent sex crimes, generally involving child victims, draw this issue to the forefront and further heighten public fears.

In some instances, citizens have mobilized themselves in attempts to drive sex offenders from communities, and some

recent laws (i.e., residency bans) have had the same overall effect. Experts indicate that this can actually decrease public safety, in part because law enforcement officers and others responsible for sex offender management will not be able to track offenders' whereabouts or provide effective supervision and monitoring, which is certainly not in the public interest.[1]

*Law enforcement agencies have long recognized that fear can be just as paralyzing to a community as the actual perpetration of a crime. It matters little whether the incidence of sex crimes is low; the public reacts to the danger they perceive. As Paul Grabosky (1995), from the Australian Institute of Criminology, said: "While the fear of crime expressed by some citizens is well-founded, other individuals are at less personal risk than they might believe. Their fear, however, is no less real."*

Therefore, the key question is not how to keep sex offenders out of communities; rather, it is how to best manage sex offenders who are in the community and still ensure public safety.

Citizens generally turn first to law enforcement for these and other answers. And undoubtedly, law enforcement officials are an integral part of the broader systemic response.

The purpose of this brief is to provide an overview of the multiple roles that law enforcement can play in increasing public safety and reducing sexual victimization through sex offender management efforts.

## **Sex Offenders are a Diverse Population**

Because sex offenders are often cast in a single light, community members, lawmakers, and others tend to assume that they should all be managed in the same way. In reality, the individuals who commit sex offenses are nearly as diverse as the general public. They differ in terms of their demographics, the crimes they commit, the individuals whom they victimize, their reasons for engaging in sexually abusive behavior, and the extent to which they can be safely managed in the community.

Indeed, the level of risk that sex offenders pose to communities is one of the important ways in which sex offenders differ from one another. Some have a high likelihood of reoffending, whereas others are at relatively low risk to recidivate. This has implications for a number of decisions that are made throughout the system. Research indicates that increasing public safety by reducing the risk of recidivism is more likely to be successful when the intensity of correctional interventions matches offenders' levels of risk (see Andrews & Bonta, 2006). This means that intensive supervision, monitoring, and treatment are best reserved for higher-risk sex offenders, and lower-intensity strategies are more effective for lower-risk sex offenders.

Specialized assessment tools can help differentiate higher- from lower-risk offenders and ensure that stakeholders throughout the system – including judges, law enforcement agents, community supervision officers, and treatment professionals – routinely use this information to inform decisions.

## **Sex Offender Management Requires a Comprehensive Strategy**

The problem of sexual offending is complex and multifaceted and, as such, addressing this issue requires a multifaceted and comprehensive strategy. A comprehensive approach takes into account various responses and activities throughout the criminal justice system, including the following (see, e.g., Carter, Bumby, & Talbot, 2004):

- Investigations of sex crimes;
- Prosecution and sentencing decisions;
- Assessment practices to inform decisions pre- and post-sentencing;
- Prison-based and community-based interventions;
- Supervision, tracking, and monitoring strategies; and
- Public education and prevention efforts.

Given these components, it is clear that the responsibility for sex offender management cannot rest solely on a single agency or discipline. Collaborative partnerships across multiple agencies and disciplines are necessary. Law enforcement officials are among the key stakeholders that play a significant role in these efforts.

## **Community Policing Provides a Complementary Model**

Prior to the 1980s, the primary role of law enforcement was to respond to law violations; the focus of their efforts was on the investigation and apprehension processes. This reactive approach often resulted in officers responding to the same locations to deal with the same or similar concerns time and time again. Reactive strategies proved to be a significant drain on resources and did not result in significant reductions in crime.

In the 1980s, the concept of community policing emerged as a philosophy and practice for law enforcement agencies. The basic principles of community policing dictate that police agencies work with communities in innovative ways to address crime and the conditions that lead to it, reduce the fear of crime within the community, and enhance the overall quality of life of citizens (Trojanowicz & Bucqueroux, 1990, 1994).

The result has been a shift to a much more proactive approach to law enforcement that promotes problem solving, collaboration with community partners, public education, and prevention. Presently, well over half of the police departments nationwide have adopted elements of community policing, most often through the use of problem-solving partnerships and community education efforts (Hickman & Reaves, 2006).

These particular community policing approaches complement the various components of a comprehensive sex offender management model. For example, while law enforcement officers take the lead role in responding to and investigating sex crimes, they remain actively involved in partnerships throughout other aspects of the system as a means of ongoing management and prevention efforts. Key partners for law enforcement officials include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Victim advocates, who provide assistance and support to those who are affected by sexual victimization, and who help to ensure that law enforcement agencies are responsive to the rights, needs, and interests of victims throughout the investigative process;
- Prosecutors, who make charging decisions based in large part on the investigations conducted by law enforcement;
- Community supervision officers (i.e., probation and parole officers), who are responsible for implementing strategies for reducing and otherwise managing sex offenders' risk to reoffend and for ensuring that sex offenders abide by the conditions of their supervision; and
- Community agencies and organizations, which provide or coordinate programs, services, and other resources for victims and offenders.

Collaborative partnerships for community policing and sex offender management are based on the recognition that public safety benefits can be maximized by respecting different perspectives, exchanging information, coordinating limited resources, and appreciating the complementary roles and responsibilities that exist within and across agencies and disciplines.

### **The Traditional Role of Law Enforcement: Investigating Sex Crimes**

The responsibilities of law enforcement officers begin the moment a sex crime is reported. Indeed, uniformed officers are often the first to have contact with identified victims. It is important to note, however, that a large percentage of individuals who have been sexually victimized do not report these crimes to the police or other public safety officials (Hazelwood & Burgess, 2008; Tjaden & Thoennes, 2006; Woods, 2008).

Under-reporting occurs for many reasons, including the following:

- The extremely private and personal nature of sexual victimization;
- Anxiety about their identity being made public;
- Fears that they will not be believed or may even be blamed for the crime;
- Self-doubt and self-blame;

- Emotional ties to, financial dependence on, and/or concerns about the prosecution of the perpetrator; and
- Fears about retaliation.

### *Community Policing Defined*

*“Community policing is a philosophy that promotes organizational strategies, which support the systematic use of partnerships and problem-solving techniques, to proactively address the immediate conditions that give rise to public safety issues such as crime, social disorder, and fear of crime.”*

*Source: Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, U.S. Department of Justice,  
<http://www.cops.usdoj.gov>*

When victims of sex crimes do come forward, it is generally because they hope to prevent victimization from happening again to themselves or to others (Tjaden & Thoennes, 2006). But even then, they may later recant some or all of the allegations or express hesitance around participating in the investigation and subsequent court proceedings, for the same reasons noted above.

As such, the nature of the interactions between the investigating officer and the victim become a paramount consideration. Law enforcement personnel must demonstrate respect, sensitivity, and support and take great care to minimize the potential for inadvertently re-traumatizing victims during the course of the investigation (Woods, 2008). Immediately engaging victim advocates, providing referrals and linkages to resources that are available to victims and their families, and offering information about the investigation and subsequent court processes are among the strategies that patrol officers can routinely employ (Woods, 2008).

### **Challenges Associated with Investigating Sex Crimes**

In addition to under-reporting challenges, multiple other factors complicate the investigation of sex crimes, including the following (see, e.g., Hazelwood & Burgess, 2008; Woods, 2008):

- The often-familiar nature of the relationship between the identified victim and suspect (e.g., commonly family members or acquaintances);
- Limited physical evidence, particularly for cases in which reporting was delayed, victims bathed or showered prior to reporting, or overt acts of physical aggression were absent;
- Obtaining reliable information from child victims because of memory, suggestibility, or limited verbal abilities;
- “Date rape” substances that affect a victim’s awareness and/or memory of the event which can lead to delayed reporting and, in turn, impact toxicology evidence; and
- Computer-based sex crimes, such as those involving sexual solicitations or other inappropriate on-line conversations in the absence of physical contact.

These unique challenges underscore the need for specialized training for law enforcement officers who have investigative authority or may be otherwise intervening in sex crimes cases. Ideally, officer training includes forensic interviewing techniques, responding to victims of sex crimes, collecting and preserving sex crime-specific evidence, and utilizing or accessing specialized technologies and tools (e.g., computer search software,

sex offender registry databases, fingerprint analysis systems, DNA analyses) that can be useful for investigations in these types of cases.

At a more fundamental level, law enforcement personnel can benefit from introductory training and information that is designed to enhance officers' awareness and understanding of sex offenders and sexual victimization trends. As is true with all who have a role in sex offender management, attitudes and beliefs about this population impact the ways in which they carry out their duties and the messages that they convey to their agency partners and the public. Indeed, introductory training for officers can dispel common myths, assumptions, or biases that may unduly influence officers' interpretations and responses during the investigative process.[2]

### ***Examples of Formalized Law Enforcement Partnerships for Investigating Sex Crimes***

***Sexual Assault Response Teams:*** *These multidisciplinary teams are established to ensure that identified victims receive a range of needed services (e.g., medical care, legal assistance, counseling) and to increase the potential for sex crimes to be prosecuted successfully. Team members typically include a forensic examiner, victim advocate, prosecuting attorney, and law enforcement officer. Formal protocols outline the roles and responsibilities for these investigative teams.*

***Child Advocacy Centers:*** *These programs/facilities are designed to provide a child-focused, comprehensive, multidisciplinary response to the investigation, prosecution, and treatment of child sexual abuse, including sexual victimization. Services commonly include forensic interviews, medical evaluations, educational and treatment services, and support to victims and their families. The teams are often comprised of law enforcement, prosecutors, medical and mental health professionals, child protection services personnel, and victim advocates.*

***Internet Crimes Against Children Task Forces:*** *This is a federally supported initiative designed to address the problem of sexual exploitation of children via the Internet. The program encourages state and local law enforcement agencies to establish multi-agency, cross-jurisdictional responses to these crimes. Representatives of these task forces include federal, state, and local law enforcement officials, federal and local prosecutors, local educators, and other practitioners such as treatment providers.*

## **Enhancing Investigations through Collaboration**

Investigating sex crimes requires a coordinated team of partners, each of whom brings distinct expertise and a commitment to collaboration. In addition to a law enforcement investigator, the team composition typically includes a victim advocate, medical professional, and prosecutor. The structure varies depending upon the scope or type of investigation (e.g., child sexual abuse, forcible rape, computer-based child exploitation). In many states, formal policies and protocols define the required team members and operating procedures for these types of teams.

Strategic partnerships for investigating sex crimes allow law enforcement agencies to minimize duplication of investigative efforts, enhance the collection of reliable evidence, and limit the potential for the investigation process to negatively impact victims and their families. Ultimately, this ensures integrity of the investigation

process, increases clearance rates, and results in greater potential for successful prosecution.

## **The Expanded Role: Supporting Ongoing Sex Offender Management Efforts**

Beyond their initial investigation and apprehension functions, law enforcement officers play a significant part within the broader system of sex offender management long after suspects are convicted and sentenced, and even after sex offenders have been discharged from the authority of corrections and supervision agencies. Some of the responsibilities have been added or expanded in recent years as a direct result of changes to state and federal sex offender-specific laws, whereas others build upon already established community policing strategies within and outside of the field of sex offender management.

## **Implementing Sex Offender Registration Laws**

When federal legislation required states to establish sex offender registries in the mid to late 1990s, an important role was defined for law enforcement agencies nationwide: to enhance ongoing investigation and tracking efforts. Sex offender registration creates a mechanism for “keeping track” of convicted sex offenders and provides authorities with a natural starting point when investigating sex crimes.

This is accomplished by collecting identifying information about convicted sex offenders (e.g., name, address, photograph, fingerprints, DNA sample) and entering this information into databases that are accessible to law enforcement agencies nationwide. The extensive information that is maintained in these databases can help investigators quickly rule in or rule out specific sex offenders as suspects.

Because the value of these registries is dependent upon their accuracy, most law enforcement agencies are also responsible for verifying the data through in-person contacts with registered sex offenders. National guidelines prescribe the minimum intervals for these verifications, which range from three months to one year, depending upon the tier to which an offender is assigned,[3] although some states actually conduct verifications monthly. Several jurisdictions throughout the country have dedicated specific officer positions, or created teams that include combinations of police officers, sheriff’s deputies, and civilian employees, to conduct monthly address verifications (see IACP, 2007).

Conducting in-person address verifications can have significant workload and resource implications for law enforcement agencies, but some agency officials believe that the accountability and monitoring benefits far outweigh the costs (IACP, 2007). Examples of the benefits include identifying any changes in offenders’ physical appearance or condition, updating other important information such as employment status or registered vehicles, and sending a clear message to offenders about being held accountable.

The value becomes even greater when patrol officers use address verifications for more than just satisfying a policy requirement and instead take the opportunity to use them as purposeful contacts (IACP, 2007). For example, capitalizing on the address verification contact allows officers to:

- Assess important risk-related changes in offenders’ circumstances;
- Establish and maintain rapport with offenders;
- Become more familiar with other members of offenders’ households; and
- Serve as a visible resource to others in the neighborhood or community.

This highlights a few examples of the manner in which community policing strategies can be applied to sex

offender management.

## **Conducting Community Notifications**

In addition to ensuring that sex offender registries are accurate and up to date, law enforcement agencies are also charged with releasing information to the public about registered sex offenders who are residing in their communities (i.e., community notification).

The federal and state statutes that require community notification are designed to raise public awareness about these sex offenders, which ideally empowers citizens to assume a role in promoting safety for themselves, their families, and their communities.

The broadest community notification strategy occurs through the posting of registered sex offenders on registry websites that are generally maintained by local and state law enforcement agencies.

Additionally, many law enforcement officers actively reach out to citizens to inform them about specific sex offenders living nearby. For example, patrol officers may make door-to-door contacts in certain neighborhoods, contact at-risk entities on a “need to know” basis (e.g., schools or daycare centers), or issue special bulletins or alerts through the media.

Community notifications are also conducted through community meetings. This approach differs from the other strategies in that community meetings are a collaborative effort between law enforcement and a team of partners such as community supervision officers, prosecutors, victim advocates, and treatment providers. It further differs because the public receives information that extends far beyond a description of a given sex offender. Rather, team members provide information about their respective roles and responsibilities in sex offender management efforts, review myths and facts about sex offenders and victims, address community involvement and reaction, and discuss prevention measures.

From a community policing perspective, notification meetings are designed as proactive opportunities to engage and educate the public in a constructive, problem-solving dialogue. Citizens are afforded the opportunity to ask questions, clarify the issues, voice their concerns, and explore potential ways in which they can prevent sexual victimization in their homes and communities. This approach is also more likely to achieve the intended goals of community notification and minimize the potential for unanticipated effects (e.g., increased fear among citizens, hostility directed toward offenders) that can occur when notification is conducted in the absence of a well-coordinated, deliberate, and thoughtful strategy.

## **Tracking with Technology**

Over the past several years, law enforcement agencies have begun to increasingly use technologies to enhance their routine patrol activities. For example, over half of the police departments nationwide now use in-field computers (i.e., either laptops or vehicle-mounted) to access criminal records or vehicle registration records, identify outstanding warrants or current protection orders, or produce field reports (Hickman & Reaves, 2006). As applied to sex offender management, officers can use in-field computers for mapping registered sex offenders in a given location, accessing sex offender registry information when questions or concerns arise during routine patrols, conducting address verifications, and quickly sharing information with community supervision officers as needed.

## **What Law Enforcement Officials – and the Public They Protect – Should Know about Sex Offenders**

- *Sex offenders are a diverse group with different motivators, patterns, risk factors, types of offenses, backgrounds, social histories, and socioeconomic backgrounds.*
- *Juveniles are responsible for a significant proportion of arrests for sex offenses; although they share some common characteristics with adult sex offenders, developmental and other differences have significant management implications.*
- *Most sex offenders victimize family members or acquaintances, not strangers.*
- *Sex crimes often occur in the homes of the victims or offenders, or other private settings; victims are much less likely to be taken from or victimized in public settings.*
- *Risk for reoffending varies from sex offender to sex offender; some pose a high risk, others pose a lower risk.*
- *Reoffense risk for a given sex offender can change over time depending upon specific risk factors, either as a result of changing circumstances or interventions.*
- *Sex offenders are more apt to recidivate with a non-sex crime than with a new sex offense.*

Most notable from a technology perspective is the use of Global Positioning Systems (GPS) for tracking sex offenders in the community. Indeed, using this specific form of electronic monitoring for sex offenders has become a widespread practice throughout the country (see IACP, 2008). To date, it has been primarily employed by community supervision or community corrections agencies as a surveillance tool for sex offenders under probation or parole supervision. However, with the increasing applicability of some sex offender-specific laws to persons who are no longer under community supervision (e.g., lifetime GPS, residency restrictions, and other “buffer” zones), the use of GPS by law enforcement agencies will likely increase in the years to come (IACP, 2008).

### **Joining Local Collaborative Teams**

Consistent with a community policing orientation and within a comprehensive sex offender management model, law enforcement officers can play significant roles in ongoing sex offender management by participating in multidisciplinary teams. These collaborative teams serve one or more functions, such as developing local policies, enhancing case management practices, and/or providing community education and outreach services.

### **Developing local policies**

Local policy teams are designed to assess the various policies that guide how the system manages sex offenders, from the investigation of sex crimes to the supervision of offenders post-conviction. These teams benefit from the involvement of officials who represent every aspect of the system, including law enforcement, prosecution, defense attorneys, the judiciary, corrections, supervision agencies, treatment providers, victim advocates, child protective services, and other service providers. They also address information-sharing and other system barriers, and identify opportunities for additional collaborative partnerships, in order to enhance sex offender management efforts at the local level.

## **Factors That Law Enforcement Officers Should Assess During Field Contacts with Sex Offenders**

- Evidence of substance abuse?
- Socially isolated or withdrawn?
- Increased hostility?
- Change in appearance, hygiene, or grooming?
- Less compliant, disengaged?
- Antisocial attitudes and social influences?
- Failing to avoid high-risk situations?
- Impulsive?
- Unstable employment?
- Conflicts with coworkers, friends, family, partner?

(see, e.g., Hanson & Harris, 2000)

### **Enhancing case management practices**

In a collaborative case management model, law enforcement works closely with community supervision officers, treatment providers, and others to enhance community management capacity. Members of these teams meet routinely to discuss individual cases, including their risk ratings, specialized supervision conditions, overall progress in treatment, employment status, and other information that is necessary for effectively monitoring the offenders.

Through daily patrolling activities and their familiarity with these cases – and with specialized training about the specific type of changeable risk factors associated with recidivism among sex offenders[4] – law enforcement officers can provide an extra set of “eyes and ears” to local case management teams. For example, they may detect questionable behavior or violations of supervision conditions (e.g., absence from work, entering prohibited areas) or identify changeable factors that may signal a greater risk to reoffend (e.g., sudden change in appearance or hygiene, impulsive behavior, affiliating with antisocial peers). Alternatively, their observations can confirm offenders’ compliance with supervision conditions and other prosocial behaviors.

In this way, law enforcement provides an important enhancement to the community supervision process, expanding the amount and number of contacts with offenders that would otherwise be possible. Moreover, when sex offenders are no longer under the active supervision of probation or parole agencies, these experiences and interactions will be useful for the law enforcement officials who may continue to have contact with these offenders.

### **Providing community education and outreach services**

Law enforcement officers can provide a great deal of leadership and support to multidisciplinary teams with respect to community education and outreach. Crime prevention education is a key underpinning of community policing, and it is among the key responsibilities reported by law enforcement agencies nationwide (Hickman & Reaves, 2006).

As noted previously, law enforcement officers have taken a lead role in coordinating multidisciplinary team approaches to community notification meetings, with a primary focus on public education and prevention.

Outside of the community notification context, similar partnerships have been established between law enforcement agencies, victim advocacy organizations, probation and parole agencies, prosecutor offices, and sex offender treatment providers to engage in a wide range of educational and outreach activities (see IACP, 2007). Key examples include the following:

- Developing a formal community education curriculum;
- Meeting with community or civic groups to discuss sex offenders, victims, and/or sexual abuse prevention;
- Facilitating broad community meetings – not specific to community notification – designed to educate citizens about sexual victimization and prevention efforts;
- Participating as speakers at multidisciplinary training events; and
- Creating public awareness websites pertaining to sex offender management, through which citizens can submit crime tips, express concerns, or pose questions to law enforcement officers.

Finally, law enforcement can play a significant partnership role in providing information to legislators and other policymakers as a means of promoting informed public policies. Indeed, lawmakers may be particularly interested in the perspectives of the persons responsible for implementing and enforcing the laws that they have enacted. Law enforcement officers can also provide policymakers with invaluable and unique insights about the types of laws, policies, and strategies that can enhance sex offender management comprehensively, from both a crime-response and crime-prevention perspective.

## **Conclusion**

Responding to victims of sex crimes, investigating those crimes, and managing the individuals who commit them requires collaboration among multiple agencies and organizations, not the least of which is law enforcement. Their role in investigating sex crimes and apprehending suspects has been long recognized. And as law enforcement officials have begun to shift from reactive to more proactive strategies, their roles in ongoing sex offender management are expanding. Familiarity with current research about sex offenders, victims, and promising management strategies is critical to ensuring that the responses to victims, offenders, and communities are well-informed. Equally important is the development of partnerships with other agencies involved in sex offender management, including probation and parole officers, victim advocates, prosecutors, and treatment providers. By building upon key community policing principles and applying those principles to a comprehensive approach to sex offender management, law enforcement officials will be well-positioned to contribute not only to investigation and management efforts, but also to the prevention of sexual victimization.

### ***State of Rhode Island Probation/Parole: Law Enforcement Partnerships***

*In recent years, the Rhode Island Department of Corrections has formed partnerships with both city and town police departments. The partnerships focus on coordination and collaboration between police and probation/parole in the areas of information sharing, specialized enforcement, and enhanced supervision. Enhanced supervision, a partnership between police and probation/parole staff, results in joint supervision of selected offenders who are under community supervision.*

*Source: <http://www.doc.ri.gov/probation/collaborative.php>*

## **Seattle Washington Police Department and Washington Department of Corrections: Collaborative Sex Offender Projects**

*In Washington State, partnerships between police and community supervision officers are commonplace. For example, in King County, community corrections officers share office space with the Seattle Police Department Sex and Kidnapping Offender detectives. Since they share responsibility for some of the same sex offenders, information (such as living conditions, treatment concerns, and employment information) is exchanged daily. Together, police and supervision officers monitor offenders' compliance with court-ordered conditions and conduct risk assessments.*

*In addition, officers from both agencies jointly:*

- receive training in scoring actuarial risk assessment tools (i.e., Static-99) and participate in other training programs; Establish and maintain rapport with offenders;*
- act as referral agents in the event offenders require additional services; and*
- provide education to the community on sex offender management issues and enforce a “no tolerance” policy for harassment and intimidation by the public.*

*In another example of collaborative partnerships, police conduct a Community Transition Class for sex offend*

### Foot notes:

1. In addition to the impact on supervision and monitoring efforts, research suggests that these types of exclusionary strategies can lead to housing and employment instability, loss of positive supports, social isolation, and hostility, which are linked to reoffending among sex offenders (see Levenson & D'Amora, 2007 for a review).
2. For example, research indicates that police officers investigating rape allegations are more likely to close cases as unfounded when suspects are acquaintances as opposed to strangers, despite the consistent findings from victimization research indicating that sexual assaults are much more likely committed by individuals known to the victims (see, e.g., Simon, 2003).
3. These national guidelines were established through the Sex Offender Registration and Notification Act (SORNA), Title I of the Adam Walsh Child Protection and Safety Act of 2006.
4. Researchers studying sex offenders under supervision have identified a number of changeable risk factors that are associated with increased potential for reoffending and have developed tools for reviewing these factors during routine field contacts (see Hanson & Harris, 2000; Hanson, Harris, Scott, & Helmus, 2007).

### **Acknowledgements**

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Director of Public Safety, State of Missouri) and Dr. Kurt Bumby of the Center for Sex Offender Management (CSOM) and edited by Madeline Carter, CSOM Project Director, and Debbie Smith of First Folio Resource Group, Inc. CSOM would like to express its gratitude to Chief Scott Cunningham, Detective Robert Shilling, and Commander Steven Stahl for their thoughtful insights and review of this document.

## Contact

Center for Sex Offender Management  
8403 Colesville Road, Suite 720  
Silver Spring, MD 20910  
Phone: (301) 589-9383  
Fax: (301) 589-3505  
E-mail: askcsom@csom.org  
Internet: www.csom.org

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## Comments:

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### 1. **Editor @ Corrections.com** on 08/10/2009:

*The following is a comment received via email:*

Just wondered how such a lengthy article on law enforcement and offender management could miss the clergy abuse issue - do you guys run the same system as in Australia, NZ, Ireland, Canada etc?

JohnB

--

September 1, 2009

<http://www.september12009.com/>

The September 1 initiative aim is simply to bring to the world a definitive and appropriate solution to the global clergy abuse crisis

-- The Prime Minister of Australia on Islamic teachings on wife beating and rape. "Under no circumstances is sexual violence permissible or acceptable in Australia - under no circumstances." "Australia will not tolerate these sort of remarks. They don't belong in modern Australia, and he should stand up, repudiate them and apologise." The Prime Minister

of Australia on Catholicism and children sexually abused and raped by Catholic clergy. "This is a matter for the church and I respect the internal judgements of the church. I don't stand outside the church and provide them with public lectures in terms of how they should behave..." Australia does not tolerate these sort of remarks. They don't belong in modern Australia, and the Prime Minister should stand up, repudiate them and apologise. There is no excuse for sexual abuse according to our law and government. We are told we are all equal before the law. The exceptions are found when you have been sexually abused by Catholic clergy. "This is a matter for the church and I respect the internal judgements of the church. I don't stand outside the church and provide them with public lectures in terms of how they should behave..."

Kevin Rudd, Prime Minister of Australia, 17 July 2008.

[http://www.pm.gov.au/media/Interview/2008/interview\\_0363.cfm](http://www.pm.gov.au/media/Interview/2008/interview_0363.cfm)

read more ... <http://www.mybrokensociety.com/questions101>

This is perhaps the most horrific act of abandonment perpetrated against the children of a specific religion by an Australian head of State and is recorded in our history for perpetuity as being made by Kevin Rudd on 17 July 2008, when he spoke in regards those affected by the sexual abuses carried out by Catholic clergy.

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## Q & A, Martin Horn Retires

By *Caitlin Donovan*

**Published: 08/10/2009**



A few days ago, Corrections.com had the opportunity to chat with [Martin Horn](#) who recently retired as commissioner for The New York Department of Corrections. We asked about his time working in corrections and what he likes outside of his job, as well as his plans for the future. Check out the Q & A below and don't forget to comment at the end.

**Q: What was the most rewarding aspect about working as commissioner of The New York Department of Corrections? What was the least rewarding?**

A: Most rewarding is the opportunity to work with a group of dedicated corrections professionals. There is no finer group of people. They do their jobs with heart and they do jobs that most people would never want to do. It's a tribute to them and that was the best part of the job. The least rewarding was dealing with the press. Some of the press is responsible, but particularly in New York City the tabloid press does not want to be informed by the facts. They prefer to accept rumors and they assassinate characters in the process.

**Q: Describe your best day while working for The New York Department of Corrections.**

A: My best day was greeting the almost 200 New York City Department of Corrections employees. Some spent as much as six weeks down in New Orleans for Hurricane Katrina. The day they arrived back, I was so proud of the sacrifice they had made and the contribution they had made to help The Louisiana Department of Corrections.

**Q: What was unique about this job as opposed to other jobs you held in the corrections community?**

A: New York City is a unique place, both in terms of its scale and its intensity. Everything happens within a city, rather than state corrections where they are spread out over a state. New York City is a hothouse of scrutiny and transparency.

**Q: How long have you worked in the field of corrections? What made you want to go into it?**

A: On July 3, I will have completed 40 years of service [started in 1969]. There are very few occupations in which an administrator can deal with the multiplicity of issues that someone in the corrections field has to be knowledgeable about. It is about politics...science...healthcare...mental healthcare. There is such a rich variety of issues that a corrections administrator must be aware of.

**Q: If your children showed interest in the field of corrections, what advice would you give them?**

A: If that is what your heart tells you to do, then you should pursue it. You're not going to get rich doing it.

**Q: Where will you go from here?**

A: I'm going to become a distinguished lecturer at the John Jay College of Criminal Justice.

**Q: Do you have any hobbies? What do you like to do in your spare time?**

A: I'm trying. I pretend to play golf.

**Q: How did you balance doing your job and caring for the inmate population?**

A: That's how you do your job. It's inseparable. You can't ever forget you're doing your job because you have people in custody that are the sons and daughters of your neighbors; you have to protect your neighbors. That's what you do.

**Q: If you had to do it all over again what would you do differently?**

A: I think I would have focused more aggressively on training and management development. I think that is the weakest part of our department and perhaps the weakest part of corrections agencies in general. To neglect building up the capacity of your middle management is to set yourself up for failure.

**Q: For those who don't work in corrections, how would you explain the role of corrections professionals in the criminal justice system? Describe a typical day as a commissioner.**

A: Our job is to ensure the safe custody of individuals who are lawfully committed to us, to keep them safe from themselves and each other.

**The typical day?**

There is not a typical day. On any given day it depends on what is thrown at you. You can be confronted with anything from a water main break to a black out ...inmates hurting each other...a seriously injured officer...breach of integrity....a work slow down by staff...labor management disagreement...contagious disease outbreak... You have to have systems in place to support your analysis and have a good team around you. It makes the job exciting.

**Q: If you could have dinner with anyone dead or alive who would it be and why?**

A: Abraham Lincoln, because I can't imagine what he had on his plate and how he got through it. When I think about it, it's awesome.

**Q: What was the last book you read?**

A: *King Leopold's Ghost* by Adam Hochschild. It's a book about King Leopold and the way he enslaved the

people of the Congo and brutalized them.

**Q: What was the most interesting trip you've ever taken?**

A: I went to Tanzania last summer and I found Africa fascinating and troubling both at the same time.

*Corrections.com would like to thank Marty for his time and wishes him well in his retirement.*

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## Risk Indicators for Misconduct

By Tracy E. Barnhart

**Published: 08/10/2009**



The goal is to identify officers who pose a liability to the department and themselves. Even though obtaining a position in corrections and law enforcement is a difficult process at best we must consider the individuals who slip through the cracks. These are the officers who get the most complaints and consider themselves the mavericks or rock stars of the agency. These officers are the superheroes of the shift whose arrests or forcible takedowns are sometimes questionable and overly aggressive. The following is a profile of high risk officers with a propensity toward misconduct.

- Under 30 years old
- Less than 5 years on the job
- High school education only
- Assigned a 2 officer housing unit

The following are problematic risk indicators of officers that may be involved in misconduct or overstressed from job related incidents during their careers:

- Complaints, disproportionately high
- Use of force, disproportionately high
- Domestic Violence incidents
- Sick time usage
- Shooting incidents
- Resisting arrest incidents
- A lot of Assault on an officer cases
- Arrested subjects with injuries
- High rate of Officer injury incidents
- Pursuits
- Preventable vehicle accidents

- Civil litigation
- Head Strikes on inmates or arrested subjects
- Loss of equipment
- High proportion of Involvement in major incidents
- Below satisfactory performance evaluations
- Excessive overtime

Informal indicators to officer misconduct or corruption that should throw up red flags:

1. Large sums of money
2. Personality changes
3. Lifestyle changes
4. Circle of associates
5. Rumors

Law enforcement and correctional administrators throughout the country have long recognized that a small percentage of officers are responsible for a high disproportionate share of complaints, which can tarnish the reputation of the entire agency. The benefits of an early agency identification and investigation into suspected officer misconduct are:

- Can salvage an officers career
- Defend the agency in a “Custom and Practice” lawsuit
- Force supervisory involvement in the officers development
- Control complaints and use of force incidents and restore public confidence
- Supports termination of problem officers
- Provides information to develop training, policy and tactics

The fact is that police & corrections officers experience high levels of job stress is well established, as is the reality that high stress is unhealthy and often has a negative affect on an officer’s performance. These experiences often change an officer’s conduct toward the public; conduct characterized by discourtesy, anger and occasionally inappropriate use of force.

Examples of LAPD Rampart police brutality that should have been indicators of misconduct and corruption that was never flagged: >br>

Rampart Shooting Incidents:

- In 1996, CRASH officer Kulin Patel shot and wounded Juan Saldana when he was running down an apartment hallway. Patel and his partner then planted a gun on Saldana as he lay bleeding. When their CRASH supervisor, Sergeant Edward Ortiz, arrived, Ortiz delayed calling an ambulance until the officers concocted a cover story. Juan Saldana bled to death before arriving at the hospital.
- CRASH officers fired 10 rounds at Carlos Vertiz, a 44-year-old man with no criminal record, when they mistook him for a drug dealer. To justify the shooting, the officers planted a shotgun on the dying Vertiz and claimed he had pointed it at them.

- In 1996, officers Rafael Perez and Nino Durden handcuffed 19-year-old gang member Javier Ovando and then shot him in the chest and head, paralyzing him. The officers then planted a gun on him. Ovando received a 23-year prison sentence based on the officer's testimony.
- On New Year's Eve 1996, Rampart CRASH officers opened fire on and wounded two holiday revelers and then arrested them on trumped-up charges. According to Perez's testimony, the officers rehearsed a story claiming the revelers fired guns in the officers' direction, and were shot in self-defense.
- Perez testified that a rookie Rampart patrol officer shot an unarmed man he discovered hiding in a closet. When the rookie's supervisor arrived at the scene, he directed the rookie to claim the man was holding a mirror, causing him to see his own reflection with a gun and open fire.
- Officer Melissa Town shot at a youth in a park that fled when she approached him. When her supervising sergeant arrived, he pulled a 5-1/2 inch piece of chrome from the bumper of a nearby car and instructed Town to say the suspect pointed it at her.

#### Rampart Beating Incidents:

- Rafael Perez told investigators of an occasion when officers broke up a party and ordered several dozen gang members to their knees with their hands behind their backs. Officer Brian Hewitt walked down the line, randomly assigning a fictitious charge to each youth.
- Perez relates how after a Rampart officer's tires were slashed; a group of officers drove around the neighborhood indiscriminately beating any youth they encountered. On a similar occasion, a gang member suspected of slashing a tire was beaten, stripped naked, and dropped into rival gang territory.
- On one occasion, a youth was repeatedly shot with a bean bag gun for amusement.
- For another suspected gang member, officers drew a target on a wall, and used the youth's body as a battering ram. The young man told investigators his head smashed through the plaster and was pierced by splinters from the wooden studs inside the wall. The officers were attempting to obtain information from the youth about a missing gun.
- Some officers, notably Officer Brian Hewitt, preferred administering beatings to gang members, rather than bothering with booking procedures and reports. According to Perez's testimony, Hewitt in particular was known for beating handcuffed suspects, and beating for sadistic pleasure.
- Officer Daniel Lujan, Brian Hewitt's partner, beat a youth at the end of a foot pursuit, badly injuring the suspect's knee. When his supervisor arrived at the scene, Lujan admitted having no reason for the beating. To justify the beating, the supervisor instructed Lujan to book the man on a drug charge. Perez testifies that on another occasion, Lujan dislocated a handcuffed suspect's elbow for sport.
- Perez's testimony also recounts a story of officers approaching a man sitting on a bench, handcuffing him and throwing him to the ground, and kicking his head and body. According to the police report the officers filed, the man injured himself by jumping out of a third floor window head first. Rampart supervisors rubber-stamped this fictitious account.

One of the fundamental causes of the Rampart Scandal was a breakdown in managerial oversight. While the department's mission statement clearly emphasizes **“Respect”** and **“Character,”** the officers in the CRASH unit were not held accountable for upholding these principles. This unit created an autonomous culture that was distant from the influences of upper management. **“Pursuits, injuries resulting from uses of force, officer-involved shootings and personnel complaints had a clearly identifiable pattern...yet no one seems to have noticed and, more importantly, dealt with the patterns.”** The heralded officers of the department were

cutting corners and breaking laws, which made it easier for others to follow suit.

It is not our job to punish people even though we see a visible need for the corrective change. It is our job to “**report violations of the law.**” Individuals above our pay grade are responsible for the issuance of punishment to our citizens and inmates within our institutions. It is when we cross this delicate line of reporting and institute punishment this is where we go too far and get caught up in misconduct and corruption. [Visit the Tracy Barnhart page](#)

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## Comments:

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### 1. ***Gunfighter*** on 08/12/2009:

My intent was not to create mistrust among society but to identify those officers whom have "indicators" to fall into patterns of misconduct. Through my articles on "God Complex" and all the articles on my sight as if pretains to misconduct they all help identify the bad apples in the barrel. I could have added thousands of article snipits as it related to correctional officer misconduct and I am sure you know a few officers personally. Our retention rate is 20% and that means 80% of all officers hired do not make thier one year probation period. Now that may not be for misconduct but a large number is. You are right about correctional officers are the forgotton cops of the law enforcement community and I have seen the road from both sides of the fence. I was a police officer for ten years and now a correctional officer for twelve. I think we are on the same side of this dicussion but that is the purpose of the article to create discussion and shake up the status of the society of corrections.

---

### 2. ***Best Jail.com*** on 08/12/2009:

Wow these are things that causes our citizens to mistrust law enforcement. We look at these few cases but there are so many more that are not reported. Some times mistakes are made but a lot of the time they are intentional. There are so many cases where the officers actions are found justifiable when in civil court they are found liable. There are too few cases where the officer is found guilty of the charges. Some of the cases I've heard of I just knew the officers would be found guilty of, but were acquitted. These are incidents with police officers. They get real offended when confronted with some of the rumors that is told around the jail by inmates that they bring in all dirty and bruised up. In corrections its quite different when we are accused of excessive force its harder for us to prove it didn't happen. We now have cameras to help support our reports. We have to justify our actions more so than police officers and we are fired more for our actions when they are with the least bit of proof. For

some reasons police officers seem to get more support from the court system than corrections. I'm sure they have more excessive uses of force than we do since they make the first encounter with the suspect but we are the ones dragged through the mud and the court system when we try to get them to conform to the rules and regulations of the jail and prison system. There are always going to be incidents wherein our actions are going to be questioned both police officers as well as corrections. We must remember that we are held at a higher standard than others and our actions make our department look good or our department look bad.

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