

CSAC Challenge Awards 2017: Shasta County Probation Department

Juvenile Rehabilitation Facility

Executive Summary

SB 1143 Early Implementation: Best Practice Solutions

Overview: Shasta County Juvenile Rehabilitation Facility (JRF) implemented Senate Bill 1143's mandates early because it was in the best interest of youth and facility staff.

Challenge: For years, juvenile halls have used room confinement as a consequence for misbehavior. SB 1143, which goes into effect January 1, 2018, limits the use of room confinement for youth in juvenile facilities to situations when it is needed for the safety of our wards, staff, and the proper functioning of our facilities.

Innovative Solution: At the JRF we have added many treatment programs and pro-social activities to our daily programming schedule for youth, including the Gardening, Responsibility, and Ownership of Self and Community Well-Being (GROW Program); Moral Reconciliation Therapy; Aggression Replacement Training; CrossFit; yoga; painting; co-occurring disorders (mental health and substance abuse treatment) group counseling; arts and crafts; a boys' support group incorporating drumming; cardio dance; poetry/spoken word performance; Girls' Circle; Boys' Council; Project Toward No Drugs; and The Leaders of Tomorrow (The LOT), a club which develops social and life skills. These programs are facilitated by Juvenile Detention Officers, community volunteers, and local treatment providers.

We instituted a Behavior Response Matrix which focuses on reinforcing positive behavior, as well as suggested responses to negative behavior. This system provided for clear expectations of behavior for youth, as well as consistency among staffs' responses to youth behavior. Further, the Matrix supports natural consequences, so youth can learn from their mistakes and be taught what they should do differently in the future.

Incentives and rewards are proven to be more powerful than punishers; we updated our point/level system in which youth meeting or exceeding standards of behavior are eligible to earn points to spend on commissary items of interest to them; earn privileges such as a pod responsibility assignment; a special visit and meal with their family; sharing a meal with a juvenile detention officer or the judge; and attending The LOT.

Originality: Shasta County is among the first five counties statewide to implement policies which are in adherence with SB 1143. We shared our updated policies, procedures, Behavior Response Matrix, and a checklist that incorporates the required goals, objectives, and services

to be provided to safely return the youth who is on room confinement status back into the general population as quickly as possible with the California Association of Probation Institution Administrators (CAPIA), an affiliate organization of the Chief Probation Officers of California (CPOC).

Cost Effectiveness: Many activities and programs for youth at the JRF are facilitated by Juvenile Detention Officers, who also provide for safety and supervision. Staff are encouraged to utilize their natural talents and abilities to provide creative, positive activities for youth, such as sports; baking; cooking; painting; drawing; gardening; book club; poetry/spoken word performance, etcetera.

Results: In the 90 day period since implementation, only two youth have had periods of room confinement, and they benefited from the review and referral process mandates of the bill, including but not limited to: facility director review and approval; review by medical staff, consultation with mental health clinician(s); and the creation of an individualized plan of action to follow in order to for the youth be returned to regular facility programming and activities with their peers.

Since implementation of the above noted changes and those implemented specifically in response to SB 1143, the JRF has seen a marked reduction of use of force incidents.

Youth in the JRF have provided positive feedback about the changes, reporting that spending too much time in their rooms can lead to negative thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. They appreciate the clear expectations and consistency provided by the Behavior Response Matrix. They have been exposed to new activities, such as poetry, gardening, book club, and yoga, and appreciate the wide variety of programming afforded to them at the facility.

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