

RESEARCH YEAR-IN-REVIEW 2021

SINGAPORE PRISON SERVICE



BY CORRECTIONAL RESEARCH BRANCH
PSYCHOLOGICAL AND CORRECTIONAL REHABILITATION DIVISION



CONTENT

FOREWORD	1
EDITORIAL TEAM	2
RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS	3
Singapore Prison Service Learning Fest 2021	4
Leaving Gangs Behind: Inmates’ Perspective Of Why, What Helps And What Hinders	5
Understanding Persistent Disruptive Behaviors Among Inmates In Singapore Prison Service	6
Adopting Open Group Format For Sexual Offenders Intervention	7
Uplifting Captains Of Lives With Weworkwell: How Staff Resilience And Wellbeing Have Been Supported During Covid-19	8
Effective Offender Engagement & Management Practices: A Qualitative Research Study	9
“Greying” Offenders: Who Are They And Exploring Why Do They Offend At An Older Age?	10
Understanding The Effectiveness Of Singapore Prison Service’s Enhanced Drug Rehabilitation Regime	11
RESEARCH DIGESTS	12
Applying Blended Learning In SPS.....	13
Enhancing Corrections: Self-Compassion	15
Practising Gratitude.....	17
Social Influences on Drug Use and Desistance.....	19
Visitation And Family Relationships	21
RESEARCH REPORTS	23
Needs Analysis Of Low And Moderate Risk Male Drug Abusers In The Drug Rehabilitation Centre.....	24
Evaluation Of The Implementation Of Frames In Drug Rehabilitation Centre (DRC)	25
Survey Of Drug Offenders’ Sentiments About The Misuse Of Drugs Act (Amendment)	26
Effective Offender Engagement And Management Practices: A Qualitative Research Study ...	27
Integrated Thoroughcare Trial Evaluation	28
Exploring The Rehabilitation And Reintegration Needs Of Supervisees On Work Release Scheme	29
An Evaluation Study Of Institution A4’s Readiness For The Implementation Of The Gender-Responsive Approach Part Ii	30
LITERATURE REVIEWS	31
Fatherhood Attitudes And Beliefs In Men Who Perpetrate Family Violence	32
Effects Of The Use Of Pornography And Masturbation	33
MOVING FORWARD	34

FOREWORD

As we venture into the chapter of 2022, it gives me great pleasure to be part of this team that continuously strives hard to curate high standards of rehabilitation experience through evidence-informed correctional practice. I am pleased to share the third installment of our annual Research Year-in-Review (YIR) by the Psychological and Correctional Rehabilitation Division (PCRD) of Singapore Prison Service (SPS).

This 2021 issue of YIR showcases a diversity of research, evaluation studies and literature reviews conducted by the various branches in PCRD. Besides in the efforts of the Correctional Research Branch (CRB) and Programme Design and Evaluation Branch (PDEB), it is encouraging to see the other branches of PCRD continuing to produce high-quality applied research to deepen their understanding of the population they work with and enhance the rehabilitation and reintegration experiences of our offenders. It also brings me joy to see the wide variety of insights gathered from research conducted in the various branches coming together in the YIR 2021.

As the circumstances of COVID-19 continue to evolve, SPS constantly adapts to meet the needs of the various populations with the help of technology. We also found innovative ways to stay connected as a community by sharing our resources and knowledge through the virtual space. Instead of working in silos, we recognize the importance of cross-departmental collaboration. Through virtual conferences, we maintained our connection with relevant communities and kept them informed on the latest findings that could help us meet the needs of offenders in their rehabilitation journey. We have also created an internal Research Repository that allows SPS staff to easily access completed studies that can inform the work they do.

These collaborative efforts in knowledge sharing are also exemplified in the biennial Learning Fest (LF). Some items presented during LF 21 are also featured here in YIR 2021. While COVID-19 created physical barriers between us, it did not stop us from pursuing our desire for learning. LF 21 is the first virtual event where more than 400 participants gathered over the span of two days to share their latest insights on rehabilitation. The theme for LF 21 is "Small Huts in a Big Village", emphasizing the strength of uniting our efforts and sharing our knowledge to transform the lives of inmates and prevent re-offending. I hope that we can continue maintaining these common grounds for sharing and connection across the branches to provide a more holistic rehabilitation outcome for offenders.

Besides supporting offenders' development through this uncertain time, we also continue to understand the experiences of our Captains of Lives to support their psychological wellbeing. It is encouraging to see the contributions in YIR 2021, and I look forward to PCRD's future research efforts that add value to not just the correctional practices, but also to the lives of offenders, their families, and the wider community.



KARAM SINGH

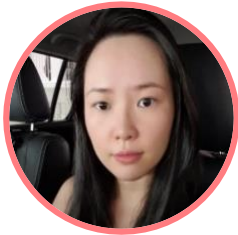
Director

Psychological Correctional and Rehabilitation Division (PCRD)
Singapore Prison Service

EDITORIAL TEAM



EDITORS



CHIEF EDITOR | Fann Jiang

Assistant Director
Correctional Research Branch

Devni Wijyaratne

Research Officer
Correctional Research Branch



Esther Leow

Research Officer
Correctional Research Branch



ADVISORS

Dr Gabriel Ong Tzong Hwang

Deputy Director
Psychological & Correctional
Rehabilitation Division



Cheng Xiang Long

Senior Assistant Director
Correctional Research Branch



**RESEARCH
HIGHLIGHTS**

SINGAPORE PRISON SERVICE-LEARNING FEST 2021

WHAT IS SPS LEARNING FEST?

Learning Fest 2021 (LF21) is an event where we showcase correctional rehabilitation work and research done in Singapore Prison Service (SPS) over the past 2 years. Through this knowledge sharing event, we aim to build a learning community in corrections and promote networking among our stakeholders. LF21 took place on 13 and 21 October 2021, which was attended by more than 400 participants from SPS, community partners and relevant stakeholders. The learning event included 14 content posters and 20 presentations across the two days.



Main committee of SPS Learning Fest 2021



THEME FOR SPS LEARNING FEST 2021

The theme for LF21 was “Small Huts in a Big Village”. The theme represented our collective desire to come together and better support ex-inmates in leading crime- and drug-free lives, embodying the “kampung” spirit, which refers to a sense of community and solidarity in Malay. In our local correctional “kampung”, each hut represents the various agencies and institutions that we come from. When we strengthen our ties with one another and amplify our “kampung” spirit, we can achieve our goal of transforming lives and preventing re-offending together.

LF21 covered a variety of topics such as maximizing intervention outcomes, supporting inmates’ rehabilitation journey, and developing staff capabilities and emotional wellbeing.



DAYS ONE AND TWO



Presented by: Professor Lynn Branham, Distinguished Visiting Scholar, Saint Louis University School of Law

In Day 1, we had a keynote address by Professor Lynn Branham, an expert in correctional and sentencing law and policy, on incorporating Restorative Practices (RP) throughout prisons. RP aims to build up individuals, restore relationships, and strengthen communities. It is a fair process to hold individuals accountable and provide opportunities to resolve issues and repair harm. In SPS, we first incorporated RP elements to engage our inmates in 2015. It is encouraging to see an increase in the number of RP-trained staff and RP initiatives here over the years.

In Day 2, LF21 had a keynote address by Ms Lim Hui Juian and Ms Marlene Chua from Community Corrections Command to talk about “Ex-Offenders as Our Neighbours”. SPS adopts a throughcare approach in rehabilitating inmates. We collaborate with our community partners to support inmates during their time in prison and follow through with them after their release. This continuity of care is integral to their successful desistance from crime. The keynote presented a refreshing perspective about our roles in the change process, intending for us to rethink life beyond desistance and re-integration, and be open to the idea of social integration.



Presented by:
Ms Lim Hui Juian, Manager Community Corrections, Halfway House (left) and
Ms Marlene Chua, Lead Specialist Community Corrections, Mandatory Aftercare Scheme (right)

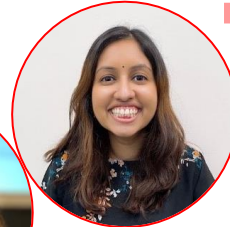
LEAVING GANGS BEHIND: INMATES' PERSPECTIVE OF WHY, WHAT HELPS AND WHAT HINDERS

PRESENTED AT:
SPS LEARNING FEST 2021

The theme for LF21 was
"Small Huts in a Big Village."

Presented by:

Sarah Lavinia Joseph,
Senior Psychologist (PDEB) (left) and
Gayathri Raja, Manager, CRSB (Penal) (right)



AIMS AND FINDINGS



This qualitative research was undertaken by the Learning Lab on Gang Renunciation. They shared about some of the motivators and barriers that impact inmates' renunciation from their gangs, as well as inmates' perspectives of the support needed to desist from gangs.

The **key motivators** for renouncing were

- Family
- Having a shift in values
- Social support

The **internal and external barriers** they faced in renouncing the gang were

- Attachment to gang
- The fear of 'losing face'
- Losing certain benefits
- The negative perceptions and perceived repercussions surrounding renunciation



RECOMMENDATIONS

Areas for improvement identified for **gang-related initiatives** included

- Increasing prosocial support
- Enhancing programming and its publicity
- Leveraging on renounees to influence other inmates

This presentation aimed to encourage staff and stakeholders such as community partners to undertake individual- and organisation-level efforts in supporting inmates' desistance from gangs.

UNDERSTANDING PERSISTENT DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIORS AMONG INMATES IN SINGAPORE PRISON SERVICE

PRESENTED AT:
SPS LEARNING FEST 2021

The theme for LF21 was
"Small Huts in a Big Village".

Presented by:

Top row (left to right): Rashida Zain, Assistant Director (General Violence) (PSB), Jessie Yeung, Psychologist (PSB), Yasmin Ahamed, Assistant Director (Programme Design & Evaluation, Penal) (PDEB)

Bottom row (left to right): Natasha Lim, Psychologist (PDEB), Paul Yong, Psychologist (PSB)



AIMS AND FINDINGS



This study was conducted to identify and understand the individual and prison specific factors that contributed to inmates' persistent disruptive behaviours in SPS, so as to enhance our rehabilitation and management of them. Ten inmates who presented with persistent disruptive behaviours within the correctional unit participated in this study. An interview protocol consisting of questions about (a) inmates' individual characteristics (e.g., mental health issues, personality difficulties, coping and functional analysis of emotions); and (b) prison-specific characteristics (e.g., perception of rewards and punishments, social interaction with inmates and staff) was administered.

An inductive thematic analysis was conducted and there were two main key findings:

(a) **Profiling:** These inmates experienced early maladjustment (consisting of exposure to violence and substance abuse from an early age) which contributed to their perception of an 'unsafe' world. As a result, they developed entrenched unhelpful cognitive distortions and beliefs which led to their mistrust towards others and use of violence during conflicts and affected their abilities to form healthy and trusting interpersonal relationships.

(b) **Protective Factors:** They valued family relationships despite narratives of being abandoned and disowned by their immediate family. They relied on their spirituality to cope with stressors and anger during incarceration. Timely staff engagement was shown to have initiated change talk and thinking among some participants.



RECOMMENDATIONS

Individual level – Continue good efforts of staff engagement as any interaction serves as a potential chance to impact and inspire.

Organisational level – Family programmes and religious counselling are part of SPS core programmes. Other core programmes to consider expounding is the topic of family relationships, and to include spirituality as a rehabilitation component. It is important to increase SPS staff's knowledge on trauma-informed practices and personality difficulties or disorders.

Individual level – Continue good efforts of staff engagement as any interaction serves as a potential chance to impact and inspire.

ADOPTING OPEN GROUP FORMAT FOR SEXUAL OFFENDERS INTERVENTION

**PRESENTED AT: BRITISH PSYCHOLOGICAL SOCIETY
DIVISION OF FORENSIC PSYCHOLOGY ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2021**

In this conference, professionals present their research projects and reviews. A general theme is adopted to ensure inclusiveness of the sharing of best practices and developments in the field of forensic psychology.



Presented by: Ng Kend Tuck, Psychologist (Sexual Violence Unit) (PSB)

ALSO PRESENTED AT: SPS LEARNING FEST 2021



The theme for LF21 was "Small Huts in a Big Village".

Presented by: Paul Yong, Psychologist (Sexual Violence Unit) (PSB) (left) and Charmaine Ch'ng, Psychologist (Sexual Violence Unit) (PSB) (right)

FINDINGS



This presentation provided several learning points and clinical observations by programme leaders following the transition from a closed group to an open group format for ExCEL+ programme, a group intervention for moderate to high-risk sexual offenders. The open group format allows participants to enter and leave the group at any point provided they have addressed their offending needs sufficiently by completing the required topics.

We found several clinical advantages in running an open group format for the local sexual offending population. First, it provides opportunities for senior participants to assist newer participants. Second, the repeated learning and topic discussions allow participants to practice and internalise the skills and knowledge they have learnt. Third, the positive culture (e.g., trust) and group dynamics (e.g., alliance) built by the psychologists and participants are retained, leading to better programme commencement and completion outcomes. Knock-on effects to other inmates within the institution are apparent as current and past participants share their experiences with inmates who have yet to attend group, resulting in increased readiness for intervention with less resistance, and thus, lower drop-out rates.



RECOMMENDATIONS

The presenters also shared challenges and possible solutions when adapting the open group format. For instance, therapist burnout can occur since an open-group format does not have an end date given the perpetual roll-in of participants. Hence, the unit scheduled intentional breaks during ExCEL+ while participants remain engaged with assigned project work. The documentation of our clinical and operational considerations and observations on the impact on group processes may be useful for other practitioners when considering a change in group modality.

UPLIFTING CAPTAINS OF LIVES WITH WEWORKWELL: HOW STAFF RESILIENCE AND WELLBEING HAVE BEEN SUPPORTED DURING COVID-19

PRESENTED AT:
THE ASIAN & PACIFIC CONFERENCE OF CORRECTIONAL ADMINISTRATORS WEBINAR 2021

The webinar theme was
'Responding to the Challenge of COVID-19 in Corrections'.

Presented by: Wayne Ferroa,
Senior Assistant Director (OPSYB)



ALSO PRESENTED AT: THE OFFICE OF CHIEF PSYCHOLOGIST MINI CONFERENCE 2021



The conference theme was 'Psychological Resilience in the New Normal'. Psychologists across the Home Team Departments shared on topics related to supporting staff well-being in the COVID-19 pandemic.

Presented by: Cindy Toh, Psychologist (OPSYB) (left)
and Seah Yun Han, Psychologist (OPSYB) (right)



5 KEY STRATEGIES

The 5 prongs were:

1. **Promote** (e.g., dissemination of self-care information and guides through multiple channels, wall of appreciation to foster positivity, hope and a supportive culture)
2. **Prevent** (e.g., mentalEwellness workshops and online video series to enhance staff's individual capabilities to manage stressors)
3. **Intervene Early** (e.g., provision of ongoing dedicated psychological support by deploying Mental Resilience (MR) specialists to each institution, increase publicity of in-house and external staff counselling services available for support)
4. **Support Recovery** (e.g., provision of psychological resources to facilitate coping for staff who are isolated due to infection or quarantine)
5. **Research and Evaluation** (e.g., morale sensing surveys, CARE needs survey)



RECOMMENDATIONS

A multi-modality approach was important to maximize outreach and reinforce key messages in the organization. In addition, technology and new platforms should be utilised to engage staff as staff have difference preferences. To manage the challenge of having low take-up rate of certain initiatives, partnering leaders and HR stakeholders would be important to increase outreach and decrease barriers to participation. As COVID-19 evolves, the approach to promoting mental wellness must evolve alongside to sustain staff morale and combat pandemic fatigue in a prolonged crisis.

EFFECTIVE OFFENDER ENGAGEMENT & MANAGEMENT PRACTICES: A QUALITATIVE RESEARCH STUDY

PRESENTED AT:

INTERNATIONAL CORRECTIONS AND PRISONS ASSOCIATION (ICPA) 2021
TECHNOLOGY IN CORRECTIONS VIRTUAL CONFERENCE



Presented by: Yasmin Ahamed, Assistant Director (PDEB) (left)
and Sarah Lavinia Joseph, Senior Psychologist (PDEB) (right)

The conference theme was "*Disrupting Corrections*". ICPA forms the largest correctional community where people from different countries come together to provide a wide variety of presentations across a range of important correctional issues and challenges.

TECHNOLOGICAL INITIATIVES



They presented on how SPS has leveraged on technology in corrections to experiment and break the boundaries of traditional methods of conducting assessments and rehabilitation.

Specifically, they highlighted **three initiatives** on:

1. Interactive e-learning modules for offenders
2. E-forms to simplify and automate data-collection for staff
3. Tele-counselling where counsellors can carry out their assessments or interventions with inmates within the prisons, from their offices.



KEY TAKEAWAYS

The presentation provided insights on the feedback obtained from staff and offenders on the use of these applications, as well as the key implementation considerations in introducing technology in corrections.

“GREYING” OFFENDERS: WHO ARE THEY AND EXPLORING WHY DO THEY OFFEND AT AN OLDER AGE?

PRESENTED AT:

CARE NETWORK (CN) SUMMIT 2021: THE NEXT HORIZON WEBINAR



Presented by: Loh Eng Hao, Assistant Director (Correctional Research 2), CRB

The Summit theme was “The Next Horizon”. CARE Network partners come together to share ideas and conversations to foster relations and seed new opportunities in the Aftercare sector. Selected sessions were opened to public to facilitate meaningful exchange of perspectives.

Mr Loh was invited to present research on elderly offenders at the session on “Understanding Ex-offenders’ Profiles: Youths, Elderly and Person with Mental Health Issues.”



KEY FINDINGS

1. Proportion of older offenders in Singapore has increased gradually over 10 years, but those above 65 years old remains low.
2. Majority of elderly offenders are lower in risk.
3. Some elderly offenders presented with mental health concerns.
4. Elderly offenders reported concerns in financial needs and barriers to employment.
5. Late-onset offenders have low risk of reoffending and their life stage circumstances led to the late-onset offending.

RECOMMENDATIONS



To facilitate a discussion amongst the participants and stakeholders on how we can work together to improve the outcomes of elder ex-offenders, Eng Hao proposed the following questions for CARE Network’s consideration:

1. How can we work together to continue to monitor trends of elderly in prison and community?
2. How can we be sensitive to the needs and responsivity issues of elderly offenders?
3. How can we reinforce community engagement in preventive efforts?

Discussions emphasized the importance of research to guide policy decisions and approach towards elderly offenders, addressing the mental health needs and concerns of elderly offenders, having more targeted efforts towards reintegration concerns of elderly offenders (i.e., finances and employment), and the need to ensure social engagement and support.

UNDERSTANDING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF SINGAPORE PRISON SERVICE'S ENHANCED DRUG REHABILITATION REGIME

PRESENTED AT:

INTERNATIONAL CORRECTIONS AND PRISONS ASSOCIATION (ICPA) 2021 ANNUAL CONFERENCE (ONLINE)

The conference theme was "Sharing Knowledge and Making Connections in Corrections". ICPA forms the largest correctional community where people from different countries come together to provide a wide variety of presentations across a range of important correctional issues and challenges.

Ms Dhevani and Ms Chua shared how SPS implemented the Enhanced Drug Rehabilitation Regime (EDRR) using the five Ps (Purpose, People, Processes, Programmes, and Place) and presented the evaluation findings from the longitudinal study conducted on the EDRR.



Presented by: Chua Shu Hui, Assistant Director (Drugs and Special Populations), PDEB (left) and Dhevani D/O Ramachandran, Correctional Rehabilitation Specialist, PDEB (right)

AIMS AND FINDINGS

Since 2014, the EDRR adopted a differentiated, throughcare approach to meet the needs of different groups of drug abusers and provide structure and support in the community to facilitate reintegration.

A quasi-experimental design was employed to understand the effectiveness of the EDRR. Quantitative data on key regime outcomes, including recidivism rates, was collected and qualitative interviews at post-incare and aftercare phases were conducted with high-risk EDRR participants to assess the performance of the regime.

A significant reduction of eight percentage point was observed in the two-year recidivism rate of EDRR participants, as compared to the comparison group. The result was corroborated with positive feedback received on the regime efforts, suggesting that the combination of incare rehabilitation efforts and aftercare community reintegration was effective in supporting the rehabilitation of drug abusers.



RECOMMENDATIONS

While these efforts should be maintained, the study also highlighted key social domains such as family support and employment that SPS and other stakeholders can continue enhancing for effective long-term rehabilitation and eventual desistance of drug abusers.



RESEARCH DIGESTS

This section contains research efforts presented as infographics with bite-sized information on each topic.

What is Blended Learning?

Blended Learning refers to a combination of different modes of teaching and learning. One of the common combinations is: **traditional Face-to-Face (F2F)** and **Technology-enabled** learning systems.



Classroom learning and/or practice in real life setting (e.g. workplace learning, coaching)



Technology used to support learning process. Learners can control place, pace, path and time of learning

A course is only considered 'blended' when these two modes are integrated well (i.e. work together to maximise learning and have clear objectives for meeting learning needs).

As such, **Blended Learning IS NOT...**

- **Purely e-learning or videos without follow-up F2F sessions.** E-learning aims to achieve learning objectives of remembering and understanding concepts, while F2F sessions allow learners to apply or analyse knowledge gained from e-learning, and to evaluate or create in the learning process
- **Simply adding tech-based instructional methods (e.g. Kahoot) in a classroom course**

Why Apply Blended Learning?

Benefits for **Learner**:



Encourage active learning: Learners are allowed to take charge of own content learning online and prepare for practical skill training in classroom



Increase in relevance and application-based learning: Greater emphasis can be placed on hands-on and real-life practice in F2F learning



Flexibility: Learners can access learning at own convenience, and personalize it to suit own pace and needs

Benefits for **Organization**:



Increase cost effectiveness: Save administrative costs (e.g. travel time, printing materials, trainer's hours)



Increase training effectiveness: Not all employees learn in the same way, blended learning allows personalization by utilizing different training methods

How can we apply Blended Learning in SPS?



Given these advantages, we can expect more of Blended Learning being applied in Singapore Prison Service (SPS). **The following illustrates how Blended Learning can occur as an integration of various modalities in these two contexts:**

1 Inmate Interventions:

Examples:

- PCP
- Cohort Meetings
- Vocational Training
- Vendor programmes

Classroom learning

- Face-to-face sessions to build skills & knowledge
- Role-play, simulations, and case study



Tech-enabled learning

- Online reading, handouts, quiz, reflections, videos, e-learning platform (e.g. DIRECT)



Learning with real-life practice (F2F)

- Vocational practice with certification
- Goal-setting using MAP
- Application of skills during incare and community supervision

2 Staff Training:

Examples:

- Prison Officer Course
- 7 Habits of Effective COLs
- Functional Milestone Courses

Classroom learning

- Face-to-face sessions to build skills & knowledge
- Role-play, simulations, and case study



Tech-enabled learning

- Pre-course interactive eLearning with formative quizzes, readings, videos
- Post-course online community support & reflections (e.g. using LMS)



Workplace learning (F2F)

- On-job training
- Structured observation, coaching & feedback
- Job rotation
- Internship

References:

1. Graham, C. R. (2006). Blended learning systems: definition, current trends, and future directions. In *Handbook of Blended Learning: Global Perspectives, Local Designs* edited by C. J. Bonk and C. R. Graham, pp. 3 – 21. San Francisco, CA: Pfeiffer Publishing
2. *Blending Classroom with Work and Technology*. (2016). [Handbook]. Singapore: Institute of Adult Learning Singapore.

The Research Digest aims to provide regular snapshots of research and evaluation knowledge and findings to promote use of research in correctional policy and practice. For more information on this issue on Blended Learning, please email to chua_wei_ling@pris.gov.sg

ENHANCING CORRECTIONS: SELF-COMPASSION

JUNE 2021 ISSUE

Buvanisha Sagadevan & Fann Jiang

DEFINITION

Self-compassion means **being positive** and **caring towards yourself** amidst suffering or failures through **3 interconnected** concepts.

Self-compassion is **not**: ❌ Self-pity ❌ Selfish ❌ Narcissistic ❌ Weak

Self-kindness

Being understanding instead of self-judgmental

Common Humanity

Recognising that everyone experiences pain & is flawed



Mindfulness

Acknowledge negative thoughts & feelings without denial or over-engagement

BENEFITS

✔ Self-compassion is **linked to reduced criminality**.

Cultivating self-compassion in offenders encourages...



Self-Control

- Considering long-term consequences of undesirable behaviors
- Being mindful which reduces rumination

Which leads to...



Less aggression



Less depression



Empathy

- Reflecting on how their actions affects others
- Developing compassion



Lower re-arrest & re-incarceration rates



Better employment outcomes



Improved conflict management



Mental Resilience

- Utilising adaptive coping & emotion regulation strategies (e.g. forgiveness & mindfulness)



Greater self-worth

✓ Self-compassion starts from your **SELF**.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

Exercising self-compassion towards yourself can **enhance your ability to connect with offenders.**

Mindfulness



Journal



Set boundaries

➤ To maintain *mental health*...

- Listen to your feelings
- Practice journaling
- Learn to say 'No'

Self-kindness



Challenge negative self-talk



Would you talk to your best friend this way?

➤ To overcome *defeatist thoughts*...

- Practice gratitude
- Remember how far you have come
- Pay attention to self-critical thoughts

Common Humanity



Recognise that no one is perfect

➤ To cope with *disappointments*...

- Be patient with growth
- Remember mistakes happen
- Manage self-expectations


Sources: 1. Neff, K. (2003). Self-compassion: An alternative conceptualization of a healthy attitude toward oneself. *Self and Identity*, 2(2), 85-101.
 2. Rezapour-Mirsaleh, Y., Shafizadeh, R., Shomali, M., & Sedaghat, R. (2021). Effectiveness of Self-Compassion Intervention on Criminal Thinking in Male Prisoners. *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology*.

Practising Gratitude

Anyone can practise gratitude, inmates too!

PRACTISING GRATITUDE means to purposefully recognise positive experiences in life and be thankful for them

People can practise gratitude by



Thinking
about their life experiences and what they feel grateful for





Writing
down positive encounters they had with others



Doing
good by giving thanks or lending a helping hand to others

Research studies have found that inmates who practise gratitude gain some promising benefits:

Increased well-being^{1,3} 

Decreased negative feelings^{2,3} 

when one practised gratitude frequently over a few weeks

How does gratitude practice work?

Practising gratitude builds one's psychological resources for positive thinking and coping. This can be tapped on when one faces difficult situations.

What can you do to encourage inmates to practise gratitude?



Start the ball rolling - let them know what you feel grateful for and prompt them to share as well!



Lend an ear and help them recognise positive learnings from their sharing of past experiences!



Encourage them to write down 2 things they are grateful for regularly (e.g., daily or weekly)!



Acknowledge their efforts to reflect on positive experiences and to show acts of gratitude!



SINGAPORE
PRISON SERVICE



CORRECTIONAL
RESEARCH

Brought to you by: Correctional Research Branch

The Research Digest is intended to communicate research findings conducted in SPS and promote the use of research to inform policy and practice. For more information on this, please contact:

✉ pris_research_evaluation@pris.gov.sg

¹ Deng, Y., Xiang, R., Zhu, Y., Li, Y., Yu, S., & Liu, X. (2019). Counting blessings and sharing gratitude in a Chinese prisoner sample: Effects of gratitude-based interventions on subjective well-being and aggression. *The Journal of Positive Psychology*, 14(3), 303-311. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17439760.2018.1460687>

² Lin, L. A. (2014). The Effects of a Gratitude Intervention on the Subjective Well-being, Pro-social Behaviour, Aggression of Male Young Offenders at the Singapore Prison School (Master's thesis).

³ Yang, Y., Zhao, H., Aidi, M., & Kou, Y. (2018). Three good deeds and three blessings: The kindness and gratitude interventions with Chinese prisoners. *Criminal Behaviour and Mental Health*, 28(5), 433-441. <https://doi.org/10.1002/cbm.2085>

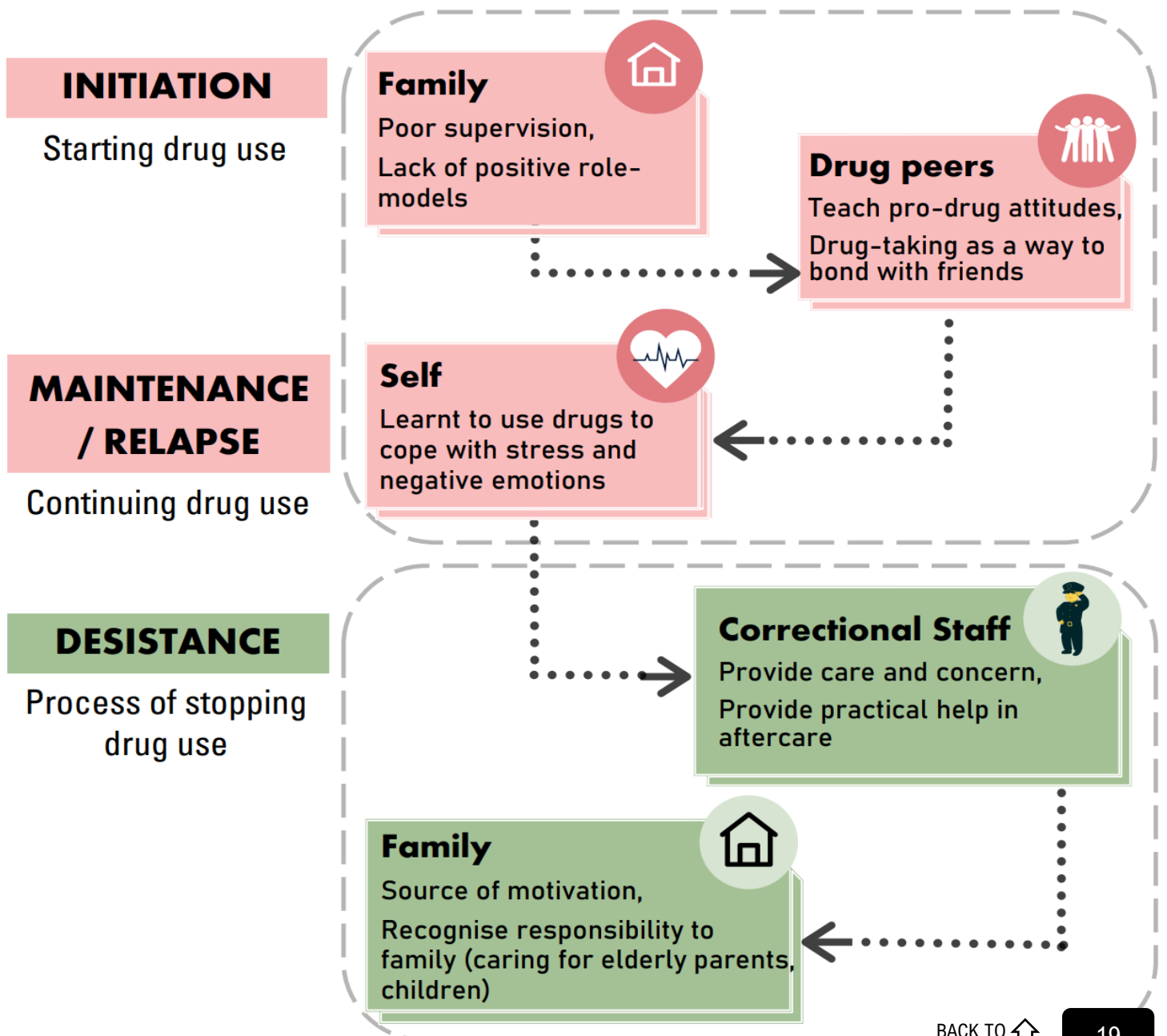
Social Influences on Drug Use and Desistance

Who are the key influences for an individual's drug abuse and desistance?

An SPS research study found that different social actors influence a drug abuser at different stages of drug abuse

Stages of Drug Abuse

Social Influences



What changes occur between periods of drug-taking and desistance?



Change in social circle

- Reduced time spent with drug peers
- Surrounded by prosocial support system



Change in self-identity and relation to others

- Recognise responsibility to family
- De-prioritise antisocial peers

What can we do to positively influence individuals towards desistance?

Provide a supportive social circle for change



- ✓ Build on day-to-day moments to reinforce their application of skills outside of incare programme sessions, or when in the community

Reinforce their prosocial identity



- ✓ Facilitate their cost-benefit-analyses and reflection of actions on loved ones
- ✓ Remind them about their goals for family and work beyond prison and aftercare supervision, towards the future lives they hope to lead



SINGAPORE
PRISON SERVICE



CORRECTIONAL
RESEARCH

Brought to you by: Correctional Research Branch

The Research Digest is intended to communicate research findings conducted in SPS and promote the use of research to inform policy and practice. For more information, please contact: Pris_Research_Evaluation@pris.gov.sg

Research Digest

Visitation and Family Relationships

By Gwendaline Ng, Loh Eng Hao

Healthy relationships foster a hope for the future and enhance social capital.



Feeling supported



Motivation to commit to prosocial roles



Exert positive influence on beliefs and values



Help with material needs

Fruitful visits can help offenders build **healthy relationships with family members.**

Family visits can positively impact offenders and prisons

1 Coping in Prison

Buffer offenders from depressive symptoms due to isolation and adjustment to prison life³.



2 Reduce Offender Misconduct

Consistent visits significantly reduce misconduct in general and major violent acts of misconduct^{4,5}.



3 Rebuild Support Networks

Allocated time for offenders to reconcile and improve relationships with family⁶.

The quality of relationships between offender and family is an important consideration to rehabilitative outcomes.



A Case Study on Video Visits: Project Hope



Project Hope is an initiative in collaboration with Yishun Secondary School and Northlight School to **facilitate more meaningful conversations** between children and incarcerated parents with the help of school counsellors or teachers.

Guided communication by the counsellors/school teachers can help parents effectively establish more concrete prosocial roles and involve parents in their children's growth.



However, video visits should aim to complement in-person visits and not replace them^{7,8}.

Some food for thought about family visits

Is family contact time sufficient?

Can we leverage technology to increase family contact time?

E.g. Voice recorded messages to children



How can we improve visitation experience?

Provide guidance to **facilitate reconciliatory conversations and interactions** between family visitors and offenders.

E.g. Informational brochures, daily conversations



Provide a **child-friendly environment** and prepare children for **what to expect when interacting with parents** during visits.

E.g. Informational videos on what to expect during visits



SINGAPORE PRISON SERVICE



Brought to you by: Correctional Research Branch

The Research Digest is intended to communicate research findings conducted in SPS and promote the use of research to inform policy and practice. For more information on this, please contact:

✉ pris_research_evaluation@pris.gov.sg

¹ Gust, L. V. (2012). Can policy reduce the collateral damage caused by the criminal justice system?: Strengthening social capital in families and communities. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 82(2), 174-180.
² Fasah, S. (2018). Pat-Downs But No Hugs: Why Prison Visitation Protocol Should be Changed to Help Keep Familial Structures Intact. *Family Court Review*, 56, 135-149.
³ Cochran, J. C., Mears, D. P., Bales, W. D., & Stewart, E. A. (2016). Spatial Distance, Community Disadvantage, and Racial and Ethnic Variation in Prison Inmate Access to Social Ties. *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency*, 53(2), 220-254.
⁴ Cochran, J. C. (2012). The ties that bind or the ties that break: Examining the relationship between visitation and prisoner misconduct. *Journal of Criminal Justice*, 40(5), 433-440.

⁵ Reidy, T., & Sorenson, J. (2020). Visitation and Misconduct Among Maximum-Security Inmates. *The Prison Journal*, 100(4), 447-467.
⁶ McCarthy, D., & Adams, M. (2019). Can Family-Prisoner Relationships Ever Improve During Incarceration? Examining the Primary Caregivers of Incarcerated Young Men. *The British Journal of Criminology*, 59(2), 378-395.
⁷ Murdoch, D. J., & King, L. L. (2020). 'Not feeling like a caged animal': prisoner perceptions of a remote video visitation system. *Journal of Crime and Justice*, 43(2), 212-227.
⁸ Duwe, G., & McNeeley, S. (2021). Just as good as the real thing? the effects of prison video visitation on recidivism. *Crime and Delinquency*, 67(4), 475-497.



RESEARCH REPORTS



This section contains research efforts presented as full text documents detailing the context or background, methodology, analysis, results and a discussion of findings for specific research projects.

NEEDS ANALYSIS OF LOW AND MODERATE RISK MALE DRUG ABUSERS IN THE DRUG REHABILITATION CENTRE

WHY WE DID THIS STUDY



Staff working in DRC should be aware of the needs of drug abusers to better support them in their drug rehabilitation journey.

AIMS To analyse the drug needs of low and moderate risk male drug abusers in a drug rehabilitation centre.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What initiation factors led to drug abusers' first drug use?
2. What factors maintained drug abusers' drug use?
3. What potential strengths and resources helped drug abusers to stay away from drugs?

WHAT WE DID

SAMPLE 42 male drug abusers identified to have low or moderate risk and needs

METHODS Inductive qualitative analysis – coding of 42 sets of interview transcripts



WHAT WE FOUND

1. The most commonly reported initiation factors that led to drug abusers' first drug use were peers and curiosity.
2. The most commonly reported factors that maintained drug abusers' drug use were anti-social peer influence, coping with negative emotions, and pro-drug attitudes (e.g., positive drug expectancies, minimisation of the severity of drug use, perceived elevated control over consequences of drug use or urges). Other factors such as anti-social influence from family and intimate partners, lack of meaningful engagement of time, sensation seeking tendencies, and impulsivity were also factors that maintained drug abusers' drug use.
3. The most commonly reported potential strengths and resources that helped drug abusers stay away from drugs were family (family support and family a motivating factor for change), pro-social peers, meaningful engagement of time, and motivation for intervention.

WHAT IT MEANS

Staff can better target the identified needs during daily interactions with drug abusers by:

1. Increasing motivation for intervention using FRAMES. FRAMES is an engagement skill set that encompasses Motivational Interviewing techniques. It is an acronym for Feedback, Responsibility, Advice, Menu of Options, Empathy, and Self-Efficacy.
2. Facilitating concrete conversational topics to target the identified needs, such as coping, peers, family, free time, and pro-drug attitudes.

EVALUATION OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF FRAMES IN DRUG REHABILITATION CENTRE (DRC)

WHY WE DID THIS STUDY



Research into effective brief interventions for substance use found six consistent features that appeared to contribute to effectiveness in producing change in clients, summarised as FRAMES.

FRAMES is an acronym for six components: Feedback, Responsibility, Advice, Menu of Options, Empathy, and Self-efficacy. FRAMES was introduced to Correctional Rehabilitation Specialists (CRS) in DRC as a structure to address motivational issues in drug abusers under their charge.

AIMS Following an online FRAMES training in August 2020, an evaluation was conducted in January 2021 in the areas of:

1. CRS' motivation and confidence in using FRAMES with drug abusers,
2. Perceived benefits and challenges experienced when using FRAMES; and
3. Recommendations to address the challenges.

EVALUATION QUESTIONS

1. How motivated and confident are CRS in using FRAMES during their engagement with drug abusers?
2. What are the benefits and challenges they experienced?

WHAT WE DID

SAMPLE 28 CRS working in DRC

METHODS Quantitative scales were administered to understand DRC CRS' motivation and confidence levels to use FRAMES in their engagement with the drug abusers.

Qualitative data was obtained via a feedback form to understand the perceived benefits and challenges experienced by CRS and obtain inputs on ways to address these challenges.



WHAT WE FOUND

1. Majority of DRC CRS are confident and motivated to use FRAMES. The mean confidence level was 7.25 out of 10 while the mean motivation level was 8.21 out of 10.
2. DRC CRS found applying FRAMES to their clinical work helpful in building collaborative relationships with drug abusers. They also provided feedback that FRAMES empowered drug abusers to take responsibility for their own rehabilitation.
3. Challenges faced included the following areas: (a) remembering the components of FRAMES, (b) familiarizing themselves with the use of FRAMES, and (c) knowing when to use FRAMES

WHAT IT MEANS

FRAMES has shown to be a promising brief engagement that provides a structure to build collaborative relationships with and address motivational issues in drug abusers. As a structured model to guide conversations, FRAMES could be used by staff to encourage drug abusers to consider consequences and take charge of their rehabilitation.

The study also highlighted the importance of post-training support to facilitate application of learning. To address the challenges in using FRAMES, a cognitive aid was provided to staff. More emphasis during training could also be placed on helping staff to understand the situations to use FRAMES, so as to increase the applicability of the use of FRAMES in their day-to-day work.



SURVEY OF DRUG OFFENDERS' SENTIMENTS ABOUT THE MISUSE OF DRUGS ACT (AMENDMENT)

WHY WE DID THIS STUDY



The Misuse of Drugs Act (Amendment) ("MDA Amendment") was implemented on 15th Jan 2019 to enhance Singapore's drug harm prevention strategy by maintaining tough laws while enhancing rehabilitation and reintegration.

The present study examined drug offenders' sentiments towards the MDA Amendment and whether they perceived it as an easing of sanctions towards drug abuse.

AIMS

1. To provide feedback on the change in drug policy and laws and,
2. To gain a sensing of drug offenders' alignment with Singapore's approach to drug abuse.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. How do drug offenders perceive the MDA Amendment?
2. How do they perceive Singapore's drug harm prevention stance?
3. Do their perceptions influence their decision to take drugs?

WHAT WE DID



SAMPLE 400 drug offenders surveyed, and a subset (n=64) interviewed

METHODS A mixed methods design was used for this study. Using psychological scales, 400 drug offenders were surveyed for their perceptions of the amended (vs previous) MDA and what it means for:

- Strictness of Singapore's anti-drug laws
- Drug permissibility (e.g., is drug abuse harmful, should it remain a crime)
- Usefulness of the shift to rehabilitation and reintegration

In addition, drug offenders indicated if their perceptions influenced their drug-taking (more likely/less likely/no impact on their decision to use drugs).

Thereafter, 64 of the 400 offenders were selected for a qualitative interview. Their reasons underlying their perceptions and their decision-making processes before drug relapse were recorded and examined.



WHAT WE FOUND

1. Drug offenders are aligned with Singapore's anti-drug laws and zero-tolerant stance towards drug use.
 - a. They continued to perceive the Amended MDA as strict, tough, and zero-tolerant towards drug abuse.
 - b. They supported the continued need for drug harm prevention.
2. Drug offenders appreciated and supported the shift towards complementing deterrence approaches with enhanced focus on rehabilitation and reintegration.
 - a. They appreciated the Amended MDA's enhanced focus on drug rehabilitation and reintegration and believed it will help prevent their drug reoffending.
 - b. They provided feedback on how support in prison and follow-ups in the community (i.e., throughcare) are needed to further motivate and sustain their efforts to change.



WHAT IT MEANS

1. The present study supplements SPS efforts to support Singapore's drug narrative through psychological research. Findings evidenced support for existing efforts moving towards complementing deterrence approaches with throughcare to support drug offenders' desistance.
2. Findings provide SPS with sensing of any need for prompt corrective actions following policy implementation e.g., educate drug offenders with permissive drug attitudes about the MDA Amendment objectives.

EFFECTIVE OFFENDER ENGAGEMENT & MANAGEMENT PRACTICES: A QUALITATIVE RESEARCH STUDY

WHY WE DID THIS STUDY



To identify effective engagement skills and/or practices that SPS officers have used to effect change on offenders and use that knowledge to enhance skills among all SPS staff.

AIMS To identify effective engagement practices and enhance current training and development efforts for staff.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What are the effective practices (skills, knowledge, qualities, and systems) among correctional officers?
2. What are the challenges to effective engagement in SPS?

WHAT WE DID



SAMPLE

Officers were identified based on various criteria:

- At least 5 years in service
- At least Chief Warden (CW) rank
- Has individual good performance awards
- Perceived to have ability to engage and manage offenders effectively
- 9 officers agreed to be part of the research study

METHODS

- OPSYB created a semi-structured interview guide and interviewed officers from Oct to Nov 2020
- Interview questions focused on their perceptions on effective skills, qualities, and systems
- Thematic analyses were conducted to identify themes and patterns

WHAT WE FOUND



1. Various individual and systemic factors were found to either aid or hinder effective engagement.
2. Staff who had utilized effective skills/practices appeared to have high emotional intelligence (EI), a sense of purpose, job clarity, and a growth mindset. In addition, the presence of collaborative partnerships, effective social modelling processes, and relevant trainings were systemic factors that aided effective engagement.
3. The presence of challenging inmates, difficulties balancing between different roles and responsibilities, poor implementation of initiatives, and poor selection of staff were factors that hindered effective engagement.



WHAT IT MEANS

SPS could foster more effective engagement and management of inmates by selecting the right staff (e.g., through using personality data and assessing attitudes towards rehabilitation), having formal and informal coaching and support processes to enhance staff learning and practising of skills (e.g., have follow-up coaching after trainings, encourage learning processes within the HU), and having access to trainings that aid in engagement (e.g., training in Emotional Intelligence [EI], coaching [for supervisors]).

INTEGRATED THOROUGH CARE TRIAL EVALUATION

WHY WE DID THIS STUDY



The Integrated Throughcare model was conceptualised in 2018 to have the same Correctional Rehabilitation Specialist (CRS) delivering rehabilitation and case management services throughout the offender's sentence from incare to community to ensure a smoother transition for the offender. The model was trialled on the Drug Rehabilitation Centre (DRC) regime and evaluated to inform future development decisions.

AIMS

- To examine the feasibility and benefits of the Integrated Throughcare model
- To identify possible implementation issues and concerns that affects the sustainability of the model

EVALUATION QUESTIONS

1. What is the added value of the Integrated Throughcare as compared to the existing model in the areas of a) therapeutic alliance, b) better continuity of care and c) reintegration planning for inmates?
2. What effect does the Integrated Throughcare have on staff's dual role work demands?



WHAT WE DID

SAMPLE 4 CRSEs participating in the trial

- 26 supervisees under the Integrated Throughcare model
- 11 supervisees under "treatment as usual" model

METHODS Qualitative data collected from supervisees at two timepoints - focus group discussions at pre-release and individual interviews at tail end of community supervision

Data from CRSEs collected via individual interviews and self-recorded reflection journals

WHAT WE FOUND



- ✓ Throughcare CRS's first-hand knowledge of the offender ensures more effective flow of information from incare to aftercare
- ✓ Greater reinforcement of incare learnings in aftercare through recollection of prior discussions
- ✓ Increased onus on Throughcare CRS to intervene
- ✗ No notable difference in therapeutic alliance and aftercare outcomes between models
- ✗ Offenders' increased expectations and risk of over-dependence on Throughcare CRS
- ✗ High physical and mental demands on Throughcare CRS to manage dual incare and aftercare roles concurrently



WHAT IT MEANS

The Integrated Throughcare model presented with potential benefits but may not be sustainable in the long run. However, lessons learnt from the trial encouraged the enhancement of practices in current model to replicate the benefits such as strengthening the flow of information, equipping staff to adopt the "throughcare lens", and further aligning incare and aftercare processes.

EXPLORING THE REHABILITATION AND REINTEGRATION NEEDS OF SUPERVISEES ON WORK RELEASE SCHEME

WHY WE DID THIS STUDY



Institution S2 houses offenders on Work Release Scheme (WRS), a Community Based Programme (CBP) that allows eligible offenders to serve the tail-end of their sentence in the community. As Institution S2 is a step-down facility, some elements of Therapeutic Community (TC) such as utilising the community as a primary change agent were integrated into the programme to support supervisees' eventual reintegration back to society. TC in both incare and aftercare settings has been shown to be effective in reducing recidivism rates of offenders with substance use disorders in a randomized trial (Sacks et al., 2012).

AIMS To understand the rehabilitation and reintegration needs of S2 supervisees for (a) better management of resources; and (b) development of more effective interventions to support building of TC.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What are the current rehabilitation and reintegration needs of S2 supervisees?
2. What are some areas of improvement and considerations for the current programme as guided by the components of TC?

WHAT WE DID



SAMPLE 7 female supervisees living in Institution S2 whose emplacement duration were between two and five weeks.

10 staff working with female supervisees at Institution S2.

METHODS Focus group discussions (FGDs) were conducted using TC as a guiding framework. Thematic analysis was used to analyse the transcribed data. A shared codebook was developed, documenting the initial codes and themes, which were iteratively refined into prominent themes.

WHAT WE FOUND



1. Family is a motivating factor for supervisees to complete CBP. However, expectations from family and supervisee to fulfil family roles causes stress.
2. Internal and external resources such as support from stakeholders, suitable training and communication relating to employment needs are necessary to cope with rehabilitation challenges.
3. Sufficient activities and suitable infrastructure are important.
4. Communication amongst staff, with staff, and the presence of multiple stakeholders are important and perceived as supportive regardless of whether requests are granted.
5. Staff and supervisees have different priorities towards CBP. Supervisees view CBP as a way to resume their family roles. Staff view CBP *as similar to incare*, and priority should be focused on supervisee's stabilization and adaptation to programme.
6. Positive peer association provides support in rehabilitation and reintegration areas such as emotional support and practical help. Engaging in deliberate efforts to avoid anti-social peers is important.
7. Supervisees require clear and concrete instructions as well as sufficient time to settle reintegration matters.
8. Other notable findings include a) limited time-off given for supervisees to mitigate risk of abscondment, and b) supervisees' lack of financial management skills.

WHAT IT MEANS



Based on the findings, the study highlighted several recommendations to improve current programmes and the structure of Institution S2. This is to further facilitate the development of TC for both staff and supervisees.

AN EVALUATION STUDY OF INSTITUTION A4'S READINESS FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GENDER-RESPONSIVE APPROACH PART II



WHY WE DID THIS STUDY

There is a growing emphasis on evidence-based gender-responsive (GR) rehabilitation programming in prisons across the world which aims at improving implementation to ensure that it is responsive to the unique risks, needs and characteristics of females. In Singapore Prison Service, Institution A4 (female prison) is changing to utilize the GR approach. This is supported by accumulating evidence where applying the GR approach is crucial when working with female offenders to reduce recidivism rates.

AIMS To explore additional contributing factors influencing A4's readiness for the GR approach

EVALUATION QUESTIONS

1. In what areas is Institution A4 ready for the implementation of GR practices?
2. What are the factors that can help the sustainability of the GR approach?

WHAT WE DID

SAMPLE 19 A4 officers and 6 A4 management (Officers in Charge of Housing Unit (OCHUs), Head Operations, Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent)

METHODS Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were conducted with A4 officers and management to gain further insight on the contributing factors influencing A4's readiness such as effectiveness of GR strategies, challenges faced and motivational readiness of staff.

This study adopted a qualitative design and analyses of transcripts were guided by the processes which included open coding and thematic analyses.



WHAT WE FOUND

1. A4 officers have awareness of Gender Sensitivity which enhances their readiness to utilize the GR approach.
2. The current practices found to be effective in working with female offenders include journaling and the presence of good collaboration between counsellors and officers.
3. A4 Management and officers are aware of current GR practices implemented within A4.
4. A4 officers are motivationally ready to upskill by attending training as they recognize the benefits of GR training in their work with female offenders.

WHAT IT MEANS

Organisational readiness is important in the implementation of change and evaluation of an organisation's readiness can identify the specific factors influencing the sustainability of this change. For institution A4, there has been an increase in readiness in implementing GR strategies, and to enhance sustainability, the following strategies are recommended:

- 1) Dialogues with A4 management, Correctional Rehabilitation Specialists (CRS), GR champions to unify common working goals and to review current GR implementation
- 2) Conduct FGDs for CRS and officers to share best practices and alternative work processes

The following have been implemented: Supt/A4 has appointed GR Champions to advocate for GR initiatives, provide guidance on GR and share training resources and to co-lead GR training with CRS.



LITERATURE REVIEWS

This section contains research efforts presented as comprehensive summaries of previous research findings, theory and methodological contributions on a topic from scholarly articles, books, and other publications.

FATHERHOOD ATTITUDES AND BELIEFS IN MEN WHO PERPETRATE FAMILY VIOLENCE

WHY WE DID THIS REVIEW



PURPOSE Family violence perpetrators form a subset of the violent inmate population in the Singapore Prison Service. A literature review on men who perpetuate family violence helps the General Violence Unit to gain insight into the attitudes and beliefs on fatherhood among family violence perpetrators for consideration of intervention needs of these men.



WHAT WE FOUND

VIOLENCE AND FATHERHOOD

Despite committing violence against their loved ones, perpetrators of family violence have expressed desire to continue caring for their children and are likely to continue their relationships or return to their families after incarceration.

Lack of awareness on the impact of violence on their children Perpetrators have little awareness of the long-term impact of their family violence on their children. They believe that their children are either too young or absent ("not around or asleep") to comprehend the violent acts or thought that the violence they inflicted was not severe enough to affect their children (Bourassa et al., 2016).

Romanticised ideals when it comes to parenting While they agreed on what it means to be a 'good' father (e.g., provision of financial stability, protection, and emotional connection with their children), most of them struggled to be one.

Lack of knowledge in child development. Perpetrators find it challenging to understand their children's needs and see disobedient behaviours as a deliberate provocation of their authority. This leads to frustration and harsh punishments. Despite not being able to understand their children's perspectives and developmental needs, perpetrators still desire contact with their children to provide 'unconditional love', suggesting the desire to fulfil their fatherly roles but they are inadequately equipped in their knowledge.

Conflict in gender roles within the household. Friction over household tasks and childcare practices could lead to resentment towards partners, and domestic violence. Unstable marital relationships tend to impact the fathering relationship as men choose to withdraw from their children during marital conflicts.

NEW VS TRADITIONAL FATHERHOOD

Veteläinen and colleagues (2013) categorised three types of fathers' parenting styles that reflect the attachment styles between fathers and their children:

Traditional Type 1:

- Avoidance of responsibility for their children.
- See themselves as being 'forced' into the disciplinarian role by their partners/ spouses

Traditional Type 2:

- Physically and emotionally distant from children.
- Reinforced by long working hours that they are unable to spend time with their children
- Fathers in this group often choose to spend their time outside of home without their family.

Traditional Type 3:

- See themselves as the head of the family to keep the family together.
- They make important family decisions.
- Perceive control as obligatory.
- Control is justified as protection for children against development of bad habits.

New Fatherhood:

- Parenting roles are not defined by gender.
- Fathers have a strong sense of shared parenting with their partners/ spouses.
- Ability to exhibit 'soft' skills such as empathy and emotional expressions when relating to their children
- Emotionally invested in the relationship with their children.

WHAT IT MEANS



The study by Veteläinen et. al., (2013) found that new fatherhood parenting style surfaced as the ideal state of fatherhood among perpetrators, with most desired emotional closeness with their children. However, perpetrators found it difficult to achieve the ideal state because of their discomfort with using 'soft' skills, which was perceived to undermine their masculinity and manhood. While perpetrators desire to be 'good' fathers, there is a gap between their current and ideal fatherhood states, which they struggle to reconcile. This could explain the disparity between wanting to be a good father and difficulty in controlling their violence that resulted in family violence.

EFFECTS OF THE USE OF PORNOGRAPHY AND MASTURBATION

WHY WE DID THIS STUDY



PURPOSE Given the proliferation and ease of access to pornography, along with the associated act of masturbation, this preliminary review examined the effects of pornography and masturbation on individuals. This is essential given that some studies have established association between the use of pornography and unhealthy sexual attitudes.



WHAT WE FOUND

PORNOGRAPHY

1. May lead to an increase or decrease in sexual satisfaction, depending on individuals' perception. For example, some may impose unrealistic perceptions of sex on their partners and experience disappointment. Conversely, it can lead to exploration of new sexual behaviours and increase in communication of sexual preferences, if watched together with a partner.
2. Decrease in self-esteem can occur when one is subjected to unrealistic standards portrayed in pornography.
3. Contribute to possible addiction given the reinforcement of pornography consumption with the release of dopamine. Notably, the neurobiology of cocaine also resembles that of sexual arousal.
4. Experience decreased stress levels as consumption of porn can distract individuals from undesirable emotions.
5. Individual differences can affect the effects of pornography use and the type of pornography one consumes. For example, men who scored high on hostility towards women are not only more likely to be exposed to sexually violent pornography, but also more likely to be affected by such exposure.

MASTURBATION

1. Possible improvement of sexual health and pleasure as such sexual exploration allows familiarisation with one's sexual responses and facilitation of communication of one's sexual needs and wants.
2. May improve general health by reducing stress and anxiety through the release of oxytocin, which lowers stress-inducing hormones, e.g., cortisol. Additionally, sleep quality can improve through the release of endorphins, which aids in relaxation.
3. Psychological problems can arise when feelings of guilt and/or shame are elicited possibly since the act of masturbation can be viewed negatively in a society.
4. Physical problems can arise when one excessively masturbates, which include genital swelling and irritated skin.

WHAT IT MEANS



- Research concerning the use of pornography has yielded mixed results on its impact, i.e., benefits and drawbacks.
- Studies thus far have only established the associations between pornography and masturbation on individuals without causal links.
- Type of and effects of pornography use can differ across individuals.

MOVING FORWARD

Thank you for your interest and contribution to the research studies featured in 2021.
Stay tuned for more studies in 2022!

If you are keen on conducting a study in SPS, email us and our friendly researchers will get in touch with you, or you can refer to the website below for more details. For those who are curious about our research and would like to find out more about any studies listed here, feel free to drop us an email provided under Study Enquiries.

RESEARCH REQUESTS



Interested Applicants:
SPS_research_requests@pris.gov.sg



More Details:
<https://www.sps.gov.sg/links/research-request>

STUDY ENQUIRIES



General queries or queries on research studies
listed in this review:
PRIS_Research_Evaluation@pris.gov.sg