

Circles of Support & Accountability Colorado

May 13, 2011

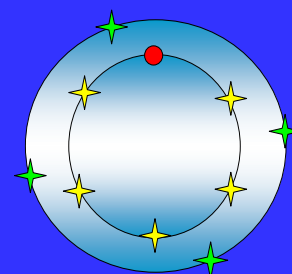
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Circles of Support & Accountability



● Core member ★ Volunteers ★ Professionals

Sexual Abuse is a Community Issue

- ❖ The community lives in fear of sexual offenders, and responses to dealing with this fear are varied throughout history.
- ❖ At the end of the day, reduced recidivism is everyone's business.
 - offender, victim, and community

Stakeholders

- ❖ victims
- ❖ citizens
- ❖ law enforcement
- ❖ legal and correctional personnel
- ❖ mental health personnel
- ❖ the media
- ❖ offenders

Today's Situation

- ❖ Upon release, many sexual offenders are subject to public notification, vilification and, sometimes, vigilantism.
- ❖ As a result, some are eventually driven out of one community into another and, often, go "underground".

This does not help.

An Untenable Situation

- ❖ Many released sexual offenders receive little or no support or encouragement to get help and live safe.
- ❖ The community and *potential victims* have few real safeguards.

Birth of Circles

When all the mechanisms for public safety in a society fail to protect the public or are found inadequate, then it is the people themselves who must act to protect themselves and their most vulnerable members.

Consider this...

Jane Jacobs (1961) The Death and Life of Great American Cities.

“The first thing to understand is that the public peace—the sidewalk and street peace—is not kept primarily by the police, necessary as police are. It is kept primarily by an intricate, almost unconscious, network of voluntary controls and standards among the people themselves and enforced by the people themselves. No amount of police can enforce Civilization where the normal causal enforcement of it has broken down.”

“The Shadow Cast by Formal Justice.”

Community is made from conflict as much as from cooperation; the capacity to solve conflict is what gives social relations their sinew. Professionalizing justice “steals the conflicts,” robbing the community of its ability to face trouble and restore peace. Communities lose their confidence, their capacity, and, finally, their inclination to preserve their own order. They instead become consumers of police and court “services” with the consequence that they largely cease to be communities.

- Nils Christie (1977). Conflicts as Property. British Journal of Criminology, 1.

The Work of CoSA Flows from Its Vision

The “work” of Circles of Support and Accountability, is a purposeful engagement in dialogue with local communities and their institutions.

This engagement taps a community’s innate capacity to preserve order to make peace, begin healing, and to reclaim the conflict.

Building Community

As CoSA practitioners, we know that this effort is never more profound than witnessing ordinary citizens confront what might be their worst nightmare, and from that to put into action,

“...the informal capacities of residents to regulate neighborhood order and the connections between neighborhoods to public institutions, especially the police, are both integral to inhibiting fear of crime and controlling crime itself” (Emphasis added).

Police Quarterly Volume 10 Number 1, March 2007 41-62, citing Bursik & Grasmick, 1993; Humer, 1985; Lewis & Salem, 1986).

Practically Speaking . . .



Building a CoSA
IS to Build Community

March 2011

Circles of Support and Accountability
CSC Chaplaincy NHQ

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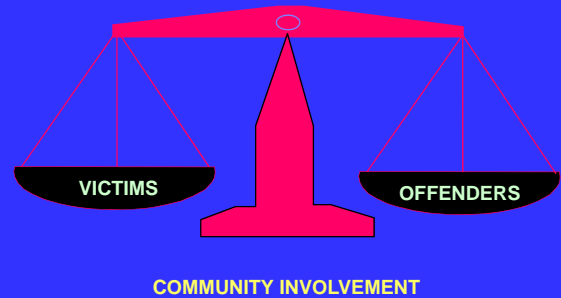
The true GENIUS of CoSA

CoSA involves a strategy to empower the people, to build community.

It reaches out and invites into community those without community rather than pushing out and away.

It is this -- this empowering, this creating, this inviting in and walking with -- that in turn offers support for offenders, protects against victimization, and yields the spectacular results we have seen in CoSA.

Circles of Support & Accountability



The "Tokyo Rules"

The United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners

"Public participation should be regarded as an opportunity for members of the community to contribute to the protection of their society."

(Rule 17.2)

The "Tokyo Rules"

The United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners

"There should, therefore, be governmental or private agencies capable of lending the released prisoner efficient aftercare directed towards *lessening of prejudice against him* and towards his social rehabilitation."

(Rule 64, emphasis added)

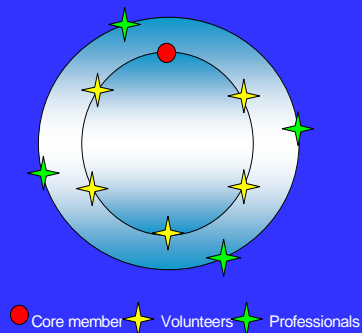
The "Tokyo Rules"

The United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners

"With the participation and help of the community and social institutions, and with due regard to the interest of the victims, favourable conditions shall be created for the reintegration of the ex-prisoner into society under the best possible conditions."

(Principle 10)

Circles of Support & Accountability



Mission statement

To substantially reduce the risk of future sexual victimization of community members by assisting and supporting released men in their task of integrating with the community and leading responsible, productive, and *accountable* lives.

Goal

To promote successful integration of released men with the community by providing offenders with support, advocacy, and a way to be meaningfully accountable in exchange for living *safely* in the community.

Who are we talking about?

- ◆ men released after having completed their entire sentence
- ◆ judged to be at high risk to re-offend
- ◆ have no pro-social support in the community
- ◆ are likely to garner media attention

Volunteer Recruitment and Training

- ◆ Volunteers are screened and familiarized with CoSA principles and practices before they are placed in a Circle
- ◆ Screening also involves Police Records Check
- ◆ Training is provided on weekday evenings and weekends for a total of 30 or more hours on a wide range of topics

Topics of training

- ◆ overview of the criminal justice system
- ◆ restorative justice
- ◆ needs of survivors
- ◆ the circle model
- ◆ effects of institutionalization
- ◆ human sexuality and sexual deviance
- ◆ risk assessment
- ◆ boundaries and borders
- ◆ Volunteer "job" description
- ◆ conflict resolution
- ◆ group dynamics

Topics of training

- ◆ building group cohesion
- ◆ circle functions
- ◆ crisis response and preparing for critical incident stress
- ◆ working with correctional officials, police, news media and other community professionals
- ◆ needs assessment
- ◆ building a covenant
- ◆ court orders
- ◆ closing a Circle

Why Do Circles Work?

Effective Programs

Based on meta-analytic research, Don Andrews and his colleagues have suggested four principles of effective correctional interventions:

- ♦ risk
- ♦ need
- ♦ responsivity
- ♦ professional discretion

Why do Circles Work?

Offender Social Support

Released sexual offenders who have positive, pro-social support in their community are at less risk of re-offending than those who have no such support, or whose supports are anti-social in nature.

The Shadow Cast by Formal Justice

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The Work of CoSA Flows from Its Vision

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*This engagement taps a community's innate capacity to preserve order to make peace, begin healing, and to **reclaim the conflict**.*

Formal evaluation

Two part undertaking:

- ❖ Process Evaluation
 - data regarding impact of Circles on participants, their families and, most importantly, the community-at-large
 - evaluate the confidence levels of the professional community
- ❖ Quantitative Evaluation
 - recidivism rates vs. control

Core member experience

Without my Circle, I may have ...

- ❖ had difficulty adjusting
- ❖ had difficulty in relationships with others
- ❖ become isolated and lonely
- ❖ turned to drugs or alcohol
- ❖ reoffended

Matching Criteria

- ❖ Detained until WED and released to same general jurisdiction
 - *de facto* risk assessment (NPB detention)
- ❖ Sex offender
- ❖ Date of Release
- ❖ GSIR Score
- ❖ Groups are not different on treatment history

Outcome - Recidivism data

Ontario Pilot Sample
(Wilson, Picheca, & Prinzo, 2007)

	Circles (60)	Control (60)
M(SD) age	47.47 (12.27)	43.62 (10.84)
M(SD) STATIC-99	5.60 (2.22)	5.00 (1.96)
M(SD) RRASOR*	3.18 (1.65)	2.12 (1.31)
M(range-mos) follow-up	54.67 (3-123)	52.47 (3-124)
M(mos) until 1 st failure	22.10	18.54
Recidivism		
Sexual*	5.00% (3)	16.67% (10)
Expected sexual	28.33% (17)**	26.45% (16)
Violent*	15.00% (9)	35.00% (21)
General †	28.33% (17)	43.44% (26)
Dispositions	38	49

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ † $p < .10$

Outcome - Recidivism data

Canadian National Replication Sample
(Wilson, Cortoni, & McWhinnie, 2009)

	Circles (44)	Control (44)
M(SD) age	42.6 (9.6)	42.9 (8.4)
M(SD) STATIC-99**	4.9 (2.1)	6.1 (1.5)
M(SD) RRASOR	2.7 (1.5)	2.7 (1.3)
M (mos; range) follow-up	35.8 (9-86)	38.6 (8-96)
M (mos) until 1 st failure	9.59	16.72
Recidivism		
Sexual*	2.27% (1)	13.67% (6)
Any Violent **	9.09% (4)	34.09% (15)
Any **	11.36% (5)	38.64% (17)
Total # (conv + chgs)**	17	73

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$

A growing concern

The Canadian CoSA model has garnered considerable international attention.

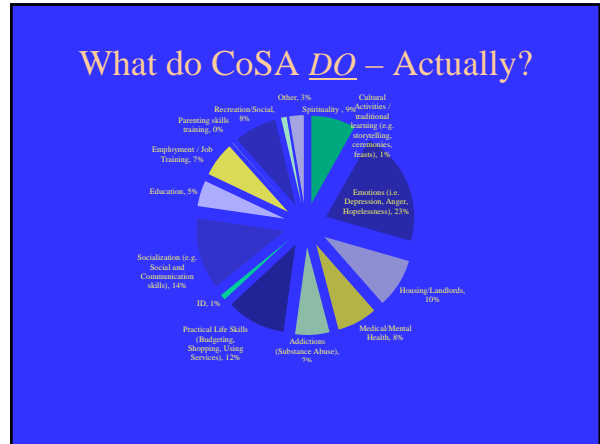
Circles projects exist in ...

- England, Ireland, and Scotland
- California, Minnesota, Colorado, Washington, Ohio, Oregon, Vermont, with more on the way
- All Canadian provinces
- Interest generated in Latvia, Netherlands, New Zealand, and other international jurisdictions

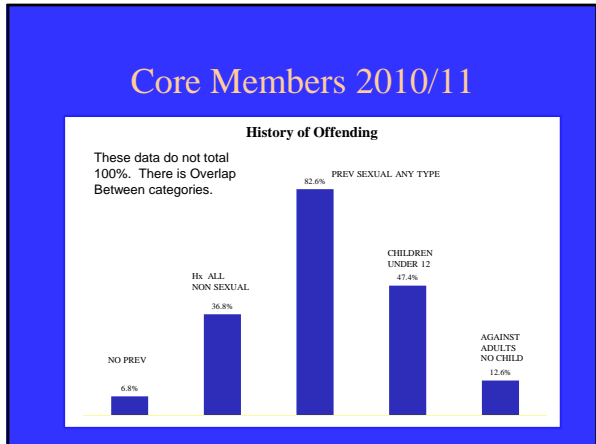
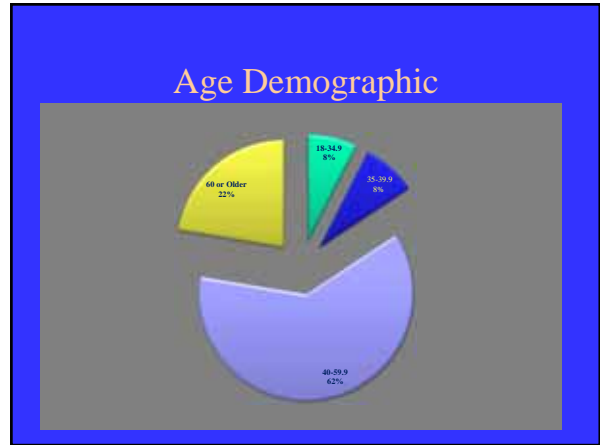
How Much Do Circles Cost? Are There Savings for the State?

- "The cost of running a CoSA intervention was estimated to be £11,140 per circle, per annum.
- The estimated cost per re-offending was estimated to be £147,161 per offender.
- Investment in CoSA appears, therefore, to provide future cost-savings. This produces a benefit-cost ratio of 0.179 – every £1 invested in CoSA produces a saving of £0.18. Hence, the benefit represents almost 18% of the costs of CoSA."

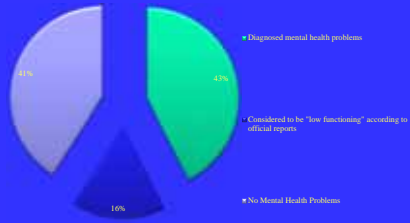
Elliott, I.A. and Beech, R. Professor Anthony R. Beech, School of Psychology, University of Birmingham, U.K. (2011).



A Little Bit About Core Members in Canada



Mental Health Issues



Closing Thoughts

Research has clearly shown that a collaborative approach which includes representation from all stakeholders can assist considerably in enhancing public safety and offender accountability. Working together, we can manage the risk.

*Teamwork is the key,
and the community has an integral role
to play in public safety!!*