

**ESTABLISHING WORKING RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN JUVENILE
CORRECTIONS AND TREATMENT PROVIDERS**

**Mental Health and Corrections:
A Partnership Providing Services to Youth who Have Sexually Offended**

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Regina Child and Youth Services and the Ministry of Corrections, Public Safety and Policing, have created an innovative partnership aimed at providing services to adolescents who have sexually offended, and their families. Mental health clinicians, probation officer/, and special supervision home operators, work together to provide an integrated and consistent approach to the assessment, treatment, and management of the youth in both the community and custody. Through the use of interdisciplinary comprehensive interviews, monthly case conferences, and special supervision homes designated specifically for youth who sexually offend, the adolescent client and family are provided with well-coordinated service. Mental health clinicians, including psychologists and social workers conduct court-ordered sex offender risk assessments, as well as provide a specialized education and treatment program designed to target the unique needs of the adolescent client who offends sexually as well as their family members. Probation officer/youth workers are trained to provide reports regarding general risk to re-offend to the courts as requested as well as manage this specialized caseload after sentencing. Community service providers are utilized to help integrate the youth in the community and to assist them to meet their social, occupational, and recreation needs. Although the aforementioned agencies typically functioning independently, these respective players have formed a unique yet successful interagency partnership aimed at more effectively serving the mental health, social, familial, and academic/occupational needs of youth who offend sexually.

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CONNECTIONS: Juvenile Court and Treatment Providers

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The joint effort of the court and the treatment provider can be beneficial in the rehabilitation of youth who have engaged in sexually abusive behavior. This in turn impacts our efforts towards community safety and preventing further sexual abuse. It is well worth our time to cultivate these working relationships. However the amount of time and effort that this type of relationship requires may be underestimated or those involved may feel that their approaches to the problem are not compatible with one another. The court system involves a variety of people from judges and attorneys to probation officers, youth service officers and those who coordinate case plans for the individual youth as well as others. It is not surprising that at times juvenile court and the treatment provider need to make a conscious effort to build a relationship that takes into account the separate and distinct roles of the each other while recognizing that there can be a shared overall common goal. This involves respecting the differences in their roles as well as recognizing that the differences may result in differences in approaches to the problem as well.

This workshop is a candid look at the working relationship between a large, metropolitan juvenile court system and treatment providers for adolescent sex offenders. One of the presenters is a local outpatient treatment provider while the other is a division director at the local juvenile court. While the presenters have known each other for several years and definitely respect each other, that doesn't mean that the professional relationship is without challenges; indeed challenges are definitely present. The workshop will provide tips and guidelines for developing an effective, working relationship between the court and the provider as well as helpful hints for overcoming common stumbling blocks. Topics addressed will range from communication to how to deal with and survive frustrations that working between systems can create. The focus will include the relationship between judges and the provider in addition to court workers and providers. The workshop borrows from real life experiences resulting in a frank and open discussion designed to provide participants with useful information to help create a more effective connection between the juvenile court and the treatment provider.