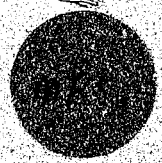


Federal Probation



Implementing Community Service: The Referral Process Probation Division, Administrative Office of the United States Courts

Strategies for Working With Special-Needs Probationers Ellen C. Wertlieb
Martin A. Greenberg

Do Correctional Industries Adversely Impact the Private Sector? Robert C. Grieser

of State Correctional Officials
revisiting: Causes, Court Orders, and Solutions Fred Holbert
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Colonization of Prison Guards:
Support Rehabilitation? Francis T. Cullen
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ACQUISITIONS

of Correctional Privatization:
a 19th Century Experience and
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Prisoners' Reformatories:
A Sample of Failed Institutional Reform Beverly A. Smith

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This Issue in Brief

Implementing Community Service: The Referral Process.—A community service sentence can serve many purposes—to deter, punish, or rehabilitate, while at the same time assuring that an offender receives a publicly discernable penalty. With increased interest in community service, many questions and issues have arisen regarding its use. This article, an excerpt from the monograph, *Community Service: A Guide for Sentencing and Implementation*, concentrates on the practical aspects of operating a community service program. Among the issues addressed are how to select appropriate agencies to receive community service; how to prepare the offender for community service; how to follow up after the offender is placed with an organization; and how to evaluate the success of a community service program. The information is especially directed to Federal probation officers but will also serve as a guide for other criminal justice and corrections professionals involved in sentencing and sentence implementation.

Strategies for Working With Special-Needs Probationers.—Authors Ellen C. Wertlieb and Martin A. Greenberg discuss the results of a survey of what alternatives to incarceration probation officers use with their disabled clients. Findings indicate a great deal of disparity regarding the approaches used within and across probation jurisdictions. All probation officers agreed, however, that they needed additional training to better serve their special-needs clients. The article concludes with some suggested strategies for improving service-delivery to probationers with disabilities.

Do Correctional Industries Adversely Impact the Private Sector?—Correctional industries have been the subject of much attention and often unfavorable publicity over the past several years. Complaints have gotten stronger in recent months as prison industries nationally are seeking to expand to keep pace with rapidly rising prison populations. Author Robert C. Grieser responds to those com-

plaints by addressing some of the numerous myths about prison industries that exist on the part of many in the private sector. The author also suggests ways in which the private sector and prison industries can work together to the benefit of both.

The Perspective of State Correctional Officials on Prison Overcrowding: Causes, Court Orders, and Solutions.—Overcrowding continues to be a major problem facing prison administrators

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Strategies for Working With Special-Needs Probationers

BY ELLEN C. WERTLIEB AND MARTIN A. GREENBERG*

PUBLIC ATTITUDE towards persons with disabilities has slowly evolved over the years. Since World War II, there has been a progressive emphasis to integrate these individuals into the mainstream of society. In conjunction with this trend, statutes have been passed which mandate considerable procedural and substantive protections for these persons. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities by agencies receiving any type of Federal assistance. For example, individuals who are considered otherwise qualified cannot be denied a job opportunity solely because of their disability. In addition, physical access to public buildings and grounds must be made available to those with disabilities. The Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975 requires that federally aided school systems provide every disabled child with a free public education. These regulations provide more of an opportunity for disabled individuals to interact with the rest of the public sector than ever before. Consequently, criminal justice personnel have an increased likelihood of making contact with these persons as victims, witnesses, or perpetrators of crimes.

The present study was aimed at exploring the treatment of these individuals when they are found to be perpetrators. It specifically focused upon disabled individuals who were placed within the probation system. The study was designed to determine how adequately probation officers are prepared to serve these clients, the alternatives to incarceration used, and the problems encountered in implementing a probation program for these individuals. The results were analyzed to determine specific strategies which could be readily implemented by probation officers who have caseloads with special-needs clients.

Methodology

Surveys were distributed to probation departments in rural as well as suburban counties within

New York State; seven different departments were represented. Seventy-seven probation officers took part in the survey. Of the 71 individuals who reported their ages, the range was 22 to 59 with a mean age of 38 and a median age of 37. Forty-seven respondents indicated they were males and 29 indicated they were females. The mean number of years experience that 75 respondents reported they had as probation officers was 9.5 with a median of 7.5 and a range of 1 to 29.

The survey included a list of 21 different alternatives to incarceration. Respondents were asked to indicate the specific alternatives that were available in their jurisdiction as well as those alternatives which they had used with mentally retarded, learning disabled, visually impaired, and/or hearing impaired clients. Space was provided for each respondent to list additional alternatives. Probation officers were instructed to respond with reference solely to their adult clients (i.e., those clients 16 years of age or older).

In order to obtain the most consistent view of the various disabilities from the respondents, definitions were provided. Individuals who are mentally retarded were described as those persons who have an intelligence quotient (IQ) less than 70 and do not meet expected standards of personal independence and social responsibility; those who are learning disabled were described as individuals who have problems in learning for reasons other than mental retardation, emotional disturbance, visual impairment, hearing impairment, motor impairment, environmental disadvantage, or economic disadvantage; persons who are visually impaired were described as those who are blind or can only see objects within a few feet even after correction; and individuals who are hearing impaired were described as those persons who have difficulty understanding speech even with the use of a hearing aid.

The survey asked participants to rate the importance of training probation officers in each of these disability areas. Open-ended questions asked individuals to describe any adaptations made for their special-needs clients, problems encountered, additional approaches thought to be needed in order to work more effectively with these individuals, and the type of information they thought would be important to include in a training workshop designed

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for probation officers working with special-needs probationers.

Results

Responses from 70 probation officers revealed much internal disagreement regarding the alternatives to incarceration perceived to be available within any given jurisdiction. As table 1 shows, there were, in fact, only three alternatives considered available within and across all seven counties surveyed (i.e., professional counseling/psychotherapy, restitution, and self-help group counseling). In contrast, probation fees were not viewed as available by most respondents. When used, such fees are charged to clients to help pay for probation supervision and incidental costs (e.g., urine testing, electronic monitoring for house detention, etc.) (Ford and Schmidt, 1985). Only one alternative to incarceration was added to the list

provided to probation officers: outpatient clinics of state mental hospitals. The officer including this alternative explained that such clinics could be used to provide in-house supervision, recreation, and psychotherapy.

Table 2 illustrates that even among those probation officers who viewed a given alternative as available, there was much variation concerning the use of that resource.

Probation officers reported many problems in working with their disabled clients. The greatest areas of concern related to supervising those who are learning disabled or mentally retarded. It was noted that these individuals often do not understand the consequences their actions can have on fulfilling probation conditions and that they often do not follow through on goals. The learning disabled clients were perceived to compound these problems by often denying any difficulty in understanding.

TABLE 1. PERCENT OF PROBATION OFFICERS WHO PERCEIVED THE VARIOUS ALTERNATIVES TO INCARCERATION TO BE AVAILABLE

Alternative	County						
	1 (N=6)	2 (N=14)	3 (N=10)	4 (N=10)	5 (N=15)	6 (N=7)	7 (N=8)
Academic training (e.g., GED, college degree)	100%	86%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Adult foster care	0%	36%	20%	30%	93%	29%	63%
Community service (also known as volunteer work)	83%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Daily living skills (e.g., budgeting, cooking)	83%	29%	80%	60%	87%	86%	75%
Financial incentives	67%	14%	10%	30%	87%	50%	25%
Fines	100%	86%	70%	90%	100%	83%	88%
Half-way house	33%	57%	100%	50%	93%	100%	75%
Home detention	83%	86%	0%	40%	40%	0%	100%
House placement (e.g., permanent group home, apartment)	83%	57%	78% ^a	80%	87%	86%	75%
Intensive supervision	100%	100%	100%	100%	40%	100%	100%
Job placement (sheltered or competitive work)	100%	93%	90%	100%	87%	100%	100%
Medical services	67%	79%	100%	80%	100%	100%	78%
Negotiated treatment contract	67%	36%	40%	25% ^b	47% ^b	67%	13%
Probation fee	0%	0% ^a	0%	0%	20%	0%	13%
Professional counseling/ psychotherapy	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Remedial education (in reading, writing, and/or math)	83%	57%	90%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Restitution	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Self-help group counseling/psychotherapy	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Split sentences (e.g., shock probation)	100%	100%	100%	100%	93%	100%	100%
Victim-offender reconciliation	17%	29%	50%	50%	47%	57%	25%
Vocational training	100%	79%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

^aOne participant did not respond to this question.

^bTwo participants did not respond to this question.

TABLE 2. PERCENTAGE OF PROBATION OFFICERS WHO USE THE VARIOUS ALTERNATIVES WITH CLIENTS WHO ARE DISABLED^a

Alternative	Probationer			
	Mentally Retarded	Learning Disabled	Visually Impaired	Hearing Impaired
<i>Academic-training (e.g., GED, college degree)</i>	43%(47)	81%(52)	55%(11)	42%(19)
<i>Adult foster care</i>	63%(24)	43%(28)	14%(7)	18%(11)
<i>Community service (also known as volunteer work)</i>	45%(47)	54%(52)	45%(11)	42%(19)
<i>Daily living skills (e.g., budgeting, cooking)</i>	65%(37)	50%(42)	67%(12)	47%(19)
<i>Financial incentives</i>	40%(25)	37%(27)	40%(5)	30%(10)
<i>Fines</i>	47%(43)	46%(46)	67%(9)	60%(16)
<i>Half-way house</i>	41%(39)	34%(44)	0%(11)	18%(17)
<i>Home detention</i>	27%(22)	24%(25)	20%(5)	20%(10)
<i>House placement (e.g., permanent group home, apartment)</i>	60%(43)	45%(42)	0%(11)	11%(19)
<i>Intensive supervision</i>	67%(43)	46%(46)	56%(9)	59%(17)
<i>Job placement (sheltered or competitive work)</i>	84%(49)	73%(51)	50%(12)	70%(20)
<i>Medical services</i>	93%(29)	58%(48)	64%(11)	50%(20)
<i>Negotiated treatment contract</i>	45%(22)	35%(26)	17%(6)	30%(10)
<i>Probation fee</i>	67%(3)	50%(2)	—(0)	0%(1)
<i>Professional counseling/psychotherapy</i>	74%(47)	83%(52)	91%(11)	63%(19)
<i>Remedial education (in reading, writing, and/or math)</i>	59%(36)	73%(49)	64%(11)	53%(19)
<i>Restitution</i>	55%(47)	65%(52)	82%(11)	58%(19)
<i>Self-help group counseling/psychotherapy</i>	57%(47)	65%(52)	73%(11)	53%(19)
<i>Split sentences (e.g., shock probation)</i>	61%(36)	73%(42)	82%(11)	58%(19)
<i>Victim-offender reconciliation</i>	54%(26)	68%(25)	86%(7)	58%(12)
<i>Vocational training</i>	74%(37)	69%(52)	91%(11)	63%(18)

^aThe numbers in parentheses signify the total from which the percentages were calculated; they represent the number of probation officers who had at least one client with the given disability and indicated that the specific alternative was available.

Some of the probation officers expressed special concern about deficits in the employment skills of mentally retarded, learning disabled, as well as hearing impaired individuals. One respondent commented that the oftentimes poor dress and hygiene habits of some mentally retarded individuals frustrate their chances of getting a job. Another probation officer noted that the hearing impaired individual's employment problems are exacerbated by the concern that some employers have about obtaining insurance for these employees.

Probation officers contacted a variety of agencies, such as the local Association for Retarded Citizens, sheltered workshops, community mental health centers, and the New York State Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, to obtain services for their disabled clients. Despite the resources of all these agencies, several areas of need were described by respondents. For example, one of the probation officers cited the need for legal advocates to ensure that the rights of disabled individuals are protected.

Respondents also discussed some of the difficulties encountered in locating services for specific types of clients. One individual noted that there were special problems in finding agencies that work with individuals who are hearing impaired. Another participant claimed that there was a need for services for borderline mentally retarded individuals; since not officially classified as retarded, these persons are not eligible for many programs. Other probation officers indicated that although services may be available for their clients, there are often very long waiting lists for these services.

The probation officers' anecdotal comments reflected the importance they attached to training. Responses to a four-point rating scale (1 = very important; 4 = very unimportant), however, indicated that the degree of importance varied according to disability, $F(3, 210) = 27.83$, $p < .05$. A Scheffe test revealed that training in mental retardation or learning disabilities ($M = 1.80, 1.62$, respectively) was perceived to be significantly more important than

training in visual impairments or hearing impairments ($M = 2.20, 2.12$, respectively), $S = .21$, $p < .05$.

The following list represents the categories of information probation officers thought should be discussed in training programs.

1. Assessment of clients so as to recognize the signs and symptoms of a particular disability.
2. Community resources to contact for help.
3. Limitations associated with specific disabilities and how to help affected individuals deal with these limitations.
4. How a disability affects one's capacity to modify behavior and ways the probation officer can help to effect change.
5. Techniques to motivate a person to follow the orders and conditions of probation.
6. Strategies to monitor attendance at programs.
7. Development of cooperative treatment approaches towards rehabilitation.
8. Causes of disabilities.
9. Relationship between disability and deviant behavior.
10. Basic communication skills helpful in working with individuals who are disabled.
11. Professional terminology and pertinent types of reports which may be encountered.

Analysis

The results of the present study revealed that probation officers encounter many difficulties in adequately serving clients with disabilities due, in part, to insufficient preparation. The range of topics that probation officers thought should be included in training sessions reflect the scope of this preparation problem.

The difficulties in adequately serving clients with disabilities may also be related to a larger issue affecting all probationers. There was much disagreement about the alternatives to incarceration thought to be available within each of the jurisdictions represented in the study. These results suggest that the availability of various local community services may not be adequately explained to probation officers within their overall training program. This possibility is understandable in light of the fact that training is conducted in a centralized location for all officers working outside of New York City. One of the authors of the present study attended this centralized program in preparation for his probation officer duties. The training consisted of 2 weeks of

instruction which emphasized the specific laws and procedures pertaining to provision of probation services; no time was allotted to a formal discussion of local resources. The information about local resources was obtained outside of the training sessions by informally asking colleagues and initiating personal contacts with service providers. During the author's 12 months of probation work, there were also a few formal presentations by community agency representatives.

Therefore, the inconsistent reports of available alternatives may have been due, in part, to treatment biases of probation officers and their supervisors as well as a limited awareness of treatment options. Moreover, the perceived availability and use of only certain types of resources may have occurred as a consequence of the initiatives of those local agency representatives who most frequently advertised their services.

Given the discrepancies within each county, it is not surprising to find that there was much disparity concerning alternative to incarceration options considered available across probation departments. There were only three alternatives which were indicated to be available in all jurisdictions: professional counseling, restitution, and self-help group counseling. While statements of participants clearly support the position that there are inadequate resources within communities to sufficiently serve clients with disabilities, the discrepant responses among probation officers within the various jurisdictions indicate that there may be more options available than officers are aware exist. Results suggest appropriate treatment of both disabled and nondisabled probationers may be severely and sometimes needlessly constrained for reasons which can be partially overcome by merely disseminating information to probation officers.

The use of negotiated treatment contracts was, for example, one technique which was only thought to be available by 27 of 67 responding participants; furthermore, less than 50 percent of those who considered this technique available used it with their disabled clients. These findings were surprising in light of the fact that the writing of such a contract would not necessarily call for the development of additional resources beyond which exist. In fact, the content of contracts bears many similarities to the program objectives included in the initial supervision plan, plan updates, and quarterly reports which are mandated to be written for each probationer in New York (New York State Division of Probation and Correctional Alternatives, 1983). An illustra-

tion of such a contract will be provided in the next section.

Strategies for the Future

The study's findings suggested various strategies for working with probationers. The treatment contract represents one approach. On the simplest level, a negotiated treatment contract can merely involve probation officers and clients coming to agreements regarding the manner in which the conditions of probation are to be fulfilled. On a slightly more complicated level, the process could include agreements made by a team of individuals consisting of probation officer, client, and various service providers. The lack of perceived availability is unfortunate due to the utility such contracts might have.

Research suggests that individuals who are disabled often feel that they are not in control of their future (MacDonald, 1972; Morrow, 1985). If that is the case, some of these individuals might conclude that it is useless for them to even attempt changing their behavior since outside forces will surely intervene. In addition, the conditions of probation imposed upon the client might seem overwhelming if an explicit plan of action to facilitate compliance is not discussed. This feeling of being overwhelmed may be especially true for learning disabled and mentally retarded individuals since they oftentimes have difficulty in focusing on the main idea amid all the other information that is presented (Houck, 1984; Westling, 1986). In line with this characteristic, some probation officers in the study indicated that they thought these individuals frequently did not understand what they were told.

The negotiation of a treatment contract communicates to probationers that they can, in fact, influence their future. Since the contract can be developed through a process of breaking down each condition into clearly defined actions, the expectations may be more comprehensible to clients, less threatening, and therefore more realistic. Writing the document in the language of the client would further help to ensure understanding.

Every negotiated treatment contract should contain the following components: behavioral objectives, an explanation of strategies for attaining these objectives, and a description of the means by which ongoing progress will be evaluated. Both the probation officer and the client should have a copy of the contract so that referral to it can be made at any time.

A common condition of probation is the maintenance of employment. In reality, this condition is

often translated to mean that the probationer will undertake a good faith effort to find and maintain employment. A behavioral objective based on these considerations might be that the probationer will obtain temporary employment within 4 weeks. Appropriate strategies to achieve this objective would include careful study of newspaper want ads, visits to local job service agencies (e.g., the State Employment Office), and personal contacts at potential places of employment. Ongoing progress towards the behavioral objective could be evaluated during each probation appointment by requiring the client to describe the employment-related contacts made as well as to submit a list of the names of people and agencies contacted.

In addition to jointly creating and signing a written contract, it might be important for probation officers to help clients who have reading difficulties as well as those who are visually impaired to make audio tapes of their contracts. Such tapes would easily allow clients to review the expectations placed upon them whenever desired and thereby eliminate reliance on others for this task. Since the development and implementation of negotiated treatment contracts integrally involve clients in a cooperative process, they may feel more of an obligation to comply with the conditions of probation.

Despite possibly feeling a greater obligation to satisfy these conditions, some individuals might not be knowledgeable about techniques which they can use to facilitate responsible behavior. The general strategies described on negotiated treatment contracts may not provide clients the sufficient means by which they can approach success given their personal traits. For example, learning disabled, mentally retarded, and hearing impaired individuals are often characterized as more impulsive than other persons (Baroff, 1986; Harris, 1978; Mercer, 1987). They might, therefore, be prone to act inappropriately as a consequence of a lack of forethought.

Researchers have, in fact, found that behavior is often guided by the statements that individuals make to themselves (i.e., self-instructions or self-statements). The lack of or inappropriate use of such self-regulatory statements seems to be associated with behavioral problems (e.g., impulsivity and aggression) (Meichenbaum, 1977). Many clinicians have, consequently, begun to use self-instruction training with children and adults who exhibit behavioral problems (Meichenbaum, 1977; van Wormer, 1988; Wallace and Kauffman, 1986).

This training involves a model demonstrating a given behavior while verbalizing self-instructions out

loud. The client then practices the behavior under the instruction of the model and then under his or her own self-instruction. At first, the self-instruction is said out loud by the client; it is then practiced in a whisper and finally via covert speech (i.e., talking to oneself) (Meichenbaum, 1977). While the modeling of one's thought processes is important, Meichenbaum (1977) cautions that it is not sufficient to engender self-control. Actual rehearsal of the appropriate behaviors which correspond to the self-instructions is also important.

Self-instructional training may be extremely useful for probation officers to implement with their clients. Training could focus on statements clients could say to themselves during particularly stressful situations.

Prior to the self-instructional training, however, it would seem to be important to engage in a problem-solving session. First, there could be a discussion of the stressful situation and the behaviors that the client typically displays. The officer could, then, help the client determine alternate forms of behavior. After the consequences for each alternative are discussed, the probation officer and client could mutually come to a decision regarding the most appropriate alternative given personal and situational factors. Such problem-solving sessions would model to clients a productive strategy for handling stress. It would not only help to empower individuals with a technique that they might be able to use independently, but could also provide the basis for the self-statements that clients could ultimately use to guide their behavior.

Based on Meichenbaum's (1977) emphasis on the importance of rehearsing appropriate behavior, the self-instructional training could be done by role playing various stressful situations. For example, a probationer who has difficulty controlling his or her temper might yell and curse at an employer when under stress and, consequently, be fired. The probation officer could play the role of employer and employee at first so as to model appropriate self-statements which could be used by the client. As employer, the probation officer could say in an angry voice, "Why did this job take you so long?!" The probation officer (in the role of employee) could then model the following self-instructional statements that the client could use: "I'm not going to yell and curse at him because if I do I will only lose my job. I can control my temper. What I will do is explain why this job was so difficult." Following the self-instructions, the probation officer (in the role of employee) could give an appropriate explanatory response for

his or her work. Praise in the form of self-statements could, then, be modeled, e.g., "I did it! I was able to control my temper." The scenario could, then, be repeated until all the stages of the self-instructional training were completed (i.e., until the client repeats these self-instructions covertly while demonstrating appropriate behavior).

It should be noted that in the previous illustration, the self-statements which were modeled did not only instruct the client to remain calm, but also provided a reason for why it was important to act in this way. In addition, these statements communicated that the client had the power and capability to remain calm. And finally, the self-statements also demonstrated how to use covert speech to praise oneself for success (i.e., self-reinforcement). For some individuals, self-praise might not be sufficient. They might choose to reward themselves in a more concrete way (e.g., by going bowling). If so, the self-statements should reflect this choice. Once probationers have learned how to use the sub-vocalization technique, it could become an important strategy to include within negotiated treatment contracts.

On a more general level, responsible behavior among probationers could also be encouraged by providing them calendars on which they could record their various appointments. Moreover, governmental and non-profit agency publications concerning a variety of issues related to dealing with the stresses of daily living could be distributed to clients. The pamphlet collections (also known as the vertical files) at community and college libraries are rich sources of such information. For example, the State University of New York at Cortland Library Pamphlet Collection contains 10 items under the "Stress" category. A sample of their titles includes: 1) "Plain Talk About Handling Stress," published by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 5600 Fishers Lane, Rockville, Maryland 20857; 2) "Coping With Everyday Problems," published by the National Mental Health Association, 1021 Prince Street, Alexandria, Virginia 22314-2971; and 3) "Stress, Tension and Relaxation," published by the International Stress and Tension Control Association, P.O. Box 8005, Louisville, Kentucky 40208. Additional practical guides produced or sponsored by Federal agencies can be located by consulting the *Monthly Catalog of U.S. Government Publications*. For example, the 1986 cumulative index volume of the *Monthly Catalog* referred to the following documents: 1) "Food Safety Adds up to Good Health—You Can Count on It!," Food Safety and Inspection Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, 4 pages, 1985; and 2) "Housing

and Disabled People, a Basic Right," U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 6 pages, September 1985. A free monthly list of similar guides and fact sheets can be obtained from the Consumer Information Center, Pueblo, Colorado 81009.

Inasmuch as the reading level of such materials may exceed that of some probationers, editing may be necessary to promote easier understanding. These edited materials could then be distributed by probation officers to appropriate clients. General information as well as instruction in various coping strategies could also be done through the use of audiotapes, videotapes, and films. Once such materials have been prepared and selected for special-needs probationers they could be incorporated into the strategies section of a negotiated treatment contract.

Implementation of the techniques thus far discussed are dependent upon probation officers assuming a therapeutic and educational approach in their interactions with clients. These approaches, however, may be considered too time-consuming by probation officers who have very large caseloads. Due to policy and/or realistic time-constraints, officers and administrators may see the probation officer only in the role of case manager whose function is to direct clients to appropriate community services or as overseer whose function primarily relates to ensuring compliance with probation conditions. Either view is likely to mitigate against the use of the interventions previously described.

Positions adverse to the aforementioned strategies would have to be addressed, in part, through education and information. Increased staffing and/or administrative reorganization would be needed to overcome the time-constraint obstacles. One participant of the present study suggested that intensive supervision of those clients who are disabled should be permitted. Specific probation officers could be solely designated to work with probationers who have disabilities. An alternative arrangement might involve providing reduced caseloads to those probation officers who supervise these clients along with their other probationers. If available, the deployment of volunteer probation officers and/or interns could provide extra assistance in working with clients who are disabled.

While some alternatives to incarceration (e.g., negotiated treatment contracts, daily living skills education) can be initiated and sometimes implemented by probation officers, several of them can only be mandated as a condition of probation by court order (e.g., split sentence, home detention, fines, restitu-

tion, victim-offender reconciliation). Probation officers can, however, influence the officially proscribed conditions by presenting strong recommendations in their presentence investigation reports. It is, perhaps for this reason, that one participant in the study stressed the importance of being very comprehensive in these reports. Probation officers can also have a strong impact after sentencing by officially recommending amendments to court mandated conditions. Such recommendations would seem to necessitate not only an understanding of a particular client's needs, but also knowledge of the efficacy of the various alternatives.

The fields of psychology and special education can currently shed much light on the characteristics and needs of disabled clients. In order to determine the means by which these probationers can live successfully in the least restrictive environment, however, it would seem that future research should focus on the development and efficacy of various court ordered and probation officer recommended alternatives.

Conclusion

The present study demonstrated the difficulties with which probation officers are faced in adequately serving their disabled clients. Many of these issues can be addressed by expanding upon the topics currently covered in probation officer training sessions. The result would probably be better service delivery to both disabled and nondisabled clients due to the many overlapping characteristics that these probationers often have. There are some problems, however, which cannot be solved solely by education. They require a commitment by all levels of administrators.

On a fundamental level, supervisors need to be able to provide a certain degree of psychological support to the probation officers they oversee due to the high stress inevitably involved in working with difficult clients. Research in the field of special education has demonstrated that burnout rate is, in fact, inversely related to administrative support (Fimian, 1986). Similar results have been obtained in the field of probation. Thomas (1988) found that management style related very strongly to stress among probation officers; the officers' personal background seemed to have a negligible relation. While the importance of psychological support is emphasized by the results of these studies, such support is meaningless unless resource support is also provided. Administrators might, therefore, need to reallocate resources so that,

for example, informational pamphlets for special-needs clients can be adapted and printed. On a larger scale, such reallocation could involve adjustment of caseload sizes and compositions to enhance manageability.

While probation is the major alternative to incarceration, it also serves as the umbrella under which most of the other alternatives operate. Since judges possess the final responsibility for choosing probation, they should be cognizant of the variety of options which probation officers often use to fulfill this mandate. Improvements in the delivery of services to probationers may ultimately depend upon the extent to which the judicial branch helps to address the types of problems raised by the present study.

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