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**CJM OUTSIDE CONNECTION  
COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAM STATEMENT**

prepared by

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COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAM STATEMENT

**NCJRS**

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**ACQUISITIONS**

**MISSION STATEMENT:**

CJM OUTSIDE CONNECTION was established on March 1, 1979 as an information and referral program to provide a wide range of indirect services to families of persons incarcerated in Kansas. Operating under the auspices of the Criminal Justice Ministry of the Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Kansas City in Kansas, the program also is intended to provide consultative services and assistance to citizen groups and volunteer organizations wishing to establish direct social services for prisoners' families.

**STATEMENT OF NEED:**

Americans today increasingly fear crime. Many feel inadequately protected from crime, and demand action. What has been done is to sentence more and more offenders to prison for longer periods of time.

The effect of imprisonment, unfortunately, is to impose punishment, with its accompanying pain and deprivations, not only on the offenders, but upon their families as well. As a consequence of the enforced absence

of one of their members, many inmates' families encounter special problems, such as reduced income, family disorganization, isolation, and emotional stress. They often suffer unnecessary anxiety simply because they lack basic information about the criminal justice system.

These problems frequently result in the urgent need for a wide range of services. Prisoners' families require adequate information upon which to base the restructuring of their lives; also, they need counseling and support to help them adjust to the changes confronting them, particularly the alteration of the family unit itself. Specific services needed may include financial counseling and/or assistance; employment counseling and/or vocational training; family or individual counseling; legal services; health care; and basic assistance in transportation, housing, and child care.

Historically, however, inmates' families have been largely ignored by traditional social service delivery systems. Individual family members may obtain services from various resources, but too few public and private agencies have recognized prisoners' families as being members of a definite group, with a distinct set of needs, requiring a specific set of services. Correctional departments, often hampered by limited funds for rehabilitative programs, focus their efforts on offenders, and have tended to neglect the needs of the offenders' families, despite strong evidence of a positive correlation between stability of family units and successful offender reintegration into society.

Much concern is currently being expressed by both public officials and private citizens about rising crime rates. Since repeat offenders are responsible for a significant percentage of the crimes committed, it is obvious that one of the keys to reducing crime is the successful rehabilitation of offenders, especially when one considers that over ninety percent of the inmates in penal institutions will be returned to their communities. Some experts contend that there are very few correctional techniques, including imprisonment, which have proven to be of significant value in offender rehabilitation. However, for over forty years, research has tended to show a positive relationship between strong social contacts and successful parole. Particularly, studies have indicated a direct connection between maintenance of solid, well-established family ties while in prison and acceptable post-release behavior. Because of this correlation, at least one authority suggests that an offender's family ought to be considered as the "prime treatment agent," and sees family contacts as a "major correctional technique."

There are no major barriers to providing needed services to the families of inmates. Many of these services could be implemented by traditional social service delivery systems, through existing programs, utilizing current personnel. Volunteers could be used to provide basic information, assistance, and support. Costs of such programs would be minimal. What appears to be lacking, however, is recognition, by both social service agencies and the general public, of the fact that any investment in supportive services, which provide assistance in maintaining the stability of prisoners' families, results in benefits for the total community. The potential for danger inherent in the failure to provide such

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services is especially abhorrent in light of those potential benefits to be gained by society.

**STATEMENT OF GOALS:**

The ultimate goal of CJM OUTSIDE CONNECTION is to reduce the incidence of crime. Specifically, the program proposes to alleviate the trauma experienced by inmates' families so that family solidarity can be maintained, and to facilitate family contacts with prisoners, thereby increasing the probability of successful offender rehabilitation.

**STATEMENT OF OBJECTIVES:**

Program Objective:

To identify, and provide services for, a minimum of sixty families of inmates by March 1, 1980.

Work Objectives:

1. To distribute informational letters, soliciting involvement, to at least 200 community groups, organizations, and social service agencies by May 4, 1979.
2. To develop, and have available for distribution to interested inmates' families, a resource packet, containing comprehensive

criminal justice information; self-help materials; and a directory of available community resources, by August 31, 1979.

3. To develop a workshop on the problems of inmates' families, for presentation to volunteers and/or professionals, by October 15, 1979.
4. To organize a network of at least twenty volunteers to work with prisoners' families by December 1, 1979.

Other program and work objectives will be added as necessary to meet the goals of CJM OUTSIDE CONNECTION.

The accomplishment of these objectives will be facilitated by the development of four program components: (1) Identification, (2) Community Development and Public Education, (3) Program Development, and (4) Research and Evaluation.

#### DESCRIPTION OF PROGRAM COMPONENTS:

##### Component One: Identification

- A. Identification of inmates' families in need of services. The names and addresses of those families needing, and wanting, services will be obtained from incarcerated family members, friends, correctional staff, resource agencies, and other interested parties. The cooperation of the Kansas Department of Corrections, the Office of the Ombudsman for Corrections,

Legal Services for Prisoners, Inc., and other agencies which may already be involved with providing services to members of these families, will be requested.

- B. Identification of organizations and persons willing to provide assistance to inmates' families. Letters will be mailed to a broad selection of community groups, organizations, and social service agencies, informing them of our program, and soliciting their cooperation and involvement, both with the identification of inmates' families and with the provision of services. Brochures will also be developed which will provide a detailed description of the program and suggest ways in which interested groups or individuals might become involved; these will be distributed through institutions, resource agencies, and other appropriate means. Interested persons will be encouraged to contact CJM OUTSIDE CONNECTION.

Component Two: Community Development and Public Education

- A. Familiarity with resources. A continued effort will be made to become aware of community resource agencies, and to be acquainted with the services they provide, in order to update and expand our network of cooperating agencies, as well as to make most effective use of their services.

- B. Public relations. The Information Director will meet with Kansas Department of Corrections personnel, including institutional staff, to explain the program, request their cooperation, and obtain suggestions for the implementation and improvement of the program. Periodic contact will be maintained to facilitate feedback. In addition, the Information Director will meet with other appropriate public officials, and attend selected community meetings, in order to increase public awareness of the program. Also, presentations will be made to interested church groups, civic organizations, and professional associations.
- C. Publicity. Informational brochures will be prepared and distributed to both potential users of services and potential service deliverers. Periodic newsletters will be sent to members of the volunteer and agency networks; inmates and their families; and other interested persons. Press releases will be sent to appropriate news media. Since education of the public to the problems faced by prisoners' families, and the resultant need for supportive services, is of maximum importance to the success of CJM OUTSIDE CONNECTION, all publicity material will be educative as well as informative.
- D. Volunteer recruitment. Emphasis will be placed on active recruitment of volunteers. Recruitment letters will be sent to volunteer organizations, such as the Service Corps of Retired



Executives; service clubs, such as the Rotary; volunteer clearinghouses, such as the Volunteer Action Center; and other service-oriented organizations, such as the PTA and League of Women Voters. Other recruitment techniques will be employed as deemed necessary.

### Component Three: Program Development

- A. Assessment of needs. A comprehensive examination of the problems and needs of prisoners' families will be undertaken. This will involve study of available research and literature, as well as discussions with inmates, their families, and correctional personnel. A conscious effort will be made by the staff of CJM OUTSIDE CONNECTION to design the program to provide for the satisfaction of as many of those needs as is realistically possible.
  
- B. Program design. CJM OUTSIDE CONNECTION is designed as an information and referral system which will act as facilitator and coordinator in the delivery of direct services to the families of inmates. Few direct services will be provided by the program itself, for several reasons. First, limitations of staff preclude the provision of most direct services at this time. Also, provision of direct services by CJM OUTSIDE CONNECTION would be duplicitous, since most services required by these families are currently available in their communities from other sources. An exception to the provision of indirect services will be the direct dissemination of criminal justice information and self-help materials to families indicating such

a need. An informal network of cooperating social service agencies will be established, as will a network of community service volunteers, who will provide assistance not readily or easily obtainable from other sources.

- C. Program staff. During its first year, CJM OUTSIDE CONNECTION will operate with one paid staff member, the Information Director of the Criminal Justice Ministry. The Information Director will be responsible for program design, implementation, and evaluation. The Information Director also will select, train, and supervise an unpaid Volunteer Coordinator, who will be responsible for volunteer recruitment, training, and supervision. In the event that a Volunteer Coordinator cannot be recruited, the Information Director will assume the duties of that position. In anticipation of expanded funding for the second year of the program, it is proposed that future staff consist of a full-time Director; an Intake Specialist-Agency Coordinator; a Volunteer Coordinator (this could remain a volunteer position); and a secretary.
- D. Volunteer program. The Information Director will develop job descriptions for the positions of Volunteer Coordinator and Community Service Volunteers. The Volunteer Coordinator will design and implement recruitment and training programs, and will be responsible for the scheduling of volunteer assignments. Areas in which volunteers may provide services include trans-

portation, child care, information, and empathetic support.

E. Time schedule. During its first year, CJM OUTSIDE CONNECTION will operate on the following schedule:

**First Quarter (March, April, May):**

1. Orientation and training of Information Director.
2. Assessment of client needs.
3. Identification of client population, and referrals.
4. Development of program materials.
5. Recruitment of Volunteer Coordinator

**Second Quarter (June, July, August):**

1. Training of Volunteer Coordinator.
2. Continued development, and distribution, of program materials.
3. Development of volunteer recruitment and training programs.
4. Development of communications networks of cooperating agencies and volunteers.
5. Continued identification, and referral to services, of inmates' families.

**Third Quarter (September, October, November):**

1. Continuation of (2), (3), (4), and (5) of Second Quarter.
2. Development of workshops on the needs of inmates' families.

**Fourth Quarter (December, January, February):**

- 1. Continuation of (1) of Third Quarter.**
- 2. Research and evaluation.**

**Component Four: Research and Evaluation**

- A. Collection of data. Forms will be developed for use by staff which will assure the adequate collection of information necessary for the provision of services and for the collation of demographic data concerning the clients served by the program. Staff will be responsible for the proper use of these forms, and the Information Director will be responsible for the collection of information from these forms, and the collation of the data.**
- B. Research. Using the collected and collated data, the Information Director will compile a study, which will investigate the validity of the assumptions upon which the program is based.**
- C. Evaluation. In addition to the collection of data, the Information Director will be responsible for the maintenance of records on all activities performed by staff (including the Information Director), so that an evaluation of the project can be made. Criteria for evaluation of the project will include the number of inmates and families contacted; the extent of interaction between communities and inmates/families; and the number of families utilizing self-help materials provided by CJM OUTSIDE CONNECTION.**

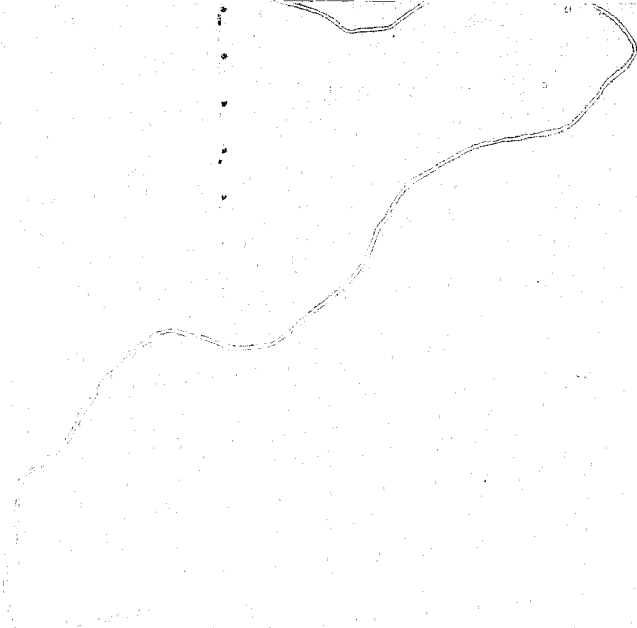
**SUMMARY:**

CJM OUTSIDE CONNECTION was established as an information and referral program to meet an existing need for services to the families of incarcerated individuals in Kansas, a need which has tended to be neglected by traditional social service delivery systems.

While the ultimate goal of CJM OUTSIDE CONNECTION is the reduction of crime, the program specifically seeks to alleviate the trauma felt by inmates' families so that family stability can be maintained, and to facilitate family contacts with prisoners so that the probability of successful offender reintegration into the community might be increased.

CJM OUTSIDE CONNECTION is intended to serve as a means by which prisoners' families may convey their needs to the community where they can receive assistance. Within its framework as an information and referral service, CJM OUTSIDE CONNECTION intends to develop, and sustain, an effective communications network between the families of inmates, their communities, and the appropriate service delivery systems.

The program's objective is to identify, and provide services for, a minimum of sixty families of inmates by March 1, 1980.



**END**