

Evidence-Based Practices

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

VOLUME III—ISSUE I—JUNE 2015

The Power of Effective Reinforcement

By Steve Cromer, DPO

Reinforcement is one of the most effective, yet simple methods to teach and elicit a new behavior. The steps of reinforcement are as follows:

1. Tell the offender what they did that you like and why it is important. Be specific.
2. Ask the offender what they think are the short-term and long-term benefits of continuing to use the behavior that you liked. Getting the offender to think of why the behavior is good for them is what encourages positive change.
3. Contract with the offender to continue to behave in the same manner. Get their commitment—just as if you were a salesperson.

Probation officers can use reinforcement in a number of different ways:

1. Verbal praise. Many of our probationers have never heard the words “good job.” Many would argue that praise works better than incentives when it comes to positive reinforcement.
2. Certificates (ex. For ETC, or a period of sobriety).
3. Privileges, such as travel permits, reduced reporting, etc.

EPICS II Implementation Continues...

By Ed Prell, DPOS

EPICS II (Effective Practices in a Correctional Setting) continues to be of major focus for the AOC. Unit level training continues in each city as designated by the senior coach in that city. Recently, new coaches have been chosen in each city to assist the senior coaches in instigating the program. The new coaches will likely attend advanced training in September of this year. Congratulations to Cory Clever in Lake Havasu City, Steve Cromer in Bullhead City and Rebecca Miller in Kingman.

Juvenile EBP Committee working hard!

By Kyle Smith, DPOS

The juvenile EBP Committee has been quite busy the past couple of months working on numerous projects in anticipation for the EBP roll-out for the juvenile division. The Juvenile EBP Committee (*Kyle Smith, Emily Flood, Michael Geraci, Melanie Longi, Nancy Tharpe, and Patty Zirkle*) worked together to help assist on several of these projects. Our first project involved developing a weekly/monthly contact chart for both Standard and JIPS caseloads. We also implemented a Case File Audit Form, along with a tracker system for monitoring Court reports. Our current project will be to standardize the uniform conditions for our department to ensure they are aligned with EBP and conducive to best practices.

In March 2015, Emily Flood co-facilitated with members of AOC a one-day training on Juvenile EBP code and policies. In April 2015, Emily and Nancy Tharpe conducted a follow up training for the entire juvenile division on how to implement EBP policies and procedures using AZYAS, case planning and Motivational Interviewing. We are now officially recognized as an EBP certified Court by AOC and are currently awaiting a signed certification; which will be placed in each office. Emily and Nancy will be responsible for training new juvenile officers on EBP and providing a refresher course to certified officers. Coming Soon – Creating a new probation department advertisement poster, along with developing a juvenile justice history timeline on court web for new officers.

Project SAFE reminders

By Steve Cromer, DPO

Pursuant to Project SAFE guidelines, incarceration sanctions should not exceed ten (10) days in length.

Additionally, sanctions must be addressed quickly. Research shows that swift sanctions of short duration are more effective at addressing behavior change.

If a probationer refuses to sign the waiver to accept the sanction, Mohave County’s Project SAFE deferred incarceration plan requires a PTR to be filed, with the officer having discretion over whether to arrest immediately or request a summons.

Special points of interest:

- > [EPICS II Update](#)
- > [Juvenile EBP Committee updates](#)
- > [Project SAFE](#)
- > [Effective Reinforcement](#)
- > [Newsletter Archive](#)