



GOVERNOR'S COMMISSION ON CRIMINAL JUSTICE & SENTENCING REFORM

YMCA – Youth Safety Office
1608 W 21st Street
Chicago, Illinois
Tuesday September 8, 2015
1:00 pm – 5:00 pm

Attendees: Pam Rodriguez, Michael Connelly, Kathy Saltmarsh, Michael Pelletier, Kathryn Bocanegra, Elena Quintana, Michael Tardy, David Olson, Greg Sullivan, Gladyse Taylor, Kwame Raoul, Rodger Heaton, Samantha Gaddy, Kwame Raoul, Stephen Sawyer, John Maki

Call In: John Baldwin, Jerry Butler, Brendan Kelly, Andrew Liepold, Howard Peters, Elizabeth Robb, Brian Stewart.

The Fine Line Between Perpetration and Victimization

Dr. Elena Quintana, Adler University

- Our main concern in the commission is to reduce the number of those in prison without affecting public safety
- In order to promote public safety we must address and understand trauma and through this we may reduce victimization
- Complex trauma
 - Ongoing, very deep trauma
 - Results from physical/sexual/emotional abuse
 - Very prevalent in the court system
 - Impedes in executive functioning capability as well as attachment
- Trauma has a large impact on brain development
- Epigenetics-large, stressful impacts in our life (like incarceration) can imbed itself into our genetic code and impact future generations
- All trauma experiences affect brain development as well as brain mass and the brain's ability to adapt
- PET scans of the brain show huge disparities between children who have experienced trauma and those who have not
- Trauma is hardwired into our brain
- Viewing/experiencing trauma can impede your vision, long term memory, abstract thinking, abstract hope, executive functioning
 - Brain is trying to adapt to the environment you have continually been exposed to
- Those who have experienced a lot of trauma are quick to get upset and slow to soothe because how their brain has developed around their experiences of trauma
- ACES (adverse childhood experiences) Study shows a cluster effect of adverse childhood experiences
 - Those who experience one, are likely to have experience others as well

- People with numerous (6+) adverse childhood experiences tend to die earlier than those who have low ACES
 - Due to health disparities throughout their lifetime
- Higher likelihood of being raped with higher ACES
- Juvenile offenders
 - 84% of girls 81% of boys have experienced family violence
 - 68% of girl and 65% of boys have had a household member who has been incarcerated
 - 31% of girls and 7% of boys have been sexually abused
- Adult offenders
 - Have 4x the number of ACES
- Trauma of correction officers
 - 34% of correction officers suffer from PTSD
 - Suicide risk for correction officers is 39% higher than all other positions
- Trauma Informed Care
 - “What happened to you?” NOT “What’s wrong with you?”

The Prison Letters

Dr. Elena Quintana, Adler University & Ray Robinson

- Surveys sent out to 25 penitentiaries throughout Illinois
- Over 1200 letters/surveys were sent back
- Responses pertain to healthcare, education programs, length of sentencing, family programs
- Length of sentencing
 - Long sentences debilitate prisoners
 - “Start giving sentences of goals”
 - 94% did not believe sentences were fair
 - Accountability laws unfair
 - Racism plays large part in length of sentencing
 - Did sentencing improve community?
 - Many responses indicated that the same behavior is ongoing in the community
 - Many long sentences fail to acknowledge ability to rehabilitate
- Many denied basic programming or educational support
- Healthcare access?
 - 94% said they have had access to healthcare
 - Very long wait times for treatment
 - Ibuprofen given for almost all ailments
 - Some conditions may go untreated for years
- Programs?
 - Want more education, mental health, substance abuse programs
- Planning for return to community?
 - 31% say yes, 59% no
 - Need to prepare inmates for re-entering or they will quickly recidivate
- Family programming?
 - Most have not participated in reunification programs
 - Belief that IDOC tears families apart
 - Do not facilitate visits with family members

Criminal Justice Reform and the Perspectives of Victims

Vicki Smith, Executive Director of Illinois Coalition Against Domestic Violence

- Speaking on the experiences of victims of domestic violence
- Topic of domestic violence began to gain prominence in the early 1970s
- Domestic violence is used as a control mechanism over their victims
- 1980s-Mental health services has been shifted to community based programs, however this is difficult to access, especially for those in domestic violence shelters
- 1990s-Welfare reform has eliminated the safety net victims need to be independent from their abuser
- Black women who are victims of domestic violence often do not report black male abuser because they do not want to add to the number of black men in prison
- Jail and prison have *not* been effective for domestic violence cases because:
 - System doesn't take domestic violence seriously, little understanding that this IS a serious crime
 - Focus is usually on minority populations
 - There are few programs within prison that hold abuser accountable
- Children need to be educated on domestic violence so that they not commit it when older
- What rehabilitative efforts are available/needed?
- Only model used to combat domestic violence is for male abusers against female
 - Duluth model: groups of batterers brought together to speak on responsibility, accountability
 - Lack of cultural sensitivity within the program
 - Many other shortfalls of this program
- Those who have experienced trauma throughout their life need different type of programming/education regarding domestic violence

Using Public Safety Dollars to Promote Public Safety

Dr. Dan Cooper & Kathryn Bocanegra

- Million dollar blocks
 - Spending millions of dollars incarcerating people from one block
 - Investment in removing individuals from communities and placing them in prisons
 - 851 blocks in Chicago where over 1 million dollars was committed to incarcerating people in one year
 - Consists of average cost of incarcerating 1 person/year in prison
- Neighborhoods themselves can have criminogenic effects
- Incarceration rates have negative health effects on neighborhood
 - Increased levels of stress have longstanding effects
- Social Capital
 - Measures the density of community organizations and non-profits within an area
- High incarceration rates can also make neighborhoods more dangerous in million dollar blocks
 - Incarceration disrupts informal social controls which undermines public safety
 - Lack of male leaders in the area, as they are in prison
 - Need to look at informal social control networks in order to make communities safer
- Importance of Community
 - Reinvestment strategies
 - Critiques of Justice Reinvestment Program

- Little evidence that data is being used through mapping to make reinvestment back into the community
 - Money instead goes back into law enforcement and probation
 - Many financial incentives for locking people up, but little incentive for doing something different
 - Think smaller!
 - Find strong community programs to do small comprehensive projects within the community
- Courts
 - How can courts address quality of life within the community
 - Community prosecution
 - Prosecutors located within high risk neighborhoods
 - Community sanctioning
 - Prioritizes needs of communities and restores the community from the losses it has incurred from the crimes
- Corrections
 - Supervising probationers and parolees where they live
 - Satellite offices within neighborhoods
 - Community supervision
- Evaluation of Programs
 - Need to divert corrections, housing, social services, education, community services money into the community structure
 - Gauge the communities want in terms of public safety
 - Importance of prioritizing programs for spending money on children in order to avoid spending more money in the long run for incarceration.

Commission Discussion

- Focus on the high incarceration areas for reform measures
- Should offenders return to the communities from which they came? Will this cause the same cycle?
 - Community members want these people to return rehabilitated and as a changed person
- There is no shared understanding of a goal for public safety
 - There is a need for a mission statement of some sort so that all are accountable for the same goal
 - Numerous different groups need to be included in on this goal
 - Law enforcement, community members, housing, corrections, etc.
- The Commission needs to create a mission statement that will include performance measures
 - “Reducing victimization by increasing functionality”
- Discussion of million dollar blocks in Chicago
 - Looking into these blocks and seeing what is there in terms of law enforcement
 - Belief that there is an overreliance on law enforcement on these blocks
- Too much reliance on corrections for several different functions
- We need to provide grants for workshops for judges, law enforcement, leaders in community and social service programs to collaborate with each other to promote public safety
 - Incentivize collaboration
- We need to get beyond just talking about the issues, we need to begin making recommendations

- We need one case manager per offender/parolee to map and track their progress, not case managers for every different aspect of their reentry
- We need to implement a spoke model of community justice programs
 - One central community service program located at the center
- Focusing on Cook County and Chicago is important
 - Start out small with the highest crime communities
- Getting OMB involved will be of the utmost importance
- Addressing to the public that probation and other alternatives are actually harsher and harder than life in prison
 - We are trying to make people accountable and rehabilitate into society

Public Comment

- Creation of a “Marshall Plan” to help provide money and support for high crime/high incarceration communities
- We need to implement new and innovative programs for these million dollar blocks
 - Place investment back into community members, stop studying the problems and work to fix the programs
- Idea that offenders are worth more in prison than they are walking down the street
 - Many say that if they had been making from their job what DOC spends on them, they would have never gone to prison
- Safe from the Start Program
 - Works with children, 0-5, who have been exposed to domestic violence in their homes on these million dollar blocks
 - Wanting to expand this program throughout the whole state
- We need to invest in people
- Most people leaving from prison do not have the support of friends and family when they get home
 - Community support and programs are so important in ensuring people stay on the right track and do not recidivate
- Prisoners need the ability to learn computer programs like Word and Excel in order to be more marketable once they are released