

Office of Sex Offender Sentencing, Monitoring, Apprehending,
Registering, and Tracking (SMART)
FY 2010 Comprehensive Approaches to Sex Offender Management Newsletter
February 2013

Introduction

This edition of the newsletter for CASOM grantees features:

- Two features about the Circles of Support and Accountability related initiatives in the U.S. and U.K.,
- Highlights about new policy papers and fact sheets available from ATSA;
- An overview of the resources offered by the National Sexual Violence Resource Center; and
- A preview of and important information about upcoming conferences.

Circles of Support and Accountability (CoSA) in the U.S. and Beyond

The information in the CoSA sections was adapted from Robin Wilson's blog (see <http://sajrt.blogspot.com/>.)



In some respects, this has been a big year for Circles of Support & Accountability. Internationally, the first UK projects celebrated their 10th anniversary of offering Circles, in addition to completing a matched comparison design evaluation that mimics existing research in its findings (approximately 70% reductions in violent or sexual offending--these results are currently

in peer-review). Circles-UK also commissioned a cost-benefit analysis from researchers that revealed that CoSA costs no more than traditional probation supervision and yields significant benefit. The European group, headed up by the Netherlands, has secured a grant from the European Union to sponsor CoSA development in Bulgaria, Catalonia, and Latvia. Their most notable contribution has been the publication of a European CoSA Handbook.

In the United States, we have also seen some great strides forward in the CoSA movement. Colorado and Vermont have been ongoing recipients of Second Chance Act grants intended to assist with sexual offender reentry. Elsewhere, Circles projects continue to emerge in the U.S. locations.

In support of this work, the SMART office and National Institute of Justice (NIJ) issued three CoSA-specific requests for proposals in 2012 to:

- Support two CoSA start-up projects (the Oregon Department of Corrections and the Criminal Justice Resource Center in Durham, North Carolina have been selected);
- Provide training and technical assistance to the OR and NC projects, as well as other CoSA projects on an ad hoc basis; and
- To conduct an evaluability study on CoSA projects in the U.S (NIJ sponsored, in collaboration with SMART).

CoSA projects are now underway or in progress in California, Colorado, Minnesota, Nebraska, North Carolina, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Washington, and Vermont. A first-ever all-USA CoSA symposium was held at last fall's annual ATSA conference in Denver (CA, CO, MN, and VT were

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represented). Of particular interest during the symposium was the presentation by MnCoSA, which reported results from a recently published RCT evaluation of their project. Although the follow-up period was too short to show significant differences in sexual recidivism, significant reductions were noted for CoSA core members in regard to probation violations, incurring new charges, and return to custody.

Canadian CoSA projects are embarking on a national evaluation, with funding provided by the National Crime Prevention Centre (an arm of Public Safety Canada). More extensive outcome data from Canada is expected in the next 18 months.

Circles South-East Marks 10 Years of CoSA in the UK

Shortly after Circles of Support and Accountability emerged in Canada, efforts to implement such a model in the UK began to emerge. In 2002, Circles projects were established by the Lucy Faithfull Foundation. CoSA has since flourished in the UK, with projects found in various communities. In the summer of 2008, a national charity (“Circles-UK”) was established. As the CoSA model moves forward into Europe, Circles-UK continues to play an important role in supporting similar endeavors in such countries as the Netherlands, Belgium, and France, among others.

On July 6, 2012, Circles of Support and Accountability celebrated 10 years in the United Kingdom. In a document entitled “Ten Years: One Hundred Circles: Community Safety – What Can Be Done”, the project recounts the long road from project inception to their current status as the largest CoSA project outside of Canada. The booklet includes information and perspective on the UK version of CoSA, with inspirational stories from volunteers and

core members and an updated outcome evaluation.

The evaluation, entitled “Circles South-East: The First Ten Years 2002-2012”, marks the first time that the UK CoSA effort was able to include a comparison group. This comparison group is comprised of persons who were referred for a CoSA but who were never taken into one. Care was exercised not to include those who would never have been placed for reasons such as no impending release or a lack of motivation to be involved in a CoSA. Fortunately, Risk Matrix 2000 scores were available on these control subjects and the study’s authors were able to identify a similar risk distribution; however, on average the comparison sample (N = 71) was at somewhat lesser risk to reoffend than their CoSA-involved peers (N = 71).

Although the comparison group was of somewhat lower risk, their rates of reoffending (contact sexual or violent reconviction) were significantly higher (see table below). They also had a tendency to higher rates of failure to comply with registration requirements. Indeed, in the CoSA group, there were no reconvictions for contact sexual or violent reoffenses. In regard to non-contact sexual offenses, there were three in the CoSA group and two in the comparison. Adding the contact and non-contact sexual and violent offenses resulted in a difference of 3 vs. 12, a finding that is also statistically significant ($\chi^2 = 4.77$, $p < .05$). Average length of follow-up was approximately 4.5 years for both groups.

	CSE Core Members	Comparison Group
Contact sexual or violent reconviction**	0	10
Non-contact sexual reconviction	3	2
Failure to comply with SO Registry	3	6
Breach of Sex Offender Protection Order	2	0

**p < .001 ($\chi^2 = 10.75$, $df = 1$)

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Additional evaluation outcomes on programs in the U.S. are anticipated in the coming months.

New Publications from the Association for the Treatment of Sexual Abusers (ATSA)

ATSA offers a number of written resources for the field on current topics related to sex offender management issues, including:

- *Policy Papers and Fact Sheets* current to specific issues. These statements can be used to guide decision making and policy debates in administrative offices and in state and national legislatures. *Policy Papers* provide more in-depth exploration of a specific sex offender treatment and management policy, highlighting various positions related to a specific policy and summarizing the research informing the policy.
- *Fact Sheets* provide a brief overview of facts related to a specific sex offender treatment and management policy, and are intended to provide general information related to a topic.

A number of these new documents are now available on several topics, including:

Public Policy Brief on Risk Assessment
<http://www.atsa.com/pdfs/SexOffenderRiskAssessmentBriefWithBibliography2012.pdf>

Fact Sheet on Pharmacological Interventions for Adult Male Sex Offenders
<http://www.atsa.com/pharmacological-interventions-adult-male-sexual-offenders>

Policy Paper on Adolescents Who Have Engaged in Sexually Abusive Behavior: Effective Policies and Practices
<http://www.atsa.com/adolescents-engaged-in-sexually-abusive-behavior>

Resources Offered by the National Sexual Violence Resource Center

The National Sexual Violence Resource Center (NSVRC) coordinates a range of special projects that address building collaborative and culturally specific approaches to preventing and responding to sexual violence. The NSVRC seeks to create positive social change through innovation, resource sharing, and partnership development. Please read below for more information about the resources the project offers, or visit <http://www.nsvrc.org/projects> for more information.

Child Sexual Assault (CSA) Prevention

Information and resources on the prevention of sexual violence against children provides context for broad application. This section also provides information on our organizational response to key cases involving CSA.

Engaging Bystanders in Sexual Violence Prevention

This project highlights resources, research and tools that support the development of bystander intervention approaches to prevention.

Know Your Rights

This section includes information for survivors of sexual violence and the general public about their rights.

National Online Resource Center on Violence Against Women (VAWnet)

This is a collection of full-text, searchable electronic resources on domestic violence, sexual violence, and related issues.

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National Sexual Assault Conference

This is a two and a half day, advocacy-based conference providing advanced training opportunities and information regarding sexual violence intervention and prevention.

Preventing Sexual Violence in Disasters

The NSVRC works to increase access to information on the prevention and response to sexual violence occurring during and after disasters, relief funds available to affected communities and planning tools.

Rape Prevention and Education

The NSVRC provides resources and technical assistance to state and territory sexual violence coalitions, health departments, and other organizations working to develop comprehensive prevention strategies.

Rural Project

The project focuses on the unique resource, training and technical assistance needs of rural communities.

SANE Sustainability Technical Assistance

This collaborative project with the Office on Violence Against Women, includes the provision of free on-site technical assistance, information dissemination and consultation with local SANE programs.

Sexual Abuse in Detention Resource Centers

The National Sexual Violence in Detention Education and Resource Project (NSDVERP) provides technical assistance to rape crisis centers, state sexual assault coalitions, and correctional facilities to address the challenges of implementing sexual assault

response teams in correctional environments.

Sexual Assault Demonstration Initiative

This project provides information about a demonstration initiative of the Office on Violence Against Women, National Sexual Assault Coalition Resource Sharing Project, and the National Sexual Violence Resource Center.

Sexual Assault Response Teams (SART)

A Sexual Assault Response Team (SART) is a multidisciplinary interagency team of individuals working collaboratively to provide services for the community by offering specialized sexual assault intervention services. The NSVRC works with responders from around the United States to identify resources, translate research findings and analyze policy will assist in the development, enhancement and sustainability of SARTs. The NSVRC offers a number of ways for SARTs to connect in the following sections.

U.S. Territories

The National Sexual Violence Resource Center provides a variety of services to individuals providing services to victims/survivors and working to prevent sexual violence in the U.S. Territories; including training, technical assistance and resources. Check back often for updates on new initiatives.

Important Upcoming Dates and Events

National Adolescent Perpetrator (NAPN) Network 2013 Annual Conference

The NAPN 2013 28th Annual Conference will be convened from April 8-10, 2013. The theme for this year's event is "Seeing the

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Forest for the Trees: An Ecological Perspective on Juvenile Sexual Offending.” This conference is sponsored by the Kempe Center for Prevention & Treatment of Child Abuse & Neglect, University of Colorado School of Medicine, with Support from the Kempe Foundation and is hosted by the Oregon Adolescent Sexual Offending Treatment Network (Hosted by OASOTN). The event will be convened at the Double Tree Hotel in Portland, Oregon. For more information, visit <http://csom.org/index.html>.

Mid-Atlantic Region Association for the Treatment of Sexual Abusers (MARATSA) Conference

The 5th Annual MARATSA Conference “Learning Together, Working Together” will be convened on May 8-9, 2013 at the Sheraton Station Square Hotel in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. For details, visit http://csom.org/pubs/MARATSA%20eBlast_V5.pdf.

New York State Association for the Treatment of Sexual Abusers 2013 Conference

The 18th Annual Joint NYS ATSA and NYSASOSP Conference will be held May 20-

22, 2013 at the Hilton Albany, which is located at 89 State Street, in Albany, NY. Workshop and poster session proposals can be submitted to: nysatsa@gmail.com.

Next Newsletter

The next newsletter for CASOM grantees will be published in April 2013.



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