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## Call for Health-Based Cleaning in Correctional Facilities

By Robert Kravitz

**Published: 03/30/2009**



Each year the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) visits approximately 2,500 prisons, detention centers, and correctional facilities around the world that house approximately half a million people. The reason for the visits, among other things, is to assess water quality as well as the overall cleanliness and sanitation of these facilities with the aim of improving both the conditions and treatment of detainees where needed.

What they are finding is quite disappointing. "Existing infrastructures can't deal with rising prison populations [worldwide], and the problem is getting worse across the board," says Robert

Mardini, head of the ICRC's Water and Habitat Unit. "Too often, communities turn a blind eye to what goes on inside their prisons, but everyone has a fundamental right to use a proper toilet, eat healthy food, and drink safe water, including people behind bars. Ensuring adequate living conditions is also one of the best ways to prevent illnesses from spreading among inmates, as well as to the outside population."

Developing more hygienic, health-based cleaning practices has long been a concern in medical facilities where the spread of infection and concerns about such diseases as nosocomial illnesses, MRSA, C. diff, and others are paramount. But now, many of these diseases have become "community based," meaning they are increasingly developing in nonmedical locations such as schools, gyms, and correctional facilities.

To help prevent them and stop the spread of illness, detention centers are encouraged to seek more appropriate, sustainable, and effective ways to keep not only inmates but also correctional staff safe and healthy.

Aesthetic appearance of a facility is no longer the standard or acceptable in determining whether a building is clean and healthy. Instead, health-based or hygienic cleaning, a concept that has been growing in attention and implementation in the professional cleaning industry, is now recognized as the most effective way to determine if a surface or facility is clean and healthy. The call for hygienic cleaning has been fostered by such organizations as the Cleaning Industry Research Institute (CIRI), which believes we must scientifically prove that a cleaning product, procedure, or system effectively removes soils and disease-causing microbials from environmental surfaces.

“What we are realizing is that the use of such simple products as color-coded microfiber cleaning cloths, certain cleaning systems, and the use of ATP (adenosine triphosphate) surface monitoring equipment, can help keep a facility hygienically—and scientifically—clean,” says Matt Morrison, communications manager for Kaivac, Inc., manufacturers of no-touch cleaning tools and equipment. “And all of these [products] are as applicable to a correctional facility as they are a medical center.”

### **Matter Removal**

Science has now proven what many cleaning professionals have suspected for eons: wiping surfaces with rags, sponges, and conventional cleaning cloths along with mopping floors with “string” mops and buckets can spread as many contaminants as they remove. In fact, scientific studies have concluded that the last surface cleaned with a conventional cleaning cloth, which is usually a terrycloth towel, may have two to as much as eight times more soil on it than the first surface cleaned with the towel. “Essentially what is happening is the towel then becomes the conduit, spreading disease and contamination,” says Morrison.

What many facility managers are finding is that a relatively simple way around this problem is to use microfiber towels that are labeled into quadrants—1 to 4 on one side and 5 to 8 on the other—and can be folded as needed by numbered quadrant. Microfiber is 99 percent more effective at soil and matter retention than conventional cleaning cloths, according to Peter Sheldon Sr., CBSE, “and if it can be folded into quadrants, as [one quadrant] becomes soiled, it can be folded so that a fresh quadrant is used,” adds Morrison. “This helps prevent cross contamination.”

Taking this a step further, many facilities including detention centers are now using what are often termed “smart towels” because they are color-coded in addition to having quadrants marked. Color-coding cleaning tools has long been standard procedure in hospitals around the world. It assures that a red towel, for instance, is always used to clean areas such as toilets and urinals whereas a green towel is used in food service areas and a yellow towel to wipe clean office desktops. “Not only is this the next step in helping to stop the spread of infection,” Morrison adds, “but color-coding is not language dependent. Once the cleaning worker knows which towel is to be used for what surface, the cleaning product is no longer the instrument spreading disease.”

Smart towels, along with spray-and-vac cleaning technology, also used in detention centers, further ensure that surfaces such as restroom and locker room fixtures, counters, and floors are both visually and hygienically clean, according to Morrison. Spray-and-vac cleaning generally entails using specially designed cleaning equipment to apply chemicals to areas to be cleaned. The same areas are then rinsed, loosening and helping to remove soils and contaminants that are vacuumed using the machine’s built-in wet/dry system.

In correction center settings, we often find spray-and-vac systems used to clean food service areas, dining rooms, holding cells/cells, infirmaries, and locker room/gym areas. Along with more thorough, hygienic cleaning, a benefit administrators appreciate is the fact that using this system tends to speed-up the cleaning process so that areas are ready to be re-used quickly.

### **The Test for Contaminants**

Health-based, hygienic cleaning would likely not be possible if not for the development, advancement, and application of ATP technology. “ATP is a universal energy molecule found in all animal, plant, bacterial, yeast, and mold cells,” says Morrison. “The energy in ATP is luminescent, which can be detected on ATP monitoring systems.”

At one time these tests were relatively slow, taking one or two days for results to be determined, required a

computer the size of a desktop or larger, and had to be conducted by a trained worker. However, today these systems are much faster, the test can be preformed by virtually any worker, and the actual ATP device is about the size of a television remote control.

“Because disease-causing microbials contain ATP, detecting it on a surface is often a red flag that contamination may be present,” explains Morrison. “The test results take less than 15 seconds, allowing managers of correctional facilities to know very quickly if contaminants are present on a surface and if additional cleaning measures must be taken.”

Prisons can be breeding grounds for infection. As referenced earlier, the ICRC reports that this situation appears to be getting worse instead of better. Overcrowding, lengthy confinement, and poorly maintained and often inadequately cleaned facilities all contribute to the spread of disease and ill health.

Some sociologists say that the quality and advancement of a society can be determined by how it keeps its prisons. Although health-based, hygienic cleaning systems cannot solve all detention center problems and conditions, they are a big step in raising the standards, protecting and promoting health, and positively impacting the health and welfare of our communities.

\* Peter Sheldon Sr., CBSE, is Vice President of Operations of Coverall Cleaning Concepts. He is also involved with organizations such as Building Services Contractors International, ASHES, International Executive Housekeepers Association, Cleaning Management and Maintenance Institute, International Franchise Association, and Building Owners and Managers Association.

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Reducing recidivism - an exploration of one county's effort, Part II

By Aaron M. Henderson and Deb Perry

**Published: 02/09/2009**



*Editor's note: Part one of this three-part series [Part one of this three-part series](#) discussed the background behind a three-year study that monitored the effectiveness of an Indiana county's efforts to reduce recidivism rates on individuals assigned to probation and/or community corrections programs. This week, part two discusses the study's assessment tools and the Risk/Need Principle.*

### **Risk/Need Principle**

Much research and discussion has been conducted in the field of criminal justice to determine the best method for determining the appropriate levels of

supervision and programming for offenders. Most notably, Andrews (1990) notes, "the risk principle suggests that higher levels of service are best reserved for higher risk cases and that low-risk cases are best assigned to minimal service," (Andrews D. , Zinger, Hoge, Bonta, Gendreau, & Cullen, 1990).

Furthering this assumption, these factors are classified into two sub-categories; static and dynamic. Dynamic risk factors, those we can change, are outlined as an individual's criminogenic needs. Since a person's dynamic risk factors can be changed, the assumption remains that risk can be lowered by correction those dynamic factors which increase risk.

Conversely, static factors are those which we cannot change. As noted, "static factors, (i.e., age, previous convictions) are aspects of the offender's past that are predictive of recidivism but cannot be changed," (Andrews & Bonta, The Psychology of Criminal Conduct, 1994). Finding the dynamic factors and associating them with the needs of the individual has proved to be successful in reducing rates of recidivism by correcting potentially damaging behaviors that increase risk.

"The most effective programs target such dynamic risk factors as antisocial attitudes, values and beliefs, delinquent and criminal peers, self-control, self-management, and problem solving skills," (Rhine, 2002).

While it is necessary to classify individuals into categories based on risk, it is inherently important to associate the risk based on an individual's need as outlined. Otherwise, the risk classification is meaningless.

Many of these dynamic factors help uncover certain social deficiencies that offenders possess. Simply incarcerating or programming individuals without addressing these social deficiencies will ensure their return to the criminal justice system.

The revolving pattern of behaviors can closely be tied to their antisocial activities. Basing a risk assessment with the inclusion of these dynamic factors has proven to be successful in rehabilitation for these offenders.

### Assessment Tools

Presently two forms of assessments are conducted in Blackford County with offenders. The Indiana Judicial Center Caseload and Classification System of risk is utilized and reported through the Blackford County Probation Department as required by the Indiana Judicial Center.

However, this assessment alone provides little measurable support of an individual's dynamic risk factors as noted. In addition, recent changes in policy and procedure utilize the Level of Service Inventory, Revised (LSI-R) assessment on all criminal cases wherein the defendant is sentenced to a term of probation and/or placement in the community corrections programs.

This step allows the probation officers and the community corrections officers the ability to tailor programming to the individual needs of the client and thus matching their risks to programs available thereby identifying and addressing their social deficiencies.

The LSI-R tool was developed based on the research noted herein and is now a standard tool in the criminal justice sector to classify risk and needs of offenders. A basic comparison indicates that the two tools utilized presently in Blackford County are similar in risk result levels based on categories of high, medium, low, but are administered differently and measure different risk factors.

Specifically, the LSI-R assessment provides more of the dynamic risk factors of the individual and is more detailed in the results found. However, the basic evaluations yield similar results and have been determined to be acceptable for their use in this study.

### Cost/Benefit Factor

"It is smart to prepare offenders to return to society as law-abiding citizens. If they do not, we all pay, either directly as victims or indirectly as taxpayers," (Dennehy, 2006, December).

In 2001 the Bureau of Justice Statistics notes that "the average annual operating cost per State inmate was \$22,650, or \$62.50 per day," (Stephan, June 2004). The average cost in the State of Indiana in 2007 is \$52.61 per day. (2007 Annual Report , 2007). The daily cost associated inmates at the Blackford County Security Center is estimated to be \$32.24 per day.

It is therefore, necessary to provide services and support to individuals to reduce the likelihood that they will return to incarceration, thereby increasing the costs associated with their incarceration. Based on average daily populations of clients in community correction programs and probation supervision, the average daily cost is \$7.33 per day per client for Community Corrections programs and \$0.87 per day for probation services.

This clearly outlines the up-front cost savings to local taxpayers by utilizing alternative sentencing options and providing evidence based practice services outside the confines of the Blackford County Security Center and/or

the Indiana Department of Corrections.

*Next week, the series concludes with a look at data sets used, evaluations of individuals in the study, and conclusions reached by the researchers.*

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Profanity in corrections: Is it really necessary?

By *Billy S. Humphrey*

**Published: 02/09/2009**



*Editor's note: This story is being shared with us by [Desert Waters Correctional Outreach](#). The non-profit organization and its newsletter, *Correctional Oasis*, are dedicated to the well being of correctional staff and their families.*

Jerry Clower said it best when he proclaimed, "Profanity is a public announcement of stupidity." Mr. Clower was a comedian from Yazoo City, Mississippi.

He believed that comedians could be funny without being vulgar. He never used profanity and suggested that people who did were simply lazy in their attempts to

emphasize a particular message. Jerry Clower was a true professional.

I obtained permission from him to use his "Profanity is a Public Announcement of Stupidity" phrase before he died in 1998. We painted it on huge signs and strategically placed it in the center of Texas Correctional institutions during my watch as facility administrator.

The majority of the staff understood the expectation and responded in a positive manner, but many of them were resistant. Over time I began to understand why.

Profanity has been condoned and accepted as part of the business throughout our history, almost becoming the norm. There are practitioners who rationalize our use of profanity, arguing that the use of vulgar language in corrections is a justifiable approach to offender management.

They view it as a form of corruption for a noble cause, an undesirable means to a necessary end. These practitioners are convinced that profanity is the only form of communication that the majority of offenders respond to, and that it is necessary to speak to them in this manner to obtain swift compliance.

If we accept this as the truth, however, then we are saying that the only way to achieve compliance from most offenders is to direct profanity towards them. This is totally not true.

There is no situation where anyone is required to be unprofessional and vulgar in order to obtain compliance

from offenders. We use profanity only as a matter of habit or as a result of losing control of our emotions.

It is unjustifiable to conclude that profanity serves a legitimate purpose in support of our official responsibilities. In actuality, the mere use of vulgar language usually complicates most situations in a secure penal institution.

I remember receiving complaints from offenders after staff members would lose their composure and use profanity towards them. The offenders would always end the complaint by reminding me of the sign posted in the center of the compound!

Tom Turner, in his text titled "Why People Obey the Law," suggests that legitimacy induces compliance, and illegitimacy induces noncompliance. There is indeed a legitimate response in corrections to any situation we are faced with.

The use of profanity to respond in like terms to offenders is not one of them. We as employees realize that this type of conduct is inappropriate, and our offender populations realize this as well.

This is precisely why we oftentimes have to utilize force after we become angry towards offenders and use vulgar language when reacting to them. The situation then escalates because offenders realize that as professionals we are prohibited from using this type of language.

It is this perceived illegitimacy of our choices which almost always causes additional problems for us. We must ask ourselves if this type of behavior is really necessary, or if indeed there is a better way of conducting ourselves on the job.

I suggest to you that the answer to this question is a re-sounding "YES!" There is a better way for us to achieve our desired results than the use of profanity. It is called being a professional.

If we truly wish to control and correct others, we must first be willing to correct and control ourselves. There is never a situation where it is necessary for any one of us to utilize profanity. What we need to do instead is issue direct and firm instructions to offenders.

It is the responsibility of correctional supervisors to model this behavior. Supervisors must lead by example, being accountable and civil to all people.

This is what I call leadership that is respectable. It is only through high quality supervision that we as a profession will be able to continue to evolve and facilitate positive change in corrections.

This is what ought to be considered a noble cause for all who are truly committed to our mission in corrections. Remember, people are our business! We need to treat them like we'd like to be treated, with decency and respect.

*Billy S. Humphrey began his career in the Texas Department of Criminal Justice in 1989. He has served as Warden and Director of Training / Staff Development in Adult Corrections, and as Deputy Director of Juvenile Corrections. He is currently Assistant Director of Correctional Managed Care.*

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In a perfect world this may be true. The fact is we are not in a perfect world. As law enforcement our duty is to be a problem solver. This cannot be efficiently achieved when we are limited by administrators, who have not actually done the job since the seventies. This has detached them from the modern criminal. These modern criminals are so uneducated that they do not always understand the polite request. While being formally uneducated they excel in manipulating the system. This is often done by "playing" the administrator. With the I'm the good little inmate, and you're rude Officer is picking on me for his own amusement. I pose this question to the author. Have you gone through your career without swearing at an inmate? I do believe that respect should always be met with respect. Sometimes respect is not given. This is when it needs to be demanded. Without this we as officers are undermined. Political Correctness is going to kill this country.

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Mr. 300

By Ann Coppola, News Reporter

Published: 02/09/2009



Accidentally stumbling upon something you soon discover you love can be a beautiful thing. Whether it's a destination you find after making a wrong turn or a band you only get to see play because you bought the wrong ticket, those experiences are always thrilling and extra-satisfying.

For Joe Bouchard, a correctional librarian by day, his accidental discovery was writing. After a humble literary beginning nine years ago, Bouchard just recently published his 300th article about the corrections field. *Corrections.com* caught up with the prolific writer to learn his secret for success.

**Corrections.com:** Congratulations on reaching article number 300! How did your journey as a correctional writer start?

**Joe Bouchard:** I didn't start out to be a writer, it just happened. I was on a prison library listserv in 1999, where prison librarians discuss issues that affect them. One of the subjects was the relationships and level of respect between custody staff and prison librarians.

I suggested that we can make ourselves more useful to custody - shake down a book, search for contraband, show that you are part of the custody team. The other librarians weren't very receptive to that answer - I kind of stuck my foot in it - but Linda Allen, who was the incoming editor for *The Corrections Professional*, liked my feistiness and dared me to write an article on contraband control.

I wrote a piece on contraband in the library and ever since I've been writing somewhere around a feature once a month.

**CC:** Had you done much writing before you started getting published?

**JB:** I always liked a good turn of phrase. I had something published in a genealogical feature once, but hadn't written that much. It just felt natural - it's something I fell into and enjoy.

**CC:** What motivates you to write? How do you bust out of a writer's block?

**JB:** Events drive me - sometimes I find myself a little upset at a problem at work and I wonder how I can fix it. Sometimes I'm the problem too. There's a little self scrutiny there. I like to conceptualize rather than attack any individual and before I know it, the problem is solved.

Sometimes feelings like frustration will do it too. You can ride these emotions and take them with you to motivate you to write.

**CC:** Do you have any literary heroes you look up to?

**JB:** Of all the legends out there, one is a hero of mine called Isaac Asimov, a famed science fiction writer who's had something published in every one of the Dewey Decimal System categories. I also am inspired by George Carlin – he can just see so clearly through concepts. So I look at Asimov as well-written classic rock and Carlin as thrash metal.

**CC:** How do you find the time to work full-time, write, and enjoy a life outside of those things with family and friends?

**JB:** Three words. Balance, balance, balance. I think about a lot of my writing ideas while doing rote tasks. And when I'm out snowshoeing or exercising my mind is occupied with these things - not to the point that it's suffocating me. It's kind of a natural stream of consciousness. I know to separate work from the rest of my life and I take time for family vacations and make sure to step away from the laptop.

**CC:** What advice do you have for your correctional colleagues who'd like to start writing?

**JB:** I actually have a bulleted list to share:

- Check with your chain of command
- Issue the proper the disclaimers
- Attack ideas, not people
- Be honest and thorough
- When you're criticized, learn from it rather than retreat from it
- Have fun with it! If it's not fun and you're not doing it for the right reasons, it becomes a task

I really respect the great writers, because they can wrestle unmanageable concepts and put them into a logical, readable, thinkable order. They transform the nebulous and confusing into sensible ideas. And from well ordered ideas come sensible practices for everyone.

I'm just a librarian. I've been very lucky with a writing hobby and people have been receptive.

*Joe Bouchard is a prison librarian in Michigan's Baraga Maximum Correctional Facility. He also teaches corrections and criminal justice classes for Gogebic Community College in Michigan. Bouchard writes for three regular columns: "Foundations" for Corrections.com, "Speakout" for The Corrections Professional, and "Corrections Directions" for The Correctional Trainer. He's written four books, and his fifth is due out in April, 2009.*

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An island of support

By *Judith Jordet, MLS*

**Published: 02/08/2009**



Federal law mandates a law library (or equivalent) for inmates to access the courts, but how does the general reading library contribute to corrections? As a library coordinator at a corrections institution in Oregon, I believe a prison library is in the middle of the lake of inmate culture.

Depending on how the reading library is managed, it can be an island of healthy introspection or end up a neglected swamp discouraging success in correction programs. It is through collection development that the reading library can contribute to corrections and become a pro-social resource for inmates.

In his book, *Crime and Coercion* (St. Martin's Press, 2000), Mark Colin defines two major attitudes in prison management. One is punitive, insisting on obedience; the other is based on pro-social support by addressing the expressed needs of inmates to achieve the "consent of the governed."

The more punitive the approach, the more emphasis is placed on rewards and/or punishments. A pro-social approach emphasizes structuring inmates' time so they participate in pro-social activities, often in the form of rehabilitative programs or education.

If a prison has no vocational, mental health or drug programs, there are still pro-social inmate services that can serve as models. Social models are experienced through the recreation department, health care, the cafeteria, transitional services, the chapel, the law library and the general reading library.

Whether intended or not, by their very existence, these social-support mechanisms inform inmates. As library coordinator, my intention is to improve the general reading library to stand as a strong model of pro-social support by managing the books through a coherent collection development policy.

### **Benefits of Reading**

The personal and social benefits of reading have been documented and are particularly valuable for inmates. Studies by Willie Van Peer in 1996 showed that "to read simulations in books is to set ourselves social problems, and practice on them."

Van Peer proved that exposure to books is a strong predictor of vocabulary, language use and general knowledge. He went on to argue convincingly that reading fiction in particular can help self-understanding because that genre often focuses on issues of identity. Self-understanding is an important element in changing ourselves, so "changes in selfhood can occur as a function of reading certain kinds of fiction."

In his book, *The Effects of Reading Literature on Social Perception and Moral Self-Concept* (Benjamin Press, 2000), J.F. Hakemulder described 54 studies in which "fictional narratives promoted moral development, improved empathy and changed norms, values and self-concepts."

He concluded that, "fiction encourages readers to take on the roles of characters in stories, and this makes them more empathetic." In other words, reading a sociology textbook about racism does not have the same impact in changing attitudes as reading a story that engages the imagination and promotes empathy with a character in the story.

### **Making Collection Choices**

The general reading library is a powerful resource for change when its collection follows a logical policy. The books provided by the corrections library should support the programs offered at the institution, not work against them. A collection development policy should take into account the education programs, as well as recommendations for pro-social fiction from the drug and alcohol counselors.

Statistics on the inmate population can help identify the information needs of inmates rather than simply choosing popular books suitable for the general public. On an intuitive level, prison book collections gathered are intended for gender and age.

Does it not make sense to use inmate statistics to purposely guide the collection development? For example, the selection of books could take into consideration the reading level of its inmates. Oregon has an average reading level of tenth grade; at the same time, each institution has a record of how many inmates need Adult Basic Education and/or their GED. By supplying an adequate selection of young adult books, the general reading library can support the goals of education.

Just as an academic library chooses books that support the college curriculum, it is also important for a prison library to support the correctional institution's programs. For example, Hunter S. Thompson's book, *Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas* is well written, entertaining, and sometimes identified as a classic of its time. It is a valuable book for the general public because it requires the reader to question the values of the status quo.

However, it glorifies drugs so it's not a choice that would support the goals of an institution that has drug and alcohol programs. Inmates can order for themselves such books, but to take up the time and organization of the prison general reading library doesn't make sense.

Another example is the issue of suicide. Suicide is taken seriously in correctional culture, often being counted as a measure of institutional health; therefore it is in the best interests of the prison population to avoid themes that end with suicide as the only solution.

The book, *Boy A*, by Jonathan Trigells, is a powerful book about a young man on post-prison supervision who eventually seeks relief by suicide because he is overwhelmed by society's hatred for someone just released from prison. For the general public, this story may provide an opportunity for reflection and shifting public attitudes towards former inmates.

However, for an inmate population, the same story could be depressing with serious consequences. On the other hand, the story *Wrist Slashers: A Love Story*, may sound like it supports suicide, but it actually treats humorously serious choices, ends with second chances and offers hope for the two main characters.

It takes time, effort and space to manage a library collection, but it is time well spent for everyone. The quantity, diversity and quality of appropriate general reading books can insure the library is an island of social support contributing to corrections culture instead of a neglected swamp with little to offer.

Related resources:

For collection suggestions, visit [The American Library Association's Library Standards for Adult Correctional Institutions](#)

Other articles by Jordet:

[Reading and prison libraries](#)

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