



VICTOR ASHE  
MAYOR  
(865) 215-2040

## KNOXVILLE POLICE DEPARTMENT THE CITY OF KNOXVILLE, TENNESSEE



PHIL E. KEITH  
CHIEF OF POLICE  
(865) 215-7229  
FAX (865) 215-7412

### SUMMARY OF PROGRAM CHANGES

May, 2003

Problem-oriented-policing responses to crime and public disorder issues are dynamic rather than static. This approach requires continuous scanning, updated analysis, changing or refining responses and ongoing assessment of response effectiveness. In short, does the problem still exist, what does it look like, are our responses adequate, appropriate and workable and are those responses making a difference. The Knoxville Police Department's Public Safety Collaborative continues to evolve through the use of problem-oriented policing techniques and philosophy.

**The Knoxville Public Safety Collaborative** was born out of citizen frustration with the ineffective response of police and the criminal justice system towards chronic offenders. These repeat offenders disrupt lives, victimize family, friends and citizens, create havoc in their communities and cost taxpayers untold thousands of dollars each year. Growing probation/parole and prison populations combined with flat or declining resources demand new response paradigms if public safety is to be maintained and enhanced. The Public Safety Collaborative has, through the use of the SARA model, made several changes to its operation. These changes include the identification of new target population sub-groups and new intervention strategies to deal with those newly identified groups.

Sex offenders have long proven to be a difficult group to supervise, treat and manage generally. The advent of state sex offender registries and reporting laws have done little to calm public fears about this group. Many states report compliance rates lower than 50%. A recent review of registered sex offenders in Knoxville and Knox County revealed that nearly 22 % (58 out of 261 offenders) were not in compliance with state reporting laws. Law enforcement agencies have continued to deal with these offenders in reactive rather than proactive ways. Furthermore, interventions have not been coordinated between agencies charged with dealing with this difficult group. Those sex offenders on probation are generally well monitored by community-corrections officers. Treatment is also a high priority for this population. Still, responsibility for this group has remained primarily with the supervising probation officer in virtual isolation from law enforcement agencies. Perhaps even more disturbing is the lack of coordination and supervision of those sex offenders who have completed prison or probationary sentences. No one has responsibility for supervising this group or seeing that they are receiving appropriate treatment services. While treatment strategies with this group have had mixed results at best, intense supervision of sex offenders appears to be a powerful deterrent to further offending behavior.

Use of the SARA model is driven by specific questions at each stage. First, in the *Scanning* stage, the nature of the problem, its identification and the identifier, the selection of the problem and the initial level of diagnosis are all reviewed. In this case, the low compliance rates by sex offenders with reporting requirements and the potential for further victimization by this population were identified by police managers through the review of crime reports and field interviews. The potential for tragedy, especially for children and other defenseless groups, drove this issue to be selected as a priority for intervention. Finally, a specific offender group, namely sex offenders not on any kind of supervision, was identified as the primary target population for intervention.

*Analysis* often occurs concurrently with *Scanning*, in our case, crime reports, field interviews and citizen complaints were used to analyze the problem. Press reports from across the country also raised awareness of this continuing problem. Victims and potential victims pushed for development of intervention strategies, while low compliance rates by offenders helped make intervention a priority. Before the development of a problem-solving approach to this issue, monitoring of this population was largely left up to the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation's development and upkeep of the Sex Offender Registry. This registry with its reliance on offender self-reporting perpetuated the non-compliance problems exhibited by many offenders.

Several *Response* alternatives were considered and implemented to address this problem. Legal issues, resource availability and organizational limitations almost always limit police and community responses. These offenders have, in most cases, completed their supervision or sentencing requirements; "*They have done their time*" and it cannot be assumed that they will commit additional crimes in the future. Secondly organizational structure and manpower limits had to be considered. The structure and operation of the Public Safety Collaborative has proven to be somewhat successful, cost effective and generally acceptable to the many agencies involved and the community in dealing with high-risk/high-needs offenders. The Collaborative includes both the treatment and supervision components necessary to manage this difficult population. The primary goal of this expansion of the Public Safety Collaborative is to better manage the sex offender population by providing comprehensive supervision and treatment services in a proactive and coordinated way. The effectiveness of the program can be evaluated essentially by comparing reporting compliance rates and crime reports (victimization) pre and post intervention.

This expansion of the Public Safety Collaborative target population is relatively new and a formal evaluation that includes the sex offenders has not been completed. The implementation of the intervention strategy has resulted in several improvements in managing this population. First, several offenders not in compliance with the state reporting laws have been identified, charged and arrested with failure to report current addresses. Secondly, other offenders that had not been in compliance are now reporting addresses as directed. Beat officers have now been made aware of offenders living on their respective beats and are better monitoring those offenders. Finally, new relationships with day care centers and schools have been established, so that, children can be better protected by providing those facilities with the location of offenders that live or work nearby. The original evaluation of this initiative demonstrates the usefulness of a proactive, coordinated and multidisciplinary approach to offender management and this approach appears to be adaptable to different offender populations. Problem-Oriented-Policing and the S.A.R.A. Model have driven the development and subsequent expansion of the Knoxville Public Safety Collaborative.

The Knoxville Public Safety Collaborative has not only expanded its target population to include sex offenders. The initiative has also improved its ability to work with substance abusers by actively participating in the Knox County Drug Court. Again, the S.A.R.A. model, as a part of a Problem-Oriented Policing philosophy drove this program refinement. Additionally, the Public Safety Collaborative has been strengthened by the formal addition of this initiative to the organizational chart of the Knoxville Police Department. The Public Safety Collaborative is now an identified unit in the Patrol Division. Formal training is now provided to all recruits in the Police Department Academy and in the Field Training Program.

***Contact Person Information:***

**Name:** LeeRagsdale

**Position/Rank:** Community Corrections Program Manager

**Address:** PO Box 3610

**City/State:** Knoxville, TN. 37927

**Phone:**(865)215-7521

**Fax:**(865)215-7412

**E-Mail:** lragdale@ci.knoxville.tn.us

Herman Goldstein Award Submission:  
The Knoxville Public Safety Collaborative (KPSC)  
Knoxville Police Department (KPD)  
April 2002

# THE KNOXVILLE PUBLIC SAFETY COLLABORATIVE

*"Working Together to Enhance the Safety and Well-Being of All Knoxvilleians "*

## Summary

The Knoxville Police Department (KPD) began a formal community policing structure in 1993. As a part of this process, citizens were invited to express their public safety concerns and participate in the development of a Crime Control Plan. In 1995 and 1996, concerned Knoxvilleians identified the negative impact of repeat adult and juvenile offenders on the quality of life in their neighborhoods as a high priority. To address this concern, the Knoxville Police Department and the Tennessee Board of Probation and Parole (BOPP) began development of a strategy aimed at enhancing public safety by helping parolees successfully reintegrate into the community. Crime statistics and parole revocation data were reviewed and analyzed to determine which offenders were at highest risk to re-offend and what factors might be involved in those parole violations. The KPD and the BOPP recognized the importance of including human service providers in this effort. Risk factors that are known to increase the likelihood that parolees will re-offend, such as chemical dependency, unstable family relationships, mental health issues, educational and vocational deficiencies, and unsuitable housing are all addressed in this **Team Supervision** process. The Helen-Ross McNabb Center, Child and Family Tennessee, the Metropolitan Drug Commission and the University of Tennessee School of Social Work Office of Research and Public Service joined the KPD and the BOPP, as major partners forming **the Knoxville Public Safety Collaborative (KPSC)**. Many other private and public human service agencies have also participated in this effort.

The KPSC provides a proactive, balanced and holistic approach to offender management that includes integrated treatment and supervision elements. Offender strengths and weaknesses are evaluated and a treatment and supervision plan developed through a multi-disciplinary case staffing process. Information sharing is critical to the process and is an integral part of the Knoxville Public Safety Collaborative.

The University of Tennessee College of Social Work Office of Research and Public Service (SWORPS) completed an evaluation of the KPSC in 2001. Recidivism was used as one measure of success. They compared the recidivism rates of KPSC parolees between September 1, 1998 and February 28, 2001 with a historical comparison group of parolees. Eighty-nine percent of the historical comparison group was incarcerated within two years of their release from prison as compared with 45% of those in the Collaborative's target population, an improvement of 44%.

## The Knoxville Public Safety Collaborative

### SARA Problem-Solving Model

#### *Scanning*

The Knoxville Public Safety Collaborative (KPSC) was formed to respond more effectively to citizen concerns about the negative impact of repeat offenders on the quality of life and public safety in the city of Knoxville, TN. Residents identified the problem by observing the actions of offenders in their neighborhoods. Neighbors also identified traffic and quality of life issues as problems in their communities. However, the problem of repeat offenders was selected for intervention because citizens identified it as their major public safety concern. Patrol officers echoed the sentiments of the community as it pertained to the issue of repeat offenders.

Crime prevention has long been a component of the policing function. The mission of probation/parole agencies should also be considered a community crime prevention tool. Until recently, these agencies operated somewhat independently from each other. The advent of community policing initiatives across America has contributed to the development of many innovative police/probation/parole partnerships. Increased attention to citizen input by law enforcement and community-corrections agencies has also helped redefine and reprioritize their missions and goals.

The target population originally included high-risk parolees who were living and/or working in the city of Knoxville. Over time, the Knoxville Police Department (KPD) and the Tennessee Board of Probation and Parole (BOPP) decided to include high-risk probationers in the target population as well since many of their behaviors, treatment needs and effects on public safety mirrored those of the parolees.

*Analysis*

After citizens identified repeat offenders as a major concern, the Knoxville Police Department (KPD) worked with the local office of the Tennessee Board of Probation and Parole (BOPP) to clarify and further define the nature and scope of the problem. The BOPP analyzed files regarding parolee residents living in the specified neighborhoods and confirmed that high-risk parolees had engaged in many criminal acts and other violations of their parole that were disruptive to their communities. The Police Department Crime Analysis Unit also reviewed crime patterns to verify and confirm citizen complaints regarding this population. Many of the parolees had an extensive prison history and had been released into the same communities multiple times. Recidivism rates for this group of parolees exceeded 85%.

Historically, a relatively small number of offenders have committed a disproportionate number of offenses. Their criminal behavior typically began at an early age, and most of them have faced multiple risk factors such as family conflict, drug and alcohol exposure and use, mental health issues, low-income, unsuitable housing, and education and vocational deficiencies. The criminal justice systems of most communities have, for many years struggled with ways to handle this difficult to serve population. The problem has been exacerbated with the tremendous increase of prison and probation/parole populations. In 1980, some 600,000 people were in prison or on parole. By 2000, that number had grown to over six million. It has been estimated that in 2001, some 585,000 felons were released from prisons across America (USA Today, 12/27/2000). Access to mental health inpatient and outpatient services were reduced just as more high-risk/high-needs offenders returned to their home communities. Without



adequate treatment or supervision services, many of these offenders continued their illegal and disruptive behaviors, which caused them to be incarcerated again.

The parolees making up the target population of the KPSC are typically property and drug offenders, so that their criminal activities are often driven by their need to acquire and use drugs. Their repetitive criminal behavior often supports those drug habits, and in the process, hurls innocent citizens, the families of the offenders and the offenders themselves. Victimization from these continuing activities can include loss of property, physical injury and emotional distress. Drug use and other criminal activity in victims' neighborhoods also adversely affected property values and quality of life in those neighborhoods.

The problem regarding repeat offenders was addressed in several ways prior to the development of the KPSC initiative. An increased police presence in known offender neighborhoods was an important tactic. However, police officers frequently encountered parolees only when they re-offended and had to be arrested. This caused parolees to have their parole revoked, and they were sent back to prison, costing Tennessee taxpayers much more money than if the offenders would have remained in the community. This approach also resulted in a lack of trust between the police and many minority communities within Knoxville. Another attempt to alleviate the problem was that parole officers for high-risk offenders had a reduced caseload compared to parole officers of regular offenders. Another attempt to correct the crime problem included parole officer referrals to human service agencies; however, due to a lack of communication between the officers and agencies, the offenders did not always receive the necessary services. A

lack of trust existed between authoritative agencies, such as BOPP, KPD, and the many social service agencies located in and around Knoxville.

Analysis of the target population and their communities revealed several underlying conditions and possible causes for the repeated criminal behaviors of this group. Parolees usually returned to the same drug-infested neighborhoods they had left upon incarceration. Another significant problem facing parolees was the return to dysfunctional families. This family conflict and other issues such as poverty, physical and emotional abuse, illegal drug use and other life skill deficits made successful reintegration almost impossible. Many of the parolees had untreated and sometimes undiagnosed mental health problems. There was also a lack of coordinated supervision and treatment, not to mention this population's general aversion to treatment. In many cases, previous treatment/diagnosis was unknown to the probation/parole officer and treatment and supervision agencies often operated in isolation from each other. This situation caused duplication or, more frequently, gaps in service for the offender and his or her family.

### *Response*

As previously mentioned, one way the KPD chose to respond to the problem was by coordinating efforts between the police department and the Board of Probation and Parole. As a part of this intervention strategy, both agencies recognized the importance of including human service providers in this effort. A joint grant application to The Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) Office of the U.S. Department of Justice was made and they selected Knoxville for a Demonstration Center grant. As a result, funds were made available to set in motion the kind of collaborative effort necessary to

enhance public safety by successfully reintegrating parolees into the Knoxville community. The structure of the KPSC now includes the KPD, the BOPP, Helen-Ross McNabb Center, Child and Family Tennessee, and 22 other human service providers in Knoxville. The Helen-Ross McNabb Center and Child and Family Tennessee are large, non-profit human service providers, that have provided consultation, case management and various treatment services for the target population. The KPD, in conjunction with BOPP and human service provider agencies, considered two options for the KPSC. The original grant proposal included a neighborhood resource center that would house the police, parole, and social service teams that would be assigned to supervise and treat the target population. In addition, a community service coordinator would have worked closely with faith-based groups, businesses, and other organizations in the parolee's neighborhood. The problem was that there was not a central location in which to place the center that would provide easy access to all parolees in Knoxville, and there was not enough funding to place a center in each neighborhood. Meetings among the KPSC members were held at the Knoxville Police Department and/or the Board of Probation and Parole and other agency locations as necessary. The KPD provided office space for parole officers in the Police Department East District Office and at the main Police Department building. This effort provided a more convenient reporting location for the many parolees who live in East and Central Knoxville.

The KPSC model that now exists expanded on the collaborative effort established between the KPD and the BOPP. It was first implemented on October 1, 1997. Many jurisdictions across the country have established links between the police and community corrections agencies. The distinguishing factor for the Knoxville Police Department and

its development of the Knoxville Public Safety Collaborative is the inclusion of coordinated and proactive treatment available to offenders through involvement of outside agencies. The expansion included human service provider agencies that address the multiple risk factors found in most high-risk parolee cases. The KPSC model also allows police officers, parole officers and treatment professionals to work side-by-side during home visits, which enhances supervision, treatment and trust for the parolees and their families. When offenders observe this team effort, they understand that with the enhanced supervision, they are less likely to successfully violate their conditions of supervision. Another important task for police officers has been checking in with offenders during their patrol hours. The sharing of information between KPD and BOPP has allowed police officers to be aware of the released high-risk offenders on their beats, so they can monitor them more closely. These efforts increase public safety and enhance officer safety.

The Knoxville Public Safety Collaborative Team Supervision and Treatment process can be divided into five steps. The first step occurs when the parolee develops a tentative release plan. A field parole officer then investigates that release plan and may approve or deny the release plan. Once a plan has been approved and the parolee released from prison, the parole officer meets with the offender to discuss his or her conditions of parole and any other concerns the offender might have. A multi-disciplinary case staffing is held to develop a supervision and treatment strategy for the offender. This meeting provides an opportunity for staff from the various agencies to discuss concerns about each high-risk offender. Each agency researches their own databases to determine what if any treatment they have provided to the offender in the

past. Other case staffings may be held as necessary as offender circumstances change. The KPSC allotted a certain amount of the Demonstration Center grant for sub-grants that resulted in contracts with local service providers to hire case managers who provided intensive case management to the parolees. The final step in the team supervision and treatment process includes monitoring, evaluation and modification of the supervision and treatment plan as necessary.

Efforts to enhance communication between the authoritative agencies (KPD and the BOPP) and the communities where the parolees frequently reside include the volunteer efforts by the KPD and the Board of Probation and Parole. Now community correctional officers and police officers in the city work closely with neighborhood organizations, town watch groups and private companies to define community service projects in which parolees and probationers work alongside their neighbors cleaning up vacant lots and building playgrounds for neighborhood children and families. These efforts have increased the level of trust between police officers, parole officers, and neighborhood residents.

The response was developed through an inter-agency agreement that originally included the KPD and the BOPP and approximately 24 human service providers, half-way houses, career centers, employment agencies, the Knox County school system, and the Knox County Health Department. Another crucial element in the ability of the KPD to implement the program was the \$935,000 grant given by the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS). The KPD used part of the grant money to hire consultants from Criminal Justice Associates to help prepare the KPD for integrating the program into the department and for helping the KPSC develop

effective intervention strategies. Helen-Ross McNabb also contracted with the KPSC to develop a sustainment plan for the KPSC initiative. Every agency has contributed personnel, time and other resources to the Collaborative.

The mission of the KPSC is to protect and enhance public safety and to promote better outcomes for at-risk children and families. The KPSC has developed six goals:

1. Enhance day-to-day working relationships among community correctional officers, police, and social service providers in the city of Knoxville.
2. Share information among parole and probation officers, police, and the social service providers to more effectively manage offenders in the community.
3. Organize and share inter-agency information and resources to address the changing needs and risks of offenders as well as their children and families.
4. Develop and use a comprehensive and proactive case management process for high-risk offenders and their children and families.
5. Use progressive sanctions, including supervised community service, for offenders in the target population.
6. Develop and implement a strategic action plan to expand and enhance the composition of the Collaborative and to obtain the resources required to sustain its mission in the future.

Many resources were available to help solve the problem. Community support was high, especially in neighborhoods concerned with the problem. This support was demonstrated by citizen participation in the community crime control meetings held by the department. Furthermore, a strong community policing philosophy already in place in the KPD provided the structure necessary for implementation of this collaborative

initiative. This community policing structure enabled citizens to identify, present and prioritize the problem of repeat offenders for the department. The established working relationship between the KPD and the BOPP paved the way for a stronger commitment from both agencies. The commitments of the KPD and BOPP to include the treatment community in the collaborative process has strengthened understanding and trust among all of the involved agencies and has improved service delivery for these very needy clients.

Overall, the KPSC process has been accepted by the various agencies and has had full support from most staff and supervisors. However, during implementation of the initiative, the KPSC encountered a few barriers. One early concern was the confidentiality issues regarding information sharing by all parties involved. The time constraints and other priorities of police officers sometimes prevented their best possible use by the KPSC. A slight resistance for publicity by some members of the collaborative may have prevented Knoxville citizens from understanding all of the KPSC's roles in the community. More recently, a significant difficulty the KPSC faced was a loss of funding for the case management positions. The intensive case management was very helpful to enhance the treatment for offenders. There has also been some resistance to creating a new database for the KPSC because so many databases currently exist within the police department and at the Board of Probation and Parole.

Various individuals and groups were involved in the response to the repeat offender problem. The Knoxville Chief of Police played a critical role in the development of the program, and he has continued to support the KPSC by encouraging officers to work with the KPSC. He has also instituted training on the KPSC in the police academy

and in the field training and evaluation program, the reserve academy, and among other personnel. The Regional Director of the Tennessee Board of Probation and Parole (BOPP), the Associate Director of Child and Family Tennessee, the University of Tennessee evaluator and many others participated in the development of the KPSC vision.

#### *Assessment*

An evaluation by researchers of the University of Tennessee College of Social Work Office of Research and Public Services (SWORPS) reported on the success of the KPSC:

The Knoxville Police Department's implementation of the Advancing Community Policing Demonstration Center Grant has brought noticeable change to the daily operations of managing offenders in the community. Although improvements are still needed, the Knoxville model sets forth some effective policies and procedures worth emulating in other jurisdictions. It also offers good indication of substantial, long-range savings for the state in terms of incarceration costs, as parolees are successful. (Broyles & Homer, 2001)

Compared to a historical parolee group, there was a 38% potential improvement in recidivism. The SWORPS researchers evaluated the KPSC's performance from September 1998 through February 2001. The evaluation incorporated both quantitative and qualitative research methods. A quasi-experimental approach was used to develop a historical comparison group. The formation of this historical group occurred by identifying all parolees released to Knoxville in 1996 and 1997 (413 parolees). The group was then narrowed down to 261 by selecting only those parolees who would have met the



criteria for inclusion in the KPSC program. Statistical analyses of variance tests indicated that the historical and the experimental groups are comparable samples. The evaluators determined the rate of recidivism of the comparison group, and because it was a historical group, they could observe the progression or digression of previous parolees over at least a two-year period.

Both quantitative data from parole officer caseload action reports and qualitative data from observations and interviews served as the data collection techniques. To gather qualitative data, evaluators spent time on-site, observing day-to-day operations. They went on ride-alongs with police and parole officers. They attended the Citizens Police Academy and held interviews with stakeholders, police officers, service providers, professionals, and a small group of parolees. SWORPS evaluators developed a stand-alone database to accommodate the data for the study. Data analysis included synthesizing observations and feedback into themes and overall trends. For quantitative data, descriptive statistics were performed to characterize participants demographically and to analyze other program data such as number of contacts and referrals. Inferential statistics determined the relationships among variables and the strengths of the relationships. Finally, the evaluator developed statistical models using multiple regression and logistic regression techniques.

The response effort could have been more effective had a few other plans been implemented. The evaluators recommended that a more complete policy and procedures manual be developed to clarify each agency's role in the collaborative. Although an inter-agency agreement provides some information on the responsibilities of each agency, a manual might be able to clarify any other process questions. It will also be important to

implement a better data collection method in the future to ensure parolees are receiving and taking advantage of treatment services and to measure the effects of the service delivery system on public safety. Keeping Knoxvilleians better informed of the KPSC mission, its progress, and ways in which the community can assist with the reintegration process might be an important improvement for the initiative. Another important aspect that could enhance the program is to include more parolee perspective. Parolees, as recipients of services, could provide more information on what services have helped them and those services that were not helpful. Parolee focus groups were conducted early in the development of the collaborative and could be used again to help determine other programmatic changes. Probably the most important resource needed to increase response effectiveness is more funding that would increase agency involvement and provide more case management and direct treatment services to the offenders and their families.

Displacement of the problem from one area to another is not a major concern for the KPSC. Offenders are required to live in an approved placement and are monitored by the collaborative wherever they live. The only "displacement" issue for these high-risk parolees or probationers refers to their possible re-incarceration, and much effort is directed toward prevention of a return to prison.

The KPSC initiative will require continued monitoring and efforts to maintain and exceed the results of the evaluation. As indicated by the SWORPS evaluation (Broyles & Homer, 2001) and the Helen-Ross McNabb Sustainment Plan (2001), the following are a few of the issues that must be included for the successful continuation of the KPSC initiative:

1. Continued outreach to other organizations in the Knoxville area
2. Annual review of the strategic plan
3. Continued effort to streamline data collection
4. Continued effort to educate and encourage police officers to actively participate in KPSC offender management
5. Continued effort to keep the public informed about KPSC principles, accomplishments, and concerns
6. Continued effort to quantify outreach efforts to other jurisdictions
7. Follow-up focus groups with offenders
8. Continuous review of the sustainment plan and innovative ways to provide support to KPSC participants and family members

### **Agency and Officer Information**

The entire Knoxville Police Department adopted the KPSC problem-solving initiative, with much support, guidance and leadership from the Chief of Police. Although not every police officer has participated directly in the KPSC, the Team Supervision and Treatment process has affected the operations of almost every unit in the department. KPD has long been committed to problem-solving policing. This is evident through the various training programs and the fact that incentives are provided to officers who initiate and engage in problem-solving efforts each year. For the KPSC initiative, a manual entitled, *The Knoxville Public Safety Collaborative: Cross Training for Supervisions and Service Delivery* was developed by Criminal Justice Associates Inc. to serve as a training guide for police officers, probation/parole officers and others involved in the

collaborative. The Team Supervision process is also taught in yearly in-service training sessions for patrol officers and investigators.

Primary funding for the Knoxville Public Safety Collaborative came from a grant from the Department of Justice, Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, (COPS). These funds were used to hire consultants, visit other collaborative programs across the country, hire staff, conduct conferences (on site and video) for other jurisdictions interested in developing similar programs and have the initiative evaluated by the University of Tennessee, Social Work Office of Research and Public Service (SWORPS). The Knoxville Police Department has contributed equipment, office space, technical advice and support and probably most importantly, the time of patrol officers.

*Contact Person Information:*

Name: Lee M. Ragsdale IE, MSW  
Position/Rank: Community Corrections Program Manager  
Address: P.O. Box 3610  
City/State: Knoxville, TN 37927  
Phone:(865)215-1296  
Fax:(865)215-1295  
E-mail: lragsdale@ci.knoxville.tn.us

References

Broyles, L. & Homer, K. (2001) Knoxville, UT, College of Social Work, Office of Research and Public Service.  
Helen Ross McNabb Sustainment Plan (2001)  
USA Today, December 27, 2000

## **Executive Summary**

### **Overview**

The Knoxville Police Department (KPD) has worked for many years to incorporate community oriented policing principles into its policy and day-to-day operations. With the U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) demonstration center grant (Grant No. 97-PAW-XK-017) award, the KPD chose to specifically focus on the proactive management of high-risk offenders—the "worst of the worst"—released on parole to the city of Knoxville. With public safety accorded priority, the goal was to help these parolees successfully reintegrate into the community.

To accomplish this in the spirit of community policing, the KPD collaborated with the Tennessee Board of Probation and Parole (BOPP) and Knoxville area human services providers, forming the Knoxville Public Safety Collaborative (KPSC).

### **Nature and Scope of the Evaluation**

The evaluator assessed the Knoxville Police Department's *Advancing Community Policing* Demonstration Center Grant in terms of content, input, process, and product. This report documents the grant implementation and summarizes evaluation activities and findings, primarily for the data collection period of September 1998 through February 2001. Any conclusions drawn are based on the conditions existing and on the data collected for the target population of 265 parolees during that period.

## Research Questions

The following questions, derived from the program goals and objectives, guided the evaluation of the KPSC initiative:

1. How effective is the KPD handling of high-risk parolees?
2. How effective is the Knoxville Public Safety Collaborative in the systematic handling of high-risk parolees?
3. How can the Knoxville Public Safety Collaborative be evaluated systematically, at regular intervals, on an ongoing basis?

## KPSC Leadership and Management

The KPSC **Executive Committee**, which reviews and approves policy and major operational decisions for the Collaborative, is comprised of leaders from the four major partners:

- KPD
- BOPP
- Child & Family Tennessee
- Helen Ross McNabb Center

The KPD's full-time **Community Corrections Program Manager**

- coordinates the daily activities of the Collaborative
- participates in training and educational activities
- makes policy and strategic planning recommendations
- gathers data related to offender and collaborative agency activities for analysis and evaluation

The **Collaborative** itself is open to any organization working with offenders and their family members.

## Target Population

The target population refers to the **265 parolees whose cases were managed by the KPSC from September 1998 through February 2001.**

The target population is largely comprised of high-risk parolees being released to the city of Knoxville who scored five or more on the Knoxville Team Supervision Program Case Plan and were therefore referred to the Case Staffing/Operations Group.

The KPSC parole officers, police officers, and human service practitioners make many contacts and referrals in support of the targeted parolees. To

determine what available support might be helpful, they consider the specific needs, traits, criminal and treatment history, and current circumstances of the participant and family members. As the state's official case manager, the parole officer enters contact notes into the Tennessee Offender Management Information System (TOMIS) and reports monthly performance measurement data to the Community Corrections Program Manager.

These data were compiled for the 30-month period of September 1, 1998 through February 28, 2001, reflecting program activity for 265 participants under KPSC proactive management during the study period.

A **historical comparison group**, comprised of 261 parolees who would have been selected for the program had there been one in place in 1996-1997, was used for comparison to the target population.

## Definition of Success

For the purposes of this study, success is defined in terms of recidivism.

**Recidivism** is defined as reincarceration for new charges (misdemeanors or felonies) or for technical violations (e.g., absconding, positive drug screens, repetitive failure to comply with conditions of parole).

Success, in contrast, refers to participants who continue to comply with parole while in the KPSC's target population. Specifically, participants are considered program successes if any of the following apply:

- They are transferred from the target population to regular supervision because of proven stability and lowered needs/risk level.
- They make an approved move to another jurisdiction while still in good standing.
- They die while in good standing.
- They reach termination of their parole and sentence.

## Findings

The evaluation presents the degree of success attained with the target population and compares these rates to the historical comparison group. These calculations and comparisons are summarized below, followed by key findings from the study shown as accomplishments and remaining challenges.

## Results

The degree of success attained with the target population is indicated by the participants' parole status as of February 28, 2001. Figure I shows the success rate among program participants. Figure II compares the success of KPSC participants with that of the historical comparison group.

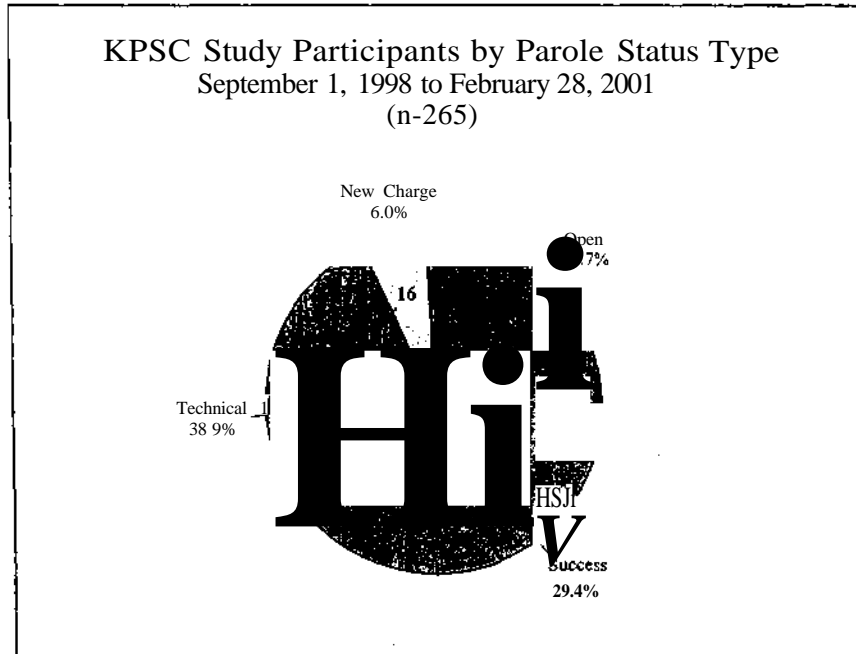


Figure I. KPSC Study Participants by General Parole Status

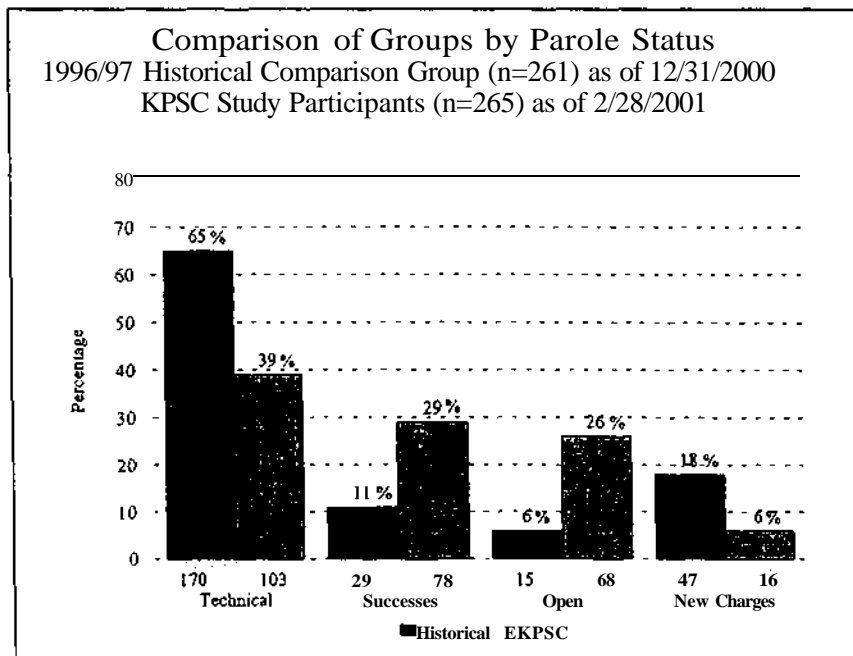


Figure II. Success: Target Population vs. Historical Comparison Group



## Accomplishments and Remaining Challenges

The table below presents the major **accomplishments** associated with community policing and KPSC efforts, as well as **challenges** that remain. These challenges include areas for continuous improvement of the collaboration and some open issues that may warrant future study.

Table I. KPSC Accomplishments and Remaining Challenges

	Accomplishments	Remaining Challenges
1	Commitment letters establishing KPSC partnership among 26 member agencies	Continued outreach to other organizations in the Knoxville area
2	KPSC development of a strategic plan	Annual review of strategic plan
3	Regular meetings of the KPSC Executive Committee and the Case Staffing Group	Publication of minutes, including review of action items and responsible points of contact; continued effort toward development of steering group
4		
5	KPD creation of Community Corrections Program Manager and office assistant positions	Reassessment of the need to fill the assistant position vacancy; review of program manager role and database support needed
6		
7	KPD expansion of parolee management to all three patrol districts	Development of more directive policy and procedures on community policing activities; celebration of successes to encourage officer involvement and increase morale
8		
9	BOPP acquisition of computers for all staff	Continued effort to streamline data collection, enhance automation, and refine related procedures
10		
11	Increased patrol officer awareness of parolee residence/activity in beat/neighborhood	Continued effort to educate and encourage officers to actively participate in KPSC offender management

	Accomplishments	Remaining Challenges
13	<p>KPSC completion of institutional case files</p> <p>KPSC development of offender's additional case study and subsequent case actions</p> <p>KPSC attention to parolee perspective (e.g., focus group, interviews and case reviews, case management efforts, inclusion of family member concerns)</p>	<p>Continued development of offender case files</p> <p>Continued development of offender case files</p> <p>Continued development of offender case files</p> <p>Follow-up focus groups with offenders (both parolees and probationers) and/or family members; development of additional case studies to demonstrate varying degrees of success</p>
15	<p>KPSC public information (e.g., newspaper and radio news stories, program displays, community events)</p> <p>KPSC rephcability in other jurisdictions: training conferences, videoconference, monographs, site visits and technical assistance, and monitoring guide</p>	<p>Continued effort to quantify outreach efforts to other jurisdictions and to improve any technical assistance provided</p> <p>Potential publication of KPSC products to the JKPDC website for access by other jurisdictions</p>
17	<p>Inclusion of community policing items in Knoxville's Annual Budget Survey</p>	<p>Dissemination of next year's survey to a sample more representative of the demographic profile for Knoxville populace</p>
19	<p>Continued Community Advisory Committee efforts toward community-wide partnerships in crime reduction and public safety initiatives</p>	<p>Potential to highlight community policing achievements and ongoing concerns for CAC consideration</p>
21	<p>KPSC development of case plans for 147 (55%) of its 265 participants during study period</p>	<p>Better adherence to large population selection criteria; case plan development for every KPSC participant</p>

Accomplishments	Remaining Challenges
<p>23</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• KPSC successes exceed comparison group by 18%</li> <li>• KPSC decrease in new charges exceeds comparison group by 12%</li> <li>• KPSC recidivism rate improvement of 38% over historical comparison group</li> <li>• Target group stability indicated at 2-year level of 45% recidivism</li> </ul>	<p>Recalculation needed at a later date to determine effect of change of status of cases that were still open on February 28, 2001 (68 target group cases open; 15 historical comparison group cases open)</p>
<p>KPSC annual cost savings to \$12,225 in institutional costs</p>	<p>Continue development of best practices for community corrections</p>

## Suggestions for Future Study

A number of topics mentioned in this report exceed the scope of this study or the data currently available. Also, some of the findings have implications in other arenas. As the opportunity arises and the necessary resources become available, the Collaborative may decide to develop these in greater depth. The following areas describe potential candidates for further review:

- database development and integration
- KPSC case management and data collection responsibilities
- BOPP staffing
- individual performance appraisal criteria
- more systematic case management
  - o improved accounting of drug screens
  - o separate tracking of offenders with drug-related crimes and needs
  - o better police activity data
  - o alternatives to recidivism (other gauges of levels of success)
- return on investment (ROI)
- intermediate sanctions and restorative justice
- systematic coordination with the domestic violence program
- assessment of technical assistance
- web presence

## In Summary

The Knoxville Police Department's implementation of the Advancing Community Policing Demonstration Center Grant has brought noticeable change to the daily operations involved in managing offenders in the community. Based on the data collected for the target population, KPSC management very likely increases an offender's chances for success. Although improvements are still needed, the Knoxville model sets forth

some effective policies and procedures worth emulating in other jurisdictions. Further, the Knoxville experience offers good indication of substantial, long-range savings in incarcerations costs for the state.

STATE / LOCAL

# High rate of recidivism blamed on lack of rehabilitation funds

## Budget cuts make improvement unlikely

By The Associated Press

NASHVILLE - More Tennessee inmates are returning to prison for crimes committed after their release because of poor funding for rehabilitation programs, the state Department of Correction says.

Of the 8,627 inmates admitted to Tennessee prisons in fiscal 1998, 8,716 - or 43 percent - were jailed for probation or parole violations, according to an audit by the State Comptroller's Office.

That's up from 32 percent in 1990.

Auditors also found that the Department of Correction and the Tennessee Board of Probation and Parole were doing little to curb that number.

Auditors said probation and parole officers focus on supervising rather than rehabilitating inmates. Auditors also criticized the DOC for not establishing a statewide halfway house program.

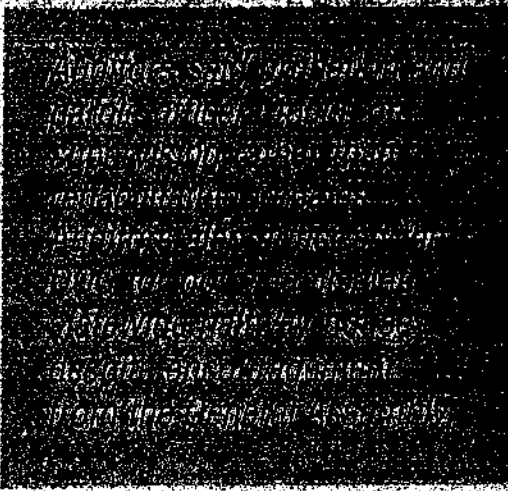
Gov. Don Sundquist said the state should be a place for rehabilitated inmates in the ranks of Tennessee's workforce.

"It seems to me that in an economy with less than 4 percent

unemployment there ought to be jobs out there for people who want a job," Sundquist said.

Department of Correction Commissioner Donal Campbell blamed poor funding for the state's recidivism problem.

He also said the sector takes



precedence over rehabilitation

when money is tight. "It's not now that we need more money," he said.

Campbell said the state has many inmates who are not in the public

workforce. "The state executive director of the Department of Rehabilitation and Parole said last year that \$50 million of the state's \$51 million budget last year was spent on rehabilitation.

She said federal funding available for rehabilitation programs has diminished since 1990.

State Rep. Phillip Plon, chairman of the General Assembly's Corrections Oversight Committee, said that in 1998, rehabilitation programs will be a low priority for lawmakers who are focused on the budget cuts this year.

Besides Plon, Campbell also has lobbyists, he said. "I have many lobbyists who care about me," he said.

"We live in a time when the general public is the one

who is being asked to pay for the corrections system. The public is the one who is being asked to pay for the corrections system. The public is the one who is being asked to pay for the corrections system.

# Community takes park back from criminals

By Don Jacobs

Nicole Santini staff writer

Years ago criminal activity caused the closure and closure of a Lonsdale city park. Now activity by convicted criminals has been brought back into Lonsdale Street Park.

When I canva here again, years ago, it was hard to believe that Joe Welsh, deputy director of Lonsdale Parks and Recreation department, would be investigating and car-

thieves had wrested from residents control of the small park in Lonsdale. People no longer felt confident letting their children play there.

It's a good feeling for the head element, Welsh said.

The city assumed the 6-acre plot in 1974. It became the city's worst park in the area, Welsh said. Only a few people used the park, and only a few children played there. The park's entrance

with some other people, Welsh said, they were not going to keep it.

Members of the community, including some of the convicted criminals, have been invited to help with the park's renovation. The city is providing the money, but the community is providing the labor.

When I canva here again, years ago, it was hard to believe that Joe Welsh, deputy director of Lonsdale Parks and Recreation department, would be investigating and car-

thieves had wrested from residents control of the small park in Lonsdale. People no longer felt confident letting their children play there.

It's a good feeling for the head element, Welsh said. The city assumed the 6-acre plot in 1974. It became the city's worst park in the area, Welsh said. Only a few people used the park, and only a few children played there. The park's entrance

# Listen up

## Police teaching youngsters to give violence the boot

By Jeannine F. Hunter

News-Sentinel staff writer

When Knoxville Police Department officer Don McClendon spoke, all children within earshot halted.

His voice rivaled any Marine drill sergeant's in real-life or movie portrayals, and kids scrambled to respond to his command.

Squeaky sneakers scooted across the black top surface. The kids moved with serious faces, but it was clear many fought back smiles.

McClendon winked at a parent, one of a few adult onlookers.

Parents and adult volunteers smiled as they stood behind the Knox Kids and Lifesavers/Phillip Moore Outreach Center properties on Pickering Street in East Knoxville.

The kids are participants in a "boot camp" being conducted by Knoxville Police Department officers McClendon and Melvin Pierce.

Stern but fair approach the

officers are using to instill social skills such as listening, conflict resolution and trust-building.

"Simple games but larger meanings," Pierce said. "If you can listen and work together, you can do anything."

Beside him stood volunteer Jesse Piety, 19, a member of True House of God Church.

"They needed more male role models, and I wanted to help them," Piety said, holding his hand toward Pierce. "I didn't have someone like him here talking to me about these things at their age, so I wouldn't have had to go to the real boot camp."

Piety, noting he was not proud of his infractions as a youth, added, "We want to let them know respect goes a long way. They can enjoy their lives, and be kids, but they must understand when it's appropriate to handle things responsibly."

The program is one facet of conflict-building being forged among the center, the Board of Parole and Probation, police

Knoxville police officers Donald McClendon, Melvin Pierce, and Jesse Piety, 19, talking to some of the 34 children attending the boot camp.

and probation officials. McClendon said the program is a "boot camp" for kids who have been arrested for minor offenses. The Cornerstone Foundation has been an important financial sponsor of the program, and the Board of Parole and Probation has provided staff support. McClendon said the program is a "boot camp" for kids who have been arrested for minor offenses. The Cornerstone Foundation has been an important financial sponsor of the program, and the Board of Parole and Probation has provided staff support. McClendon said the program is a "boot camp" for kids who have been arrested for minor offenses. The Cornerstone Foundation has been an important financial sponsor of the program, and the Board of Parole and Probation has provided staff support.

Please see CAMP, page B2



VICTOR ASHE  
MAYOR  
(865) 215-2040

## KNOXVILLE POLICE DEPARTMENT THE CITY OF KNOXVILLE, TENNESSEE



PHIL E. KEITH  
CHIEF OF POLICE  
(865) 215-7229  
FAX (865) 215-7412

### RESUBMISSION EXPLANATION

May, 2003

We believe that this resubmission is warranted due to the expansion and program refinements made to the Knoxville Public Safety Collaborative in the last year. The Knoxville Police Department, along with its partner agencies in the Collaborative, has implemented new responses to ongoing crime and public order issues. The problem identification and prioritization process along with the development of new interventions was the direct result of our use of the S.A.R.A. model and a belief in a problem-oriented policing philosophy.

The Knoxville Public Safety Collaborative is a dynamic and continually evolving example of the problem-solving approach to policing. This initiative is innovative because non-traditional partners from the human service/treatment sector and the larger community have been included in both the development and implementation process.

A new offender group was added to the Public Safety Collaborative target population. As a result of this addition, new responses were devised to more effectively manage this crime and public safety issue. New partners, including schools, day care centers and the court system were brought in to help deal with these potentially dangerous sex offenders.

New responses to an already included group, namely substance abusers, were put into place also. Finally, the Collaborative has been strengthened with the institutionalization of the initiative inside the Police Department.

These programmatic changes and additions demonstrate the practical use of problem-oriented policing at a time when resources are stretched to the limit. Those resources must be used in the most cost-effective manner possible. To accomplish this, problems should be clearly identified, priorities set, intervention strategies developed and implemented carefully and fully evaluated. The Knoxville Public Safety Collaborative strives to do just that. As a result of our efforts, the Knoxville Public Safety Collaborative was selected as a finalist in the Innovations in American Government Awards this year.