

I. Welcome and Roundtable Introductions ([click here](#) to view sign-in sheet)

II. Special Presentations

- Allyson Benton, M.S., J.P.S.
- Call or email Allyson at 559-936-8963 or abenton01@gmail.com

I. Disclaimer

II. Additional studies:

- a. [Justice Reinvestment in Alabama](#)
- b. [Alabama Therapeutic Education Facility](#)
- c. [Re-entry Resources](#)

II. Defining Inmate Culture

- a. criminologist definition: inmate subculture
- b. inmate and correctional staff definition: convict code (definition used in today's discussion)

III. Elements of Convict Code

a. peculiar language

- i. ex. "you need to check my jacket" is a threat—"you don't know how bad I really am"
- ii. ex. "I caught a case"—you don't ask about other's cases, mind your own business
- iii. ex. "graveyard dead"—worse than "regular" dead
- iv. ex. "outlaw"—doesn't conform to convict code, does his own thing
- v. ex. "snitch"

b. distinctive set of informal norms, attitudes, beliefs, values

- i. convicts use barter system, example: trade a haircut for pack of cigarette
- ii. unique value system
 - "don't trust cops or C.O.s"
 - "don't show emotion or sensitivity"
 - "don't discuss your case or other's cases"—value varies in different areas
 - "know who the 'shot callers' are and who they are aligned with"—people who are in charge of their race/group, mostly black and white in Alabama; align with prison gangs to stay alive; prison alliances don't always translate to outside world
 - "know who the mental patients are"—they have the meds

c. inverted status hierarchy (examples)

- i. Honors behaviors outside world finds appalling: cop killer would have major status; drug dealers, rapists have status; child molesters are at bottom of the totem pole

IV. Only the Strong Survive

a. don't gamble, mess with drugs, etc.

- i. Don't steal (thieves are called "box breakers", don't mess with homosexuals, don't loan or borrow
- ii. Top violations of convict code: never become a snitch, don't disrespect another inmate or their family, don't mess with someone else's "boy"—Allyson shared a story in which an inmate was killed for this offense

b. what happens if you ignore the norms and values

- i. At the very least you will be considered weak—as a result you could be prostituted by stronger inmate
- ii. You may be killed

V. Key Differences Between Male and Female Prison Populations

- a. higher percentages of female inmates enter prison having already been abused and suffering from PTSD than male prisoners
 - i. Introduction of evidence based training curriculum has made a difference
- b. female inmates fight more than male inmates, but fights result in fewer deaths
- c. female inmates cope with prison very differently than male prisoners
 - i. Create pseudo families and live in family units
 - ii. Men cope by acting out sexually
- d. female inmates are often the main caregivers for their family and suffer added separation anxiety and trauma having been separated from their children
 - i. Importance of maintaining family relationships
 - ii. Changed visitation to be more child and family friendly
- e. historically, female inmates were expected to emerge from prison and immediately assume responsibility of parenting while male inmates were not
 - i. No time to readjust to family life

VI. What happens when inmates are released in Alabama

- i. DOC provides 2 weeks of pre-release classes 30-60 days prior to release
- ii. Will assist inmates to get Social Security card/birth certificate at inmates request (this is the rule, but this doesn't often happen)
- iii. Call Eddie Lancaster 334-353-9511
- iv. Home and job plan
- v. DOC provides new pair of pants and polo shirt
- vi. DOC gives inmates \$10 upon release, inmates get \$1 per month with good behaviors
- vii. Inmates are required to register with local police when they move back into the community

VIII. Questions

Q: How much responsibility does the family have to released inmate?

A: None

Q: Is there a certain percentage of inmates in your studies who have experienced sexual assault at a young age?

A: This is something Allyson ran into a lot. Has used book *Broken Boys, Mending Men* to help with coping/healing.

Q: What is a fair amount of money to put on someone's books to get them necessities in prison?

A: No more than \$20 per month. Inmates are limited to how much they can spend each month.

III. Old Business

IV. Continuum Business

- Reinstating SSVF meetings, opening meetings up to continuum
- AIDS Alabama moved into new space, held open house December 2
- 211 has new app coming out for all mobile devices, statewide information about the services near you: map, list of agencies, contact info

V. New Business

- One Roof is moving to Cooper Green next week and will be CLOSED FOR BUSINESS
 - For HMIS issues, call Nathan on his cell at 617-6207
 - If you NEED Michelle call 617-6208
 - PLEASE DO NOT call with client problems
 - Other staff will have limited access to email
- Next membership meeting—January 8, 2015, 2 p.m. at YWCA