

PROBATION



**NDCI**  
NATIONAL DRUG  
COURT INSTITUTE

# **COMMUNITY SUPERVISION**

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# Disclosure

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# What Is Community Supervision?

The challenge for community supervision officers is to develop a quality relationship with the offender while balancing the goals of protecting the safety of the community (i.e., control) and rehabilitating the offender (i.e., care). *(Skeem & Manchak, 2008)*



# Why Is Community Supervision Important?

Protects public safety

Provides accountability

Protects internal and external program integrity

Supports the progress of the participant

Provides early intervention

Acts as an adjunct to treatment

Extends the team into the community



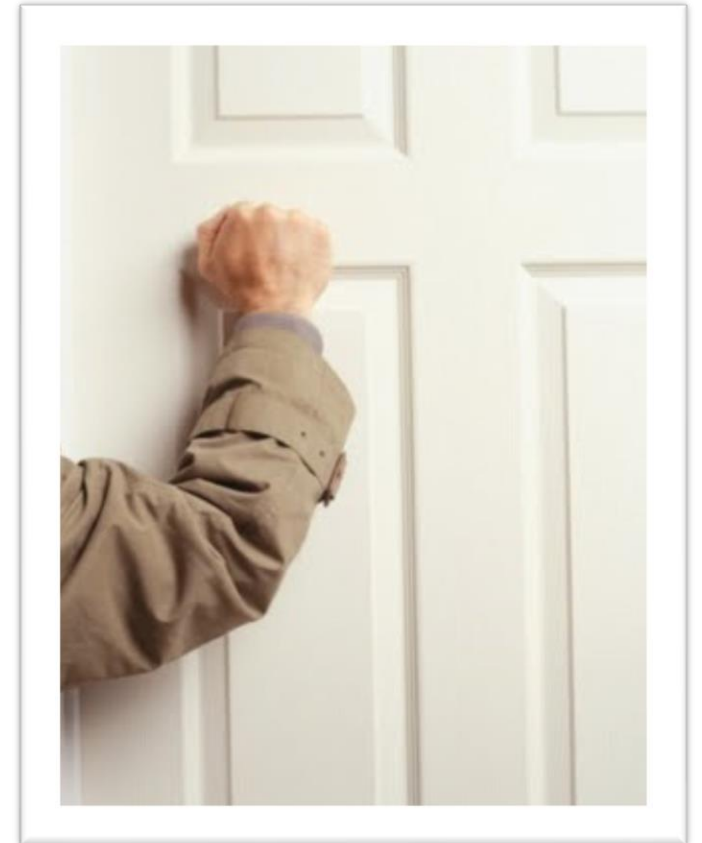
# Who Does the Community Supervision?

Probation

Law enforcement

Pre-trial services

Community supervision  
officers



# Research





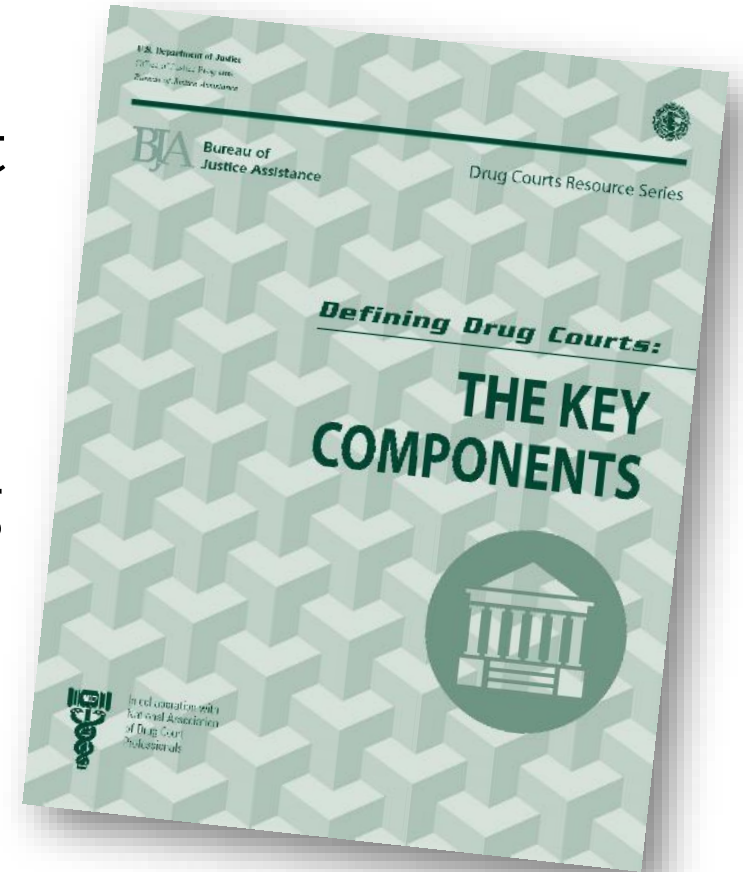
# 10 Key Components

## Key Component #5

**Abstinence is monitored by frequent alcohol and other drug testing.**

## Key Component #6

**A coordinated strategy governs drug court responses to participants' compliance.**



# Principles of Evidence-Based Practices

- Principle 1** *Assess actuarial risk/needs* – Offenders are not alike; determine the risk and need that must be addressed to reduce the likelihood of reoffending.
- Principle 2** *Enhance intrinsic motivation* – Increase the offender's motivation to change behavior.
- Principle 3** *Target interventions* – Provide effective interventions matched to the offender's criminogenic needs according to the principles of risk, needs, and responsivity.
- Principle 4** *Skill train with directed practice* – Use cognitive behavioral methods when appropriate.
- Principle 5** *Increase positive reinforcement* – Behavioral change is increased through positive reinforcement.
- Principle 6** *Engage ongoing support in natural communities* – Prosocial family networks increase the resources available and reinforce positive behavior.
- Principle 7** *Measure relevant process/practice* – Collect data to determine program impact on offender behavioral change as well as staff performance.
- Principle 8** *Provide measurement feedback* – Encourage behavior change by providing feedback.





# *Guidelines for Community Supervision*

**“When assessment and planning do not occur or are conducted poorly, supervision is haphazard, conducive to negative outcomes, and ultimately indefensible.”**

*Patricia M. Harris, Associate Dean, University of Texas at San Antonio (1994)*



## **Take away...**

Individualized case or supervision plans for all offenders that outline specific supervision strategies.

Assess and reassess. Case and supervision planning is a dynamic process and should occur more than once during the supervision process.

Create goals, objectives, and task-oriented strategies based on information from the risk and needs assessment and alcohol/drug history.  
*Goals, objectives, and strategies should be framed in a positive and strength-based context.*

Establish a collaborative relationship with treatment providers and communicate regularly.

# Caseload Sizes

Table 2	APPA Recommended Caseloads	
Probationer Risk and Need Level	1990 Guidelines	2006 Guidelines
ISP: high risk and high need	–	20:1
High risk	30:1	50:1
Moderate risk	60:1	50:1
Low risk	120:1	200:1

Probationers with 50:1 caseloads had significantly better probation outcomes, including fewer positive drug tests and other technical violations.

Probation officers with caseloads substantially above 50:1 had considerable difficulty accomplishing their core missions of monitoring probationers closely and reducing technical violations.

*Sources: APPA (1991); Byrne (2012); DeMichele (2007)*



# Caseload Sizes

## Benefits of 30:1 Caseloads

More frequent and longer contacts

More specialized services designed to reduce risk to public safety

Significantly lower recidivism rates lasting for at least 2½ years, including fewer new arrests for drug, property, and violent crimes

*Source: Jalbert et al., 2010*



**REMEMBER**

**Treatment court probation officers should be supervising only treatment court cases**

**Recommended caseload 30:1**

**Why?**

**Monitor meetings and status hearings**

**Perform drug and alcohol tests**

**Contribute critical observations and information during pre-court staffing**

**Deliver cognitive behavioral criminal-thinking interventions**

**Conduct field visits**



# Law Enforcement Involvement

**Law enforcement is a member of  
the treatment court team**

Recidivism reduction\* ↑ 88%

**Law enforcement attends  
court sessions**

Recidivism reduction\* ↑ 83%

\*Recidivism reduction relative  
to treatment courts that do  
not follow these practices.



*NPC Research meta-analysis, 2008*



# Case Planning



# EXAMPLES OF CASE MANAGERS

**Probation**

**Treatment**

**TASC (Treatment Accountability for Safer Communities)**

**Pre-trial services**

**Private agencies**

**Community-based organizations**

**Coordinator**

***What is the difference  
between treatment  
case managers and  
probation officers?***



# Risk, Needs, and Responsivity Assessment

A validated risk, needs, and responsivity tool is used prior to acceptance into treatment court.

Static and dynamic factors must be gathered to generate an accurate assessment of the offender.

Share the assessment with the team. Information the probation officer or case manager gathers is a baseline for further action, supervision, and progress.

Individualized case planning is derived from the assessment outcome.

APPA recommends that probationers be reassessed every 6 months at a minimum.





# MUST DO SOMETHING WITH INFO!

You can assess 'til the cows come home

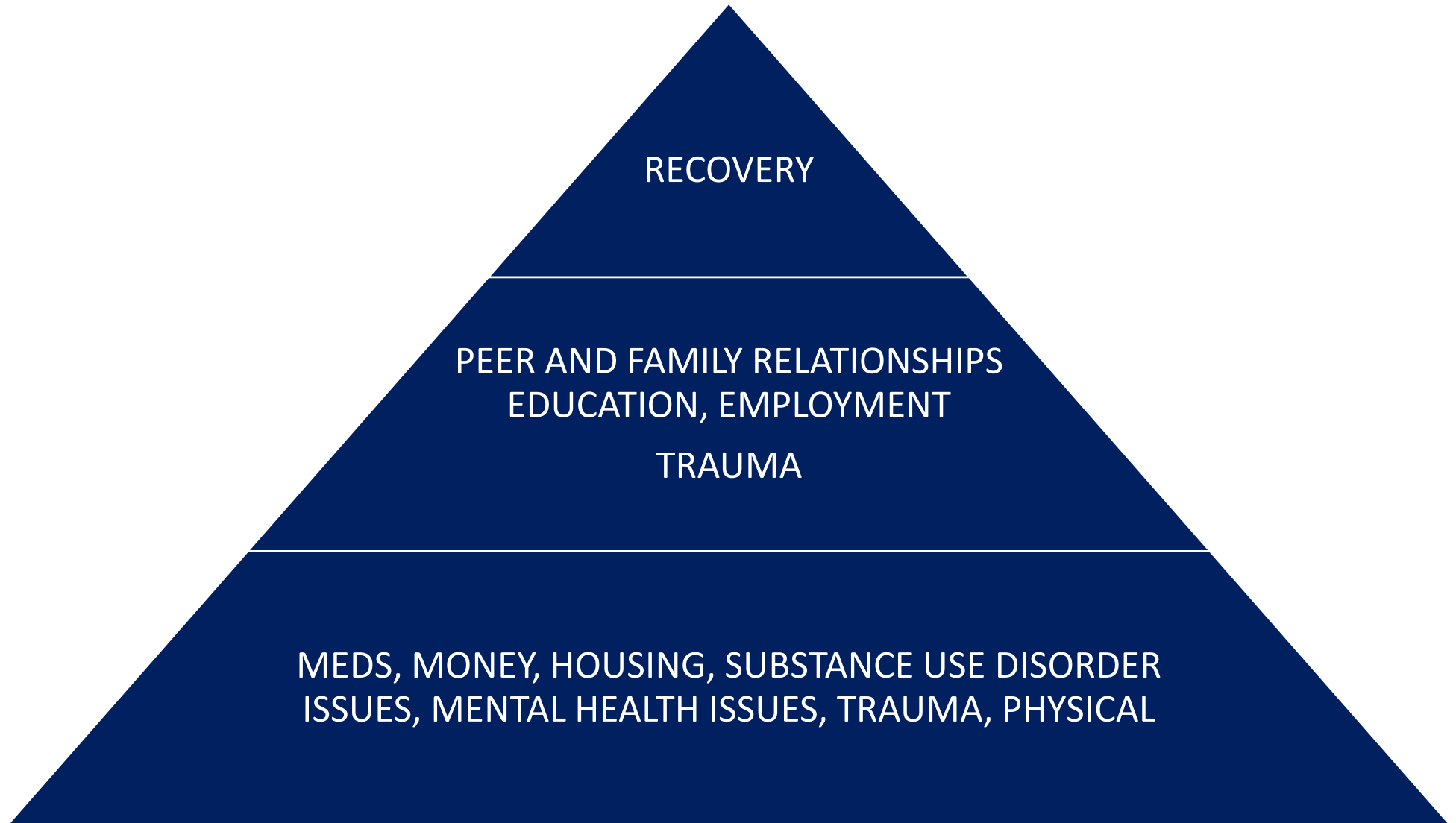
**Assessment**



**Action**



# ASSESSMENT LEADS TO CASE PLANNING





# REVIEW OF CASE PLANNING: EXTERNAL AND INTERNAL CONTROLS

- ✓ The **case plan** is the backbone of the supervision process.
- ✓ The **case plan** serves as a map of how staff and the offender will identify and solve the offender's problems.
- ✓ The **case plan** *must* include client input to enhance engagement. Role clarification?
- ✓ The **case plan** is a comprehensive strategy that outlines the goals and obstacles that may arise during the supervision process.
- ✓ **External controls**: Outside forces that influence the offender's behavior.
- ✓ **Internal controls**: The offender's intrinsic (inner) motivations that drive behavior.





**PROBATION**

**Fieldwork**

# Get Out There!

You cannot visit and test too much, but you **CAN** do too little.

This group is high risk and high need.

Caseload sizes **MUST** be kept in check to allow field visits and testing on a frequent basis. These caseloads are defined within an overall workload.



# Home Visits

Announced and unannounced

Different times and days of the week

Nongovernmental hours

Event visits, etc.

Condition of the home: Safe?  
Clean?

Food in the refrigerator?





# Home Visits

Engagement of family?

Test (PBT or oral swab)

Curfew checks

Catch them doing  
something right





# Home Visits Can Be Critical!

Participant found dead in bedroom

Had been drinking over the weekend

Court didn't test at night or over the weekend



## IN-DEPTH:

## Sobriety Court Program



Repeat drunk driver

cause of death is still unknown.

But because a police report states he had been drinking over the weekend, despite court restrictions not to, we went to learn more about the Sobriety Court program was involved in.

Only a little more than a year old, the Sobriety Court aims at reaching repeat drunk drivers in ways other courts haven't, through support and treatment.

coordinators say, was doing well in the program and had tested negative on every alcohol test administered to him.

Those semi-random tests, though, typically are not given on nights or weekends, a policy the court's leaders now say they look to change.

"Do you think if we had been doing testing differently, we might have noticed if he was drinking?" the reporter asked.

"Well, naturally that would be the easiest thing to say, that yeah, it might possibly have caught that, but it's hard to say, it might be a weekend of falling off the wagon, and it's terrible, but ultimately he paid the ultimate price for that bad judgment," said a Sobriety Court Coordinator.

The difficulty: the program receives very few funds. Additional testing, some say, could be costly.

# Search

Pre- or post-plea court?

**Fourth Amendment waivers**

Extent of search activities has to be framed by the nature of the court order or by waivers and consents to search



# Search

Signs of polysubstance use?  
(Oxy? Xanax?...)



Alcohol-based substances?



The more you look, the more  
the client has to think twice  
before violating the terms and  
conditions





# Be Aware of Everything

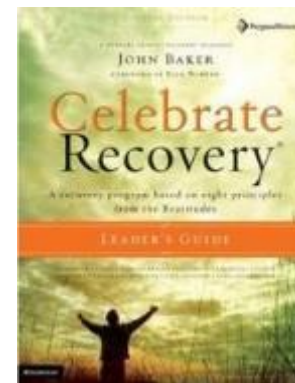
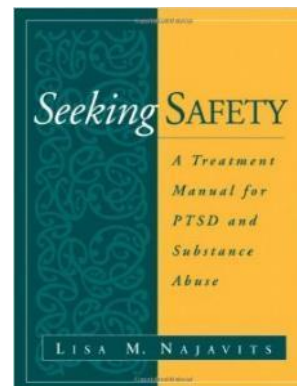
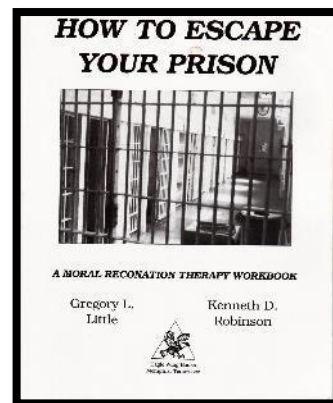
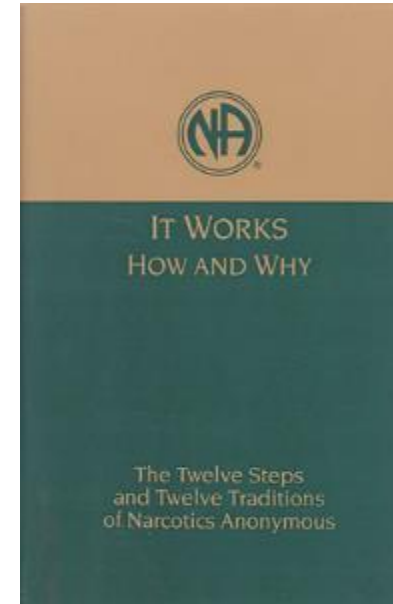
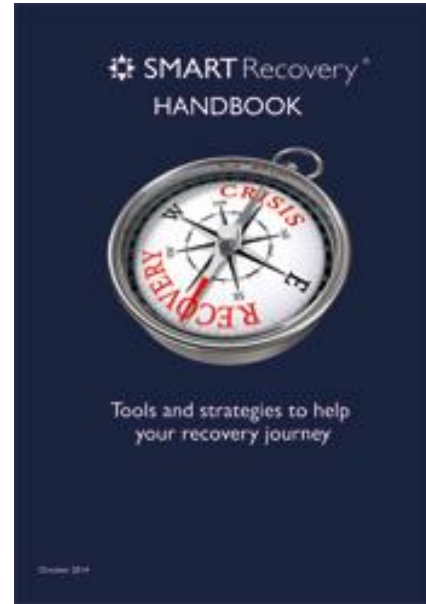
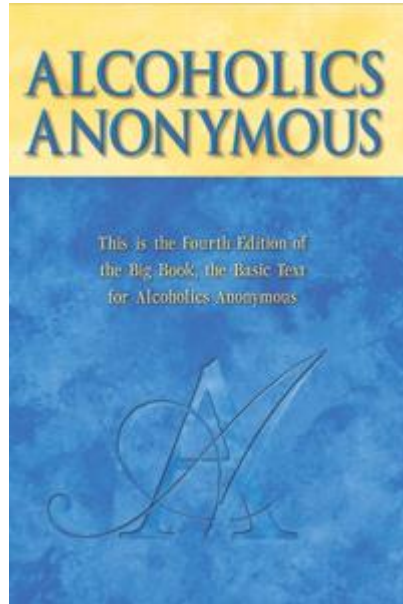


# Be Aware of Everything





# What We Should See



# Surveillance

Watch treatment, office visit, court,  
job: **Do they drive away?**

Observe associates who may  
present danger to recovery.

Prepare to take action if necessary.



# Benefits of Supervision

Immediate responses to behavior

Problem-solving assistance

Identify service gaps and barriers

Encouragement and support

Program integrity

Real-time communication

