

Blueprint for a Successful Mental Health Court

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Jasmine Gonzalez, BS

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Track: Legal/Clinical

Level: Introductory

CE: CPA/BBS/BRN, MCLE (1.5)

Narrative

Mental Health Courts (MHC) generally began in 1997. They came to be due to the ever increasing number of people with Serious Mental Illness (SMI) involved in the criminal justice system. As of 2009, there are more than 250 mental health courts across the country, with many additional courts in the planning phase. Mental Health Courts have evolved in the 20 plus years since they began and there is great variety in how individual MHC's are operated.

Yolo County's Mental Health Court began in 2013 and since its inception has seen great success. Even a year after completing the program graduates have a 96% reduction in recidivism, 100% reduction in Department of State Hospital bed days, and a 67% reduction in local hospital bed days. In this presentation Mental Health Court representatives from the District Attorney's Office, the Public Defender's Office, and Health and Human Services Agency will discuss what they believe are the 3 keys to the program's success: the District Attorney's Office involvement, effective interagency collaboration, and an intense & holistic treatment approach.

BIO

Terri Lipelt

Terri Lipelt is a Mental Health Rehabilitation Specialist for Yolo County Health and Human Services Agency (HHSA) and has over 30 years' experience working in the mental health field. Prior to joining Yolo County, she worked in a Special Education classroom for Seriously Emotionally Disturbed children, ages 6-10 years old before moving into the Crisis Intervention Specialist role at a Non-Public school. Terri came to Yolo County 14 years ago where she has worked with the Transition Aged Youth population before joining HHSA's Forensic Mental Health team 5 years ago. While Terri has always played a pivotal case management role on the Forensic team, she has recently moved into a lead role providing coordination, oversight, and collaboration with partner agencies involved in the Mental Health Court program, the Addiction Intervention Court program and the Misdemeanor Incompetent to Stand Trial (IST) program. All of these programs involve significant coordination and collaboration with the District Attorney's office, to the Public Defender's office, the Probation department, the Courts, Jails and hospitals.

Jasmine Gonzalez

Jasmine Gonzalez is a Deputy Probation Officer and has been employed with the Yolo County Probation Department for the last 13 years. Currently assigned to Mental Health Court, she has developed a diverse expertise, and perspectives to theories, applications and ethics related to crime and justice. She represents the Probation Department on various boards and intra-agency

groups. She received her Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice in 2018 from Sacramento State University. She received an Associate of Arts in Performance/Dance from Sacramento City College in 2005.

Preston Schaub, JD

Preston Schaub is a Deputy District Attorney for Yolo County, CA and represents that office in Yolo County's Collaborative Mental Health Court partnering with the Superior Court, Public Defender's Office, Health and Human Services Department, and Probation Department. Preston also prosecutes a variety of serious and violent felonies while acting as the West Sacramento Community Prosecutor.

Jonathan Raven, JD

Jonathan is the Chief Deputy at the Yolo County District Attorney's Office, an office with approximately 40 prosecutors. He received his law degree from Loyola Law School in Los Angeles in 1991 after graduating with honors from the University of California Santa Barbara in 1986. California Attorney General Bill Lockyer appointed Raven Director of the Office of Victims' Services (OVS) in September 2002. OVS advocates on behalf of crime victims, interfaces and works with law enforcement, and works on policy and legislative issues pertaining to crime victims' issues. In November 2010, Yolo County District Attorney Jeff Reisig appointed Raven to the Chief Deputy position, the number two position in the office. Raven manages a number of divisions. Due to his interest in mental illness and substance abuse issues, he is the District Attorney's representative on the Mental Health Court and Addiction Intervention Court teams.

In March, 2019, Raven to appointed by Yolo County Supervisor Jim Provenza to be a member of the Local Mental Health Board. Raven is an adjunct professor at UC Davis King Hall School of Law teaching trial advocacy since 2005. He is also an instructor at the Museum of Tolerance in Los Angeles where he trains officers on the POST-mandated racial profiling course. He teaches a segment on the "Criminalization of the Mentally Ill" for the regional Crisis Intervention Training (CIT). Raven enjoys spending time with his wife and three children. He coaches AYSO soccer, enjoys traveling and has run 13 marathons, including the NY Marathon.

Allison Zuvela, JD

Allison currently serves as the Chief Deputy Public Defender for the Yolo County Public Defender's office where she is in charge of training and operations. She is also a certified Criminal Law Specialist by the Board of Legalization of the State Bar of California. Prior to her employment with the Office in 2003, Allison served as a Deputy Public Defender in Tulare County after her graduation from the California Western School of Law in 1994. Outside of her attorney service, Allison has participated in leadership roles in the Yolo County Bar Association (as both Secretary and President) as well as the California Attorneys for Criminal Justice (where she is a member of the Board of Governors). In addition, Allison is a member of several legal organizations including the California Public Defenders Association, the National Association of Criminal Defense Attorneys, the American Council of Chief Defenders, and the Swartz/Levi Chapter of the American Inns of Court in Davis. Since 2012 Allison has also served as an attorney coach for River City High School's Mock Trial Team.

Learning Objectives

1. Describe the impetus for Mental Health Courts
2. Examine the successful components of Yolo County's Mental Health Court
3. Analyze how these components could be applied to your County