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Alameda County
Probation Project
Briefing

October 8, 2019

NO More Tears, A Response to Violence

California State Prison San
Quentin



Purpose Statement

No More Tears is a violence- and crime-prevention program started by incarcerated men and concerned citizens.

Workshop participants learn strategies of nonviolent conflict resolution, receive mentorship, and commit to serve others upon release.

We recognize the unique ability of former perpetrators to bring solutions to where they once contributed to the problem.

History

In November, 2002 and January 2003 two video forums were held at San Quentin State Prison (SQSP), focusing on the rise in violent crime in the Bay Area cities.

The first forum hosted by the Muslim community, focused on the increase of crime and violence in our local communities. The second, hosted by Centerforce, focused on developing and implementing solutions that would effectively decrease levels of crime and violence. Both forums were attended by community leaders, concerned citizens, survivors, perpetrators of violence, and members of san Quentin's general inmate population.

Plan

NMT developed and initiated an **action plan**. The plan was to **identify and correct factors in the individual's lives that lead to violent and criminal behavior**.



Strategy

NMT has expand its in-house program and build a volunteer base for community outreach.

Our sustainability strategy is to continue measures (evaluate) growth outcomes of this important project. e.g.

- Parolee support and resource networking
- Youth outreach
- Community education
- Housing support
- NMT members training/Certification

Programmatic 12-workshop series

- NMT employs a series of workshops addressing factors, and the individual's responsibility to change one's mindset and actions.
- Our workshops provided information and instruction on methods through which to develop new life skills and prepare for a constructive life after prison.

Programmatic 12-workshop Series

- Two of the workshops focus specifically on the cause and consequences of violent behavior, and explore remedies.
- Two workshops address the root of violence.
- Four of the workshops focus specifically on taking steps to become employable, including preparation one may need to take while incarcerated and steps to take upon release.
- The final workshops of this series focus on avoiding violence and conflict resolution in the workplace.

Programmatic 12-workshop Series

- Workshops are facilitated by trained incarcerated men and community volunteers
- Workshops are role play, didactic, inmate and community story-telling


Programmatic 12-workshop Series

- Workshops are available to ALL inmate population
- Sign-up is mandatory
- Commitment to complete 12-workshop series
- Completion rate is 85%
- Graduation ceremony is hosted



Restorative Justice Healing Circles

- Participants include community person who was impacted in some form of violence
- Incarcerated person is at some point was a predator but also a victim themselves
- A way of responding to conflict, misbehavior and wrongdoing that makes things as right as possible for all who were impacted.
- Creates future accountability suggestions and/or agreements that will prevent the same thing from happening again.



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Why we use restorative justice approach?


Provides ways to effectively address behavior issues.

Improves safety by preventing future harm.

Offers proven alternatives to negative consequences.

Offers a supportive environment that can improve learning.

Individuals feel empowered and more connected to their community.



Values and Principles of a Restorative Approach

- Equity of voice
- Authentic listening and sharing
- Inclusive decision making
- Doing things “with” one another and not “to” or “for”
- High expectations for behavior
- Sense of belonging, safety, and shared purpose
- Community building and sustaining
- Value for all members of the community

OUTCOMES

associated with NMT workshops and healing circles – July 2018

First Round:

- How long have you lived in Oakland and what neighborhood are you from?
 - 2 – W. Oakland
 - 4 – E. Oakland
 - 1 – Lake
- Avg. 16 years residency

Second round:

- How are you connected to your neighborhood?
 - 80% of participants – As a perpetrator of violence, as a hustler, as being a victim of violence

OUTCOMES

associated with NMT workshops and healing circles – July 2018

Third round:

- How do you define violence?
 - from fear
 - from being associated with violence in my family, community, peer association (3)
 - from lack of positive male role model (2)
 - from the need to hustle

Fourth round:

- How has violence impacted your life, e.g. how often, what type of violence, who was involved
 - resulted in harm to community, to family (2)
 - resulted to my freedom, separation from kids, my life
 - type was violence against someone else – murder, theft (5)
 - type of violence against a female (7)
 - types of violence assault in prison (5) “do what you have to do”

OUTCOMES

associated with NMT workshops and healing circles – July 2018

Fifth round:

- What is the main cause of violence?
lifestyle, upbringing
society...it comes way back from our time, we just learned it as a way to cope
I was abused (physical, sexual, emotional, domestic)

Round six:

- What needs to be done in the community to stop violence?
incarcerated men need to return home and stay home
music can be a big influence
carry positive messages from inside to outside
establish a united platform against violence

OUTCOMES

associated with NMT workshops and
healing circles – July 2018

Close (final thoughts):

- need to have more of these forums inside the prison, this is how No More Tears started
- i have two life sentences but that does not mean I cannot be a role model to youth behaviors
- closing rap by participant
- continue movement in the community
- have a reception for all men returning home

Overall Outcome

Renewed vigor to go back to prison-community forums.

Future forums will empower the incarcerated, victims, families, and stakeholders to make personal changes in their lives that allow them to transform their lives.

To understand the violence impact will allow individuals return to their communities to empower other victims, be positive roles models for change, and advocates for victims of violence and crime prevention.

Collaboration with other violence, victim service, faith-based, and community service providers

Change the culture of violence

Overall Outcome

Since 2017 to present 43 men have returned home and ZERO have returned

Returning citizens are consumed with occupations/volunteerism of giving back to high-risk youth and other underserved populations

Returning citizens provide a video taped dialogue aimed at depicting obstacles associated with returning home

Returning citizens have supported newly released individuals

Continue the NMT purpose in the community



Workforce Development



Moving Forward BSCC

- A platform to approach the violence
- Restorative Community approach
- Engage our youth in all facets



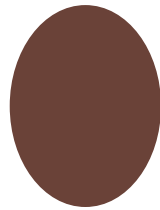
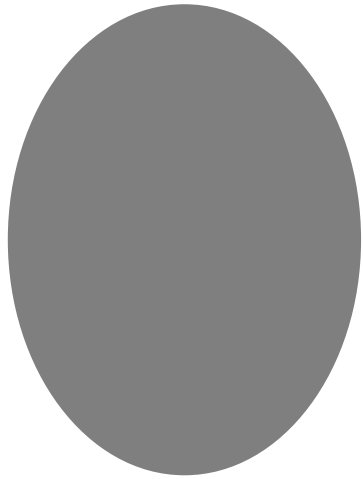
Moving Forward BSCC

- Pre-Released participants have committed toward behavioral changes
- Warm-handoff referral to BSCC community providers 90-days prior to release
- NMT community will act as secondary liaison to a successful community transition



Moving Forward BSCC

- Plan a 2-day Inside/Outside Summit
- Invite ALL stakeholders, e.g. BSCC providers, gang members, law enforcement, community activist, formerly incarcerated, faith-base
- Address the community needs – Day 1
- Go inside Day 2 (SQ) – address reentry needs from incarcerated perspective



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