

**Gender Responsive
Policy and Practice Assessment Project:
Women in the Criminal Justice System**

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Gender Matters

- Based upon the significant growth in women's and girls' involvement in the criminal justice system, it is important for policy makers and practitioners to acknowledge the appropriate role of gender in the criminal justice system.
- Gender matters significantly in shaping patterns of offending as well as the criminal justice system's response to criminal offending.
- Gender is also important in examining the differential effects of current policies and practices.

Women and Girls in the CJ System

Compared with men, women –

- Have more severe histories of sexual/physical abuse
- Have a higher prevalence of mental and physical health problems
- Have patterns of drug abuse that are more socially embedded – revolving around their interpersonal relationships
- Are typically primary caregivers for minor children
- Have limited education and employment histories
- Respond differently to treatment and correctional supervision

What Does Gender Responsive Mean?

Gender responsive means creating an environment through site selection, staff selection, program development, content and material that reflects an understanding of the realities of women's and girls' lives and addresses their challenges and strengths.

(Covington & Bloom, 2002)

Making the Case for Appropriate Policy & Practice for Criminal Justice Involved Women and Girls

Gender responsiveness is key to meeting the goals of the criminal justice system by:

- Acknowledging differences between men & women
- Targeting pathways to offending
- Developing policy & practice

Policies and Practices for Women and Girls in the CJ System

An effective system for females should be structured differently than for males (i.e., gender-responsive).

- Gender-responsive policies & practices target women's pathways to criminality by providing effective interventions.
- Gender-responsive policies & practices consider women's relationships (especially family) & their roles in the community when delivering both interventions & supervision.

Theoretical Perspectives

- Pathways Perspective
- Relational Theory & Female Development
- Trauma Theory
- Addiction Theory

Guiding Principles for a Gender-Responsive Treatment System

1. Gender
2. Environment
3. Relationships
4. Women's Services
5. Economic & Social Status
6. Community



(Bloom, Owen & Covington, 2003)

Trauma-Informed Services

Recognizes the importance of trauma in women's psychological development, avoid triggering trauma reactions, adjusts behaviors of staff to support coping capacity and allow management of trauma symptoms.

(Harris and Fallot, 2001)

A Culture Shift: Core Values of a Trauma-Informed System of Care

- Safety: Ensuring physical and emotional safety
- Trustworthiness: Maximizing trustworthiness, making tasks clear, and maintaining appropriate boundaries
- Choice: Prioritizing consumer choice and control
- Collaboration: Maximizing collaboration and sharing of power with consumers
- Empowerment: Prioritizing consumer empowerment and skill-building

Women-Centered Materials and Programs That Show Improved Outcomes

- Helping Women Recover (Covington)*
- Beyond Trauma (Covington)*
- Seeking Safety (Najavits)
- Female Offender Treatment and Employment Program (CA)
- Women Offender Case Management Model (NIC)
- Moving On (Van Dieten & MacKenna)

**Randomized studies in prison and drug court setting.*

Research

Treatment Components Associated with Better Outcomes for Women (Review of 38 studies):

- Child care
- Prenatal care
- Women-only admissions
- Supplemental services and workshops on women's focused topics
- Mental health services
- Intensive case management
- Comprehensive programming

Gender-Responsive Program Assessment

Program Elements:

1. Theoretical Foundation and Mission
2. Site and Facility
3. Administration and Staffing
4. Program Environment/Culture
5. Treatment Planning
6. Program Development
7. Program Assessment

Covington & Bloom, 2008
www.centerforgenderandjustice.org

Developing the Protocol for Assessing Gender Responsiveness in Criminal Justice Policy and Practice

National Institute of Corrections Cooperative Agreement
with
The Center for Gender and Justice

- Create a protocol that will assist agencies to conduct an internal assessment of their current policies and practices for working with justice-involved women.
- The protocol will be web-based and available to criminal justice agencies to use in their planning efforts.
- The goal is to improve the quality of programs and services for women and girls involved in the criminal justice system.

Agency Participation

- Pilot tests were conducted to guide the protocol development
- Participating agencies can include multiple points of criminal justice contact:
 - Jail
 - Prison
 - Probation/Parole
 - Community Services
- Participating agencies will benefit from guidance for this internal evaluation.

Phase 1. Pre-Assessment Preparation

- Determine agency motivation and readiness
- Select a Project Coordinator
 - Management level personnel
 - Organize team meetings and all aspects of the protocol
- Identify a Project Team (3-5 members)
 - Directors or Deputy Directors
 - Staff responsible for training and/or quality assurance
 - Staff with direct contact with clients

Phase 2: Preparing for GRPPA Facilitation

- Review background materials on females in criminal justice system
 - *Provided by the Center for Gender and Justice*
- Review GRPPA Manual
- Review Domains and Scoring Instrument
- Review information gathering procedures (who will do what?)

Phase 3: GRPPA Protocol Facilitation

Use the GRPPA instrument to guide information collection within the domains:

- ❖ Domain I: Agency Environment
- ❖ Domain II: Staffing
- ❖ Domain III: Assessment, Classification, and Case Management
- ❖ Domain IV: Services and Programs
- ❖ Domain V: Quality Assurance/Evaluation

Phase 4: Post Assessment Activities

Upon completion of Team Consensus Scoring:

- Select priority areas and create an action plan
- Determine next steps for your agency
- Present findings and action plan to agency leadership

3 Steps to GRPPA Scoring

1. Project Team members determine if the item is applicable to the agency. If not applicable, NA will be recorded.
2. If the item is applicable, determine if the item is present. If it is not present, this results in a score of "0".
3. If the item is applicable and present, determine the quality of the item implementation. This will result in a score of 1, 2 or 3. Half points (.5) may also be applicable. (3 will be highest quality)

Thank You!

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NICIC.gov

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