

BACK ON TRACK

LOS ANGELES



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BACK ON TRACK

LOS ANGELES



KAMALA D. HARRIS - ATTORNEY GENERAL
CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

CALIFORNIA'S PUBLIC SAFETY REALIGNMENT ACT

Attorney General Kamala D. Harris recognized that addressing unacceptable prison conditions alone, while an important achievement, would do little to address the more intractable problem of recidivism.

“We have to reject the notion that you are either tough on crime or soft on crime. We need to be smart on crime. ”



THE OPPORTUNITY FOR CRIMINAL JUSTICE CHANGE

Over the past few decades, the United States has experienced an enormous increase in the number of persons incarcerated in county jail and state prison. As a result of the rising crime rates in the 1960s and 1970s, criminal justice policy adopted a “tough on crime” approach. Incarceration rates peaked in 2008, when more than 1 in 100 adults in the United States were in prison or jail.¹ From 1982 to 2000, California’s state prison population increased 500%. To accommodate this population growth, the state built 23 new prisons.²

In 2011, the California Legislature passed the Public Safety Realignment Act (Assembly Bill 109) - (“Realignment”). This legislation was a direct response to the U.S. Supreme Court’s decision in *Brown v. Plata*, 563 U.S. 493 (2011), which effectively changed the criminal justice landscape in California. The Supreme Court, finding the State’s prisons overcrowded, ordered California to comply with constitutional standards by reducing its prison population by 25% within two years.³ Realignment was a historic paradigm shift in California’s criminal justice system. Under Realignment, significant criminal justice oversight and responsibility for low-level offenses were transferred from the State’s prison system to the

State’s 58 county jail systems. The legislation mandates that felony offenders who have never been convicted of a “serious” or “violent” crime, or an aggravated white collar crime, and are not sex offenders, now serve their sentences in county jail rather than state prison. In addition, most offenders released from state prison are subject to locally monitored “post-release supervision” rather than state parole. With few exceptions, state parolees who violate a condition of release serve their sentences in county jail.

This significant change in offender custodial placement brought relief to state prisons by easing the size of their populations, but overcrowded conditions represented only a part of the problem in criminal justice. For years, California has had one of the highest rates of recidivism in the nation. According to the California Department of Corrections 2011 report, which defines recidivism as a return to criminal activity after a conviction, sixty-one percent (61%)⁴ of offenders who serve time in state prison will return to custody within three years of release. Attorney General Harris recognized that addressing unacceptable prison conditions alone, while an important achievement, would do little to address the more intractable problem of recidivism.

ATTORNEY GENERAL KAMALA D. HARRIS

In October 2013, Attorney General Harris announced the Division of Recidivism Reduction and Re-Entry (DR3), an initiative designed to curb recidivism in the state. Under Attorney General Harris' leadership, the California Department of Justice has worked collaboratively with law enforcement leaders and community stakeholders across the state to create and implement best practices and innovative anti-recidivism measures and initiatives. An initiative already receiving notable recognition is "Back on Track – Los Angeles" (BOT-LA), a bold, visionary, anti-recidivism reentry pilot program launched in March 2015 (see Appendix A). In an unprecedented reentry partnership, Attorney General Harris joined with the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department (LASD) and the Los Angeles County Probation Department (LA Probation) to develop and implement a comprehensive in- and out-of-custody reentry model. State and local agencies joined as value-added partners collaborating in the design and implementation of the program. The BOT-LA pilot aims to offer a comprehensive blueprint to effectively reduce recidivism. Although local and state correctional facilities vary in size and population, the BOT-LA model is designed to be easily replicable and of value to any correctional organization.

"Back on Track – Los Angeles was borne out of a belief that for far too long when we talk about criminal justice policy, we have offered a false choice. The false choice being we are either soft on crime or tough on crime, instead of asking are we smart on crime? With Back on Track, we are doing the work of being smart in addressing the wholeness of the individual who committed the offense, while also achieving what we all want which is public safety.

Reducing recidivism is key to a smart-on-crime approach to criminal justice. Instead of only reacting to crime, we must also focus on prevention to shut the revolving door of the criminal justice system. Back on Track – LA will hold offenders accountable to their communities, their families and themselves. This initiative will give participants the skills to become contributing and law-abiding members of society, which enhances public safety."

– Attorney General Kamala D. Harris

LAUNCHES HER VISION

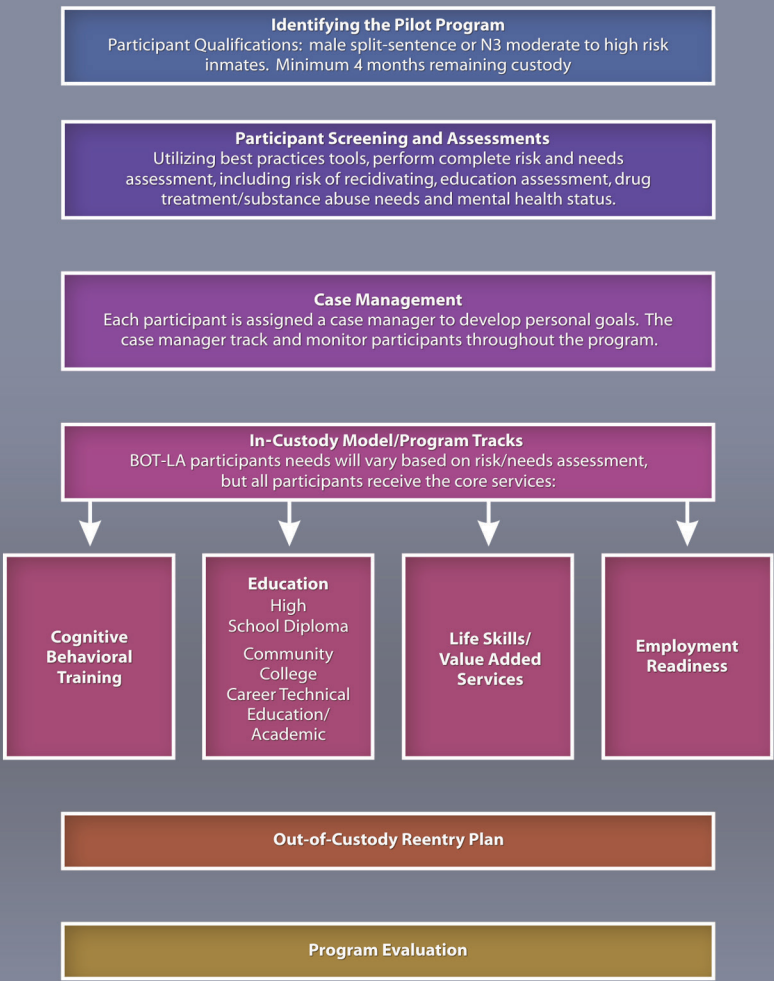


BOT-LA is based on the same principles that guided Attorney General Harris' successful Back on Track – San Francisco (BOT-SF) which she created and instituted as District Attorney of San Francisco. BOT-SF was a comprehensive reentry initiative for first-time adult offenders who committed a low-level, non-violent drug offense. This initiative was, first and foremost, about holding participants accountable for their transgressions. In exchange, participants received needed reentry services and employment opportunities that, in turn, significantly reduced their likelihood to recidivate. The BOT-SF model was recognized as a national model by the National District Attorneys Association and the U.S. Department of Justice.

Successfully executed, reentry programs in county jails have the power to address the unexpected increases in local incarceration, while enhancing public safety. Leveraging the knowledge of researchers working in criminal justice over the past two decades, BOT-LA has created an environment conducive to offender behavioral change and ultimately to improving the prospects for the intended beneficiaries of reform.

DEVELOPING A REENTRY MODEL

- **Why Los Angeles?**
- **Program Scope**
- **Identifying the Pilot Population**
- **Participant Screening and Assessments**
- **Case Management**
- **The In-Custody Model/Program Tracks**
- **The Out-of-Custody Reentry Plan**
- **Program Evaluation**



FROM CONCEPTUAL TO CONCRETE

Before formalizing a written plan, we needed to gain a full understanding of the long-standing challenge of reintegrating an offender into the community. We consulted the best scholars in the field to help answer the toughest questions: (1) Why do offenders continue to reoffend; and (2) Why, after multiple terms in prisons and/or jails, separated from families and communities, would a formerly incarcerated offender find him or herself back in custody?

To identify best practices for reducing recidivism, we reviewed the most current and credible criminal justice literature, studied successful initiatives in other states, analyzed reliable offender data, interviewed prominent criminologists, and met with state and local law enforcement and public safety agencies. The BOT-LA model drew heavily from what the scientific literature and academic practitioners found to be effective.

Confident in the conceptual framework and the vision for a reentry pilot program, the next step was to design the operational model. We brought together key stakeholders and designed a communication prototype (Appendix B) that allowed the stakeholders to address operational and policy barriers and ensure that each program component was effectively and collaboratively integrated into a model. These stakeholders ranged from law enforcement, probation, child support, to health

care. Over a three-month period a comprehensive reentry model was designed.

Each stakeholder worked diligently to translate the model design into a set of concrete activities that would give form to the program. Monthly workgroup meetings were held to address stakeholder barriers and present solutions that were incorporated into the model. For the first year, bi-weekly conference calls were held with stakeholder decision-makers to address challenges and program gaps. Quarterly briefings were scheduled for all stakeholders to review the application of the model and ensure program fidelity.

The primary goal of the BOT-LA model is to deliver a reentry program to offenders utilizing a comprehensive “inside-outside” continuum of services approach. BOT-LA’s unique approach begins in-custody during the remaining seven months of an offender’s sentence and continues for one year following the offender’s transition into the community (regardless of whether or not the offender is released on supervision). By providing a broad set of educational opportunities, evidence-based cognitive behavior interventions, and reentry services to incarcerated men, this program helps offenders locate employment and housing, and reunite with their families—all designed to build new, crime-free lives.

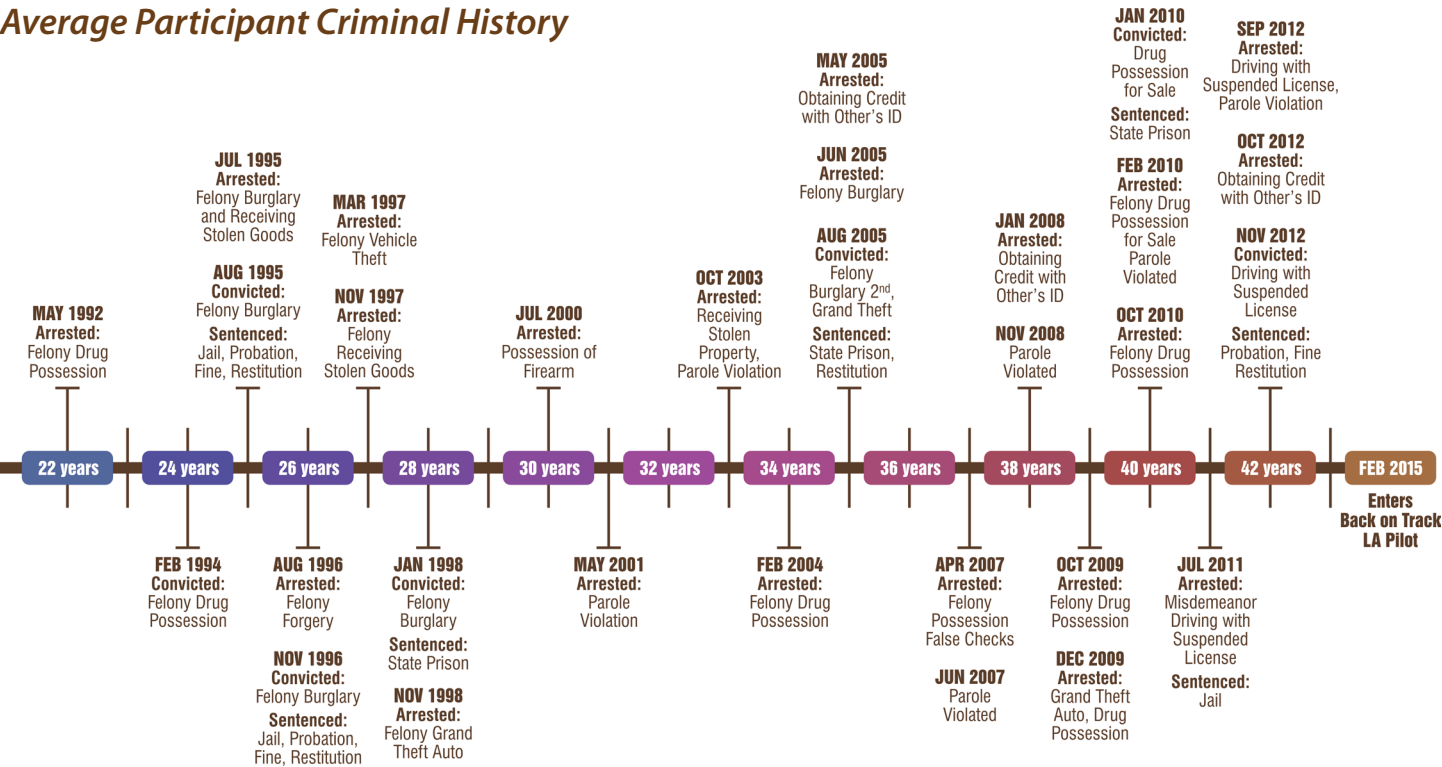
Why Los Angeles?

Los Angeles County is California’s most populous county, and historically, the top feeder into the state’s prison system. As a result of Realignment, inmates who would have otherwise served their sentences in state prison are currently serving their sentences in county jail. As of December 2012, Los Angeles County retained 8,515 offenders who formerly would have been sentenced to state prison, and assumed

nearly 11,500 state prison parolees. As a result, LASD run jails experienced a 25% increase in their jail population, growing from 15,463 inmates on September 30 2011, to over 19,600 in March 2014.⁴ These statistics highlight Los Angeles County’s urgent need for effective reentry programs in the eyes of Attorney General Harris. It underscored why Los Angeles

was the ideal environment to launch a reentry pilot. Its size, diverse population, multiple facilities, wide geographic area and, most important, the positive response from its law enforcement and community leaders, provided an opportunity to pilot an intervention focusing on academic and vocational training, as well as offender behavioral change.

Average Participant Criminal History



Program Scope

“This unique program offers hope to those who too often cycle in and out of our jails and will serve as a model for national thinking around these important issues.”

– Los Angeles County Sheriff, Jim McDonnell

Launched on March 9, 2015, BOT-LA is a two-year pilot program. The program consists of in- and out-of-custody components. While in LASD custody, offenders, referred to as “participants,” receive extensive programming focused on providing intensive case management, evidence-based cognitive behavior interventions, education, life skills, employment readiness, and reentry assistance. Upon release, participants enter a one-year “transitional safety net” phase where they receive continued case management and a continuum of care services. New participants, in turn, enter the program and begin the in-custody component of the program. The BOT-LA pilot is expected to provide service to over 150 participants within two years.

One notable feature of the LASD Realignment population is that nearly all

of the participants exit custody without being subject to any formal supervision or probation conditions. This means that BOT-LA participants’ continued involvement in the program after their release, for the most part, is purely voluntary. Prior to a change in state law (Assembly Bill 1468) which became effective in January 2015, the courts in Los Angeles County imposed in a majority of criminal cases “straight time” sentences rather than “split-sentences.” Under Realignment, the court may impose a range of sentences, including; (1) a “split sentence,” which means that a portion of an offender’s sentence is served in custody, with a concluding portion served on mandatory supervision; or (2) a “straight time sentence,” which means an offender serves all of his/her sentence in jail, with no probationary or mandatory supervision period to follow.

The fact that most BOT-LA participants are released without supervision means that participants must be motivated to take advantage of the out-of-custody continuum of care services designed to address barriers and ease the strain of reentering into their communities.

The straight time sentencing scheme poses certain challenges for BOT-LA. Without a mandatory period of supervision following release, it is easy for participants to refuse continuing services. However,

participants who focus solely on their release, without embracing continued supportive services, frequently fail in their attempt to successfully reintegrate into the community. It is easy to underestimate the difficulty of transitioning from a highly controlled jail environment to one with maximum freedom of choice. Unless offenders are highly motivated to change, well-prepared to find employment and/or continue their education, and have the support of positive influencers, many are easily overwhelmed and return to the familiar environments of old neighborhoods, criminal associates, and/or criminal activity.

Identifying the Pilot Population

Considerable thought was given to identifying those offenders who would benefit most from the BOT-LA reentry model. Prior to selecting the first pilot population and the first jurisdiction, certain critical issues were resolved by asking the following questions: (1) Which California county has Realignment produced the greatest impact and therefore created the greatest need; (2) As Realignment mandates are executed, how long will it take before a local jurisdiction experiences a significantly increased workload in offender custodial responsibility; (3) What

amount of in-custody programming time will be required to adequately address offender risks and needs; and (4) What lessons could be learned from the pilot, both in terms of population and location that would assist other California counties with reentry programming?

Guided by our research findings, the BOT-LA pilot program initially focused on 85 male participants housed in the Los Angeles County Peter J. Pitchess Detention Center (Pitchess) in a single barrack-like setting. The participants had been sentenced under California Penal Code Section 1170(h) and all met the non-violent, non-serious, non-sexual offense criteria under Realignment. Program participants range in age between 18 to 55 and have at least four months remaining on their individual sentences. Using recognized assessment tools, all participants have been classified as medium-to-high risk to recidivate. As exemplified by a typical BOT-LA participant profile, the majority of the participants have extensive criminal histories, as well as suffer from significant substance abuse.

Currently, the average age of a BOT-LA participant is 37 years old, with 68% of the participants between 25 to 44 years of age. Over 46% are Hispanic/Latino, 21% are Black, and 25% are non-Latino

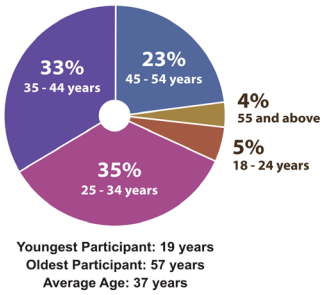
Whites. The majority of the participants identify themselves as fathers (67%). Most participants do not have a high school diploma or GED (72%). On average participants read at an eighth grade level and perform math at a sixth grade level. In addition, the participants average 20 individual arrests primarily for drug related crimes. (See Appendix C.)

Participant Screening and Assessments

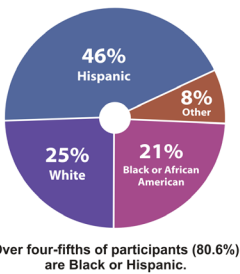
The high rates of recidivism, public safety implications, and the costs of incarceration have driven policymakers and practitioners across the country to identify those offenders in custody who pose a risk to the community and to allocate resources to break the cycle of crime.

Doing so means using validated risk and needs assessment tools to identify individuals with a high risk to reoffend and to develop appropriate interventions to change criminal behavior. In the past 20 years, the Risk-Need-Responsivity (RNR) model has become the most widely used and empirically supported model for offender intervention and rehabilitation. Developed in the early 1990s by Andrews, Bonta, and Hoge, the RNR model has sought to answer the question “what works for whom” in offender rehabilitation? This

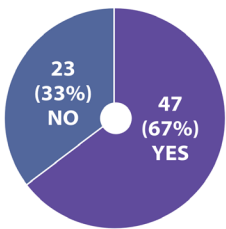
Age Distribution



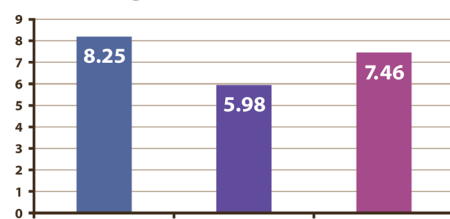
Ethnic Composition



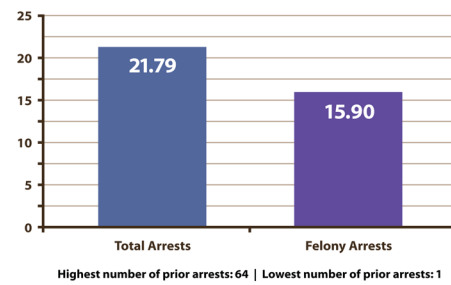
Number Of Men Who Are Fathers



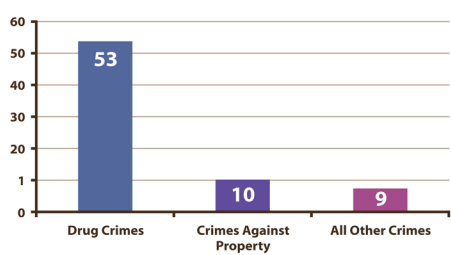
Average Academic Grade Level



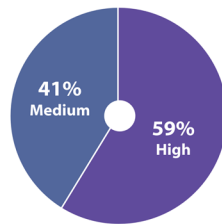
Average Number of Prior Arrests



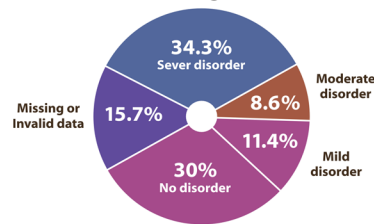
Most Recent Offense Category



COMPAS Recidivism Risk Score



TCU Drug Score



model suggests: (1) program outcomes are maximized by focusing on moderate-to-high risk to recidivate offenders; (2) programs should focus on the participants’ dynamic risk factors (those that can be changed), rather than the stable risk factors (those that cannot be changed, such as age and prior convictions); and (3) programs maximize the impact of the intervention when they are evidence-based and tailored to an individual’s learning style, motivation to change, abilities and strengths.

In order to assess an individual’s level of risk and criminogenic needs (characteristic or traits directly related to reoffending), practitioners implement empirically validated actuarial risk-need assessment tools. These tools are increasingly used for offender rehabilitation both in- and out-of-custody, and typically consist of a series of questions that guide an in-person interview with an offender. These questions uncover attitudes and behaviors that research has shown relate to criminal reoffending. These interviews are supplemented by criminal history information, including the age at first arrest and prior incarcerations.

Risk and need assessment tools cannot predict an individual’s behavior with absolute certainty; some low-

risk individuals will reoffend and some high-risk individuals will refrain from crime. However, a large body of research has shown that validated, actuarial assessments consistently and substantially outperform clinical judgments the likelihood of reoffending. These tools serve as a guide for making decisions, but should not supplant professional judgment and discretion, and must be validated on the populations on whom they are being administered.

Actuarial Assessment Tools

The BOT-LA program follows the evidence-based RNR framework. Upon intake and prior to admittance, the validated risk and needs assessment tools are used to identify medium-to-high risk to recidivate participants and the offenders’ criminogenic needs that must be addressed. The same assessments are also administered just prior to release from custody. The following are the specific assessment tools used.

Correctional Offender Management Profiling for Alternative Sanctions (COMPAS) is a validated risk-needs tool used to assess individuals’ risk to recidivate and common criminogenic needs.

Test of Adult and Basic Education (TABE) assesses competency levels, college

readiness, and measures progress among native English-speaking adult learners with limited literacy skills.

Texas Christian University (TCU) Client Evaluation of Self & Treatment (CEST) measures treatment motivation, engagement, as well as social and psychological changes during the course of the program. Examples of 12 assessment subscales are:

- Desire to Help
- Treatment Readiness
- Treatment Needs
- Pressure for Treatment
- Self Esteem
- Depression
- Anxiety
- Decision Making
- Hostility
- Risk Taking
- Treatment Participation
- Treatment Satisfaction

TCU Criminal Thinking Scales (CTS) assesses cognitive functioning related to criminal offending. Examples of assessment subscales are:

- Entitlement
- Justification
- Power Orientation
- Cold Heartedness
- Criminal Rationalization
- Personal Irresponsibility

TCU Drug Screen V assesses alcohol and drug dependency and abuse.

The risk and needs assessment is completed prior to program entry, as it is one of the major criterion used to screen participants’ eligibility for programming. Other assessments are administered as close to program entry as possible. A 30-day window is allocated to achieve the TCU and TABE assessment completion. Additionally, these assessments are administered again within 30 days of release. With the exception of TABE, these assessments are only administered at program entry and program exit. The TABE is administered every 12 weeks, as required by the educational service provider.

To ensure the validity of the assessments, BOT-LA requires that those administering the assessments are trained in their proper usage and the implementation of the prescribed assessment tool. These tools are used for service and treatment planning and for measuring outcomes.

Case Management

Case management is an essential and valuable feature of the BOT-LA model. Under the leadership of Five Keys Charter School, highly trained and experienced case managers deliver BOT-

LA case management services through an intensive one-on-one approach with each participant. Case managers are responsible for coordinating and facilitating each participant’s engagement in the program. They do so by establishing rapport and trust, a critical issue for participants. Case managers ensure that participants remain actively engaged in the process, hold them accountable to their stated goals, and at the same time encourage their retention in the program and commitment to behavioral change.

Because the case managers’ role calls for expertise in a range of areas including counseling techniques, such as active listening and motivational interviewing strategies, the BOT-LA program enlisted case managers with a strong background in offender management and therapeutic counseling.

Case managers function across a wide area of responsibilities. They conduct bi-weekly in-person check-ins with participants; coordinate and consult with the academic and career technical education (CTE) instructors; oversee and monitor educational courses; facilitate group meetings on topics related to reintegration; and assist in developing an individualized reentry plan that addresses, among other things, the participants’

housing needs, child support obligations, education and employment desires, and the process for acquiring a California identification card and health insurance upon release.

Experience has shown that effective case managers are the force that generates enthusiasm for the program and enables participants to sustain their strong internal motivation.

The In-Custody Model/ Program Tracks

As described earlier, the BOT-LA pilot model consists of in- and out-of-custody components designed to equip participants with the tools and critical reentry services needed for a seamless and successful transition into their respective communities.

In addition to case management, the in-custody component consists of four program tracks that include evidence-based cognitive behavior interventions, education (academic and CTE), life skills and employment readiness.

BOT-LA participants’ needs will vary based on their individual risk/needs assessment and their Individual Case Management Plan (ICMP). However, all participants receive the following core services.

Cognitive Behavioral Training

In the past twenty years, researchers have identified several barriers that derail offenders after they exit the custodial setting. Distorted thinking, self-justification, failure to accept accountability, and the misinterpretation of social cues predispose an offender to risky and dangerous conduct. The result of this maladaptive behavior is offenders who cycle in- and out-of-custody, often viewing themselves as victims rather than as responsible actors. One distinct behavioral change intervention has received wide acclaim in addressing this self-destructive pattern.

Cognitive Behavioral Training (CBT) is a well-established, structured form of intervention that draws from both cognitive and behavioral theories of human behavior. It rests on the theory that individual behavioral characteristics are, to a large degree, learned rather than inherent. Based on a well-researched and validated theory, this short-term intervention helps offenders change pro-criminal, destructive thoughts, beliefs and values that underlie criminal thinking. In turn, this helps individuals develop problem-solving skills.



CBT interventions concentrate on developing: (1) the necessary cognitive skills to recognize distorted, risky, or deficient thinking patterns; and (2) the social skills to effectively handle external events without engaging in criminal behavior. Therefore, CBT affords individuals the opportunity to utilize their newly developed cognitive skills to re-analyze problematic thoughts and arrive at rational thoughts through role playing and behavioral rehearsal.

Persuaded by the definitive research findings supporting the CBT approach, BOT-LA engaged the services of leading

scholar and practitioner Dr. Ed Latessa and his team from the University of Cincinnati and Corrections Institute (UCCI). UCCI oversees the design, training and implementation of the BOT-LA pilot cognitive behavior program. UCCI's staff developed a four-phased implementation plan focused on: (1) program design; (2) training; (3) implementation/coaching; and (4) continuous quality improvement.

During the design phase, a multidisciplinary implementation team and subcommittees were assembled. The subcommittees include: (1) Assessment

and Case Management; (2) Program and Program Schedule; (3) Behavior Management System; and (4) Training and Continuous Quality Assurance. Each subcommittee was assigned deliverables required for successful program development and implementation. Representatives from CA DOJ, LASD, Probation, Five Keys Charter School, and community college partners participated in each of the four implementation and design subcommittees.

Staff members who are in a position to meaningfully interact with participants

in the course of the program are critical to successful offender behavioral change. Thus, Dr. Latessa began the BOT-LA program implementation by first training LASD deputies and correctional officers, case managers, probation coaches, and others involved with the program in the principles of effective interventions and core correctional practices. Understanding the principles and methods for changing offender behavior is crucial because participants' services are delivered through the direct actions, knowledge, skills, and abilities of those same correctional workers. The specialized training stresses relationship-building skills, effective reinforcement strategies, pro-social modeling, and behavior management.

CBT is designed specifically for medium-to-high risk to recidivate offenders and encompasses four cognitive behavioral training components, which are taught by the case managers.

"Thinking for a Change" is a cognitive-behavioral approach to self-change, improved problem-solving and enhanced social skills, and is based on the simple principle that thinking (internal behavior) controls actions (external behavior).

Aggression Replacement Training (ART) is an extended cognitive behavior

intervention program to help improve social skill competence and moral reasoning, better manage anger and reduce aggressive behavior.

Substance Abuse Intervention is designed for individuals that are moderate-to-high risk in the area of substance abuse. The training relies on a cognitive behavioral approach that teaches participants strategies for avoiding substance abuse. The program places heavy emphasis on skill-building activities to assist with cognitive, social, emotional, and coping skill development. Components of the program include motivational enhancement, cognitive restructuring, emotional regulation, social skills, problem solving, and relapse prevention.

Effective Practices in Community Supervision for Influencers (EPICS-I) is a method taught to those who have a positive connection and influence with the offender. Probation coaches instruct a one-day course that provides influencers with an understanding of the challenges an offender faces and the tools/skills to effectively interact with the offender upon his release. Most important, it teaches close family members how to react to the offender in stressful situations.

"... Participants have reported improved interactions with their wives, children, custody staff, and dorm mates as a result of applying the cognitive behavioral skills ..."

*– Shelley M.
Five Keys Charter School
In-Custody Case Manager*

"Several of the participants openly shared how the course material has aided them in their personal interactions with family and friends ..."

*– Renee T.H.
Five Keys Charter School
In-Custody Case Manager*

"Various participants have expressed they have seen changes in their own social interactions with others and in their decision making."

*– Elsa E.
Five Keys Charter School
In-Custody Case Manager*



Cognitive restructuring is analogous to an iceberg. What is above the surface of the water is what you can see. However, the danger of the iceberg lies beneath the surface. Cutting off the top will not significantly alter the mass of the iceberg. Likewise, unless one deals with thinking – the internal behaviors that are not seen – it will be difficult to change the actions (external behaviors) that can be seen.



Influencers can be family members, friends, clergy, etc. Virtually anyone can function as an influencer if they have a solid, positive, and vested interest in helping the offender turn his life around.

The type of support an influencer can provide includes: (1) modeling good behavior; (2) assisting with decision-making; (3) identifying risky behavior; and (4) helping a participant manage the stresses of daily life.

Education

There has long been a connection between education and recidivism. Empirical evidence shows that the less education an offender has attained, the more likely he/she is to recidivate.⁶ Inmate access to educational opportunities while

in-custody has been shown to have a positive impact on recidivism reduction. A meta-analysis by the RAND Corporation found that participation in educational offerings while in custody— including high school and college courses and career technical training— “reduces an individual’s likelihood of recidivating by 43 percent.”⁷ Furthermore, “individuals who participated in college programs while incarcerated had 51 percent lower odds of recidivating than those who did not. Correctional education programs that connect students with the outside community including courses taught by college instructors and programs that include post-release components— were especially effective in reducing recidivism.”⁸

“Providing high quality education for those who are incarcerated and formerly incarcerated provides an opportunity for them to take full responsibility for themselves, their families, and their communities. This is an issue of community renewal.”

– *Douglas Wood,*
Ford Foundation

“Education is a key indicator of whether an individual will end up in our correctional system... 82% of prisoners in America are high school drop-outs and less than 94% of high school drop-outs ever go to college . . . so the people in this program, you are really lucky because you have great community colleges standing behind you.”

– *Dr. Dianne Van Hook,*
Chancellor,
College of the Canyons

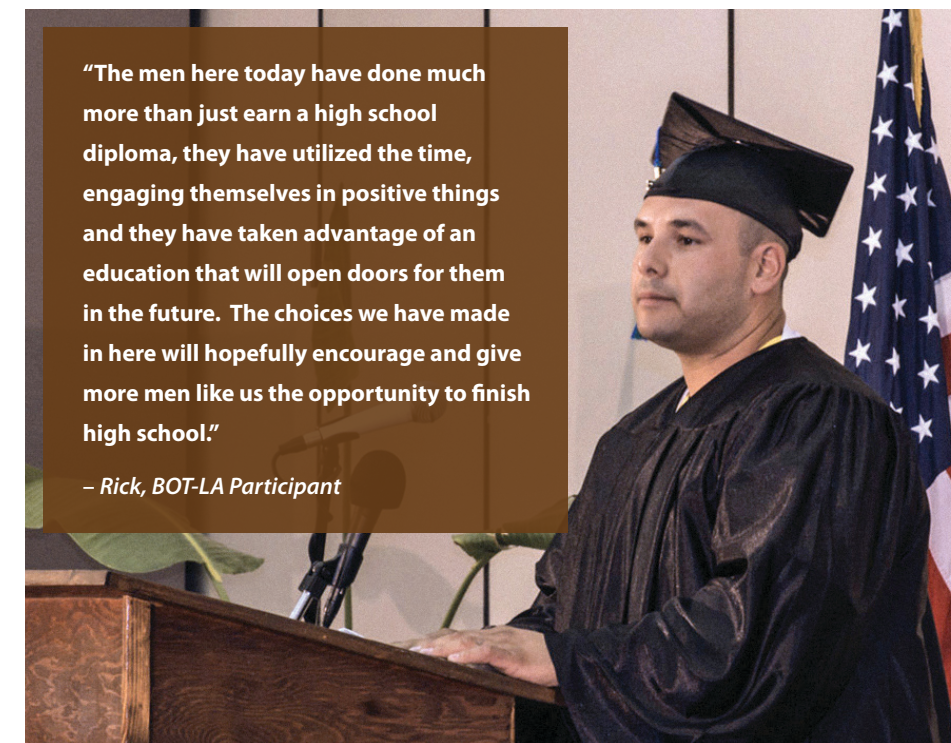
BOT-LA partnered with Five Keys Charter School, College of the Canyons, Los Angeles Trade Technical College, and Los Angeles Mission College to offer participants high school, college, and CTE opportunities. BOT-LA case managers work collaboratively with the education partners to help participants develop a customized education plan, register for classes, and apply for financial aid opportunities.

Remedial courses are offered to those participants in need of a high school diploma. As part of the program, participants who are unable to complete their high school studies while in-custody are permitted to complete their studies at an out-of-custody Five Keys location in Los Angeles County. College and CTE courses are offered to those participants that have obtained a high school diploma (or its equivalent). Offered courses have included college English, Math, Computer Applications & Office Technologies, Personal Development and Employability Skills, career development workshops, welding, construction and painting. As part of the program, academic credits earned while in-custody can be transferred to any Los Angeles County community college. Participants enrolled in CTE courses may also earn certification in welding, construction and/or painting.

Educational programming in custody promotes successful reentry in two specific areas. First, participants who have been out of the education system for some time are re-acquainted with the demands of school and are taught proper study habits and the discipline needed to succeed. Second, confidence is instilled in those interested in pursuing higher education post-release.

BOT-LA staff witness first-hand the sense of accomplishment participants experience upon receiving their high

school diploma, CTE certification and/or the completion of college courses. In just over 12 months of the program’s operation, 34 participants have received their high school diploma, 28% of participants are currently enrolled in post-secondary education courses, and nearly 40% of participants are currently enrolled in CTE courses. Because of the offered education tracks, many who once believed that obtaining an education was out of their reach are motivated toward self improvement through higher learning.



“The men here today have done much more than just earn a high school diploma, they have utilized the time, engaging themselves in positive things and they have taken advantage of an education that will open doors for them in the future. The choices we have made in here will hopefully encourage and give more men like us the opportunity to finish high school.”

– *Rick, BOT-LA Participant*

Life Skills/ Value Added Services

Deploying ordinary, everyday skills are essential to managing a better quality of life. Participants are enrolled in a 12-week life skills program that consists of five modules: (1) self-esteem, goal setting and planning; (2) anger management; (3) employment skills; (4) wellness and nutrition; and (5) a parenting module for those participants with children.

Many participants express a desire to support their children. To respond to this interest, Los Angeles County Child Support Services (CSS) initiates contact with the participant during the period of incarceration, with the intent of establishing an ongoing parent/child relationship, encouraging responsible parenting and calculating the child support obligation owed under the current guidelines. CSS educates participants on their support obligation and payment schedules and provides timely information about requirements. Their services include: (1) establishing parentage; (2) identifying current child support orders; (3) compiling compliance history and arrears balances; (4) assistance with modifying court orders; and (5) modifying and enforcing an order for health coverage. If no court order has been filed, CSS will file a case with the court to obtain a judgment where needed.

Because of the high rate of mobility among California residents, CSS coordinates its efforts with the California Department of Child Support Services and with counties throughout California to ensure that all child support obligations are met.

During the planning phase of the pilot, the BOT-LA team identified a significant barrier to successful reentry – a widespread lack of vital documents and credentials. Most participants do not possess a current identification card, social security or health card, birth certificate or academic transcript. Upon

reentry, participants find themselves unable to maneuver within the complex bureaucracies necessary to apply for various documents. After navigating the systems, it is not unusual to wait months to obtain a response, resulting in lost opportunities in securing housing, obtaining employment or enrolling in school.

BOT- LA engaged key stakeholders, as “value-added” partners, to help streamline this cumbersome process. These value-added partners include the California Department of Motor Vehicles, the United States Social Security Administration, and the California Department of Health Services.



These key partners, including LA Probation and LASD, formed a workgroup to identify and address current policy and process barriers. The workgroup developed a process to ensure each participant leaves custody with all vital documents in-hand.

As part of the BOT-LA Life Skills program, the participants work with their case managers to identify the critical documents and credentials needed prior to release. Probation coaches act as the point of contact and work with the various agency representatives to gather the documents. Upon release, each participant is provided with a “briefcase” filled with the critical documents needed to begin a successful reentry.

Employment Readiness

Training participants for tomorrow’s economy is critical both as a pathway to successful reentry, and as a tool to reducing recidivism. This is confirmed by former offenders who identify employment problems as one of the most decisive factors in their post-release success. However, even with the right skills and training, significant barriers still exist for those with criminal records. Finding meaningful, living-wage work requires more than directing a job seeker to a job opening. Hard-to-employ adults must be matched with career counseling services that improve job readiness and a receptive job market willing to give an ex-offender an opportunity.

In response to these barriers BOT-LA administers assessments that help identify participants’ employment interest. In addition, the program provides out-of-custody career services during the continuum of care phase, specifically tailored to each offender’s needs and interests. Though these approaches contribute to a successful search, we recognized that these efforts alone would fail to generate the jobs the participants seek.

To increase an offender’s employment opportunities we sought the partnership of a community advocate, one with insight into the complex LA employment environment, and one seen as an ally of business, who understood the realities of the job market. We stepped outside the typical offender-related channels and approached the most respected and influential business federation leader - the Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce (the “Chamber”). No organization is better positioned to encourage business and industry decision makers to expand job opportunities for former offenders. To our good fortune, the Chamber responded with its full support, helping us establish the BOT-LA Employment Advisory Board (the “Board”).

The Board represents the most influential community leaders and concentrates its efforts on: (1) removing employment barriers; (2) developing relationships and partnerships with public and private businesses; and (3) creating transitional employment which lead to sustainable career pathways. If we are to prepare participants to be viable employment candidates, we must equip them with competencies that build a solid resume. The Board offers unique insights, including knowledge of industry standards, employer’s perspectives, and LA County’s employment environment. Taking a deliberate approach to the in-custody programming, the Board guides us in strengthening and aligning our educational skill-building components to meet real-world job market demands.

The Out-of-Custody Reentry Plan

The planned transition from the in-custody phase to the out-of-custody phase is critical to an offender’s successful reentry. Despite pre-planning efforts, the transition from the structured environment of the jail setting to the unstructured environment outside the gates present new challenges. Without proper preparation and support, this

gap period can derail even those with the best of intentions. Most offenders exiting jail or prison are often consumed with the stresses of securing housing and employment, enrolling in public social services, and obtaining critical documents, all while working to reestablish familial ties.

Therefore, advance preparation is essential to ensuring a newly released individual’s stability. Aiming for a seamless reintegration, BOT-LA provides comprehensive individualized services utilizing a Reentry Collaborative Team (RCT). The RCT is comprised of representatives from LASD, LA County Probation, Five Keys Charter School, the Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce, and the community based organization Shields for Families. Charged with managing the out-of-custody phase, the RCT meets with each participant prior to his release to chart the course of his complex reentry needs.

In the BOT-LA model, probation officers who typically supervise and monitor probationers, step out of their traditional role and serve as “coaches” to participants during the out-of-custody phase. These CBT trained officers, focused on an incentive-based rather than a sanction-based approach, help participants navigate the period of reentry

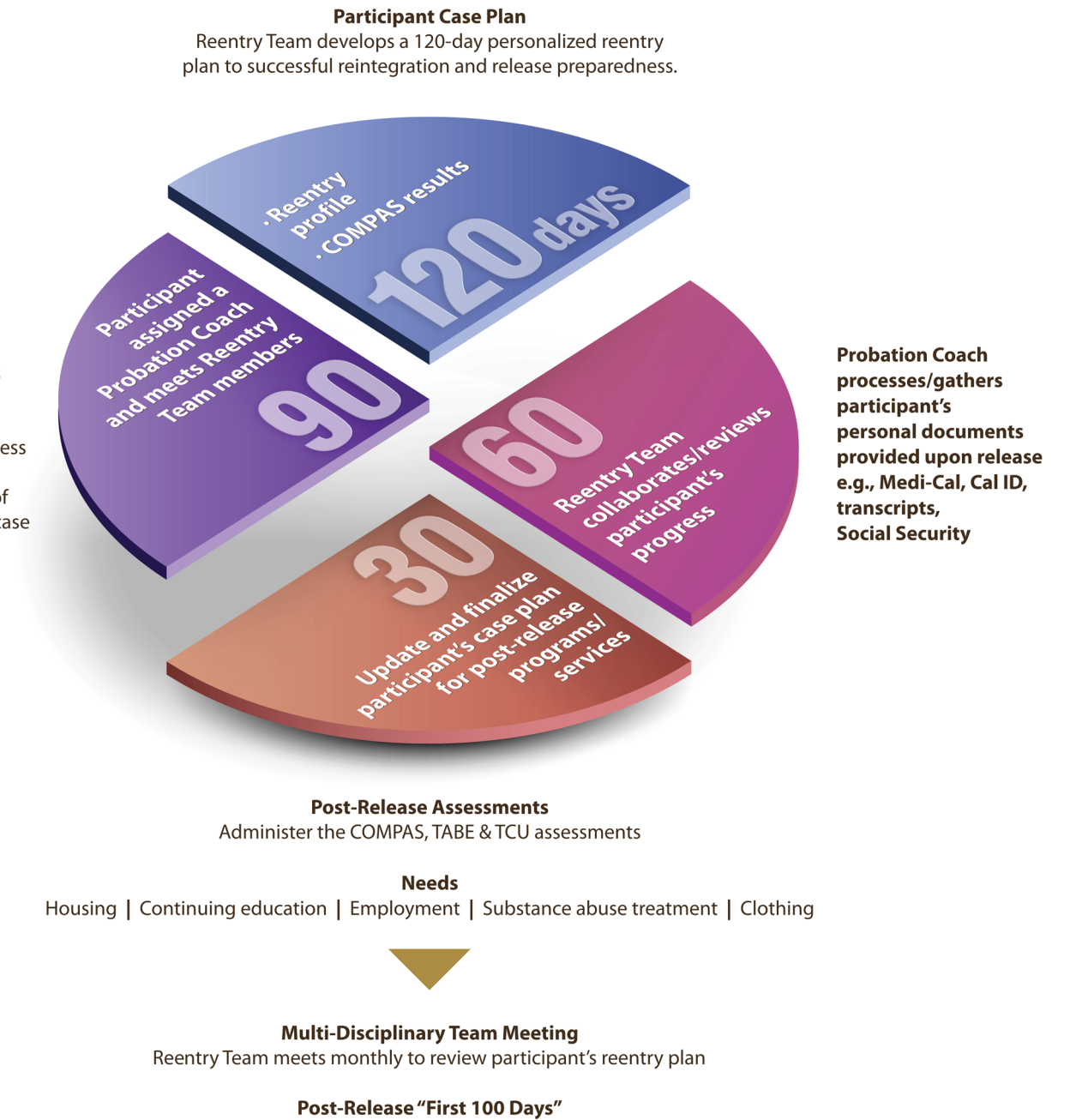
for 12-months following release. The process begins in-custody, as probation coaches establish trusting relationships with participants and identify their specific needs. With advance planning, probation coaches are afforded sufficient time to arrange for housing, and substance abuse treatment, gather critical documents and address other needs that will create a stable environment outside the jail facility.

“ . . . when these guys come out of custody it will be a smooth, seamless transition. It will have a huge impact on jail costs, costs to victims and there will be a ripple effect in the community.”

– *Reaver Bingham*
LA County Probation

Developing the Reentry Plan

With each participant’s full involvement and while the participant is still in the custodial setting, the RCT meets at benchmark intervals of 90, 60, and 30 days prior to release to identify strategies and available services to address each participant’s reentry needs and risks, as



well as the practical issues of housing, health care, continuing education, substance abuse counseling, employment readiness, and job placement.

120-days Prior to Release: 120 days prior to the participant’s release, each reentry partner receives a dashboard summary of the participant’s risks, needs assessment results and personal goals. Each partner reviews the information and is prepared to address questions prior to the first RCT meeting with the participant. (Appendix C.)

90-days Prior to Release: At the 90-day benchmark, the RCT meets with the participant to develop a customized reentry plan.

To assist with these efforts, BOT-LA partners specializing in academic services, job readiness, employment development, and job placement services administer an employment survey that is used to determine the participant’s career interest and job readiness level. Armed with this information, the RCT works collaboratively to develop a customized exit plan, with strategies for effectively addressing all critical issues. Through this intensive engagement, the team is building rapport and fostering a strong working relationship that will continue post-release. At this benchmark, participants connect probation coaches with family members and friends who serve as “positive influencers” in their lives.

60-days Prior to Release: At the 60-day benchmark, the RCT continues to meet with the participant on his personalized reentry plan. Probation coaches begin their outreach to the participant’s identified positive influencers. The participant’s positive influencer is invited to the one-day EPICS-I training. RCT members address any remaining gaps identified in the exit plans and make necessary modifications.

30-days Prior to Release: At the 30-day benchmark, RCT members continue to meet and finalize the participant’s exit plan. A RCT meeting focused on a final review of the exit plans of those participants with 30 days remaining on their sentences is also conducted during this time. Probation coaches confirm arrangements made for transitional housing or stays at treatment facilities. Probation coaches obtain each participant’s earned certificates and vital documents to ensure that participant has these items upon his release.

At this juncture, Probation conducts a one-day EPIC-I training for positive influencers in the skills needed to reinforce participant’s pro-social behavior.

Day of Release: This day marks the culmination of months of hard work, personal maturation and professional skill building for the participant exiting the program. Long anticipated, there is

nonetheless a final effort, coordinated by LASD, case managers and probation coaches, to assemble vital documents, transcripts/certificates, clothing, and hygiene products for release. The team will confirm participant’s time of release, schedule a probation coach and a community organization representative to greet and safely transport the participant to a treatment facility transitional house or family resident.

Not surprisingly, the first 100 days post-release are the most vulnerable times for an offender. Any encounter with the criminal justice system is a set back and the best laid plans can be derailed. Because we understand the unexpected can occur, we designed a system to safeguard those newly returned to the community. The continuum of services model is a high priority of the BOT-LA program. In this phase of post-release, probation coaches are in frequent contact with participants (and their identified positive influencer) to serve as mentors, to provide links to additional services and to reinforce new skills and learning. Probation coaches and CBO partners conduct monthly meetings to monitor progress, and modify exit plans accordingly. In addition, Five Keys Charter School hosts weekly resource meetings for alumni.



Peer Support

Peer support is intended to provide motivation and a connection with a person whose experiences and challenges mirror those of the participant. BOT-LA is developing a formal peer support program designed to provide participants with the tools to reinforce of

their in-custody learning, assist them in reaching their goals, and allow them to share their experiences.

Peer support will focus heavily on substance abuse issues and addiction. We will recruit eligible peers from the formerly incarcerated population who are actively involved in substance abuse recovery.

Program Evaluation

It is important that correctional programs not only deliver services to individuals in the criminal justice system, but that programs deliver those services effectively and efficiently. To identify the effectiveness of the BOT-LA pilot program, the California Department of Justice is collaborating with both internal and external evaluators to conduct a comprehensive study of the program.

Studies continue to advocate for the use of standardized assessments (e.g., Lowenkamp, Latessa, & Holsinger, 2006)⁹ within correctional programming. The use of standardized assessments allows

for data-driven identification of participant criminogenic factors and appropriately tailored programming. This principle has been applied consistently in the evaluation of the BOT-LA program.

Because program evaluation is costly, programs strapped for funding sometime omit this critical phase. BOT-LA however, has leveraged standardized assessments in use and utilizes free or open-source standardized assessments where possible.

Our evaluation team uses assessments tools to examine individual risk/needs and relies only on valid and reliable instruments. Data collection begins at the start of each offender’s entry into

the program and a similar data collection process is conducted on a control group.

Program success is defined using multiple indices. As expected, a reduction in recidivism for participants is high on the list. However, there are additional measurements of success including educational gains, employment attainment and retention, decrease in criminogenic needs and increased jail safety.

Intermediate outcomes are also assessed when evaluating program success because of their profound impact on the participant and his family members. Fulfilling child support obligations, enrollment in health insurance plans, and family stability, can all contribute to the likelihood that the participant can transition successfully to a contributing member of the community.

As illustrated in this section, planning the program evaluation is extremely important. Creating a standard evaluation tool, and a logic model, can be useful. A logic model conveys the rationale for the program and the relationship among available resources and activities. It is focused on the intended impact and outcomes to be achieved. In this way, it differs from an “action plan” which focuses on the steps necessary to carry out the program’s goals and objectives.



SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION

**“SUCCESSFUL PROGRAMS DO NOT CONTAIN
THE SEEDS OF THEIR OWN REPLICATION”
- L. B. Schorr, 1993**

Innovative criminal justice programs, especially in the initial phases, often confront unexpected hurdles. Though a well designed program will delineate goals and objectives, it is in the implementation that these goals and objectives are fully realized. Planning alone will not achieve the desired outcomes. Plans must be executed and operationalized to create a set of concrete tasks and activities. Only through effective implementation will plans be translated into specific program processes and procedures.

Implementation Model Suggestions

Program success rests not only on the quality of the innovation, but also on the quality of the implementation. After the planning team defines in detail what must be done to achieve its goals, the team determines how the program’s components are put into action. The “how” refers to the implementation process—how various program activities connected, how processes and procedures were established and monitored.

Throughout the pilot implementation process, the BOT-LA team has devoted considerable attention to ensuring that the implementation of the program model is aligned with its design. Too many programs fail, not because of poor design, but because of a failure to implement the program model as intended. We understand that the test of successful implementation is the degree to which it adheres faithfully to each component as designed in the model. Researchers describe this as “fidelity” to the model. Fidelity refers to the extent to which program model components are delivered: 1) as designed, 2) with the right frequency and dosage, 3) meeting the standards and quality expected, and 4) in the manner prescribed.

Replication

The key to replicating a program will depend on understanding how the model program’s components were translated into action. Was the program implemented as originally conceived and as subsequently described?

AND REPLICATION



An equally important consideration is to design a model appropriate to local conditions. Experience tells us that what works in one setting may not be fully replicable in another. Jail management constraints and opportunities for programming differ from agency to agency. Therefore, when attempting to replicate the BOT-LA model, each agency must consider the unique environment in which it operates.

In California, local jails operate under the jurisdiction of the county they serve, therefore it is not surprising that critical differences will exist among them. The BOT conceptual model is flexible and can be scaled or adapted to accommodate environments that differ from Los Angeles. Local programs must consider an offender’s age, gender, types of offenses, sentencing length, etc. Although these variations will influence the selection and dosing of program components, adaptation should not be confused with a decrease in program fidelity. Adaptation is a re-working of the design, a variation in the model in order to better suit the context in which a program is placed. Whatever design modification is selected, implementation must adhere faithfully to the program goals and objectives, and adequate resources developed for sustainability.

PARTNERSHIP SYNERGY

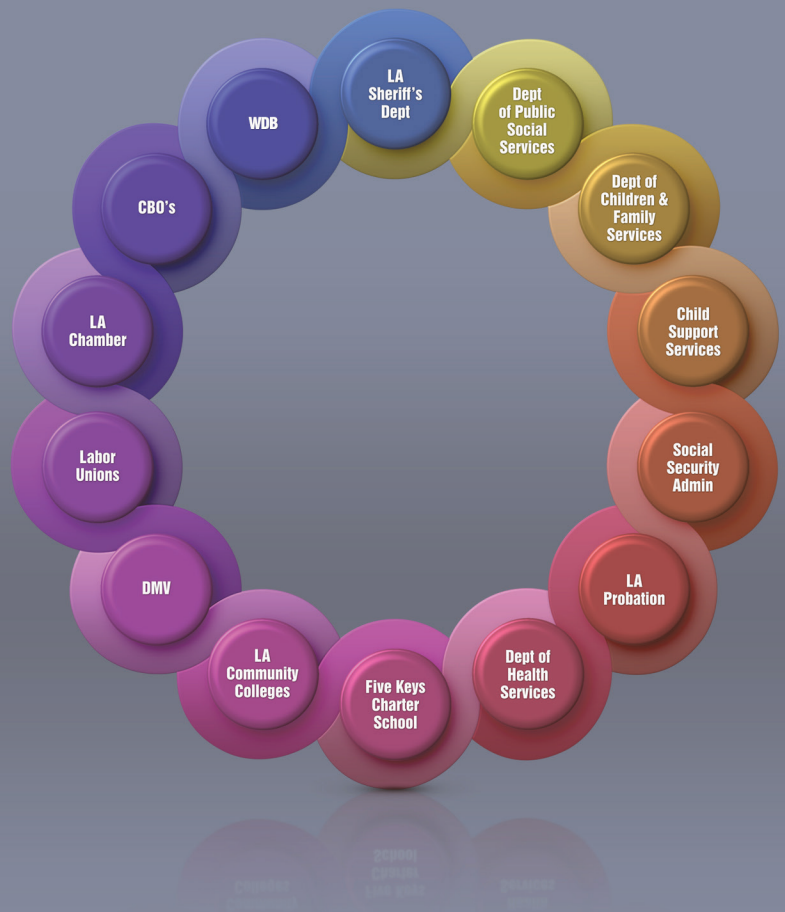
No single criminal justice agency has the ability, expertise or resources to provide an ex-offender the comprehensive services and support needed to address the numerous barriers they face upon reentry. The success of BOT-LA is due in large part to the partnership synergy and collaboration with key stakeholders who have been fully engaged, investing significant time and effort to difficult work, in pursuit of a common goal. Local and state government agencies, educators, community service providers, generous non-profit organizations and businesses came together to establish a comprehensive model to support reentry and mitigate or remove existing barriers to successful community reintegration.

At the very onset, we brought together key stakeholders and established a collaborative communication model (see Appendix B). The model includes working groups, a core planning team, an executive steering committee and policy directors. The working groups, consisting of multidisciplinary subject matter experts from community colleges, health services, community based organizations and state and local government agencies, came together monthly and developed individual business processes,

identified and addressed barriers to reentry and designed workflows integrating each partner's role and responsibility into the emerging reentry model. These working groups also helped establish performance benchmarks for evaluation purposes. The working groups reported findings and made recommendations to the core planning team. The core planning team, composed of key managers from LA Sheriff's Department, LA County Probation and the California Department of Justice, held bi-weekly conference calls to discuss working group findings, provide guidance and address business process challenges. The executive steering committee, consisting of executive leadership from LA County Sheriff, LA County Probation and the California Department of Justice was informed on the progress of the pilot and provided the core planning team direction and leadership. Regular reports were provided to the policy directors – the Attorney General, LA County Sheriff and LA County Probation.

This consistent collaboration helped all partners develop a solid understanding of the principles needed to increase correctional effectiveness. An unexpected and positive outcome of exchanges across multiple disciplines has been the cross-pollination of ideas and

IT TAKES A VILLAGE



practices disseminated among the different groups. For example, LASD is now working with the Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce to identify the industries most amenable to hiring the formerly incarcerated. With this knowledge, LASD is better able to design and tailor in-custody programming to support these industries thus increasing employment opportunities for participants.

When complex programs are successful, it is most often a result of collective achievement and collective leadership. To foster such a collaborative environment, harness the skills and assets of each partner, and reinforce the strategic model, BOT-LA exercised great care in clarifying roles and responsibilities. The mechanism used is our "Letters of Partnership" – a document memorializing the roles and responsibilities between BOT-LA partners. Our partners provide a range of services relevant to the needs of the participants and are vital to the success of the program. We are grateful for their hard work and commitment and are proud to work alongside them.

The California Department of Justice designed and implemented the BOT-LA program and currently provides program evaluation.

Following is a list of our BOT-LA partners and the assistance they provide:

Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department: contributed to the program design, oversees its implementation, provides facility space, custodial staff support, and collects program evaluation data.

Los Angeles County Probation Department: provides out-of-custody "coaches" who guide participants through the 12 month reentry process post-release.

Five Keys Charter School: provides one-on-one case management services, life skills and high school instruction leading to a diploma.

Community Colleges: provides academic and CTE (vocational) course work, transferable course credits, transcripts and certificates of completion/achievement.

Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce: created a BOT-LA Job Development Director position focusing on workforce development and strategic reentry services.

Los Angeles County Department of Child Support Services: works to ensure children and families receive court-ordered financial and medical support and provides in custody services which include identifying and locating in- and out-of-county children, a custodial parent, establishing paternity, modifying and enforcing court orders for child support and health coverage.

California Department of Child Support Services: works cooperatively with county and regional child support agencies.

County of Los Angeles Public Health and Department of Public Social Services: provides participants referrals to primary health care clinics for out-of-custody health care needs and substance abuse programs.

Los Angeles County Department of Children & Family Services: provides information and assistance with child visitation and family reunification programs.

California Department of Motor Vehicles: processes applications for issuance of California Identification cards to participants prior to release.

U.S. Social Security Administration: processes applications and issues Social Security cards to participants prior to release.

Los Angeles/Orange Counties Building and Construction Trades Council: provides participants in the custodial setting and upon release with information regarding trade unions, membership, and employment opportunities.

Community Based Organizations: provides services in skill building, employment readiness, and job training.

University of Cincinnati Corrections Institute: works with the CA DOJ and LASD in design and implementation of our BOT-LA jail based reentry program. Dr. Edward J. Latessa, Director and Professor of the School of Criminal Justice at UCCI, and his team of professionals, use an evidence-based approach programming, self training and quality assurance.

Workforce Development Board (WDB): oversees the delivery of workforce services (e.g. job training, placement, business services) delivered through the local One-Stop Career Centers.



IN THEIR OWN WORDS

Leonard Lemus

Mark Mendez

Derrick Young

Martin Chen



WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

As of May 2016, 44 participants have been released. Although 98% of the participants are released without supervision, nearly 50% of the participants are in contact with their probation coaches and many have taken advantage of the out-of-custody continuum of services. As the pilot matures, more and more participants are calling upon the reentry team for assistance. The participants are gaining more confidence in the program and have developed trust with their probation coaches and other community partners. There are many success stories to share. Following are just a few.

Leonard Lemus

What are the greatest challenges you are facing in this new phase?

BOT Los Angeles opened my eyes to start investing into myself, to challenge myself at all levels. It's made me think about things all the way through. It's saved my life and awakened my heart through the caring individuals it has in place. It gave me a team to play for, a good one; the best one! So many places, so many resources, everything and anything you need are right here at Back on Track Los Angeles. It's the drawing board I was looking for in my life.

The challenges I am facing right now are making the big decisions, like housing and employment, work or school or somehow both. Honestly, had I not gone to treatment, I would not have the success I'm having. Addict or not, behaviors can be just as bad if not worse. Safe Refuge has brought that full frontal and it makes me work on myself. I stay busy by staying connected. It works if you work it.

Also, the key aspect is the people involved. My probation coach has been there since day one. She provides me with what I need and insight sometimes I can't even see. The reality of having someone accompany you on this walk back into the community, back into our families' lives and into our own life is just a pure blessing.

Mark Mendez

How did the Back on Track program at Pitchess prepare you to return to the community?

It gave me the cognitive skills to change. "Thinking for a Change" was great for me; I could process my feelings and understand my emotions. Substance Abuse classes prepared me and helped me recognize I have a disease and that I need treatment. Being a part of Back on Track prepared me to go back into the community and if it wasn't for Back on Track, I would already be back in jail.

What are the challenges you have or are currently facing since your release from custody?

Finding a good job and housing.

Derrick Young

How did the Back on Track program at Pitchess prepare you to return to the community?

My attitude changed for the better due to Life Skills. “Thinking for a Change” and my substance abuse illness helped me decide to make a change and want a drug free life.

What are challenges you have or are currently facing since your release from custody?

Staying away from people, places and activities that caused me to use drugs. Being out of custody is challenging.

Martin Chen

How did the Back on Track program at Pitchess prepare you to return to the community?

Upon release in October 2015, I faced the monumental task of having to adjust after losing almost all of my belongings when I was arrested two years earlier. Back on Track was a new program at Pitchess, still developing into an even bigger more powerful, and no doubt very beneficial

program. I was there from day one, made lots of adjustments and had a learning curve. There were many individuals involved with hearts as big as one can imagine. The best part of Back on Track is not what happened in prison, but the week I got out!!! The minute I was released, many individuals were there to help me. I am grateful to Attorney General Kamala Harris, and retired Deputy/Coordinator of Five Keys Charter School, David Bates, whose kind heart introduced me to his dentist friend Dr. Arnie and his staff for my dental/denture needs. Also, Ms. Roach of LA Probation, and many more people at the Center for Living Organization: Rhonda, Alex, Bob, Ron, Mary, Larry and especially Lorraine Jimenez. There are many other individuals, including Shields for Families, Joseph, and Catherine Lozano. Only God knows the hearts of these nice people.

What are the challenges you have or are currently facing since your release from custody?

Upon release in October 2015, during my first three months, I sought help but couldn’t work due to problems with chronic back pain, mental health issues and my prison record. I had no immediate relatives except a loving son who lives in Los Angeles (who distanced himself from me until, over time, I showed him I would

not return to prison). In January 2016, I managed to land a job suitable with my medical condition at minimum wage and part time with no guaranteed hours. I was told whatever money I made will very soon go towards housing, food, etc., since I am not on probation and not on parole. I feel much uncertainty and I worry about my health. I will soon be moving from shelter to shelter with my belongings, using public transportation without further funding and most places and people may be reluctant to help me. I was told I would get 12 months of help upon my release. Back on Track, helped me get stronger and back on my feet. My foundation is still shaky and I am worried.

The above participants willingly shared their hopes for the future and the realistic challenges they face once they exit the program. They also face a predicament few of them would admit or recognize in advance. That is, once released, these participants are not subject to community supervision or probation conditions. As explained in the preceding program description, participants in the BOT-LA pilot have been sentenced under court imposed “straight time”. This means that once they complete their sentences they are released without restrictions.

Although BOT-LA highly encourages

participants to remain engaged in the “one year” continuum of services opportunity, many choose to go it alone. Thus, it is not surprising that participants report a range of experiences once released.

The period after release as reported by participants is best described as a combination of promising and less than optimum results. A number of participants have achieved measurable and sustainable successes. Successful participants include those who completed residential drug treatment, remain consistently in contact with the program, obtained employment and achieved a workable relationship with family and children. Other participants report suffering drug relapses, but continue stay engaged with probation coaches and Five Keys Charter School officials. Some participants have sporadic engagement with coaches, reporting some success with employment and some backsliding. A few participants have struggled, without success, to manage their drug disorders, but refuse the offer of residential treatment. And, BOT-LA has a number of self-sufficient participants who have chosen to “move on”, believing themselves capable of managing work and family life without further program involvement.

By the participant’s own admission,



drug abuse is the main hurdle to reducing their recidivism. Most recognize that relapsing is common among those with drug disorders and without a support system, risk of drug use can be hard to avoid. Probation coaches and others who are overseeing the out-of-custody phase of the program are in a position to identify the early warning signs of relapse, intervene early in the process and provide

the necessary treatment.

The program works hard to persuade those exiting custody to take advantage of the benefits offered in our out-of-custody phase. BOT-LA strongly believes that participants who remain connected to the program, and to the professionals who offer support and guidance, have a better chance of long-term success.

LESSONS LEARNED

GAINING USEFUL INFORMATION THROUGH EXPERIENCE

Conducting a pilot provides the opportunity for a “test run” on a smaller scale. A pilot allows program developers time to identify and refine their vision and consider the feasibility of a particular design. Unforeseen costs are avoided because pilots can produce preliminary results on which to base future budgetary decisions. Capturing “lessons learned” is an integral part of every pilot project. A lesson learned is useful information gained through experience which can be used for future projects by other organizations. The following are highlights learned during the course of the BOT-LA pilot.

Lesson 1 – Selecting the Right Population. Empirical studies on recidivism suggest that the most effective interventions target offenders who are moderate-to-high risk to recidivate as identified through a validated assessment tool. On the other hand, research shows that low-risk offenders have an increased likelihood of recidivism when they are over-supervised or receive treatment or services in the same programs as moderate- and high-risk offenders.

Lessons Learned From Dr. Seuss

You have brains in your head.
You have feet in your shoes.
You can steer yourself,
any direction you choose.

I’m sorry to say so but,
sadly it’s true
that bang-ups
and hang-ups
can happen to you.



And will you succeed?
Yes indeed,
Yes indeed!
Ninety-eight and
three-quarters percent
guaranteed! *

* Thank you to Dr. Seuss for those childhood messages that stand the test of time.

Lesson 2 – Utilizing Evidence-based Practices. Program staff must commit to utilizing evidence-based practices which researchers and practitioners have shown to be effective. Cognitive behavior training has proven to be the most effective intervention in offender programming.

Lesson 3 – Addressing Silos. Many criminal justice agencies and community organizations are dedicated to addressing the issue of recidivism, but much of this work is being done in silos. Without working together, valuable expertise is lost, resources are not effectively utilized and funding is not leveraged sufficiently or effectively.

Lesson 4 – Ensuring all Stakeholders are at the Table. Although the BOT-LA pilot focuses on Los Angeles County, it was critical to bring both state and local partners together. For example, without the state and local child support representatives at the table, it would be impossible to address multi-county child support obligations often times resulting in potential barriers relating to housing and employment post-release.

Lesson 5 – Ensuring Program Fidelity. Program fidelity refers to the degree to which the delivery of the program adheres to the model as originally developed and designed. A well developed program must emphasize program fidelity to increase the chances of success.

Lesson 6 – Beginning the Process of Reentry While Still In-Custody. The most effective reentry efforts begin in custody, where intensive programming in cognitive behavior training, academic and vocational training, and life skills development will better prepare an offender to step outside the gates.

Lesson 7 – Engaging Case Managers and Coaches in the Process. Case managers and coaches are the foundation of the program, acting as counselors and motivators who encourage participants to commit to and remain engaged with all components of the program. Therefore, the participant, case managers, and coaches must begin working together immediately upon the participant’s entry into the program.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

California Attorney General Kamala D. Harris would like to express appreciation for the collaborative efforts, contributions and commitments made by all the BOT-LA partners.

- Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department
- Los Angeles County Probation Department
- Five Keys Charter School
- College of the Canyons
- Los Angeles Mission College
- Los Angeles Trade Technical College
- California Department of Child Support Services
- Los Angeles County Child Support Services Department
- Los Angeles County Department of Children & Family Services
- Los Angeles/Orange Counties Building and Construction Trades Council
- Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce
- County of Los Angeles Department of Public Social Services
- County of Los Angeles Public Health
- Shields for Families
- Anti-Recidivism Coalition
- U.S. Social Security Administration
- University of Cincinnati, Corrections Institute
- California Department of Motor Vehicles
- Workforce Development Boards

Attorney General Harris would also like to extend gratitude and appreciation to BOT-LA’s generous funders.

- The Ford Foundation
- The Rosenberg Foundation
- The California Wellness Foundation
- Roy and Patricia Disney Family Foundation
- Bureau of Justice Assistance Second Chance Act Grant

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⁵ County of Los Angeles California, *Public Safety Realignment Year-Three Report*, (2015), <http://www.bscc.ca.gov/downloads/Los%20Angeles%20County%20FY14.pdf>.

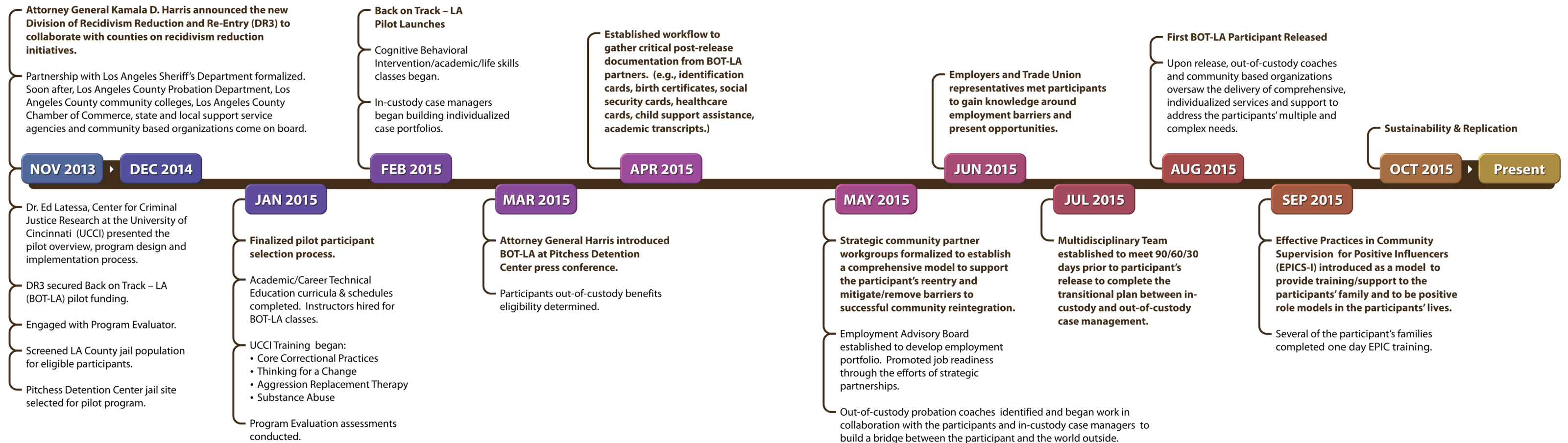
⁶ U.S. Sentencing Commission, *Measuring Recidivism: The Criminal History Computation of the Federal Sentencing Guidelines*, RESEARCH SERIES ON THE RECIDIVISM OF FEDERAL GUIDELINE OFFENDERS 1, 12 (2014), http://www.ussc.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/research-and-publications/research-publications/2004/200405_Recidivism_Criminal_History.pdf (“Overall, offenders with less than a high school education are most likely to recidivate (31.4%), followed by offenders with a high school education (19.3%). Offenders with some college education (18.0%), and offenders with college degrees (8.8%).”)

⁷ Debbie Mukamal et al., *Degrees of Freedom: Expanding College Opportunities for Currently and Formerly Incarcerated Californians*, STANFORD CRIMINAL JUSTICE CENTER & U. OF CAL. BERKELY SCHOOL OF LAW, 18 (2015) <https://law.stanford.edu/publications/degrees-of-freedom-expanding-college-opportunities-for-currently-and-formerly-incarcerated-californians/>.

⁸ *Id.* (“These findings are supported by a preliminary evaluation of the in-person college program operating at San Quentin State Prison in California. Researchers report that the three-year recidivism rate for both new offenses and parole violations among Prison University Project graduates was 17 percent. In the 11 years since the program began collecting data – during which time it served over 1000 students – no Prison University Project graduate has returned to prison for committing a violent crime.”)

⁹ Christopher Lowenkamp et al., “The Risk Principle in Action: What Have We Learned From 13,676 Offenders and 97 Correctional Programs?,” CRIME AND DELINQUENCY 52, 52-76 (2006).

APPENDIX A - TIMELINE



APPENDIX B: BOT-LA COMMUNICATION MODEL



APPENDIX C: SAMPLE PARTICIPANT DASHBOARD

Name: John Doe
Age: 38
Race/Ethnicity: Other
DOB: 3/28/1978
Release Date: 4/4/2016

Criminal History

Total Arrests: 24
Total Convictions: 15
Age of First Arrest: 18
Date of First Arrest: 1/14/2012

*Juvenile data is limitedly reported.

	PROP	PERS	DRUG	OTHER
Arrests	12	0	11	1
Felony Convictions	3	0	1	0

Needs

Need DMV- Identification Card: Need
Need DMV- Drivers License: Need
Need Clothing: Yes
Need General Assistance: Yes
Need Food Stamps: Declined
Need SSI/SSD: No
Need Social Security Card: Yes

RNR Assessment Scores

TCU

- Drug Screen V Classification: Moderate
- CEST:
 - Desire For Help: 30
 - Treatment Readiness: 25
 - Treatment Needs: 18
 - Pressure For Treatment: 18.6
 - Self Esteem: 35
 - Depression: 31.7
 - Anxiety: 22.9
 - Decision Making: 32.3
 - Hostility: 16.3

COMPAS Risk Score: High

- Risk Taking: 32.9
- Treatment Participation: 35
- Treatment Satisfaction: 31.4
- CTS
 - Entitlement: 26.7
 - Justification: 25
 - Power Orientation: 25.7
 - Cold Heartedness: 38
 - Criminal Rationalization: 31.7
 - Personal Irresponsibility: 26.7

Employment

Training/Certificates Earned: Painting
In-Custody Work Experience/Job: *
Last Date of Employment: 02/01/2012
Type of Employment: Drywall
Longest Length of Employment: 1 year
Type of Employment: Janitorial
Date of Employment: 2008
Ever Been Terminated: No
Reason:

* Upcoming survey for Five Keys will include questions to capture this data.

Academic/TABE Scores

Reading Level: 6.8
Math Comprehension Level: 5.6
Applied Math Level: 5.4
TABE Book: M9
High School Education Level: None
College education Level: 0
Continued Education Plan: To enroll in an Electrician Union training program
Start and Completion Dates
Vocational Training: welding
Thinking For A Change: 3/23/2015- 5/29/2015
Substance Abuse: 8/3/2015- 12/11/2015
Aggression Replacement Therapy: NA
Life Skills: 2/23/2015-6/5/2015



DR³