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# Editor's note



Literature has shown why offenders stop offending and identified an array of individual, social and environmental factors that support their desistance journey. To reduce recidivism, it is not only important to understand why people re-offend, but also to understand and identify the factors that help them to desist from offending. In this edition, we will take a closer look at some of these initiatives shared by members on their rehabilitation policies and practices that help prepare offenders for a crime-free and purposeful life.

Singapore Prison Service recently conducted a study to identify and evaluate desistance factors relevant to Singapore. From the findings, we found an array of individual, social, and environmental factors that promote desistance. The study vali-

dated existing SPS's rehabilitation practices and supports the multi-level interventions for offenders.

Rehabilitated offenders experience numerous challenges, including stigma and broken familial and social network that are difficult to surmount on their own. To scaffold their rehabilitation, Hong Kong Correctional Services Department works closely with various stakeholders to weave a strong support network for rehabilitated offenders at the individual, familial and community level to prevent re-offending, thereby creating a safer society.

Recognising education as an important means for rehabilitating offenders, Malaysia Prisons Department prioritise education amongst young inmates by providing a conducive learning environment in prison for inmates and teachers. Korea Correctional Service introduced a series of educational programmes aimed at changing inmates' thinking, with the hope of successfully reintegrating them into society upon release from their correctional facilities.

To promote good behaviour in prison, Mongolia's Department of Corrections introduced yoga classes for inmates as part of their rehabilitation programme. From the yoga classes, inmates adopt positive attitudes through physical, mental and spiritual practices that help manage their anger. Macao Correctional Services celebrated Mother's Day and Father's Day within their prison walls. These celebrations gave inmates a precious opportunity to strengthen ties with their families, and inspire confidence in their reintegration journey ahead.

I hope these articles will also inspire confidence among APCCA members to devise and implement more evidence-based initiatives to support offenders' rehabilitation and reintegration. My sincere appreciation to APCCA members who have contributed to this issue. May all of us continue to share our experiences and achievements through this newsletter so as to broaden our perspectives and enrich the corrections community.

Desmond Chin  
Singapore Prison Service



## How do people stop offending: Me and my environment – Singapore Prison Service

Contributed by Singapore Prison Service

### HOW DO PEOPLE STOP OFFENDING: ME AND MY ENVIRONMENT

Singapore Prison Service

**P**eter (not his real name), a 55-year old man, is passionate about his work as an interior designer. He meets his customers around the island to discuss about their dream home designs, and follows up promptly to their satisfaction. He is recognised as one of the best interior designers in his company. Peter is happily married and often travels with his wife to different countries to experience different cultures.

No one would believe that Peter was an ex-convict 15 years ago, who used to live a criminal lifestyle with gang affiliation, drug addiction and involvement in unlicensed money lending activities. His mother was heart-broken that he went astray as a teenage and failed to change for 20 years. His elder brother gave up hope on him and treated him as the “black sheep” of the family.

During his last incarceration where he was convicted with a long term imprisonment, he had a painful self-reflection, “I have been in and out of prison for 20 years, is this the life I want? What’s the purpose of my life?” That was the turning point for him to change, and he renounced from his gang, behaved himself in prison, and attended rehabilitation programmes. For Peter, his desist-

ance journey started at the point when he wanted a new purpose in life and was motivated and committed to turn over a new leaf while he was still in prison.

### Desistance: What Is It?

**D**esistance may be understood as a cessation of offending over a period of time for habitual offenders, resulting in ‘gaps of non-offending’. This is known as **primary desistance**. Although gaps of non-offending are a convenient way to identify an individual as a ‘desister’ or ‘reoffender’, it fails to explain how and why the individual was able to remain offence free. Hence, the concept of **secondary desistance** emerges, which is defined as an identity change from a criminal to a non-criminal.

When desistance is viewed as a process of non-offending, it acknowledges that the path of non-offending involves persevering through multiple challenges. This is especially so for offenders with a drug history, whose path away from drugs can be long and arduous. However, the individual who eventually desists from offending can be said to have experienced a fundamental shift in identity. He starts viewing himself as a ‘pro-social citizen’ instead of as a ‘criminal’ and demonstrates positive behavioural changes.

Existing literature identifies individual, social and environmental factors that explain how and why an individual embarks on the desistance journey.

a. Individual factors. One key individual factor of the desistance process is **self-identity**. Successful desisters are better able to put away their past criminal identity and develop a new pro-social identity. Individuals who are able to desist from crime are also said to have high levels of **self-efficacy** – they see themselves in control of their futures and have a clear sense of purpose in life.

b. Social factors. Pro-social bonds between the individual, his family and community is another desistance factor. The strong bonds that the individual forms in terms of a stable employment, satisfied marital relationship, and responsibility of parenthood promote the desistance process. When an individual's bond to society is disrupted, it is likelier for him to reoffend.

c. Environmental factors. Environmental factors such as workplace and living environment may support or hinder desistance. Employment barriers due to criminal records and a high crime neighbourhood increase an ex-offender's likelihood of reoffending.



Programme session conducted in purpose-built classroom with beanbags

## Studying Desistance in the Singaporean Context

We conducted a study to identify and evaluate

desistance factors relevant to Singapore. This is important given that Singapore's offender population is different from overseas jurisdictions. The findings will help inform throughcare correctional rehabilitation practices and policies in order to nudge and prepare offenders on their desistance journey. Studies on desistance from a local perspective further ensure that Singapore's correctional practices are supported by evidence.

The study aimed to explore what are the individual, social, and environmental factors that promote the desistance process in the Singaporean context. 44 male desisters were interviewed face to face in 2016. On average, these desisters had been crime-free for a period of 8.2 years, and majority (91%) had a history of drug offending. A deductive thematic analysis was conducted to answer the research question.

## Five Topline Findings of Study

Finding 1: Successful desisters expressed self-efficacy in their ability to change. Self-efficacy is a key individual factor of the desistance process, and qualitative interviews showed that local desisters had a language of self-efficacy. Further analysis revealed that self-efficacy facilitated motivation to change. This is demonstrated in the following quote: *"There were some who mocked me, but I persisted and stood my ground in what I believed in. This is a choice we made to stay clean."* (Subject 28). Self-efficacy also facilitated action towards change. As clearly described by one participant: *"when you work it out [take action], you will see results. You don't work it out, you think – everybody also can think, – I mean sometimes thinking is deceiving."* (Subject 19).

Finding 2: Successful desisters conscientiously avoided their drug triggers. The interview results also indicated that local desisters coped with drug-taking temptation by avoiding triggers such as alcohol, drug-abusing friends and places. They knew that the process of staying away from drugs

<sup>1</sup> Having 44 participants is twice the recommended sample size required for a qualitative study, and was thus deemed sufficient in order to obtain robust results.

is a long and onerous one, and thus focused on avoiding temptations a day at a time. *"Sometimes even a sip of beer... it is a trigger point. So I know I cannot do that. I know myself... Once I take, like people say once is too many, thousand times is not enough. You started you will never stop."* (Subject 33).

**Finding 3: Successful desisters surrounded themselves with pro-social support.** Pro-social relationships triggered change. Ultimatums by family members made participants realise the harm they caused to their families. One participant mentioned: *"when my son came to visit me, he shouted at me, because I promised him that I won't go into prison anymore ... I realized that I hurt him so much... Yes, that was my turning point."* (Subject 1). In addition, learning from ex-offenders who have desisted for years provided participants with hope and role models for them to aspire towards. As illustrated by one participant, *"Most of the [halfway house] staff here all are the ex-convicts, also the hardcore addicts... they are the role models... if they can change, why I cannot?"* (Subject 21). Some participants shared the emotional support they received from prison officers to spur them to change while incarcerated. *"Thanks for some of the officers inside [prison], and they talked to me, they also say this word 'how many 5 years you have'"* (Subject 15).

Leaving antisocial friends was also found to be crucial for local desisters. Criminal friends were a source of temptation and desisters actively took steps to avoid them. As one participant succinctly described: *"Bad company influence bad, good company influence good. Right or not?"* (Subject 19).

**Finding 4: Successful desisters placed themselves in an environment supportive of change.** Many offenders made the decision to change while incarcerated, only to relapse after release due to environmental factors. Preparing oneself for release, making correct decisions after release, and the release environment participants found themselves in were important for desistance.

**"There were some who mocked me, but I persisted and stood my ground in what I believed in. This is a choice we made to stay clean."**

a. **Structured after-care programmes**, such as emplacement at halfway house programmes, support groups were found to promote desistance. One participant succinctly explained, *"Halfway house, they have structured programme, and the programme works because we have time to reflect and we had time where we had group discussion, where we relate our problems [to staff and seniors], sometimes [we share] our experiences."* (Subject 8).

b. **Participation in religious practices** was one of the main reasons behind participants' desistance journey. Religious teachings taught them about right and wrong, making them aware of their wrongdoings. As explained by one participant, *"Religious wise, I've learnt a lot... the verses in Quran... the good thing that we should do that I've never did before."* (Subject 13).

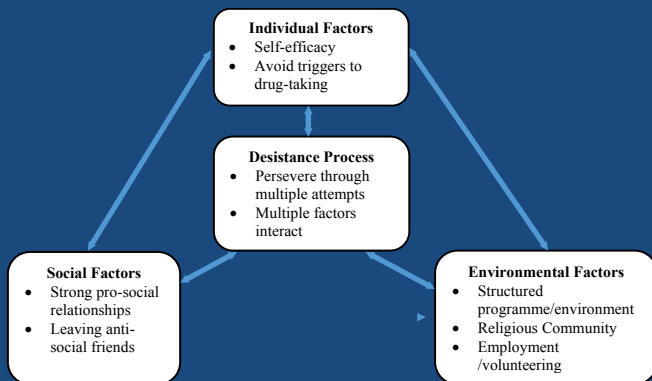
c. **Employment and volunteering.** Majority of participants maintained their desistance through occupying their time meaningfully with stable employment and volunteering activities. Employment provided participants with income, increasing the costs of giving up and returning to their old ways. *"But when I got this job that pays well...no way am I going back... Because of my good salary, I feel confident about myself. I don't need to go back to my old lifestyle..."* (Subject 39). Ability to help others and paying it forward for the help they themselves received, were cited by participants to help them feel good about themselves. *"I'm also helping people but nowadays*

*much more confident because I went to Aceh for helping... I also went inside prison for befriending. So ... I feel good, feel happy. When I feel good, I will of course not take these things [drugs].” (Subject 20).*

**Finding 5: Ex-offenders experienced successful desistance after persevering through multiple attempts.** Successful desistance involved several attempts before ex-offenders were able to maintain a crime-free status. As clearly illustrated by one participant: *“We have to start from there, slowly journey you know. During this journey we still have the up and down. Sometimes you might just go back to drugs...” (Subject 23).*

Notably, not one single factor was decisive for change. Rather, participants reached a tipping point for desistance when multiple factors interacted with each other. For example, they experienced small improvements in multiple areas of life, such as experiencing turning points, realising the cost of their crimes, meaningfully occupying their time, learning from others, and managing temptations. One participant succinctly explained it: *“Everything adds on, to play a part ... Family alone cannot. Jail sentences alone cannot. So it [is] all, my health also taking a role.” (Subject 4).*

**Summary of Findings.** This study found an array of individual, social, and environmental factors that promote the desistance process. Figure 1 shows the snapshot of the topline findings.



Note: Double arrows represent desistance process and factors influence each other

Figure 1: The snapshot of the salient factors and desistance process

## How do the Findings Inform SPS’s Practice?

The study results validate existing SPS’s rehabilitation practices and support the multi-level interventions with offenders. Besides working with offenders to develop their individual capitals, it is essential to strengthen their social capitals through initiatives such as provision of family programmes to improve family bonding, and befrienders services to establish a pro-social network. Further, it is important to garner more community support (e.g., employment and volunteering opportunities) to help ex-offenders contribute to society.

## Conclusion

The saying “it takes a village to raise a child” is an apt description for the concerted and multi-level efforts needed to rehabilitate offenders. The current study identified individual, social, and environmental factors that promoted desistance in local offenders with a drug history. The relationships between these factors are iterative, in which offenders’ belief of their capability to change is realised through opportunities provided to them. That, in turn, reinforces their action to change. Findings not only validate the existing SPS’ throughcare rehabilitation strategies for offenders, but suggest strategies to enhance desistance.



Prison Officer and Rehab Specialist conducting a group session for inmates



## Understanding Desistance – The Hong Kong's Experience

Contributed by Hong Kong Correctional Services Department

### Understanding Desistance – The Hong Kong Experience

Rehabilitated offenders may experience numerous challenges, including stigma, broken familial and social network, hostility and distrust, and even non-inclusive social norms and policies, which will be difficult to overcome alone. To facilitate their rehabilitation, Hong Kong Correctional Services Department (HKCSD) has striven to “co-produce desistance” with various parties in the community by weaving a social network at different levels ranging from individual to collective for years.

#### Individual Level

Research on desistance suggests that rehabilitated persons require personalized and holistic support with which positive behavioural change can be generated and sustained.<sup>1</sup> The support is manifested in collaborative and democratic relationship between the rehabilitated persons and penal practitioners. HKCSD has dedicated much effort to create the favourable conditions from which such relationship can grow.

#### Risks & Needs Assessment and Management Protocol for Offenders

HKCSD adopts an integrated risks and needs evaluation protocol for the management of offenders, namely Risks and Needs Assessment

and Management Protocol for Offenders (the Protocol). It provides a scientific and evidence-based approach to prison management. The Protocol was designed to identify custodial and re-offending risks of persons-in-custody (PICs) so as to enhance prison management and to deliver rehabilitation programmes matching their needs.

Upon assessment of re-offending risks and criminogenic/rehabilitative needs, PICs who were found to have considerable needs in either one or more of the following seven domains:

- Family/Marital
- Associates
- Employment
- Criminal Attitude
- Personal/Emotional
- Community Functioning
- Drug Abuse

would be provided with rehabilitative programmes matching with the specific needs identified. These programmes aim to help those in need to re-establish family relationship, improve their social and job search skills, rectify their delinquent thinking, manage their emotion, enhance the understanding of community support and handle their drug abuse habit. From 2006 to 2017, more than 38,890 PICs have received assessment under the Protocol.

To address the diverse needs of PICs and to promote desistance, HKCSD has been developing treatment tools or methodology suitable for

<sup>1</sup> Burnett, R., & McNeil, F. (2005). The Place of the Officer-Offender Relationship in Assisting Offenders to Desist from Crime. *Probation Journal*, 52(3), pp. 247-68.

PICs in local context and tailoring treatment programmes for PICs with special treatment needs. By utilising clinical tools and systematic psychological assessment, HKCSD has strengthened the psychological treatment programmes targeting at offending behaviours for sex offenders, violent offenders, young offenders, drug abusers, and female PICs. With a new battery of psychological assessment tools for young offenders, specific treatment modules have been refined to better address the changing risks/needs profiles of young offenders. In addition, a Mindfulness Corner, as a pioneer initiative to integrate the clinical use of mindfulness into the existing psychological treatment programme for female drug abusers in a drug addiction treatment centre, was launched in May 2017 to enhance the desistance among drug abusers.



### Religious Services

Apart from promoting mindfulness, HKCSD also encourages PICs to cultivate positive outlook or habit with religious practice. A full-time Chaplain co-ordinates the planning and provision of religious services. He is assisted by a number of volunteer Chaplains who visit and conduct services for PICs on a regular basis. Many volunteers and non-government organisations (NGOs) also provide a wide range of spiritual and social services in correctional institutions.

### Education/Vocational Training and Employment Services

For rehabilitated persons to stay strong on the path of rehabilitation, a fair job opportunity and sustained employment is pivotal. Our effort in recruiting support from social and community partners has contributed in providing job opportunities.

With an aim to enhance the employability of PICs upon release, HKCSD, in collaboration with different entrepreneurs/trade associations and training agencies, offers various market-oriented vocational trainings which help them acquire up-to-date and frequently sought vocational skills in the labour market. For adult PICs, more than 1,400 training places of some 40 trades, including construction, engineering, food and beverages, retail, tourism, logistics, beauty care, etc., are provided. For young PICs, HKCSD provides half-day education as well as half-day vocational training. The trainees will be arranged to sit for examinations held by accreditation bodies, for instance, the *City and Guilds*, and the *Construction Industry Council*, etc. They may also take certificate courses offered by various training institutes.

Over the years, Certificate Presentation Ceremonies (CPC) have been held in penal facilities to



A young PIC shared his satisfactory results in the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education Examination 2017 with his parents

recognise the academic and vocational achievements attained by PICs as well as their commitment to personal enhancement. In 2016-17, a total of seven CPCs were organised for PICs where their family members, NGO service partners, guests from district organisations for offender rehabilitation and community partners were invited to participate in the events.

Symposiums on Employment for Rehabilitated Offenders co-organised by HKCSD and tertiary institutions provide a platform for the employers whom have hired rehabilitated offenders to share their experience of engaging them in their work force. Such a platform also gives rehabilitated offenders an opportunity to share their stories of reintegration.

The scheme of Pre-release Employment Services is established to provide an interactive job-matching platform for potential employers and rehabilitated offenders. PICs will gain access to job vacancy information through the Pre-release Reintegration Orientation Course and job vacancy notices displayed in institutions. Job interviews by video-conference or by tele-con-

ference could be arranged at the request of potential employers in person. Job vacancy information is now also made available to super-  
vises under statutory supervision.

## Familial and Group Level

While progress of rehabilitation may partly rely on “holistic and personalized” support rendered through the services at individual level, family as well as group support are vital resources in co-producing desistance by offering emotional and practical support and informal social control.<sup>2</sup> Besides, they may strengthen the rehabilitated persons’ determination to start anew on which hinges the key to successful rehabilitation.

### Inmate-Parent Programme (IPP)

The IPP aims to help young PICs strengthen the relationship with their parents and improve communication skills, so that on one hand, allowing the parents to stay positive and be prepared for handling their children’s potential rehabilitation issues upon discharge, and on the

Activity	Target Group	Content
i) Familiarisation Visit	Parents of newly-admitted young PIC	- Institutional visits to locations such as dormitory, workshops and classrooms to understand the custodial environment and rehabilitation programmes to alleviate parents’ worries
ii) Birthday Treat/ Birthday Party	Parents & Young PICs	- Birthday celebration at institution - Sharing precious moments and boosting positive family relationship
iii) Inmate-Parent Group	Parents & Young PICs	- Interactive groups to help build better communication
iv) Parents’ Day	Parents & Young PICs	- Interactive games - Discussion by clinical psychologists on effective means to nurture young people - Briefing on community resources available for young people
v) Specialists’ Talk for Young PICs’ Parents	Parents of Young PICs	- Seminar by clinical psychologists and outside professionals

<sup>2</sup> Weaver, B. (2013). Co-producing Desistance: Who Works to Support Desistance? In I. Durnescu, & F. McNeill (Eds.), Understanding Penal Practices (pp. 193-205).

other hand, boosting the determination of the young PICs to stay away from crime upon discharge and progress to rehabilitation. The Programme consists of five major activities:

A featured activity in recent Parent Day, namely "From Head", highlighted young PICs' effort and talent in hairdressing after receiving vocational training run by Vocational Training Council at a rehabilitation centre as representation of their affection and thankfulness to their parents. The event found the young PICs giving hair treatment to their parents who did not only show great appreciation for their children's change and accomplishment but also recognized the value of the event in strengthening family bonding. Another heartwarming occasion on which young PICs paid tribute to their parents took place at training centres where young PICs who had been trained in food and beverage industry prepared a meal for their parents. The event even saw the presence of local artists and celebrities showing their support.



A famous actress, Miss Louisa So, showed her support to inmate-parent programme in Cape Collinson Correctional Institution.

## Family Album

This project adopts narrative approaches to help young rehabilitated persons reconnect with their family members, particularly their parents. By drawing them together to create a family album, the process offers them a chance to review their lives together. It aims to facilitate an in-depth understanding of what motivates the rehabilitat-

ed persons, the significance of potential opportunities for change and how they might interact with an individual's personal priorities, values, aspirations and relational concerns. The project enables participants to develop structural narratives about themselves and their loved ones, thus promoting an individual's self-understanding.

## **Collective Level**

To facilitate desistance at collective level, HKCSD has been playing the role of community navigator. Areas of work include identifying and facilitating access to available community resources, aligning resources and cultivating new partnerships, and promoting collaboration between individuals, organizations and communities.

## Community Engagement

HKCSD has been reaching out to the community to seek public engagement for offender rehabilitation. Among other partners, the Committee on Community Support for Rehabilitated Offenders, comprised of community leaders and professionals, advises on offender rehabilitation and publicity strategies. With around 240 volunteers, the CSD Rehabilitation Volunteer Group (CSDRVG) conducted language courses, computer studies, cultural events, and activities to meet various needs of PICs. A number of publicity events such as District Fight Crime Committees District-based Publicity Activities on Offender Rehabilitation, Thank-you NGO Month, NGO Forum and Award Presentation Ceremony for Volunteers of CSDRVG, has bridged PICs and the wider community to highlight the importance of collaborative efforts made by community members and NGOs to accept and help offenders rehabilitate.

Collaboration with social enterprises on training and referral of suitable rehabilitated offenders to

relevant industries are also put into practice. HKCSD participated in various exhibitions, such as Hong Kong Brands and Products Expo and Hong Kong Flower Show, which are opportunities to showcase products made by PICs. This helps to promote their employability, in addition to enhancing the image of HKCSD.

With a view to enhancing positive energy in the society and creating opportunities for the disadvantaged, HKCSD also collaborated with the Society of Rehabilitation and Crime Prevention, Hong Kong and a private enterprise to launch a social enterprise bakery in July 2017. Employment opportunities were provided to young rehabilitated persons who had received food and beverage training.



Volunteers from various NGOs were awarded for their continual support of Rehabilitated Offenders

## Positive Energy Map and Continuing Care Project

Positive Energy Map is a comprehensive database of valuable community resources categorized by districts and types of services provided by NGOs in the community. It has been launched since late 2015. Through making referrals to district NGOs for enrolling supervisees who are under statutory supervision after their release in various community activities, young rehabilitated persons are expected to be able to establish healthy hobbies, sustain the positive values developed under custody and create a new social circle. In addition, young

ex-offenders will be referred to appropriate government departments or NGOs for assistance according to their needs and wishes under "Continuing Care Project". Since 2004, over 2,800 referrals have been made under the Project.

*“According to our latest statistics, the overall recidivism rate in Hong Kong has decreased from 39.9% in 2002 to 27.1% in 2015.”*

## Rehabilitation Pioneer Project (RPP)

For promoting community education, HKCSD has launched the Rehabilitation Pioneer Project (RPP) since September 2008. It is an integrated set of enhanced public education initiatives to promote crime prevention by advocating the messages of "Be law-abiding - Stay away from drugs - Support offender rehabilitation" to the youths through nine different activities. To uplift the sense of social responsibility and further develop a correct attitude against crimes, PICs/rehabilitated persons are encouraged to take part in RPP activities as "life coach" by recounting their bitter experience in sharing sessions with participating students. The sharing has not only enabled the participating students to realise the serious consequences of committing crimes, but also helped the PICs/rehabilitated persons strengthened their confidence and determination to lead a law-abiding life upon discharge. Having secured public recognition and support, RPP has secured a total of 301,753 participants since its establishment to the end of 2017.



The Rehabilitation Pioneer Project disseminates to the young people the messages of leading a law-abiding and drug-free life as well as supporting offender rehabilitation.

## Conclusion

With an ambition to become one of the co-producers of desistance, HKCSD will continue to actively review and enhance various types of rehabilitation services and programmes in light of social changes and needs. For example, a consultancy study to review the Drug Addiction Treatment Centres (DATC) programme was launched in September 2016 in an attempt to identify rooms for improvement in the DATC programme. The study is expected to be completed in 2018. Another longitudinal study lasting for three years will also be conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of the rehabilitation programmes of HKCSD in terms of facilitating the rehabilitated persons to reintegrate into the society.

According to our latest statistics, the overall recidivism rate in Hong Kong has decreased from 39.9% in 2002 to 27.1% in 2015. In addition, our

efforts in community education and rehabilitation services have saved a total of HK\$74.3 billion incurred by criminal activities over the past five years according to the latest consultative study commissioned to a local university. Such encouraging findings have vouched for our investment in community education in the way forward.

HKCSD will continuously commit to protecting the public and reducing crime through safe custody, coupled with appropriate rehabilitation programmes to prevent PICs from re-offending after release. Collaboration with various stakeholders in community education to promote the message of supporting offender rehabilitation will remain the department's sustained endeavor of crime prevention.





## Education Behind Bars: Lifelong Learning - Malaysia Prison Department

Contributed by Malaysia Prison Department

### Introduction

Studies have shown that reoffending numbers will increase tremendously if ex-offenders remain jobless. Once they are unable to find a suitable job, they will likely to reoffend. Most ex-offenders failed to secure a job because they do not have sufficient skillsets. Most of them are illiterate and lack the necessary skills to handle effective communication. These will increase the risk of reoffending. Obviously this scenario contributes to re-offenders or recidivism in the future if authorities fail to address the factors leading to it. The recent increase in the number of new prisons built in the country to accommodate more inmates is a clear sign for us to address re-offending issues

quickly before the situation becomes worse.

Aligning with the UNESCO Slogan, “*Education for All*”, the Education Ministry of Malaysia has decided to prioritise education among young inmates in the prison so that they would not be left behind by the mainstream education system. For this purpose, Prison Department of Malaysia has introduced Integrity Schools strictly for young inmates. This Integrity School started in 2008 in cooperation with the Ministry of Education. Inmates under the age of 21 or juveniles and young offenders were placed under this education system. The school has similar curriculum with other schools in Malaysia.



Graduates congratulated by Deputy Minister of Home Affairs during the 2017<sup>th</sup> Open University Convocation held especially for the inmates.

## Early Education in Prison

The Integrity School and Henry Gurney Schools play an important role in the life of the youth

### EDUCATION: Hope behind bars



inmates by providing a conducive education environment for inmates and teachers. The integrity school has all the necessary facilities to cater the needs of inmate students. There is a resource library where the inmates can do revision or borrow books to help them in their studies. There is also a computer room catered for inmates who are interested to learn basic computer skills such as MS Words and Powerpoint .

Students in the Integrity School adhere strictly to the Prison rules and regulations. They are required to adopt organizing skills in accordance to the school stipulated time frame. Should they fail to follow the school rules, they have to face the consequences. Thus, it is very hard to find a student who disobeys any of the prison rules and regulation.

The prison school offers various programmes and activities, like the annual school sports day, teacher's day, independence day celebration, language based competition, co – academic competition, games and athletic events among Integrity and Henry Gurney schools, correctional cadet competition among the integrity schools, song and poetry competition and so on. Such programmes provide the inmates with avenues to shape their



Inmates who has graduated successfully attends special Convocation Ceremony.

personality, as well as a platform to show their talents and cultivate positive traits. With these programmes, we hope to turn them into good citizens and thus prevent reoffending.

## Higher Education in Prison

The Prison Department has started the higher education programme as soon as the school was established. The tertiary education is a collaborative effort between Malaysian Prisons Department and Open University of Malaysia. Inmates who are keen in furthering their studies are given opportunities to enroll in diploma, bachelor degree, post graduate and even Doctorate programmes. This is meant to cater for the development of the intellectual capacities of talented inmates. We believe that we can only put their physical bodies "inside" but not their minds. Most of the prisoners are eligible to further their studies with the support from the family. Besides obtaining an academic qualification, we also get their families to commit to support their sons or daughters in their academic pursuits as ultimately, they still have to reunite with their families upon release.

## Education Staff

Teachers play an important role at the Integrity

School where inmates see them as role models and a parent-figure. The amount of care and concern given by the teachers, will slowly shape their character in becoming good citizens. Our inmates respect their teachers and follow their instructions. Thus, it is important that our teachers are experienced and qualified. In the prison school, teachers are equipped with knowledge in counseling, psychology and pedagogy. What differentiates a teacher and prison officer, is the perception they have of inmates. Prison officers are trained to focus on safe and secure custody of inmates, hence, it is imperative for them to focus on their operations rather than inmate rehabilitation. On the other hand, teachers are educators, and view inmates as individuals with a capacity to learn and change. Everyone makes mistakes in their life, and must be given room for change. Inmates are also human with basic needs such as the desire for love, care and positive relationships; and strict laws and regulation alone are insufficient to encourage change in them.

*“The Prison Department has started the higher education programme as soon as the school was established.”*

## Change Factors

Recidivism is reduced through the establishment of Integrity Schools for the young inmates in the selected Malaysian Prison and Academic Unit in Henry Gurney Schools. Inmates who have gone through the education system often do not re-offend when they are released.

**There are a few factors on why the young inmates could have changed after involvement in education phase.**

a. **Facilities** – conducive facilities are availa-



New Integrity School built for young inmates to continue their education with a better facilities and accommodation

ble and found at the Integrity Schools.

- b. **Rules and Regulation** – rules and regulations must be obeyed and followed by the inmates either at the Integrity School area or in the prison itself.
- c. **Discipline** – self-discipline and following of instructions to carry out task given without any complains.
- d. **Teacher Factor** – teachers as role models are assigned to guide and teach inmates, give moral support, inculcate values and skills, and bring out the best in them.
- e. **Activities and Programmes** – programmes and activities planned by the Integrity School and the Prison Department that enhance students’ education.

## Conclusion

Rehabilitation is a process of educating our young offenders and adult prisoners before they complete their sentences. Although there are many ways to change the person, education is still one of the best.



## Intensive Personality Education Programme – Korea Correctional Service (KCS)

Contributed by Korea Correctional Service (KCS)

### Intensive Personality Education Programme - Korea Correctional Service (KCS)

**K**orea Correctional Service (KCS) introduced a variety of education programmes aimed at changing inmates' thinking, with the hope of helping inmates released from the correctional facility reintegrate into society successfully. Rehabilitating inmates would result in better recidivism outcomes, protecting the people and also helping to reduce social costs arising from recidivism.

Other than traditional reformation programmes such as religious and academic education, correctional facilities across the country have also developed various types of education and edification programmes. These include culture arts programme, reformation programme for sex offenders, rehabilitation programme for drug offenders, employment and startup education for inmates, reintegration programme for those released from prison, rehabilitation education for alcohol addicts, as well as programmes targeting offending behaviours.

In particular, the importance of addressing offending behavior to effect change has emerged as an important factor for successful return to society and prevention of recidivism. In line with this, the paradigm of Korea's correction and edification policy has changed from the existing accommodation management-first correction policy, towards strengthening rehabilitation and reintegration.



Figure 1. Lecture on anger control in the basic course

Despite the challenges of inmates' poor motivational level and participation in programmes, and shortage of professionals to provide rehabilitation and reintegration programmes, we recognised the need to review our rehabilitation guidelines. In December 2008, we revised the "guidelines on inmates' rehabilitation" to the "guidelines on operation of inmates' rehabilitation and edification," implementing programmes for the inmates. Inmates are eligible to receive programmes within six months after being sentenced. Each programme consists of over 15 hours of education, spanning 3 to 5 days, and contains topics such as relationship reparation, psychological treatment, group therapy and moral education. In August 2010, a topic on filial piety was also included for inmates at correctional facilities.

Despite such efforts, the continuation of violent crimes and the high recidivism rate have failed to reduce the people's uneasiness on the country's state of security. Since October 2013, the inten-

sive personality education programme, which has been conducted for a short period of 15 hours at correctional facilities in the country, was drastically extended in terms of education hours arising from an increased budget and revamped individual education career. A trial of the actual correction and enhanced programme for the intensive personality education was designed to reduce the recidivism rate through the basic personality change of inmates, and was carried out at six institutions, including Yeosu Correctional Institution. In March 2015, the programme was classified into three stages of I, II and III with a corresponding 35, 100 and 300 hours of programme duration, respectively. It is delivered at all correctional institutions for inmates with fixed sentences and in accordance to their prison terms.

To improve several problems resulting from the nationwide implementation of the intensive personality education programme, it was

reviewed in January 2016. Stage I, the 35-hour course, educates new inmates on what to expect before their release. The Stage II course was changed to be a 100-hour basic course and the Stage III course was changed to a 220-hour intensive course. The adjustment of the education hours was made after evaluating the solicited feedback from inmates who had completed the programme as well as education experts and field staff who were involved in it.

The evaluation of the intensive personality education programme also incorporated specific criminogenic factors (Attitude of Law-abidance, Pro-sociality, Family Relations, Self-control, and Personal Relations) that would contribute to inmates' risk of recidivism in order to gauge the effectiveness of the programme. The evaluation results indicated that the three stages of the programme were beneficial in improving inmates' self-control, especially.



Figure 2. Advanced Programme on affirmative psychology

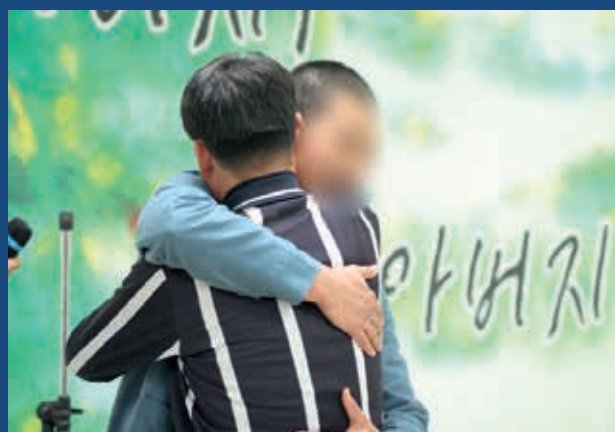


Figure 3. Topic on parental relations during the advanced programme

*“In December 2008, we revised the "guidelines on inmates' rehabilitation" to the "guidelines on operation of inmates' rehabilitation and edification," implementing programmes for the inmates.”*



Figure 4. Topic on relationship reparation during the advanced programme

In June 2017, the "global citizens' education" programme, aimed at fostering mature global citizens who understand and respect universal values such as the world peace, human rights and cultural diversity, was introduced as part of the intensive personality education course to provide a more holistic programme.

Since its inception, a total of 29,844 inmates have completed the intensive personality education programme - 70 in 2013, 579 in 2014, 8,604 in 2015, 10,066 in 2016 and 10,525 in 2017.

In February 2018, the two-year recidivism rate was calculated for the 2015 cohort of inmates according to those who went through the intensive personality education programme in 2017 and those who did not. The results are as follows.

- Out of 24,576 prisoners released in 2015 who did not attend the programme, 4,714 were committed to correctional institutions again within

two years, equating to a recidivism rate of 19.18%.

- On the other hand, the recidivism rate of released prisoners who completed the intensive personality education was 17.81% (636 re-offenders out of 3,571 released inmates). This comparative result showed that the intensive personality education programme had a positive effect in preventing inmates' re-offending.
- Based on the evaluation results for inmates who completed the intensive personality education in 2017 (as of 31 Dec 2017) a positive change was noted in all fields of the five criminogenic factors used to measure recidivism risk (Attitude of law-abidance +0.80, Pro-sociality +0.86, Family Relations +1.30, Self-control +0.31, Personal Relations +0.80). In so, the intensive personality education programme has proven to be an effective policy in lowering inmates' risk of recidivism and reducing the recidivism rate.





## Family Activities in Macao Correctional Services Bureau

Contributed by Macao Correctional Services Bureau

Inmates will all return home one day when they are released from the prison. Hence, it is undoubtedly that families play an important role in inmate's rehabilitation. The source of practical and emotional support is a great driving force that can better help them to rebuild confidence, to reintegrate into the community and to desist from reoffending. Recently, with Mother's Day and Father's Day celebration, the Correctional Services Bureau in Macao held a Mother's Day activity on 6 May and a Father's Day activity on 10 June. The purpose is to alleviate inmates' homesickness and to give them an opportunity to express their gratitude to their beloved parents. These occasions gave inmates precious reunion time with their families to strengthen their ties, so that inmates would be more confident in their journey towards reintegration.



The mother and son give a big hug deeply



An inmate gives massage to his father

*“The source of practical and emotional support is a great driving force that can better help them to rebuild confidence, to reintegrate into the community and to desist from reoffending.”*

At the two activities, the inmates started off by giving heartfelt massages to their mothers and fathers while sharing bits and pieces of their recent lives. Then, the Bureau played a video clip featuring inmates who opened up about their wholehearted feelings toward their parents. One of the inmates featured in the video, Wai (pseudonym), mentioned how he had failed his mother

multiple times but was still forgiven. Therefore, he vowed to be a good son, make his mother proud and never let his family down again. After hearing the inmates' vows for change and self-reform, the mothers were touched and moved to tears, while the fathers mentioned that their biggest wish was for their children to learn from their mistakes, lead an honest life and come home soon.

Aside from the video clip, each inmate followed the Chinese traditional culture of serving their parents a cup of warm tea, to thank them for their unconditional care and love. Although it was an



A father encourages his son

ordinary cup of tea, the parents' faces brimmed with joy and satisfaction. Moreover, the inmates wrote to their parents on the wish cards they made and also sang several songs to express their love and filial piety.

The Correctional Services Bureau hopes to continue organizing similar events to strengthen the relationship between inmates and their families, as well as to remind inmates of the care, support and encouragement from them. By doing so, we hope our inmates will have more confidence in preparing themselves to return home, reintegrating into the society successfully and desisting from crime.



Inmates sing for their parents

*“These occasions gave inmates precious reunion time with their families to strengthen their ties, so that inmates would be more confident in their journey towards reintegration.”*





# Preventing Re-offending through Rehabilitating Drug Abusers – Mongolia

Contributed by Mongolia

## GENERAL EXECUTIVE AGENCY OF COURT DECISION, MONGOLIA

### Preventing Re-offending through Rehabilitating Drug Abusers

The current situation of illegal trading of narcotics and psychotropic substance in Mongolia between 2011-2016 is as follows:



Registered crime number, incident number, and number of persons involved in crime

- Crime number; -Blue color
- Incident number;-Red color
- Number of persons involved in the commission of crime; -Green color

In Mongolia, the Department of Corrections is responsible for the country's prisons. The Department of Corrections is part of the General Executive Agency of Court Decision.

The General Executive Agency of Court Decision oversees various correctional administrations including law enforcement and establishing order among prisoners, providing control and security, organizing socialization works, conducting trainings, and labor works.

In order to help the prisoners to rehabilitate and reintegrate successfully, the General Executive Agency of Court Decision recognize the importance of conducting vocational training that provide useful skillsets with an aim to change negative behaviors and trends.

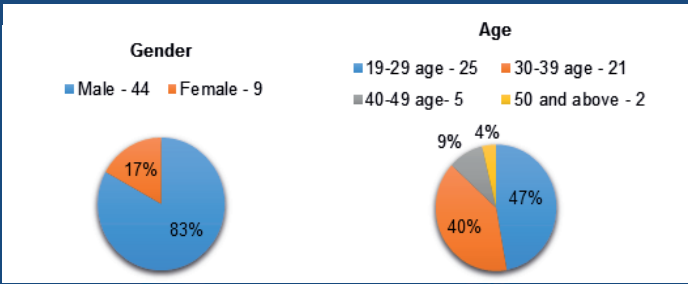
### Crime Trends

According to the first half of 2017 statistics, there are a total of 53 prisoners, and 12 accused in the detention pursuant to the articles of 188, 191, and 192 of Law on Crime. These offenders are charged with drug trafficking in the territory of Mongolia.



[- Others (blue color), - Narcotics (orange color)]

From the table below, the gender of those who are charged for crimes related to narcotics and psychotropic substances, is 83% (or 44 in actual number) for male, and 17% (or 9 in actual number) for female respectively. In accordance with their age groups, the 47% (or 25 in actual numbers) is in between 19-29, the other 40% is in 30-39, and 4% to 5% is in 40-49 respectively. There are only 2 who are over 50 years old.



According to the education level illustrated in the figure below, majority of the offenders have completed high school while 32% of the offenders are graduates. In other words, in terms of social status, it can be concluded that this majority belongs to the average or higher than average group of society.

Also, it can be determined that the substantial number of drug related offenders committed their

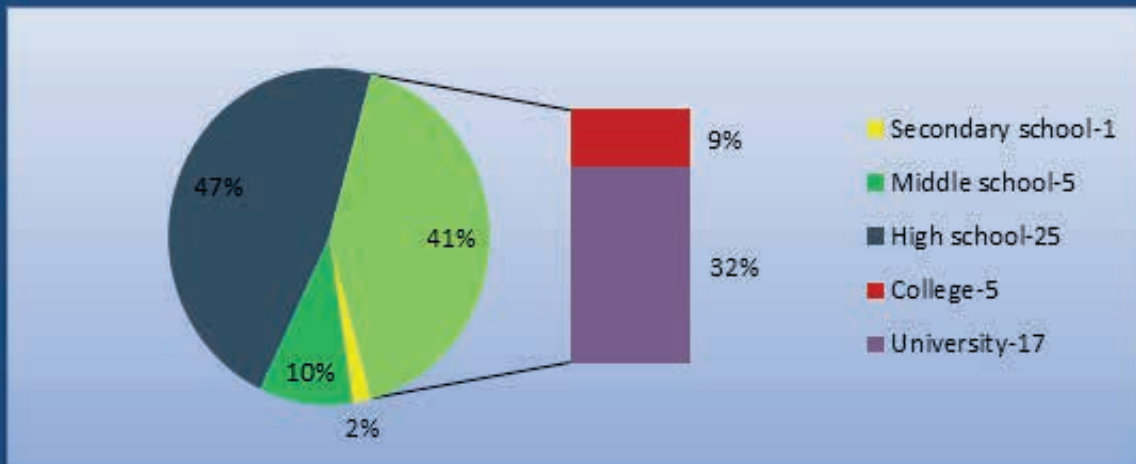
crimes due to psychological condition, and poor peer influence.

It also concluded that some offenders are unaware of the ramifications relating to the law and legal sanctions on the misuse of narcotics and psychotropic substances. Pursuant to the punishment regime, 9 of the total accused are in detention, 24 are in low to medium security prison, and 20 are in the maximum security prison.

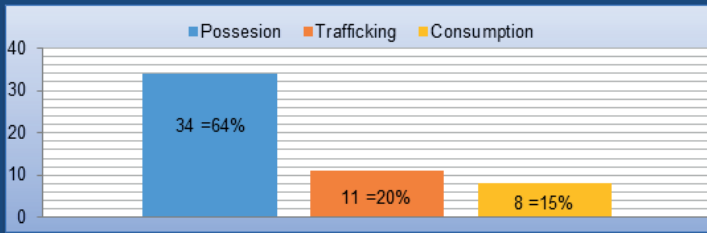
In terms of the specific drug offences, 64.1% (or 34 in actual number) of total accused is charged for possession, 20% (or 11 in actual number) is charged for trafficking, and the rest of 8% to 15% of total accused is charged for consumption.

From our study and review on women offenders, majority of them committed crime relating to possession and trafficking. They tend to influence others to use the narcotics and psychotropic substances rather than for personal consumption, and they are mostly acting on behalf of drug cartels.

There are 3 foreign prisoners who committed crime on narcotics and psychotropic substance abroad, and sentenced currently in Mongolia through extradition treaties between countries. Here, it should be noted that these 3 prisoners were in their 20's when they committed the crime.



[By education level: - low, - incomplete secondary level, - Complete secondary level, - Professional education level, - higher level of education]



## Rehabilitation Regimes in Prisons

Our psychologists and social workers from the Department of Corrections are conducting an individual and group meeting with these prisoners, and to intervene them on the harmful effect of narcotics and psychotropic substances that caused physical and psychological damages. In addition, the Department of Corrections have undertaken certain measures to provide prisoners with yoga classes that can aid their rehabilitation. According to the feedback from the yoga class participants, our prisoners expressed that they have benefited from it as they have learnt to cultivate positive attitudes through physical, mental and spiritual practices that helps in their anger management.

However, there are no medical assistance and services catered to the prisoners who are under physical and psychological depression due to drugs withdrawal symptoms as this situation may inadvertently affect the prison operations.

While the Department of Corrections conduct psychological intervention for prisoners who are charged for narcotic related crimes, it is also important for the department to assist prisoners in their rehabilitation and reintegration through work programmes. One of the successful work programmes involves the provision of work places inside the open prison system in industries such as agriculture, manufacturing and minerals. Depending on the type of vocational training, sometimes inmates work outside of the protected area under close security control. The vocational training aims to facilitate prisoners' reintegration into society upon release.



Inmates participating in Yoga classes





M U L T I M E D I A   H U B  
Tanah Merah Prison  
Singapore



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Special thanks to the inmates at MMH for their dedication  
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**SINGAPORE  
PRISON SERVICE**