

Mission Statement

The Agency provides education, training, and treatment designed to encourage positive changes and meet the rehabilitative needs of offenders. We are committed to enhancing public safety through the utilization of evidence-based practices to reduce the rate of recidivism while promoting efficiency and economy in the delivery of correctional services. We are dedicated to improving quality of life and public safety by being professional and non-judgmental with respect to individual needs; being proactive through accountability, empathy and encouragement to support offenders; and creating awareness to empower individuals to make positive changes resulting in an alternative lifestyle to live productively and lawfully.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Recovery Night	2
National Night Out	3
VA Drug Diversion School	3
Happiness & Emotional Well Being	4

Spotlight: Welcome Michael!



Michael Walker began working with Riverside Criminal Justice Agency as a Probation Officer on August 1, 2016. Prior to joining the agency, Mike was employed as the Program Director with Metro Area Support Services, working with clients with mental health issues. He had worked in that capacity since 2008. Mike obtained his bachelors degree from Virginia State University in 2015 in Criminal Justice, and is currently working on his Master's Degree in Public Administration from Liberty University. In addition, Mike is

a founder of Men About Progress, which is a mentor organization for juvenile males in the tri-cities area. He says he mentors to give back to the community and to help impact the lives of youth that need a role model they can look up to. When not working he enjoys his role as a mentor, fishing, drag racing, and flag football. He is also quite the DJ! Mike is full of surprises, is very spunky, and chose the criminal justice field to make an impact in the lives of those around him.

Communication

Communication skills, both verbal and non-verbal, are valuable tools within the workplace. Effective communication skills go beyond routine conversations to and include body language, facial expressions, written reports, and e-mails. Communicating within the workplace helps foster relationships between management and staff to create a highly efficient team. When communication proves to be effective, employees are able to trust each other as well as the management team. This will produce a harmonious work environment with high productivity, integrity, and responsibility. When employees are competent within their roles and feel a sense

of appreciation, the department can be effectively managed thorough providing constructive criticism without creating a hostile working environment. An open yet effective line of communication between management and staff boosts morale being when employees feel appreciated through effective communication. This produces a healthy and prosperous work environment. When communication within the agency is lacking and appears to be ineffective, it creates frustration and confusion; however, a positive and productive management team has the ability to alleviate these issues by keeping the lines of communication free and clear. What type of communicator are you?



September is Recovery Month

Riverside Criminal Justice Agency chose to celebrate September "Recovery Month". Staff invited our clients, drug court participants, and tried to spread the word about the event to the NA/AA Communities, and others. The event was held on campus under the pavilion at Scott Park. John Randolph Medical Center, Dr. Jeff Jacobs, Center for Therapeutic Justice, and District 19 Community Services Board were more than happy to partner with us for the event by providing information substance abuse and recovery services within the community. There were over 50 people in attendance for this first event! Anthony Crain did a marvelous facilitating the group. He welcomed the attendees



with a powerful message and then led an open group meeting. Many people with long term recovery shared their story and encouraged others to keep working and focusing on their recovery; they advised them not to become complacent. Focus was given to the disease of addiction and how it is ruthless and without regard to people, but how support can make ongoing recovery possible. We can't thank John Randolph Medical Center enough for providing funds for food to be enjoyed by all who attended, free of charge. We are fortunate to have a strong Community Policing unit in Prince George county with whom we work closely. Prince George Police Officer Harold Shreves volunteered to cook for the group as well. This spoke volumes to those in attendance. Comments at the end of the event were extremely positive. Thus, plans



are already being discussed for next year's event. This proved to be a very successful collaborative effort and that impacted lives of some of the participants.



National Night Out at Pine Ridge Mobile Home Park

For several years, staff at Riverside Criminal Justice Agency has enjoyed participating in National Night Out activities at Country Aire Mobile Home Park. This year, we decided to move to a different site to meet more of our neighbors in the community. Heavy rains fell right before the event started, but the skies cleared just in time for the cookout! The Park Manager had arranged



for a magician to perform who made most elaborate balloon animals! There were also a variety of other children's games, music and a raffle for residents to enjoy. But the hit of the evening was the appearance of Nat the National Night Out Knight. One child was so determined to go home with Nat that he wrapped himself around his leg as he tried to leave! Our agency purchased the knight as we think NNO a great opportunity to get into the community and build that rapport with residents and the police that protect them!



Virginia State Police Drug Diversion School & Prescription Monitoring Program

Probation Officer Vern Phelps recently had the opportunity to attend the Virginia State Police Drug Diversion School as a prerequisite to being able to access the Prescription Drug Monitoring Program (PMP). The two and a half day training was packed with information focusing on Prescription drug abuse, misuse, forgery, theft, and fraud. However, the predominate message delivered during the this training is that we all need to work together in every capacity as a community to focus on prevention and early deterrence. Drug Diversion is described as any movement of any legal drug into an illicit marketplace. As we hear more and more of overdoses in our communities and the misuse



of prescription drugs, it effects us all. We all know someone who has been effected by this growing problem. The statistics say that 1 in 20 Americans use prescription medicine for non-medical use. While that statistic that was presented seemed alarming, it makes sense in what we are seeing today in the criminal justice field. We are no longer seeing the person who is addicted to just one substance but to several substances, many of them prescription medications that are obtained legally but are misused or are obtained illegally by various means. The Prescription Drug Monitoring Program

was developed as a tool to attempt to combat prescription drug abuse in Virginia. This system is administered by the Department of Health. It records the scheduled narcotics and other controlled substances that people have filled and makes this information available for open investigations. Personnel that complete the Drug Diversion School are able to see when and how people are obtaining medications. This system was not primarily developed for law enforcement but for the health care system in order to for doctors to see if patients were given similar prescriptions by other doctors and within what period of time. This helps reduce and deter "Doctor Shopping" and other types of prescription misuse.

CORRECTION CONNECTION

Happiness and Emotional Well-being

A healthy diet and exercise are great for your body, but don't neglect your emotional health and well-being. Reducing stress, getting enough sleep, and having fun are all ways to find happiness. When your mind is frazzled and stressed, and your emotions are taking over your thoughts and affecting your everyday activities, it's time to take a step back, take a deep breath, and relax. Focusing on your physical health is important, but treating your mind and spirit deserve the same attention.

Your emotional health is just a term for how you feel...your overall happiness and well-being. Are you stressed? Unhappy? Unsatisfied? Worried or anxious? Then, your emotional health needs some serious attention, or your body will start paying the price. Some simple and enjoyable changes are all it takes to boost happiness and well-being:

- Exercise. It protects physical and emotional health, relieves stress and makes you feel good.
- Sleep. Everyone gets cranky without enough sleep, so dedicate adequate sleep time every night. Treat yourself to a nap every now and then
- Be healthy inside. Avoid junk food and stick to a healthy diet. Steer clear of smoking, drug use, and too much alcohol.
- Be creative. Spend time learning new things, like a new language or skill (knitting, music). Even just working in your yard or garden can help you relax and feel satisfied.
- Treat your senses. Do little things that treat your senses (indulge in a massage, buy fresh-cut flowers, light a scented candle, treat yourself to your favorite food or drink).
- Adopt an animal. Pets offer fun, relaxation, and a whole lot of love. They can encourage you to exercise and tear your attention away from stressful activities
- Get More Sleep. Even mild sleep problems can damage your well-being and quality of life. Create a bedtime ritual...go to bed and wake at the same time every day. Remove all electronic stimulation; create a cool, dark and quiet room; avoid high intake of alcohol, caffeine and sugary foods which can disrupt sleep patterns.
- Manage stress. Staying positive during difficult times may reduce stress...smiling during stressful period can lower your body's stress response, regardless of whether you are feeling happy or sad. Learn and practice yoga. Make lists to help put things into perspective. Take regular breaks and be assertive about not taking on too much.

