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Orange, Santa Ana and Tustin. In addition, the SSA invited police departments to have ERU personnel at their location. The following communities are involved as a result: Fountain Valley, Fullerton, La Habra, La Palma, Newport Beach and Westminster.

Table 2 presents the number of social workers assigned to each unit showing a 22% decrease in full-time equivalent personnel over the past three years. Caseload has remained relatively constant over the past three years with new referrals per social worker averaging 12 new cases and 22-24 open cases per month in 2010. Interviews revealed that the number of cases assigned to each social worker is manageable as they have remained relatively constant over the past three years.

**Table 2**  
**ERU STAFFING (2008 – 2010)**

	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>
<b>ER UNIT I</b>	73	65	56
<b>ER UNIT II</b>	61	51	48
<b>TOTAL</b>	134	116	104

The ERU respond to referrals from CAR by making critical analyses and decisions. This necessitates review of all information provided by CAR, review of “priors”, that is prior events (e.g. criminal records, previous reports) by all involved in the case. Clarity and detailed information coming from CAR is essential for the ERU social workers to make a logical, legal, caring response. Social workers are asked to respond to a wide range of cases, some requiring an immediate response and possibly removal of a child. They must analyze each case appropriately and then process their conclusions and recommendations with their supervisors to ensure that appropriate decisions and actions are taken. This is most pronounced when an immediate response is called for. The ERU social workers are often the first professionals to arrive at a scene where child abuse may have occurred or where children may be at risk for being abused or neglected. Their initial objectives are to evaluate and address immediate needs, both medical and psychological. Ensuring the safety of the child is paramount.

Cases assigned to the social workers vary in complexity. Some are very routine requiring less research and can be resolved quickly. Others can be very complex, requiring extensive research, multiple home visits and interaction with a number of agencies. For example, a case that involves a domestic dispute and a child removal requires considerably more time on the part of the social worker. Such cases may remain “open” beyond the 30 day close date expected of ERU. Supervisors were found to be sensitive to individual case loads (new and open) and assign new cases accordingly.

Recognizing the need to address complex cases requiring additional hours and the necessity for responding 24 hours a day, overtime pay is available on a limited basis. Overtime pay is allocated sparingly with some social workers indicating that flex-time was the norm rather than overtime. Flex-time allows work hours to be adjusted to change from an 8:00 to 5:00 schedule to accommodate evenings and/or weekends. Overtime paid for the past three years was:

- \$448,431 (2008)
- \$170,118 (2009)
- \$269,736 (2010)

Orange County law enforcement agencies work closely with ERU personnel with designated contacts in the Sheriff's Department and 21 community police departments. Law enforcement gets involved in a number of ways: (1) some reports of child abuse are reported directly to law enforcement which they report to CAR, (2) they may discover abuse cases while on duty and (3) social workers request assistance from law enforcement where there is danger present for anyone involved in a case.

Children and Family Services does not specifically track the number of referrals to law enforcement, however, they are involved in the majority of ERU investigations that involve a removal. Table 3 shows the number of removals for 2008 – 2010.

**Table 3**  
**NUMBER OF CHILDREN REMOVED**  
**FROM THEIR RESIDENCE**  
**(2008 – 2010)**

2008	1,684
2009	1,499
2010	1,512

Removing a child from a home is an action taken only when a child cannot safely remain there. If removal is necessary, the social worker is responsible for transporting the child to a secure location such as the Orangewood Children and Family Center. California law allows a child to be detained for 72 hours. The Intake Unit can petition the court within 72 hours or dismiss the petition. It may propose a family maintenance agreement using strategies such as counseling, parenting classes, or referral to one of the 12 Family Resource Centers. The primary goal is to work with the parents for possible reunification as soon as possible. Input from the ERU case manager is critical.

Interviews with both social workers and law enforcement representatives revealed a very positive working relationship. A significant number of ERU personnel described a good working relationship with Orange County Sheriff's Department deputies. During interviews with ERU personnel and representatives of the Sheriff's Department, both recommended more joint in-service training so they could understand each other's role in order to increase efficiency.

When asked why the number of cases reported in Orange County has remained relatively constant, interviewees indicated that improvement in established prevention and intervention programs is a major factor. In addition, increased efficiency in screening calls has reduced the number of responses to unsubstantiated reports. Also, well coordinated efforts in the other three areas of Children and Family Services (Family Assessment and Shelter Services, Continuing Family Services, and Planning and Permanency Services) have reduced recidivism. When considering the percentage of children who were victims of sub-

stantiated or indicated child maltreatment, over 95% did not have additional maltreatment during the subsequent six months. Orange County exceeds both state and national standards.

The interview process conducted with ERU staff revealed a highly motivated professional group who were very cooperative and open with their views. Their educational level, as well as their area of expertise, was commendable. Some social workers have worked in a number of other areas (e.g. Intake, Probation) which they feel gives them a broader perspective as they manage cases requiring interaction with other agencies.

In the interviews a number of social workers expressed a desire to get more detailed information from CAR in order to expedite their efforts. Interviews with CAR personnel revealed that their workload varies by the time of day, weekends, holidays and when school is in-session or not in session. When the CAR call load is heavy, reports to ERU might not be as detailed as when there is a light load. Immediate response calls are expedited with extensive interaction among CAR and ERU. Several social workers expressed concern about the extra time it takes to respond to a call when a team structured decision approach is used to process CAR information, that is, using a group of ERU personnel processing a case rather than a single social worker. There was no indication that such activity has hampered a response. Interviews revealed a very positive working relationship between CAR and ERU and their supervisors.

Interviews with ERU social workers revealed three primary concerns:

A first concern was the time required to complete the report for each case, indicating that the new format calls for too much information and has a number of redundancies. They indicated that the time to complete a report has lengthened dramatically. For most cases, 2- 4 hours are required. However, they were quick to point out that detail is essential for the record which may be used in subsequent venues (e.g. court, repeated abuse, parents acquiring reports). In addition, a number of social workers reported far more scrutiny by their supervisors than in the past, therefore much more detail is being provided. The protocol for report writing is now being reviewed within the SSA in order to increase efficiency, answering such questions as "What detail is sufficient information, are there redundancies, how might CAR help expedite the process?"

A second concern involved school visitations. If there is a situation in a school that deserves immediate and emergency attention, ERU will enter a school to investigate, usually accompanied by law enforcement. However, for non-emergencies, interviews in schools have been complicated by a court ruling that prohibits them from interviewing a student in a school setting without permission of at least one parent. If the case is deemed serious enough, the social worker has the option to request a warrant which can be time consuming. This ruling is currently under review by the courts.

A third concern involved the high level of stress social workers must face. Beyond caseload/workload demands, as well as report writing, ERU personnel function in a challenging situation in that their schedule is unpredictable, that is, it relies on calls/reports. On a given day, their schedule may include a routine 10 day response or may escalate to an immediate response usually attended to within two hours. The resultant stress is unavoidable and understandable, especially when presented with cases that are especially try-

ing, even to the veteran social worker. The stress level has not resulted in an increase in Workers Compensation claims. From 2008 – 2010 there were 18 claims, 14 of which were for accidents, falls and strains; 4 listed as miscellaneous; 7 resulted in time lost.

Other concerns expressed by a significant number of social workers were:

- 40 hours of mandated in-service training required every two years. A number of interviewees felt that the training is often redundant and takes time from their schedule to serve children. They suggested that the training focus on specific intervention strategies and joint sessions with the other entities they deal with, specifically law enforcement.
- Several social workers indicated they would like to have more involvement with follow-up for families.
- Transportation of children. Concern was expressed about liability involved with the use of personal vehicles to transport children when removed from their home.

### ***FINDINGS***

In accordance with California Penal Code Sections 933 and 933.05, the 2010-2011 Grand Jury requests responses from the agency affected by the findings presented in this section. The responses are to be submitted to the Presiding Judge of Superior Court.

Based upon its review of the ERU of the Children and Family Services of the Social Services Agency, the 2010-2011 Orange County Grand Jury has arrived at seven principal findings, as follows:

- F.1:** Even though there has been a 22% decrease in personnel assigned to Emergency Response Units I and II (2008-2010), the needs of children who are referred to Emergency Response Units I and II in Orange County are being met.
- F.2:** While case load has not increased in ERU, workload has increased due to increased reporting requirements.
- F.3:** Response time to address child abuse, both 10 day and immediate, consistently exceeds mandated State requirements.
- F.4:** The percentage of children who receive a monthly visit for whom a visit was required, exceeds State standards.
- F.5:** The interaction between Emergency Response Units I and II, the Child Abuse Registry, Child Abuse Services Team, Intake and law enforcement are working effectively.
- F.6:** Mandated in-service training for social workers (40 hours every two years) is perceived by some social workers as redundant.

- F.7:** Social Workers sometimes use their personal vehicles to transport minors when removing them from their home, causing them concern about their liability.

### ***RECOMMENDATIONS***

In accordance with California Penal Code Sections 933 and 933.05, the 2010-2011 Grand Jury requests responses from the agency affected by the findings presented in this section. The responses are to be submitted to the Presiding Judge of the Superior Court.

Based upon its review of the ERU of the Children and Family Services of the Social Services Agency, the 2010-2011 Orange County Grand Jury makes the following three recommendations:

- R.1:** Conduct workshop(s) jointly with law enforcement to enhance the role of each and ways to seek more efficient interaction when working together on child abuse cases.
- R.2:** Review and analyze procedures concerning the transportation of children in social workers personal automobiles in terms of liability and possible alternatives.
- R.3:** Continue analyzing the ERU reporting requirements using social workers from both units to reduce redundancy and increase efficiency.

### ***REQUIREMENTS AND INSTRUCTIONS:***

The California Penal Code Section 933(c) requires any public agency which the Grand Jury has reviewed, and about which it has issued a final report, to comment to the Presiding Judge of the Superior Court on the findings and recommendations pertaining to matters under the control of the agency. Such comment shall be made *no later than 90 days* after the Grand Jury publishes its report (filed with the Clerk of the Court); except that in the case of a report containing findings and recommendations pertaining to a department or agency headed by an elected County official (e.g. District Attorney, Sheriff, etc.), such comment shall be made *within 60 days* to the Presiding Judge with an information copy sent to the Board of Supervisors.

Furthermore, California Penal Code Sections 933.05(a), (b), (c), details, as follows, the manner in which such comment(s) are to be made:

- (a) As to each grand jury finding, the responding person or entity shall indicate one of the following:
- (1) The respondent agrees with the finding
  - (2) The respondent disagrees wholly or partially with the finding, in which case the response shall specify the portion of the finding that is disputed and shall include an explanation of the reasons therefore.

- (b) As to each grand jury recommendation, the responding person or entity shall report one of the following actions:
- (1) The recommendation has been implemented, with a summary regarding the implemented action.
  - (2) The recommendation has not yet been implemented, but will be implemented in the future, with a time frame for implementation.
  - (3) The recommendation requires further analysis, with an explanation and the scope and parameters of an analysis or study, and a time frame for the matter to be prepared for discussion by the officer or head of the agency or department being investigated or reviewed, including the governing body of the public agency when applicable. This time frame shall not exceed six months from the date of publication of the grand jury report.
  - (4) The recommendation will not be implemented because it is not warranted or is not reasonable, with an explanation therefore.

If a finding or recommendation of the grand jury addresses budgetary or personnel matters of a county agency or department headed by an elected officer, both the agency or department head and the Board of Supervisors shall respond if requested by the grand jury, but the response of the Board of Supervisors shall address only those budgetary or personnel matters over which it has some decision making authority. The response of the elected agency or department head shall address all aspects of the findings or recommendations affecting his or her agency or department.

Comments to the Presiding Judge of the Superior Court in compliance with the Penal Code Section 933.05 are requested from the:

<b><u>Responding Agency</u></b>	<b><u>Findings</u></b>	<b><u>Recommendations</u></b>
<b>Social Services Agency</b>	<b>F.1 through F.7</b>	<b>R.1 through R.3</b>



# Orange County Sheriff's Department Inmate Re-Entry Unit





## Orange County Sheriff's Department Inmate Re-Entry Unit

### ***SUMMARY***

The Orange County Re-Entry Partnership (OCREP) founded in December 2005, with the Sheriff's Department as the lead agency, collaborated with over 40 government agencies, private companies, and non-profit organizations to examine Orange County's inmate re-entry practices. The partnership was developed to bridge the gap between the release of inmates from incarceration to community-based services. Consequently, the Orange County Sheriff's Department in 2006 established the Inmate Re-Entry Unit to provide in-custody programs designed to educate and prepare inmates for re-entrance into society.

Due to this undertaking, the 2010-2011 Grand Jury elected to study the Inmate Re-entry Unit and its programs. The review found that the pre-release services offered by the Inmate Re-Entry Unit reduced recidivism (re-entry into the jail system) rates in Orange County. A significant component for the preparation of released inmates is the Great Escape Program, which contributes to the formerly incarcerated individuals' success in staying out of the penal system. Beneficial aspects provided to the community when former inmates do not re-offend were analyzed.

The mission of the Inmate Re-Entry Unit is to successfully transition inmates upon release from custody into the community. The re-entry services offer inmates initial assessment and access to the Great Escape Program while incarcerated. In January 2007, the Great Escape Resource Center opened to provide out-reach resources to former inmates.

Orange County Sheriff's Department statistics demonstrate that if an inmate receives rehabilitation programming while in custody and these services are continued immediately upon release, the chance of becoming a productive member of society increases by at least 25%. Breaking the cycle of antisocial behavior and criminality and thereby reducing the recidivism rate is the ultimate goal of the Orange County Sheriff's Department Re-Entry Unit and their programs.

This study revealed the need for greater public awareness as well as an on-going need for funding sources.

### ***REASON FOR STUDY***

During the course of the Grand Jury's introduction and familiarization with the Orange County correctional programs, one area of concern is recidivism (in this report recidivism refers to a released inmate who re-offends and returns to the jail system within one year or less).

In an effort to identify and describe new and/or improved methods for reducing the inmate revolving door phenomena within Orange County jails, the Grand Jury chose to study this topic. Recidivism is not only costly but jeopardizes the safety of Orange County citizens. After reviewing attempts made through many programs within Orange County detention facilities in recent years, one comprehensive recidivism reduction project stood out as being successful – the Inmate Re-Entry Unit. The importance and success of this Unit's programs in improving the likelihood released inmates become productive members of society could not be ignored. The cost of housing an inmate (approximately \$40,000 plus per year),

the safety of the community and the salvaging of broken lives became obvious reasons to encourage and recognize this program.

### ***METHODOLOGY***

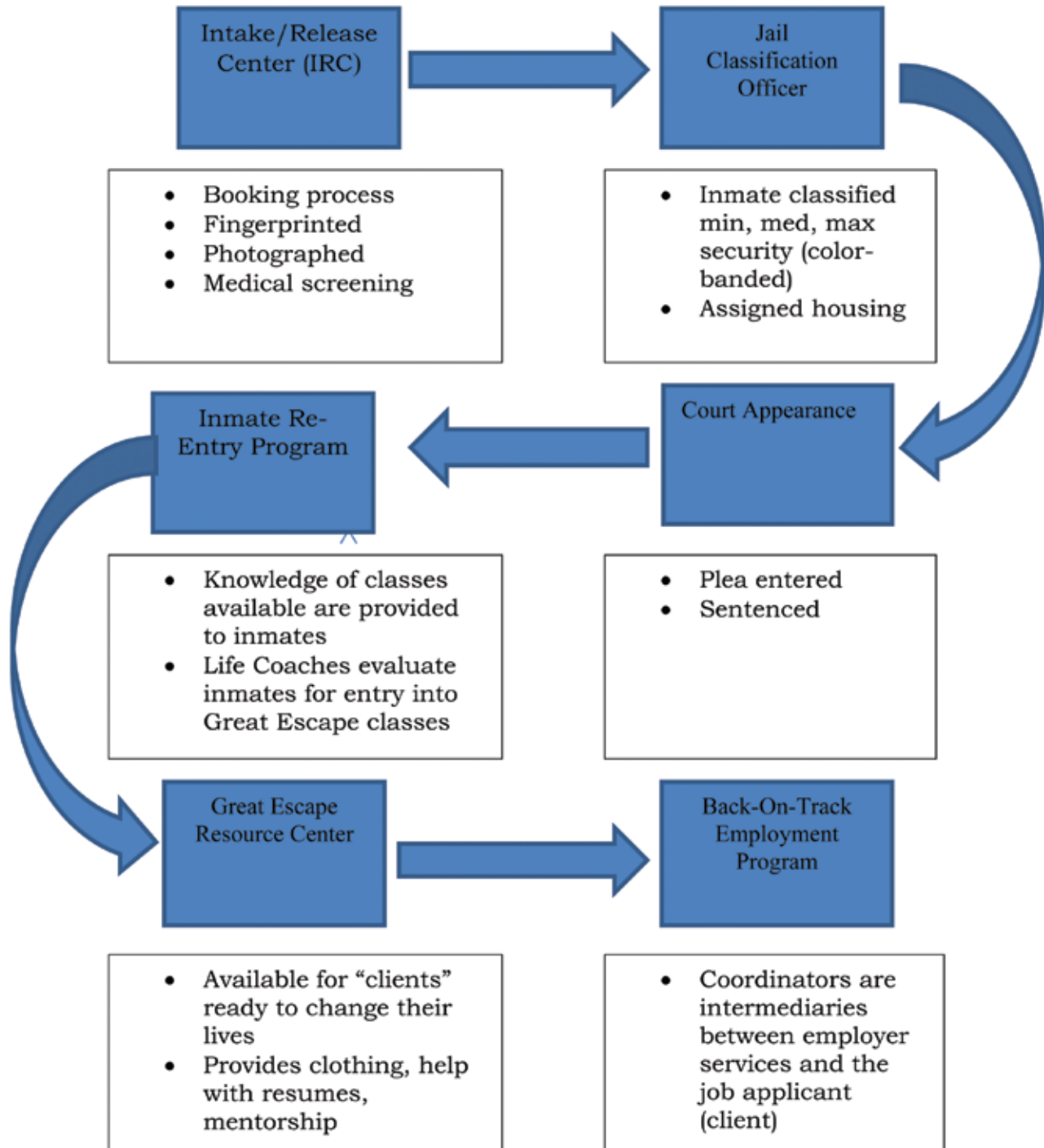
The 2010-2011 Grand Jury conducted the inmate re-entry study by examining a program of the Orange County Sheriff's Department titled "Inmate Services Division Correctional Programs and Inmate Re-Entry Needs Profiles". This inclusive listing of services describes available classes, programs and facilities. A flow chart from the Inmate Re-Entry Unit was used to understand the process when assessing inmates after incarceration. Meetings were held with the Executive Management of the Inmate Services Division. Interviews were conducted with a Sheriff's Captain, Lieutenant and Sergeant from the Central Jail Complex/Intake and Release Center (IRC). Staff members from the Great Escape Resource Center were interviewed. The Orange County Sheriff's Department Inmate Re-Entry Facts at a Glance publication, an overview of each program and a listing of Inmate Re-Entry Totals for fiscal year 2008/2009 was reviewed. Lastly, 2009/2010 Inmate Re-Entry data was examined.

### ***FACTS***

- Fact:** Orange County Re-Entry Partnership (OCREP) is intended to improve transition of inmates into the community.
- Fact:** The Orange County Sheriff's Department has a program for classifying inmates after booking.
- Fact:** Inmates voluntarily attend rehabilitative programs while in custody.
- Fact:** Re-Entry coordinators have a computer-generated assessment form to determine inmates risk to re-offend.
- Fact:** Pre-release planning sessions are to be completed on an individual 30 days prior to the inmate's release.
- Fact:** The Re-Entry Unit designed the Back-On-Track Employment Program to assist recently released inmates find work.

**INTAKE/RELEASE CENTER TO RE-ENTRY/RELEASE FLOW CHART**

(The following chart was designed by the 2010-2011 Grand Jury to illustrate the process from incarceration to release and employment as described in this report)



## ***ANALYSIS***

The Orange County Re-Entry Partnership (OCREP) was created to serve as a critical link between community resource providers and the formerly incarcerated individuals striving to re-establish healthy, productive and rewarding lives. The steps required to accomplish this goal for the inmate include initial risk and needs assessments, in-custody classes, pre-release planning sessions, and post-release resource services. OCREP serves as the connecting thread between community resource providers and formerly confined individuals, now referred to as “clients”. A simple word choice such as “client” when referring to a released inmate as opposed to “ex-con, jail bird, etc.”, offers dignity and a sense of hope. This partnership involves agencies which include Probation, Courts, District Attorney, Public Defender, Health Care Agency and private companies.

### **Intake Release Center (IRC)**

When male or female adults are arrested for criminal violations and booked at the Central Jail Complex, the process of classifying inmates commences with an experienced Deputy Sheriff of the Orange County Sheriff's Department assigned to assessing incoming inmates. The deputies' primary assignment is to ensure the security, protection, and welfare of the individual currently being booked, as well as the inmates incarcerated within the facility, and the jail personnel. The deputies responsible for classifying inmates provide crucial information to the staff regarding the incoming inmate.

### **Jail Classification Officer**

During the booking process the Deputy Sheriff completes the Initial Screening Classification Assessment document on the inmate to determine classification status. The type of law violation, propensity of the inmate for aggressive and violent behavior, affiliation of gang involvement and criminal history are reviewed and stored in the Sheriff's Department data base.

Inmates are classified into the following categories:

- MINIMUM - indicates a low risk inmate who will be assigned to a dorm unit
- MEDIUM - an individual exhibiting abnormal behavior or history of mental illness
- MAXIMUM - an inmate that is permitted to co-mingle with others while in a secured environment
- PROTECTIVE CUSTODY – segregated from jail population for their own safety
- ADMINISTRATIVE CUSTODY – inmates that present a danger to themselves or others and are therefore forbidden from association with other inmates.

Following the booking and the initial screening process, the inmate is assigned to a particular housing unit based on their classification and given a bedroll before being moved to their assigned area. Included in the bedroll is a Correctional Programs Inmate Orientation brochure describing available programs for inmate consideration. The same information is also posted throughout the facility. Inmates voluntarily attend re-entry programs while in custody to help them stay sober, find jobs and places to live upon release.

### **Inmate Re-Entry Program**

Life coaches are civilian employees from the Inmate Re-Entry Unit who gather the information collected from the initial booking/classification session and focus on the answers to three questions. These three an-

swers are used collectively by the Inmate Re-Entry Unit on a form titled "PROXY" data. The questions are:

- current age (lower age generates higher score)
- age at first arrest (lower age generates higher score)
- number of prior arrests (greater number equals higher score).

The inmate's answers to these three questions are assigned a numerical value, ranging from 1 to 6. Values from 1 to 4 are the least likely to re-offend and are not given priority. Values of 5 or 6 are considered evidence as to the greatest possibility to re-offend and are assigned high priority for a life coach interview. The resulting scores help the life coaches assess the inmate in determining the best and quickest route to successful re-entry. Important areas of the assessment other than PROXY data are substance abuse history, education level, housing information and employment history.

An important tool of assessment used by the life coach is the Wisconsin Risk Needs Assessment. This assessment tool is a 53-item interview-driven analysis. Since its adoption by the National Institute of Corrections (a branch of the Department of Justice) in 1982, the Wisconsin instrument has been widely accepted as a tool for risk prediction or properly classifying offenders and needs assessment. It is currently used by the Orange County Sheriff's Department, the Orange County Probation Department as well as the Inmate Re-Entry Unit. By implementing the same assessment tool, all three agencies maximize resources to better identify the inmate/clients needs. In lieu of spending resources on low-risk offenders, the ability to place higher-risk inmates into programs targeted for their needs allows the use of scarce resources to be allocated efficiently.

All four Orange County detention facilities, James A. Musick, Theo Lacy, Central Jail Complex (IRC) and Men's Central Jail offer classes in life skills, educational programs, vocational programs, behavior modification, substance abuse and general services. The educational programs assist inmates in obtaining a high school diploma or GED equivalent and language skills. Math and reading classes are offered as well as classes in citizenship, government and other academic programs. There are vocational programs in food preparation, welding, cabinetry, sewing, software applications and general workforce readiness. Inmates dealing with drug and alcohol addiction can access programs to assist in their recovery. All inmates have access to these correctional programs, however, the Great Escape/Re-Entry Planning classes and the OCREP/Re-Entry Partnership programs are only available to inmates who have been assessed and approved by life coaches using the collected scores. All four jail facilities offer this re-entry program.

Another program the Inmate Re-Entry Unit is in the process of implementing is an evidence-based in-custody curriculum called, Thinking for a Change. Evidence-based practices utilize research and documented data as a basis for determining the best action to take that will generate positive results. Thinking for a Change focuses on modifying an inmate/clients thinking and behavior.

### **Great Escape Resource Center**

Thirty days prior to being released, inmates meet with a re-entry coordinator for a one-on-one release planning finalization assessment. This includes encouragement to utilize the services provided by the Great Escape Resource Center.