Employment for Individuals with Developmental Disabilities/Mental Illness: Forensic/Sex Offending Behaviors

Chris Snell, Director of Specialized Employment Services (SES) at CLASS, Inc.

Dr. Paul Van Almkerk, Clinical and Organizational Consultant to the SES program
Welcome!

- First time using webex?
  - You can communicate with other attendees or the host in the **Chat Box** and seek technical assistance if needed.
  - You can type questions about the material presented in the **Q&A** section.
  - You can **raise your hand** and we’ll pause to let you speak if we have time.

- Today’s webinar will be **recorded and archived** on the NCCJD website. Please keep this in mind when sharing information and experiences during the webinar.
Introduction of Presenters

- Chris Snell
- Dr. Paul Van Almkerk
CLASS Agency Overview

- Founded in 1976, CLASS Inc. empowers people with disabilities through supports and services to promote personal choice, growth, and full participation in their communities.
- Agency sites in Lawrence and Wilmington serve more than 400 individuals from 40 communities.
- For more agency information please visit www.classinc.org
SES Program Overview

- Located in a former mill building dating back to the 1800’s when the city of Lawrence, MA was recognized as a major wool-processing center until the 1950’s.

- Environmental setting includes 7 “homebases” that are rooms containing clusters of individuals.

- Each homebase is populated based on specific needs, supervision, compatibility, and vocational skills. These homebases are re-clustered at least twice annually to transition individuals to more appropriate areas dependent on their successes and challenges over the previous six months.
SES Program Overview

- On-site employment opportunities
  - contracted piece work
    - shipping/handling, collating, assembly
    - producing work on looms for social enterprise company
  - in-house vocational opportunities (competitive wage)
    - maintenance
    - mail delivery
    - landscaping external site property
    - warehouse material handling employment
SES Program Overview

- Off-site employment opportunities
  - local lumberyard involving janitorial responsibilities
  - local warehouse assembling production materials
Polling Question

What is the current number of sex offenders in U.S.?
SES Best Practices Overview

- The program Best Practices contain a detailed overview of the program mission and values, as well as a multi-tiered service delivery model of universal expectations and individualized supports for all participants.
Agency Collaborations

- Currently the SES program’s census consists of individuals supported residentially by eleven state funded provider agencies.
- The funding sources for these providers -
  - Department of Developmental Services (DDS)
  - Department of Mental Health (DMH)
  - Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission (MRC)
  - Department of Education (DOE)
Interoffice Mail
Vocational Opportunity
Polling Question

Individuals with ID represent almost 3% of the U.S. population. What percentage is currently represented in prison or jail?
Program Individuals Profiles

- **Current census of 58 individuals**
  - 8 Massachusetts Sex Offender Registry Board (SORB) leveled individuals (5 Level Two, 3 Level Three)
  - 5 additional individuals currently on probation
  - 7 individuals forensically involved within last two years
  - 3 individuals currently residing at regional inpatient stabilization unit
  - 2 individuals discharged from regional inpatient stabilization unit to group residences in last six months
Individual Profiles

- Most prevalent and challenging diagnoses
  - 18 Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
  - 10 Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) / Acquired Brain Injury (ABI)
  - 10 psychotic disorder
  - 6 Personality Disorder

The commonality within the population of individuals supported in the program is that the vast majority are multi-diagnosed.
An English research study examined 103 sex offenders with developmental disabilities. What percentage did they find had re-offended after 6 years?
Program Staff Profile

- 13 FT frontline staff positions (1/2 of staff have at least undergraduate degrees)
- Case coordinator, behavior specialist, program manager, program director
- Supports by production coordinator and employment manager responsible for acquisition and oversight of employment contracts
Polling Question

What percentage of all reported sexual offenses are committed by individuals with developmental disabilities?
Internal and External Program Challenges

- Funding
- Staffing
- Sheltered and community employment
- Risk reduction
- Managing behaviors vs. supporting/treating the whole person
Case Study

“Peter”
Next Webinar

- Attend the next webinar on November 20th:
  Laura Usher from NAMI talks about CIT
- Sign up to receive email alerts
- Use I&R/TA service, and refer others
- Share your story and raise awareness

Contact us at:

NCCJJDinfo@thearc.org
Questions?

Survey:

Next Webinar:
- November 20th: Laura Usher from NAMI talks about CIT

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