

## CBI FACT SHEET - November 2000

### What is CBI?

Cognitive behavioral interventions (CBI) are based on the simple principle that thinking (an internal behavior) controls overt actions (external behavior). Therefore, through CBI programs (or curricula), offenders learn new skills and new ways of thinking that can lead to changes in their behavior and actions, and ultimately affect their criminal conduct. CBI programs use a combination of approaches to increase an offender's awareness of self and others. This awareness is coupled with the teaching of social skills to assist the offender with interpersonal problems. In other words, these specific types of intervention programs assist an offender in "restructuring" the thought process and teach "cognitive skills" to assist in basic decision-making and problem-solving.

There are a number of theories developed by researchers including Bandura, Beck, Ellis, Yochelson, and Samenow describing cognitive structures or thinking frameworks that leads to troubled behavior or criminal actions. These theories suggest that how an individual thinks about an external event, not the event itself, triggers feelings that can lead to criminal acts. The premise of a **cognitive restructuring** program is that offenders hold antisocial beliefs, attitudes and mental habits that lead them to criminal offenses. The goal of **cognitive restructuring** is to teach offenders how to change their antisocial beliefs to prosocial ones with the change process focusing on the content of their thinking. **Cognitive restructuring** guides offenders through a process of consciously examining their thoughts, and then making connections between their thoughts, related emotions and the crimes they commit.

Other researchers such as Ross and Fabiano identified social skills that offenders need to learn to become more prosocial people. **Cognitive skills** teach offenders how to modify their cognitive processes to control themselves and interact positively with others. The goal of **cognitive skills** is to teach offenders to manage their own behavior by engaging in processes that develop self-control, making them responsible for and in charge of their actions no matter how stressful the situation. These specific skills include problem solving, social skills training (learned behaviors that enable one to interact with others in ways that elicit positive responses), anger management, and empathy training.

### ***Curricula Descriptions:***

***Thinking for a Change (TFAC)*** – The **TFAC** curriculum uses problem solving as its core embellished by both cognitive restructuring and social skill interventions. This curriculum is 22 lessons, offered 1-2 times per week for 1 1/2 to 2 hour sessions. The curriculum is appropriate for adult and/or youthful offenders. The cognitive restructuring concepts are introduced and emphasized during the initial eleven lessons, interspersed with critical social skills, which support the cognitive restructuring process. Then, in lessons 16-21, problem-solving techniques are taught which are supported by cognitive

self-change and social skill development. This is a new curriculum presented by the National Institute of Corrections (NIC); therefore research data are not available.

***Problem Solving Skills for Offenders (PSSO)***, recently renamed to ***Problem Solving Skills in Action (PSSA)*** – The **PSSA** curriculum teaches offenders basic social skills critical to effective problem solving training. The curriculum is 8 lessons, and is ideally taught for one hour per session. It is recommended that the entire curriculum is taught within a 3-4 week time frame and each session is no more than 3-4 days apart. Problem Solving is appropriate for adult and/or youthful offenders. This curriculum was developed to meet the need for a short term training experience offered to relatively large groups of offenders (16-20 offenders). The scripted instructional unit (8 sessions) focuses upon skill acquisition while the transfer training (transfer coaching) component (6-10 weeks after completing instructional unit) emphasizes the importance of skill application. Research studies are ongoing, and results are available from the authors, Dr. Juliana Taymans or Dr. Steve Parese.

***Reasoning and Rehabilitation (R&R)*** – The **R&R** curriculum was developed in 1989 by Ross, Fabiano, and Diemer-Ewies of Canada and is widely used throughout the Canadian correctional system as well as in a number of states in the US. This curriculum follows a psycho-educational approach using a variety of techniques such as role-playing, case studies, modeling demonstration, overviews and reading. The program schedule is 18 weeks and is offered 2 days a week for 2 hours each session. This curriculum is appropriate for adults and/or youthful offenders. There are a total of 36 sessions in the **R&R** program. The curriculum includes 9 modules: Problem Solving, Social Skills, Negotiation Skills, Managing Emotions, Creative Thinking, Values Enhancement, Critical Reasoning, Skills in Review, and Cognitive Exercises. Empirical research studies on the R&R program are widely available.

***Choices and Changes*** – The **Choices and Changes** curricula are based on the adult version of the Wisconsin THINK program. **Choices and Changes** use realistic stories, interactive exercises and role-plays to help offenders gain insight regarding their thinking, and practice pro-social skills. Both curricula are appropriate for offenders between 16-19 years old. The **Choices** curriculum is 15 lessons, offered 2-3 times per week and for 1 ½ hours each session. The **Choices** curriculum helps offenders recognize and begin to challenge thoughts and beliefs that lead them to incarceration and/or probation supervision. The **Changes** curriculum is 12 lessons, offered 2-3 times per week for 1 ½ hours each session. The **Changes** curriculum helps offenders develop pro-social skills in goal setting, anger management and social problem solving—skills that support the positive change begun in the **Choices** curriculum. These are new curricula; therefore research data are not yet available. Male and female versions are now available.

### **Project Stats:**

- ✓ More than 225 DOC staff and other criminal justice professionals trained to facilitate **Thinking for a Change, Problem Solving Skills in Action, and Choices & Changes**.
- ✓ Approximately 3,000 offenders have participated in a CBI program in a prison facility or community corrections setting.
- ✓ 23 Division of Prisons' facilities are currently using **TFAC** and **Choices & Changes** and either facility staff or community college instructors are teaching these programs to inmates.
- ✓ 5 Division of Prisons' facilities are currently using **R&R** and contractual staff teach the program to inmates.
- ✓ 42 Division of Community Corrections and/or Criminal Justice Partnership Programs are currently using **TFAC** or **PSSA**.
- ✓ 26 Community College instructors representing 16 campuses have attended **TFAC** Facilitator training. These instructors are delivering CBI in prison and community corrections settings.

### **Project Highlights:**

- ❑ North Carolina was one of four states in FY 99-00 to receive technical assistance from the National Institute of Corrections (NIC) for Master Trainers Seminar for **TFAC**. North Carolina currently has 13 certified TFAC Master Trainers.
- ❑ Expanding the Department's relationship with the Community College System, **TFAC** (in its entirety) can be offered under the Human Resources Development (HRD) program and the Employment Readiness (PRE) program on the Continuing Education Master Course List.
- ❑ An article in the August 2000 issue of Correction News highlights the implementation of CBI at Craven Correctional Center and the Iredell Day Reporting Center.

### **General CBI Policies & Procedures**

Generally, two (2)-trained facilitators are required to conduct a CBI group, however untrained staff may serve as apprentice instructors under the supervision and guidance of trained facilitators.

CBI is usually offered twice a week for 1 ½ - 2 hours per session. No more than 15 participants are allowed but the ideal group size is 8 – 10 offenders.

As a general rule, potential candidates for any CBI group should be screened for participation and inclusion based on the rules and regulations of the sponsoring facility or location as well as by the CBI Facilitator conducting the group. Ideally, the CBI Facilitator will be able to select from a group of potential participants to ensure an appropriate balance to maintain group integrity.