Chapter One

Ventura County and the Theory of Community Justice

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On a hot summer day in Oxnard, California, 17-year-old Julio stole a car and committed a hit and run. Julio’s childhood was not easy—his mom had abandoned him at birth, and Julio had a history of drug and alcohol problems—but this was the first time he was arrested. On that same summer day, Raymond also was getting into trouble. Ray also came from a troubled family—his dad was in jail and his mom was struggling to make things work for Ray and his four siblings. Ray had begun hanging out with some local taggers, and on a dare, he decided to do some “artwork” on a local alley wall. He too was caught and arrested for the first time. When the police department sent their cases to the probation agency for review, staff there felt both of these young men were at risk for reoffense because they had additional risk factors other than their crimi-
nal activity. Consequently, both were given probationary sentences. Yet, probation for each of them meant something quite different. About half of the qualifying youth put on probation received traditional probationary services. Such was the case for Raymond. For him, his responsibilities primarily entailed following his court-ordered probation terms—for example, having contact with his probation officer once a month and attending any services provided by other agencies that the court or probation officer deemed necessary. The other half of South Oxnard youth receiving probation services were assigned to the new, experimental South Oxnard Challenge Project (SOCP). Because Julio was sent to the SOCP, probation meant much more. The SOCP provided a more intensive focus on Julio and his family. In his case, many staff from different agencies worked together as a team to help him and his family improve their daily lives and increase Julio’s likelihood of success on probation and afterward. In addition, staff worked with Julio’s victim to help him deal with the aftereffects of the crime. Julio’s experience represents a new philosophy of probation, a new vision and set of practices that focus equally on the needs of offenders and victims and take advantage of an unfortunate criminal event to improve the quality of community life.

Ventura County: The Context

Ventura County is just north of Los Angeles County on the California coast. Like many coastal counties, the area has a mild climate and is an urban mix of beach and mountain communities. About 750,000 people live there, of which about two-thirds are white and about one-third are Hispanic. The area is relatively wealthy, with only about 10% of the residents below the poverty level, but there are also pockets of poverty (U.S. Bureau of the Census 2000). Oxnard has approximately 70,000 residents and is a primarily working-class, Hispanic community (about 68% of the population) (see Cohen and Associates 1999). Many of the poorer residents live either in the long-established barrio, La Calonia, or in South Oxnard. Because it is one of the highest crime areas of the county, South Oxnard has been a primary concern for police, probation, and other social service agencies in recent years. During the mid-1990s, Oxnard had about 21% of the county’s youth population, but the city’s youth represented 64% of youth who are incarcerated and 40% of youth on probation, and many of these youth lived in South Oxnard. In the year prior to the initiation of the SOCP, there were 225 gang-related crimes by young people, including 6 homicides and 10 drive-by shootings in South Oxnard (Ventura County Multi-Agency Juvenile Justice Coordinating Council 1997).

In late 1997, the Ventura County Probation Agency received a grant from the State of California to work collaboratively with other service providers to help South Oxnard juvenile probationers. In the summer of 1996, Frank Woodson, then director of the probation agency,7 read an article by Todd R. Clear that discussed broadening the corrections focus on offenders to also include community members and victims by using community justice approaches to repair the harm from crime (Clear 1996). Woodson was intrigued and brought the idea to the local Multi-Agency Juvenile Justice Coordinating Council (MAJJCC), which was charged with setting juvenile justice priorities for the county. They agreed to use these community justice ideas and request funding from the state for a multiagency, one-stop site for juvenile justice services in South Oxnard. In late 1997, Ventura County was awarded $4.5 million to implement its new program, the SOCP, and the new probation agency director, Calvin C. Remington, his project manager, Carmen Flores, and managers of many other social service agencies set out to implement community justice in South Oxnard.

The SOCP Program and Its Clients

The SOCP uses the community justice approach and has been implemented as a randomized experiment targeting youth aged 12 to 18 years who live in South Oxnard and the bordering community of Port Hueneme. It targets youth who have been cited for a criminal offense or violation of probation and who score at least 12 points on a locally developed risk assessment instrument. On the risk assessment, probation officers score information about the youth’s age at first referral, current offense, prior offenses, drug or alcohol use or both, school problems, parental supervision, peer relationships, and out-of-home placements or commitments. Youth with more problems in these areas receive higher scores (up to six points for each problem), making them more likely to qualify for the SOCP. Those who qualify are randomly assigned to either the SOCP, where services are delivered via case management by a multidisciplinary team at a one-stop South Oxnard location (see Exhibit 1.1 for agency participants and their duties), or to traditional probation, where the cases are managed by a probation officer and generally referred out for services.

The SOCP has five broad goals: (1) to develop a more responsive and comprehensive juvenile justice system, (2) to increase youth accountability to victims and the community, (3) to increase family participation, (4) to
Exhibit 1.1. Participants in the South Oxnard Challenge Project

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Partner Agencies</th>
<th>Staff Provided On-Site (as of November 2000)</th>
<th>Staff Roles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ventura County Probation Agency</td>
<td>1 Departmental Manager</td>
<td>Manage project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Part-time Supervising Deputy Probation Officer</td>
<td>Assign cases to staff</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Senior Deputy Probation Officer</td>
<td>Supervise project staff</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Deputy Probation Officers</td>
<td>Manage formal and court-ordered informal probation cases; focus on families</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Probation Aid</td>
<td>Act as navigator or service coordinator or serve as aid to other staff (depends on skill level)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Office Assistants</td>
<td>Provide clerical support for project staff</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ventura County Behavioral Health Department, Drug and Alcohol Programs</td>
<td>2 Alcohol and Drug Treatment Specialists</td>
<td>Provide individual and group alcohol and drug treatment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ventura County Behavioral Health Department, Mental Health Services</td>
<td>1 Social Worker</td>
<td>Provide a modified version of multisystemic therapy for up to 5 clients for 4- to 6-month periods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Social Work Interns</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City Corps (Oxnard)</td>
<td>1 City Corps Program Assistant</td>
<td>Provide community service opportunities (work crews)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Work Crew Leaders</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of Oxnard Recreation Department</td>
<td>1 Recreation Supervisor</td>
<td>Provide recreation services and supervise recreation staff, including navigators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Navigators</td>
<td>Facilitate youth use of services</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Part-Time Recreation Staff</td>
<td>Lead outings, transport youth, help lead groups</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oxnard Police Department</td>
<td>1 Senior Police Officer</td>
<td>Assist staff in searches, obtaining police reports, and help at day reporting</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Exhibit 1.1. (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Partner Agencies</th>
<th>Staff Provided On-Site (as of November 2000)</th>
<th>Staff Roles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>El Concilio De Condado De Ventura</td>
<td>1 Service Coordinator</td>
<td>Provide case management support; focus on families</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Community Outreach Worker</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interface Children Family Services</td>
<td>1 Restorative Justice Advocate</td>
<td>Provide victim-offender and parent-offender mediations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palmer Drug Abuse Program (PDAP)</td>
<td>1 Counselor</td>
<td>Provide pre-12-step treatment groups for teens</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Enhance community participation, and (5) to decrease juvenile delinquency. The SOCP usually serves youth and their families for seven to nine months, depending on the seriousness of the case, and, when possible, works with the victim via a restorative justice advocate, who conducts mediations with offenders and their victims or with parents and their children. The community is invited to serve on the advisory board and to become involved in the development and delivery of services. Community youth are also invited to participate in some of the program’s activities (see Exhibit 1.2 for community justice-related program activities).

The youth on probation are the impetus for bringing the wider array of services to the offender, family, community, and victim. To give the reader a sense of the youth being served by the SOCP, we briefly describe the characteristics of the 264 youth in the SOCP at or prior to referral. Most youth referred to the SOCP are male (79%), Hispanic (81%), 15 or 16 years old (51%), and live with at least one of their parents (69%, 25% with both biological parents). Most (73%) were referred because of a new citation (arrest) and were on informal probation (67%). Only a third (29%) claimed to be or were suspected by police or probation to be affiliated with a gang or tagging crew. About a quarter of these youth had used alcohol (26%) or drugs (31%) to the point where it interfered with home, school, or peers. Most (68%) had received their first citation by the time they reached 14 years of age. Prior to entry into the program, most youth did not have any prior sustained petitions (only about a third), but those who did were more likely to
have been adjudicated delinquent of either property crimes (59%) or violent misdemeanors (19%). There were very few previously sustained petitions (convictions) for violent felonies (8%) or drug offenses (2%).

**The Community Justice Model**

The community justice model is divided into two domains (see Exhibit 1.3). First, a set of theoretical constructs is summarized by four process-oriented categories: system accessibility, community involvement, reparative process, and reintegrative process. The second domain refers to intended outcomes of the community model, which will be discussed later in this chapter. Because this is a book describing community justice programs in action, it focuses on the “process” of doing community justice. As research on community justice accumulates, we will learn about the effectiveness or the outcomes of community justice, whether or not it really does improve the quality of community life. In this chapter, we describe the left side of Exhibit 1.3, or the process dimensions, in detail by examining how the SOCP has approached the implementation of community justice principles for youth on probation.

**System Accessibility**

The first process element is system accessibility, which refers to various attempts by criminal justice agencies to make their programs more easily available to the community. Accessibility can be examined based on proximity, flexibility, and informality (see Exhibit 1.4 for measurement indicators).

One way to examine system accessibility is through proximity, which refers to the location of the service center compared to the location of the client base. Services located within the served community are more accessible because clients, victims, and community members must not travel far to reach the program, thereby decreasing the time and effort they must expend to participate in the healing process. The SOCP was designed with this specifically in mind. The service center building was located within the heart of the South Oxnard community to help facilitate client access to the service providers and vice versa. Initially, because some staff members had previously been in more traditional units, often located in the city of Ventura, about 15 miles away, they were surprised when they received many unannounced personal visits from the youth and their parents. For example, youth sometimes stopped in after school, and one youth came by every morn-
Exhibit 1.2. Continued

Community Outreach Workers
Recruit community residents for participation in the SOCP
Obtain community support for and participation in client activities
Run daily employment preparation groups ("breakfast club")
Work on local School Attendance Review Boards
Interact with neighborhood councils and community ministerial groups
Organize special presentations for and about the SOCP

Restorative Justice Advocate
Connect with victims
Facilitate healing between offenders and victims, including conducting mediations
Conduct parent-child mediations

Exhibit 1.3. Community Justice Model

Exhibit 1.4. System Accessibility Indicators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theoretical Construct</th>
<th>Operational Factors</th>
<th>Relevant Indicators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Location/Proximity</td>
<td>Location of community justice program</td>
<td>Distance of stakeholders to community justice program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flexibility</td>
<td>“Compartmentalization” of functions; decentralization of staff authority and accountability</td>
<td>Operating hours; range of services; rigidity of staff roles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informality</td>
<td>Responsiveness to emotional needs and other concerns; stakeholder treatment of individuals</td>
<td>Rigid and/or adversarial administrative rules/ procedures; stakeholders treated personally, respectfully; acknowledgment of rights, dignity</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

... ing for months before going to day reporting or working in the community service program (City Corps Community Service Academy). Although this young man moved out of the area, he continued to stay in contact with SOCP staff, writing them letters and calling to let them know he was okay. Parents also sometimes stopped by to see staff or called to ask for help with their children. Some parents even called to notify the probation officer of “good” things their child has done or to make sure that visiting relatives, for example, will not violate the youth’s probation terms. According to SOCP probation officers, parents of youth on traditional caseloads rarely contact them for positive reasons such as these. SOCP probation officers think project youth and their families may feel comfortable initiating positive contacts because SOCP staff spend much of their time out in the community working with youth, their families, and the community rather than conducting office visits and searches like routine probation officers do.

Another criteria with which we can examine system accessibility is through flexibility. When services are delivered in a flexible manner—for example, offering a wide range of services and maintaining adaptable staff roles and nontraditional work hours—programs are better able to administer community justice. The SOCP is specifically designed to offer a wide array of services by staff from different disciplines who work in teams to determine the best approaches to working with each youth and family. The staff have weekly team meetings in which they discuss cases and staff goals for the week. Each staff member takes responsibility for some of the tasks,
but their traditional roles often blur as they work together. For example, in the SOCP, probation officers sometimes are leaders who facilitate groups for the youth, even though the groups are sometimes more about family, relationships, and drugs than about probation-related content (e.g., preventing illegal activity). In addition, when clients make phone calls to specific staff members for help, other staff members may be the ones who respond—either due to their immediate availability or because the staff see themselves as working as a team to address youth and family problems. Because staff are given the freedom to be creative in responding to client needs, implementation and program guidelines are fluid. As staff generate new ideas for improving the delivery of services, they are often implemented and maintained if they seem to work. For example, new client groups—such as a Girl’s Social Group, Job Club, and Leadership Group—come and go as clients express interest. From the beginning, SOCP managers recognized the importance of having more flexible work hours, because they were aware of research indicating that youth are most likely to commit crime after school on school days and in the early and late evenings on other days (Sickmund, Snyder, and Poe-Yamagata 1997). Consequently, SOCP employees are expected to be available during evenings and weekends. For example, family conferences—meetings where staff work with the youth and family to develop a program plan—are often in the evenings or on the weekends to ensure parent availability. For one family, many staff worked together to help solve crises such as family arguments, sometimes going to the family’s home as a team at 8 p.m. or 9 p.m. to help diffuse an immediate conflict situation.

A third criterion of system accessibility is informality, or a release from the formal, authoritarian approach that generally characterizes the justice system. The stereotypical tense environment of the probation office changes to a more comfortable atmosphere in which offenders are included as contributing members in the process. The SOCP has attempted to make its program more inviting to youth, families, victims, and the community so people will come there on their own without being coerced by legal requirements such as terms and conditions of probation. The environment is much different from a typical probation office—there are no metal detectors, bulletproof glass, interview rooms, or probation officers wearing “gear” as part of their daily attire. Although on-site police officers sometimes wear their guns, they are not in uniform, and the probation officers wear their bulletproof vests only when they conduct searches. The remainder of the staff dress in casual street clothes. Because the atmosphere is different from a typical probation office, clients and their families often feel free to walk back into the office area to look for the person they came to see, rather than going to the reception area to request permission to see someone, as they would in a traditional probation office.

Rather than meeting only in interview rooms, staff meet with youth in their offices, outside on benches, or in the community where the youth are located (e.g., in their homes or at school). Some youth have been so attracted to the program that they spent time there daily. For example, for a few months, one youth arrived after school and stayed late into the evening because he did not want to go home. His mother had told staff members that she did not want him as part of the family. Another youth came to see his probation officer every day for awhile to talk about his life and ask advice about his future. Other youth continue to perform community service even after their ordered hours are completed. Some actually initiate projects, for example, asking, “Can we clean my alley today?” Informality also increases the youths’ and families’ comfort level with staff as many of them come for help unrelated to their probation conditions—for example, social relationships, job opportunities, and homework assignments. Some program youth who attended a five and one-half-month voluntary boot camp program designed for young people having trouble in school chose SOCP staff as their mentors—people to help them transition back into the community upon their release. Others have told their friends about the program, and those youth have then asked for help too. Families have also voluntarily participated in events at the center—for example, making flower arrangements and food, planning and carrying out holiday celebrations, attending Community Advisory Group (CAG) meetings, and mentoring other youth.

Community Involvement

A second major difference between community justice and traditional probation is community involvement in the process. Community involvement can be examined based on the program’s ability to identify appropriate people to participate, staff’s ability to recruit these people to join reparation efforts, and the level of power-sharing between the enlisted people and the justice administrators (see Exhibit 1.5). Community involvement is grounded in a basic understanding of democratic process—decision making is decentralized, citizenship is valued, residents are invested and empowered (Barber 1984). For the SOCP, there are two general types of relevant communities: the macro community, or the South Oxnard community as a whole, and the micro community, or those who were affected by a specific criminal event (e.g., neighbors, witnesses, victims, or family members of involved parties).
### Exhibit 1.5. Community Involvement Indicators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theoretical Construct</th>
<th>Operational Factors</th>
<th>Relevant Indicators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Definition of sanctioning community</td>
<td>Identification of relevant community and stakeholders</td>
<td>Identification of affected parties by geographic and social indicators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stakeholder participation</td>
<td>Participation of stakeholders (victims, offenders, etc.)</td>
<td>In/extensiveness of stakeholder participation; recruitment process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community partnership</td>
<td>Power-sharing by community groups with criminal justice agencies</td>
<td>Nature of agreements between community groups and criminal justice agency; instances of accountability processes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### The Macro Community

The SOCP initially focused on gaining support from and addressing the needs of the larger South Oxnard community, in part because groups in this area of the city had long expressed concern that they did not receive needed services from local government. The neighborhood organizations wrote a letter of support for the project, which was included in the grant application to the state. When funding was awarded, local leaders held a community meeting asking for participation and advice about project implementation details, for example, asking what the community wanted most and how they thought it might best be accomplished. Out of this meeting emerged a small group of concerned residents (about 10) who later became the CAG. This group has since merged with the executive board, which initially was comprised primarily of local elected officials and social service organization directors who advised the SOCP on policy matters. The CAG was very energetic and active from the outset, meeting weekly during the program start-up phase and then monthly after that. The CAG initially was concerned primarily about promoting community safety, increasing available services in the community, and ensuring that the grant money was used effectively to address community needs. This group was especially helpful in designating community service projects for program youth such as cleaning alleys, planting flowers or building playgrounds in school yards, and painting house numbers on street curbs. The CAG members also helped with programming by providing entertainment for events, donating goods for project families and recreation services, and giving food to youth who do community service in their neighborhoods. The members of the CAG expressed an interest in helping community youth and energetically expressed ideas about how the program might best serve the community. For example, one community member suggested the concept of “Challenge U.” Her idea was that this symbolic program would be built on the university concept in which youth participate in modules (or classes) that challenge them to become competent young people. SOCP staff did implement a modified version of this idea for youth who were cited (arrested and released) at school. These youth attend three two-hour group sessions in which they are encouraged to look at their behaviors and engage in self-assessment discussions about issues such as relationships, personal needs, self-understanding, and identity. These youth then spend a Saturday doing eight hours of community service and another Saturday doing six hours of recreation activities (e.g., hiking, mountain climbing) monitored by a police officer and SOCP staff. Youth who complete all required activities receive a certificate of completion and have their case closed.

Involving community members beyond the CAG has been a challenge for SOCP staff, but over time, community participation has increased. Community Outreach Workers have been successful in encouraging broader community participation in some typical ways such as food and service donation for clients and their families. For example, around Christmas each year, community members help organize and manage a 20-team, two-day softball tournament in which players are asked to bring toys for project families in lieu of a participation fee. For Christmas 2000, this event collected about 300 toys and gift certificates, so many that the event not only helped fulfill holiday wishes of SOCP clients and families but also provided toys for about 60 second graders in one of South Oxnard’s poorest schools. Both citizens and businesses helped sponsor this event. For the 2000 holiday dinner in which SOCP staff and youth prepared decorations and food, a business also donated chafing dishes to ensure that the food remained warm as parents and their children came to enjoy their meal. In addition, community residents helped prepare youth to attend the five-and-one-half-month Grizzly Academy, a voluntary boot camp/education program for high school dropouts sponsored by the California National Guard, which worked with youth on physical training and discipline and helped them get General Education Diplomas (GED). SOCP volunteers helped prepare youth for the Academy beforehand by working on physical training, tutoring, and career development. They also helped organize a barbecue celebration before the youth left for Grizzly. Other community members started out as volunteers and then became paid employees.
The Micro Community

Community justice primarily calls for participation by the micro community: those people most affected by the offense. As useful as the CAG and volunteers are in helping the project with their advice and donations, they cannot substitute for participation by the victim, the neighbors who saw the event, or the offender’s family. The SOCP set out to work with two of these groups—the offender’s family and the victim. From the outset, the SOCP realized the importance of including the offender’s family—both parents and siblings—in attempts to encourage offender accountability and to increase competency in the youth and their family. The SOCP felt this was an especially important component of the program, because juvenile offenders’ lives are rooted in their family experience, like all children’s are.

After the youth is assigned to the SOCP, the initial meeting with the youth occurs in a family conference. Two or three staff from different disciplines (e.g., probation officer, navigator, mental health counselor, and/or alcohol and drug treatment specialist) introduce themselves, talk to the family about their particular strengths and needs, and sign a Challenge Agreement (and terms and conditions of probation, if necessary). Because many of the youth are not on formal probation, the Challenge Agreement is often adequate and spells out the expectations of the youth and the family, as well as the project staff, in some cases. At a minimum, these conferences include the youth and one parent but also may include siblings and extended family members. Unlike routine juvenile probation, family members have input about the goals of the agreement. For example, parents might want their child to come home earlier, stop using drugs, or stop fighting with them so much. In some cases, staff set up the agreement to work on the issues that the family indicates as a priority for them and listen to parents’ input about what might work to help their children. If a sibling of the offender is also on probation, the SOCP probation officer requests the sibling’s case be transferred to the officer’s caseload, so the SOCP can serve the entire family. If a sibling is not on probation, the parents and sibling(s) are still encouraged to use SOCP services such as a parent support group and recreation events. One recreation event was a camping trip that the SOCP invited families to attend that was sponsored by another community organization but monitored by SOCP staff. Families are also invited to participate in parent-child mediation if there seems to be a lot of anger, fighting, or unresolved issues. If the family has special needs—for example, parental drug use or child abuse and neglect—the staff also work with the family to remedy these issues either by directly giving them services or by referring them to other agencies. For example, in one case where two sisters participated in a mediation after being involved in a fight at school, the mother later voluntarily came to see the mediator to ask for help in a spousal abuse situation. The family eventually worked out the spousal abuse issue on their own by calling the police to have the husband/father removed from the home. The ultimate goal of SOCP service efforts, such as mediation, is to teach the family to be self-sufficient and decrease their dependence on the justice system and other social service personnel to solve problems for them.

Victims comprise another group that has received primary focus from the SOCP. The project has a full-time, on-site restorative justice advocate (mediator), who works to get victims to participate in mediation. These mediators contact victims, often multiple times, to develop a relationship with them and let them know they are available to help them either to get services or just to talk. The mediators also try to show how helpful mediation can be, and although the victims are often resistant at first, many eventually agree to mediation with the offending youth. For example, in one case, a youth tagged a real estate company and etched the building’s windows. At first, the owner was resistant and did not want to see the youth or spend more time on the problem, but the mediator talked to her about the power of the youth’s facing the victim and accepting responsibility for the offense (e.g., “Remember how you felt when you were little and your mom made you go to someone and apologize to them?”). The owner then agreed to meet with the youth. In another case, in which a young man stole something from a department store, the mediator set up a meeting in the store manager’s office, because the manager said the mediator and the youth could have only “five minutes.” In this meeting, the manager asked for an apology and “scolded” the boy a bit but then agreed to let him work in the store for eight hours to help pay for his restitution.

The SOCP has yet to systematically incorporate neighbors as participants in repairing harm for particular crimes, but it has been successful in getting offenders to blend with other community members, thereby decreasing the offenders’ usual social distance from the remainder of the law-abiding community. For example, youth are encouraged to attend dances sponsored by the local Police Activities League (PAL) to facilitate their socializing with nondelinquent peers. The City Corps group also took youth to Food Share to pack boxes for distribution to needy families throughout the community. At the senior center, which shares an SOCP site, City Corps helped bag and distribute groceries one day a week. In addition, the Girl’s Group assisted in a voter registration drive and organized a fund-raiser to help the Tarahumara Indians, who come to the area.
once a year to raise money for their Mexican village. These youth also served food at the local homeless shelter and helped with gift wrapping at the Salvation Army.

Reparative Process

The third process component is the “reparative process” and is grounded in the problem-solving model common to community policing (Goldstein 1990). Rather than emphasizing strict adherence to precedence and procedure, community justice continually focuses on the problems caused by crime and the problems that cause crime. Where harmful conditions and criminal damage are identified, a decision-making process is undertaken to rectify this harm (Bazemore and Walgrave 1999). Unlike traditional just deserts philosophies, emphasis is not placed on imposing proportional costs on offenders for the harms they have wrought (Clear 1994). Nevertheless, an offender is believed to be in “debt” to both victims and the community. Holding offenders accountable in a manner that facilitates their making amends is a critical part of the community justice process. Traditional punishment that is not directly constructive is outside the community justice model (Bazemore 1996; Bazemore and Umbreit 1995). However, both incapacitation to ensure public safety and potentially onerous work may be requirements of the reparative and the reintegrative processes (which are discussed in the next section).

The reparative process has two components: (1) identifying reparative tasks and (2) ensuring completion of responsibilities (see Exhibit 1.6 for indicators of reparative process). Identifying reparative tasks is often done in a negotiation process that includes offenders and victims. Victims have an important role in specifying how they have been harmed by the criminal incident and what they might need to be “healed.” Harm may be identified as (1) material—loss or damage to personal property; (2) personal—ranging from hurt feelings to physical pain; or (3) communal—harm to the whole community’s quality of life rather than specifically to the victim’s.

One reparative task that has a long tradition in the Ventura County juvenile justice process is restitution, which is the primary means for offenders to repair material harm. In the SOCP, probation officers are expected to prioritize the completion of restitution payments by offenders. For example, when restitution is assigned to a youth, the team often expends great effort to ensure that tasks are completed to help facilitate payment (e.g., a community outreach worker might help the youth get a job, the navigator might take a youth to work every day to ensure the youth can pay restitu-

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<th>Exhibit 1.6. Reparative Process</th>
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<tr>
<td>Theoretical Construct</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reparative decision making</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reparative opportunities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victim restoration</td>
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<tr>
<td>Victim services</td>
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<tr>
<td>Community restoration</td>
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...tion, and the probation officer might contact the youth on payday to ensure restitution is paid). Sometimes, restitution is not monetary but takes care of the victim’s personal needs. For example, one youth painted graffiti on a victim’s garage, and his restitution involved painting the garage he had defaced as well as other graffiti that had been painted on neighborhood lampposts by other youth.

In the SOCP, the mediator works with the victim to determine ways to repair the personal harm caused by the youth. The mediator calls victims initially to talk to them about the incident and their feelings about it. The mediator hopes to develop a relationship of trust with the victims so they will feel comfortable talking about feelings, asking for help, and participating in a mediation with the youth. (For an examination of victim-sensitive mediation processes, see Umbreit and Greenwood 2000.) Once the trust is established, the victims often continue to call the mediator, whether or not mediation occurs. Sometimes, it is not until after multiple phone calls or face-to-face contacts that victims feel comfortable identifying some of the things they need (e.g., beyond the monetary restitution usually required by the probation officer) and meeting with the youth. Many victims simply want an apology. Other times, the victims find themselves becoming interested in helping the youth. For example, in one situation, a young man
committed a petty theft at a market when he did a beer run and walked out of the store. He was caught, and although the store manager refused mediation, the security guard who caught the boy agreed to participate. When the two met, the boy was embarrassed and apologized with his head down, but the security guard told him it took a lot of courage to apologize, and then offered to go to court on the boy’s behalf.

Sometimes, however, victims are not necessarily interested in participating in mediation. Consequently, in community justice projects like the SOCP, staff often work to create reparative opportunities within the community that are relevant to identified needs. One way to judge community justice projects is by the amount of time and energy staff spend doing this. One of the goals is to use the service experience as a learning opportunity. Sometimes the mediator contacts the youth’s pastor or another church and asks if the youth can do something for the church as a way to repair harm. As a result, SOCP youth have done many things for local churches such as providing day care for children, cleaning up buildings, and working in reception areas. One youth also worked for her mother’s company in the local community doing janitorial work. When opportunities such as these are not available, the youth are referred to programs such as anger management, Al-Anon, and Alateen that fit their needs and might help them become better members of the community.

The SOCP has also gone beyond focusing on individual offenders and now works to improve community way of life as a whole. For example, the Community Outreach Workers organized focus groups where police, probation, and other SOCP staff met with local community members to discuss their concerns—the harm they were experiencing—and to develop solutions to the problems. One of the issues that arose was an increase in graffiti and the community’s belief that more gang-related youth were hanging out and committing disorder-related crimes (e.g., vandalism). The community was concerned about these activities being precursors to violence and worked with police and probation to develop solutions to the problems. Some of the strategies included neighbors agreeing to help each other and to call police if they see these disorderly activities occurring and police and probation agreeing to be more visible during the most vulnerable times (e.g., at night) in the most vulnerable places (e.g., hot spots).

Once a reparative need and a solution have been identified by the people involved, carrying out this solution itself requires a lot of effort. Often, solutions require many different staff and agencies to participate, and these staff typically must collaborate to help the offenders and victims complete the tasks. Interagency partnerships and government/community partner-

ships are often difficult to achieve (Chavis 1998; Grinc 1998; Schorr 1997; Skogan 1996). For example, a probation officer, mediator, and community service organization staff might need to work together to coordinate the supervision and completion of the offender’s assigned or agreed-upon duties. Projects like the SOCP are ideally suited for such collaborations, because the staff are all in one building and can work together easily to ensure such activities occur.

**Reintegrative Process**

The reintegrative process is the final process component involved in defining community justice programs. The goal is to integrate an offender into conventional social life. This primarily means (1) understanding and abiding by the norms of the community, (2) building healthy relationships and strong ties to community institutions, and (3) developing skills and abilities so one can succeed in school, work, and personal relationships (see Exhibit 1.7 for measurement indicators).

**Exhibit 1.7. Reparative Process**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theoretical Construct</th>
<th>Operational Factors</th>
<th>Relevant Indicators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Norm affirmation</td>
<td>Articulation of local behavioral standards</td>
<td>Opportunities for norm communication; offender acknowledgment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offender supervision</td>
<td>Offender risk management</td>
<td>Levels of supervision assessment; risk and protective model; frequency and type of offender monitoring; offender violations of reparative agreements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support network development</td>
<td>Social ties</td>
<td>Ex/intensiveness of community network</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competency development</td>
<td>Development of conventional competencies for victims and offenders</td>
<td>Array of programs available for competency development; mentoring for competency development, supervision and social support</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Norm Affirmation and Offender Supervision**

Reintegrative processes begin with norm affirmation strategies, which are designed to help offenders conform to community standards of behav-
Other nontraditional activities include physical training and field trips with clients. One probation officer worked out with a group of youth who were going to the voluntary boot camp, and another ran with one of his clients in the morning before work. Officers also go on field trips with their clients—for example, bike rides, museum tours, and university tours—both to monitor clients and to allow the youth to see them outside the authoritarian role, thereby creating what they believe to be better relationships. During these events, officers can spend more time affirming behavioral norms, for example, giving clients ideas about how better to spend their time, how to do well in school, how to avoid negative situations with police and courts, and how to better their lives. Officers have commented that some families do not recognize them as probation officers because their roles are so different from routine probation officer roles. In addition to working with the youth, probation officers and service coordinators work with the youth’s family to better their life skills (e.g., teach them how to write resumes and get help from social services). In one case, a probation client’s girlfriend became pregnant, and the probation officer chose to work with her to find resources for the baby and to learn how to parent. The hope is that by focusing on the family as a whole, the SOCP will be able to affect youth’s environment and better their chances of doing well after the intervention is complete.

In addition to probation officers and service coordinators, the SOCP has many other staff who spend time monitoring youth and providing them with suggestions and help with their lives. All youth receive a navigator, who is primarily responsible for connecting the youth to services and teaching the youth how to navigate these services on their own. Activities include taking the youth to or joining the youth in doctor’s appointments, school conferences, etc. In practice, navigators do many other things with youth: running groups, providing friendship, mentoring, guidance, crisis intervention, transportation to and help in court, recreation activities, tutoring, food, clothing, and so on. For some youth, these navigators serve the role of an older brother or sister who gives advice and yet is easy to talk to and “kick it” with. For example, one youth had a problem with other girls in the neighborhood, and instead of responding to their provocation to fight, she went home and called her navigator, who helped her think of another way of coping with the situation. For others, the navigator serves as a substitute parent, who spends most of the time monitoring, giving advice, and sometimes disciplining them—for example, asking them why they are not in school, whether they are using drugs, telling them how to do things differently, and giving them consequences if they do not respond. This navigator
role often depends on the needs of the client but also on the navigators’ personal styles.

Because the staff work in teams, many other staff also work with each youth, including drug and alcohol treatment specialists, mental health social workers, a restorative justice specialist, community outreach workers, City Corps staff, and recreation staff. These workers provide services based on their disciplinary expertise, but they also provide supervisory roles and promote positive behavior, thereby serving the role of an extended family of service providers. For example, these staff transport youth to and from SOCP activities and other services and visit youth who are institutionalized in the local facilities. They also connect youth and families to services: helping them obtain housing assistance, helping with payment of utilities, jobs, medical care, furniture, and clothing. As they go about their day, each of them also typically talks to some youth or their families or both about their lives and how to make better choices.

Support Network Development

Another important integrative component of community justice programs is helping offenders and victims build support networks outside the justice system (Bazemore, Dooley, and Nissen 2000). This is one way to help youth maintain law-abiding and prosocial behavior in the community. In addition, staff work with youth and families to help them designate other people in their lives who may be able to help them navigate daily life activities. For example, if parents do not have a car, staff ask if there is someone else in the family or a friend who might be able to take the youth to school or to medical visits. Or if youth are unable to make appointments or get to school because they are expected to baby-sit younger siblings, staff problem-solve with families to see if there are other ways of caring for the children. At any one time, approximately six youth and their families receive a modified version of multisystemic therapy (MST) for three to five months. MST is designed to “change the real-world functioning of youth by changing their natural settings—home, school, and neighborhood—in ways that promote prosocial behavior while decreasing antisocial behavior” (Henggeler 1997:2). Unlike traditional mental health services, MST workers are in the field working with youth and families, are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, contact the youth and family almost daily, and take responsibility for treatment outcomes, rather than giving responsibility solely to the client. MST will improve youth and family functioning in a way that is maintained over the long term after the social worker leaves the family (Henggeler 1997). Supporters of the SOCP say these intensive services and skills training is one way they can build independence in families.

Competency Development

The third element of reintegrative process is competency development (Bazemore and Umbreit 1995). Youth competency has been the primary focus of the SOCP, because the funding agency is specifically interested in youth outcomes—for example, recidivism, probation completion, and completion of restitution and community service. In addition, most of the staff are primarily trained to work with individual clients (rather than the larger community, for example). Most of SOCP staff time is spent managing cases, monitoring youth, and facilitating services. Each team spends about three to four hours a week discussing its cases and developing the week’s casework strategies, and much of the remainder is spent doing actual casework with individual youth and families. Casework is multifaceted and varies, depending on client and family needs. In addition to casework, the SOCP offers some competency-building services on-site, including program components such as City Corps, alcohol and drug treatment groups, I2-step groups, parent support groups, a girls’ and a boys’ social support group, and open recreation hours.

Obstacles to Successful Implementation

Community justice programs like the SOCP are working hard to change the way probation is designed and implemented in hopes of making the system more humane and more holistic in addressing not only offender needs but also family, victim, and community needs. But probation programs that are working toward implementing community justice ideals often face challenges that make the process difficult. We briefly mention some obstacles here to acknowledge the difficulties faced by probation agencies such as the SOCP, even when there are idealistic and energetic program staff (see Lane and Turner 1999 for a more detailed discussion).

One primary issue probation agencies face is creating and maintaining the program’s vision. Because probation is traditionally (or at least recently) law enforcement oriented, many probation officers have been trained to ensure public safety and compliance with court-ordered probation conditions. It is sometimes difficult both emotionally and logistically for officers
to break from their training, expertise, and experience to work on what may be perceived in the agency and possibly in the community as "soft" or "warm and fuzzy" (Bazemore and Pranis 1997). They may not know how to "think outside the box"—how to go about delivering services differently. Even if they receive new training, these officers likely will feel more comfortable in their traditional activities. They also may feel they are caught between two conflicting sets of expectations—one from the program, which might ask them to think of alternatives to violating the youth and to help families, victims, and the communities, for example, and another from the agency, which might ask them to focus on public safety, caseload management, and court expectations. Officers may find it difficult to meet both sets of expectations and may choose the safest route for their careers (e.g., promotion)—following the primary agency guidelines.

Collaboration, which is key to many community justice programs, is also very difficult at its best (Chavis 1998; Grinc 1998; Skogan 1996). Agencies and their staff often approach problems from very different perspectives and may disagree about the vision: about the guiding principles, the desired client base, the goals of intervention, and the gauge of success. The same terms (collaboration, teamwork, community justice) might mean different things to different people. For example, programs must ask the following questions: Who pays for what? Are partners equally involved financially? If not, how will the primary agency ensure that tasks are completed? Even if everyone agrees on these things and is equally involved, working together may be difficult in practice—for example, who will do training and what will staff be trained on? Who has primary responsibility for monitoring cases? How and when will client information be shared across agencies? Who makes the final decisions if staff disagree—is it based on consensus, majority vote, or does the probation officer have the final say? What happens if some of the staff do not live up to the expectations of others or complete their tasks? How will the vision be maintained on a daily basis in all the project activities? When agencies work together, issues such as these become magnified, because each agency likely has different ways for dealing with problems when they arise. In addition, when they work together to implement something completely new, such as community justice, the problems are even more inflated. Staff have to struggle with these collaboration issues in the midst of trying to find their way through this new process.

Another issue for community justice programs is defining and involving relevant communities (Karp 1999). Many communities have a group of people involved in community activities (e.g., neighborhood watch, city commissions, and community activism). These folks might be energetic and willing to help (or hinder) the goals of the program, but they cannot substitute for victims and community members who were affected by the crime (e.g., neighbors and witnesses). Including this latter group in the process may be difficult. Victims may not want to participate for many personal reasons (e.g., fear, desire to stay away from the offender, a lack of interest, or a busy schedule), but involving local community members who are affected is also problematic. They may also be too busy or see no benefit in spending time dealing with issues that might seem peripheral to their own lives. But even if the situation is important to them, some people may not feel comfortable participating in justice system activities, especially in minority communities where relationships with officials might be tense or seem difficult to change.

Community Justice Goals: Is it Worth the Effort?

Although often difficult to implement perfectly in practice, community justice programs may be worth the effort, because the traditional justice system has often failed to address neighborhood problems that cause crime and the harm that crime inflicts on communities. Rather than simply focusing on punishing the offender, community justice programs center on the local community as a whole, involve citizens in the justice process, repair the harm of crime, and reintegrate offenders in order to reduce crime, increase justice, and improve the quality of community life. Ultimately, community justice works to strengthen community capacity and increase citizen satisfaction, including their perceptions of safety. The next two sections discuss these ultimate goals.

Community Capacity

Community capacity refers to "the ability to effectively develop, mobilize, and use resources to manage change" (Chavis 1998:85) (see Exhibit 1.8 for measurement indicators). This is consistent with the premise of social disorganization theory that effective communities are able to realize common values (Bursik 1988; Kornhauser 1978; Sampson 1995). Community justice must result not only in just outcomes for offenders and victims but also an increase in a community's ability to solve its own problems. Thus, community justice is a means of achieving criminal justice and a strategy
for community building. Community capacity is reflected in the vitality of local institutions such as families, schools, churches, health and municipal services, and commerce. It is also reflected in the ability of community members to enforce mutually agreed-upon behavioral standards.

**Exhibit 1.8. Community Capacity**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theoretical Construct</th>
<th>Operational Factors</th>
<th>Relevant Indicators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community institutions (families, schools, churches, health and municipal services, commerce)</td>
<td>Socialization Service availability Citizen participation recruitment pool Resource leveraging</td>
<td>Strength of families and schools in the community; community education Creation/expansion of services for competency development, restoration Extensiveness of participation Fund-raising success</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norm enforcement</td>
<td>Informal control in the community</td>
<td>Use of informal control</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

One indication of community capacity is the extent to which community members are effectively socialized into the culture of the community. In large part, socialization is not a private phenomenon but the work of local institutions and individual community members fulfilling expected institutional roles such as parent or teacher (Bellah et al. 1991). These roles are certainly creatively and variously performed, but their scripts are derived from enduring cultural practices that transcend individuals. When we evaluate community justice programs, we might ask to what extent has the community justice process strengthened these community institutions and facilitated their role in the socialization process? A clearly observable measure is the community’s ability to deliver needed services to its members. In community justice, service availability is especially important for competency development (which facilitates reintegration) and restoration, as discussed earlier. Community capacity is also indicated by the citizen participation recruitment pool. For example, is there a roster of volunteers in the community or various networks that facilitate grassroots mobilization? To what extent will volunteers commit their time and energy? Equally important is the capacity of the community to leverage resources for its development. Can it both mount fund-raising campaigns at the local level and garner resources from various sources such as city or state government, foundations, or through coalitions or collaboratives with external partners?

Does the community have the skills, political influence, or technical assistance needed to secure funding for the provision of desired public goods? Community justice programs like the SOCP work to ensure that the answer to these questions is yes.

**Community Satisfaction**

Community justice also is concerned with citizens’ perceptions of the justice system and their experience of community. Although community capacity refers to objective characteristics (what is available), satisfaction is a subjective phenomenon (how people feel). The basic hypothesis is that public sentiment matters and may at times act quite independently of objective indicators, coloring not only public opinion about the justice system but also community identity and attachment (Miethe 1995; Taylor 2001). Community justice is ultimately rooted in the experience of community life, the perception of citizens that their own sacrifices for the sake of the general welfare are reasonably rewarded by the community’s provision of public goods (Etzioni 1996). Among the most important returns are three subjective perceptions: a sense of safety, a sense of justice, and a sense of community (see Exhibit 1.9 for measurement indicators).

**Exhibit 1.9. Community Satisfaction**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theoretical Construct</th>
<th>Operational Factors</th>
<th>Relevant Indicators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sense of Safety</td>
<td>Neighborhood fear of crime</td>
<td>Mobility; risk; fear; coping behaviors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sense of Justice</td>
<td>Remorse/forgiveness</td>
<td>Offender expressions of remorse/ victim expressions of forgiveness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Offender accountability</td>
<td>Stakeholders views of success in accountability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Norm affirmation</td>
<td>Expressions of norms; degree of consensus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rights protection</td>
<td>Ratio of innocents sanctioned; net widening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Legitimacy of criminal justice system</td>
<td>Fairness; responsiveness; capability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sense of Community</td>
<td>Fulfillment of needs</td>
<td>Perceptions that community meets basic needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Membership</td>
<td>Feelings of inclusion, belonging</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Influence</td>
<td>Perceptions of efficacy, making a difference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Emotional connection</td>
<td>Feelings of commitment, empathy, close personal ties</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
example, we would hope to see South Oxnard residents increasingly satisfied with the justice system and with community life as the project progresses.

Conclusion

This chapter outlines the community justice model and applies it to one probation program. It specifies the critical domains for action and evaluation that distinguish a criminal justice model based on crime control, criminal justice, and community building. This model is grounded in the idea that criminal justice agencies must make themselves accessible to the community and the community must take an active role in the justice process. Foremost, community justice emphasizes strategies that repair damage or solve problems in order to restore communities. Community justice emphasizes strategies that integrate marginal members of the community at risk for further criminal behavior. Ultimately, the success of community justice is predicated on the development of community capacity and community satisfaction. In the next chapter, we venture eastward to examine how another probation program, this one in Phoenix, Arizona, seeks to fulfill the promise of making community justice accessible to the community.

Notes

1. Both Julio and Raymond are fictional examples of South Oxnard juvenile probationers.
2. At this time, the Ventura County Probation Agency was called the Ventura County Corrections Services Agency.
3. We are also studying 275 youth randomly assigned to routine probation, and their characteristics are approximately the same. There are also 41 siblings being followed (30 SOCP youth siblings and 11 control youth siblings).

References


