



## **CREATING SAFER PRISONS BY TACKLING ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR**

**Poster Presentation**

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### **[Note from the Editor:**

Part of the assessed work for the work-based learning module is a poster presentation. The poster which a student creates is also based upon time spent in the work place; that is, identifying an issue or issues which can then be discussed in relation to the literature. Kelly Passmore's poster identified the issue of tackling anti-social behaviour within the prison system.]

As part of the Criminology and Criminal Justice Studies degree programme, I undertook an 80 hour work placement at HMP Channings Wood which spanned a period of four months. During my time there I shadowed prison staff and was given the invaluable experience to work one on one with prisoners in the Vulnerable Persons Unit (VPU), the Drug Therapeutic Community (DTC) and the Education department. My favourite aspects of the work placement were the times that I spent in the DTC and the Education department. These two departments are separate within the prison however they both link together as they specifically look at changing the prisoners' behaviour and lifestyle choices in order to rehabilitate them so that they can continue their lives as law abiding citizens when they leave prison. It was in both of these areas that I was able to carry out more practical work in comparison with other departments that I worked in through observed focus groups and classes which enabled me to join in with discussions with the prisoners. This gave me a real insight as to what it was like to work one on one with them.

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Working in a prison there were a wide array of issues that I could have researched. One of the key issues that occurred during my time there was that of Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB), and I spent some of my time on placement with the 'Safer Prisons' Officer. Her role is to monitor ASB within the prison, write reports and to find strategies in order to effectively tackle the issue. ASB covers a wide range of behaviours within the prison such as physical assaults, self harm and suicide, threats, rumour spreading, bullying and intimidation, verbal abuse or insults, sexual abuse or assault, theft, getting into debt, violence, racial abuse, and play fighting (Wilder, 2010). An example of this was at the start of my placement, it was reported in local newspapers that three men climbed onto the roof of the jail's segregation wing and started to tear off roof tiles, threatening to jump off of the roof if staff tried to bring them down (Herald Express, 2011), which caused the jail to be on lock down for seven hours. This protesting is a frequently occurring issue at Channings Wood and affects every prisoner as they are then locked up in their cells for the whole day so that the prison staff are able control the situation.

The Channings Wood Safer Prisons Officer wrote a report in 2010 based upon ASB within the prison. I found this report particularly interesting and it prompted me to choose this as the issue to base my poster presentation upon. The Work Based Learning Module was an invaluable experience for me and something that I would encourage all students to do. By undertaking a work placement at HMP Channings Wood I have gained practical experience of working within the Criminal Justice System which has increased my confidence about my ability to work within this sector. The experience I gained from working in the prison has led me to undertake a PGCE in Post Compulsory Education, with the future aim of working in the field of prisoner education.

## **References**

This Is South Devon, 'Prison Trio's Rooftop Rampage Cost £58,000', *The Herald Express*, 21 January 2011: <http://www.thisissouthdevon.co.uk/news/Prison-trio-s-rooftop-rampage-cost-163-58-000/article-3127046-detail/article.html>.

Wilder, K., *A Safer Prison Annual Report 2010*. Denbury: HMP Channings Wood, (2011).

