Although confinement facilities are complex organizations that vary in purpose, size, and structure, the elements of effective management are universal. Certain strategies and practices promote success, whether a facility serves a few or many residents, and whether its function is as a juvenile detention center, a juvenile correctional facility, or an adult facility that also serves youth. The same principles, policies, and practices can work in federal, state, county, or regional systems, as well as in private and public operations. Regardless of the size and structure of the facility, effective performance begins with a clear vision and mission.

Vision and Mission

A cogent mission statement is the first step toward setting a clear direction and gaining a measure of control in the uncertain and changing environment of juvenile justice. Fully and clearly defined purposes become the foundation for decisions and consistent policies. A strong mission statement includes beliefs, values, and expectations about what will happen to confined youth in a particular facility.

The National Juvenile Detention Association (NJDA) definition captures the essence of juvenile detention.[1] That definition addresses the seven essential characteristics of juvenile detention identified by the American Correctional Association (ACA), Juvenile Detention Committee: temporary custody, safe custody, restricted environment, community protection, pending legal action, helpful services, and clinical observation and assessment.[2] Those elements can serve as the basis of a comprehensive juvenile detention program and a mission statement. (See Ch. 2: Types of Facilities: Juvenile Detention) [2]

In 1992, the Academy Division of the National Institute of Corrections (NIC) (formerly referred to as the National Academy of Corrections [NAC]) assembled 30 juvenile detention and corrections experts to address the issue of vision and mission
statements for juvenile detention and corrections. The NAC report from that meeting noted the common perspectives of the participating juvenile justice practitioners, particularly the high levels of consensus about the need for intervention before youth become institutionalized. The vision and mission statements promulgated by that group are still pertinent. They read as follows:

**Vision Statement**

Our vision is that every child experience success in caring families and nurturing communities that cherish children and teach them to value family and community. Our vision is guided by the fact that our decisions and actions affecting children today determine the quality of our life tomorrow.

**Mission Statement**

The mission of the juvenile corrections and detention system is to provide leadership for change for youth, family units, and communities. It operates by creating legitimate, alternative pathways to adulthood through equal access to services that are least intrusive, culturally sensitive, and consistent with the highest professional standards.[3]

These statements illustrate the broad underlying purpose of juvenile confinement facilities. They can serve as a foundation for a facility to develop its own mission statement—within its jurisdiction and as part of the juvenile justice system. They recognize the challenges faced by the young people the system serves. They point out the importance of professionals in that system asserting their influence in guiding the future actions of facilities and programs to better serve youth. They stress the importance of practices being built on evidence-based research. And, they emphasize the value that juvenile justice experts place on intervention to enhance the future for youth. A facility’s mission statement flows from the organization’s fundamental values, beliefs, and expectations regarding the treatment of youth and goals for their successful future. That mission statement will then influence the policies and procedures.

**The External Environment**

A central task for facility administrators is to address challenges from the external environment, including such issues as overcrowding or downsizing, commitments that are inappropriate or involve vulnerable or demanding youth, and lack of adequate resources. These issues may undermine the best-designed programs; however, they can be overcome through a variety of management tools, including:
• Reliable information on population trends, delinquency and crime rates, and demographics.
• Sound planning.
• Admission criteria that are clear and understandable.
• Mechanisms for prompt or regular review of detention or commitment decisions.
• Availability of an adequate array of non-secure alternatives—such as a continuum of care. Mechanisms for timely disposition, transition, and release— including adequate community and residential resources.
• A means to constantly monitor the facility population and to ensure that court scheduling, placement assessment and referral, and transportation are timely and do not become obstacles to transition and release. (See Ch. 18: Transition Planning and Reentry). [3]

All of these techniques demonstrate the importance of the relationship between the confinement facility and the broader juvenile or adult criminal justice environment, including courts, probation and parole, placement agencies, law enforcement, and transporting authorities.

One way to meet the challenges and overcome the problems of managing a confinement facility is to build coalitions. Building coalitions means making connections with individuals, groups, organizations, and agencies that can make a difference. Sometimes coalitions are forged through formal means—reports on goals, accomplishments, and shortcomings of the program; speeches and brochures that interpret the philosophy and goals of the program; tours and educational events that open the facility to the community; and advisory boards, committee membership, and public meetings that involve key people from outside the organization. Coalition building is also achieved informally—responsiveness to inquiries from the community; sensitive handling of telephone calls and letters from parents, victims, and concerned citizens; and regular contacts with judges, commissioners, legislators, and other key decision makers.

Although the examples of coalition building presented above apply to the local level, the process is just as critical on the state and national levels. Facility practitioners can build coalitions with one another; with representatives from other parts of the juvenile and criminal justice system and from different levels of government; with the research and academic communities; and with leaders of churches, businesses, corporations, and foundations. Coalitions that have a purpose can help to build support and promote positive change.
Responsibilities of Facility Management

Among the responsibilities of facility managers are four key tasks: 1) development and communication of sound policies, procedures, and standards; 2) acquisition, allocation, and monitoring of resources; 3) selection, training, and development of staff; and 4) evaluation of organization performance and planning for the future.

Policies and Procedures

Effective policies and procedures are discussed in detail later in this chapter. Those written guidelines can help ensure consistent practice.

Resource Management

Resource acquisition, allocation, and monitoring are critical to building a successful program. The physical plant and operating funds are primary resources. Design and maintenance of the physical plant must acknowledge the relationship between space and the objectives of the facility. In addition, designated funding sources and the public in general must be willing to pay the costs of security, safety, health, and well being. Facility administrators have the obligation to define what constitutes adequate funding and to make the case for its allocation. They also have the responsibility to manage those funds with rigorous efficiency and integrity. (See Ch. 3: Physical Plant Design and Operations).

Competent Staff

Competent, conscientious staff are more important than any other element for ensuring quality and achieving the mission of any confinement facility. The most important tasks for management are selecting and training staff. Through the hiring process, administrators and managers seek to identify people with the knowledge, skills, and qualities of character needed to achieve the purposes of the facility. Training supports the development of knowledge and skills, expands understanding of the aims of the organization, and integrates staff into the process of sustaining the values and accomplishing the goals of the program. (See Ch. 4: Developing and Maintaining a Professional Workforce).

Evaluation and Planning

The management responsibilities of evaluation and planning are two sides of the same issue. Evaluation asks how well the organization is doing; planning asks what the organization can improve for the future. Both functions are based on
understanding what constitutes organizational performance. A highly performing organization is successful in the following five areas:

- **The organization’s relationships to its environment.** How effective are the relationships with the court and with placement or parole agencies? Are admission criteria in place and respected? Can some measure of predictability and control be exercised over admissions and release? What are the organization’s relationships with external stakeholders (e.g., law enforcement and educational institutions)?

- **Acquisition and use of resources.** Is the organization able to secure and retain financial and human resources? Is the building or physical plant adequate in size and design? How well does the building or physical plant serve the purposes of safety, security, health, and development? Is funding adequate and managed efficiently? Are the staff scheduled and assigned to work effectively?

- **Internal processes.** How many clients are being served? Do activities support goals? How well do support services such as purchasing, food service, and clerical work function?

- **Achievement of purposes and goals.** Are the purposes of safety, security, health, and development or rehabilitation being met? To what extent are there escapes, injuries, assaults, or other indicators of performance failure?

- **Satisfaction of clients and employees.** To what extent do youth and staff feel safe? Do youth feel that the staff cares about them? Do employees show signs of trust, respect, and loyalty? What is the state of employee morale? How effective are processes for communication, problem solving, and conflict resolution among youth and staff? To what degree are opportunities afforded for innovation, self-expression, and autonomy?

**Leadership and Capacity Building**

**Building Leaders from Within**

Effective leaders have many valuable qualities, one of which is the **willingness** and the **ability** to build current and future leaders from within the organization. Willingness requires having confidence enough to not be threatened by developing leaders within the organization. It entails recognizing the skills and potential in others and acknowledging their benefit to the facility. The ability to build leaders within the facility, like most leadership traits, is learned. Cebula and colleagues discuss this notion:

When employees are able to put their talents, skills, and knowledge to use, frustration and complacency are rare. Continuous learning also includes giving
staff opportunities to build self-confidence through practice. Leaders who build self-confidence in their staff give them the foundation to deal with unexpected events and to make the tough choices this field often requires. Higher performing leaders know that building an organizational culture based on openness and trust encourages employees to suggest how to improve processes, propose innovative ways of dealing with issues and problems, and engage in improving the organization’s effectiveness.[4]

Developing employees involves helping them to achieve their goals at the organizational, unit, or individual levels. It is important to remember that people meet different personal needs as they realize their goals. Some people need to stretch and prefer a challenge, knowing that they may not fully succeed but that they will grow and progress. Some people need more readily achievable goals to foster confidence, raising the bar as objectives are reached incrementally. An effective leader must be aware of and sensitive to those individual needs and work styles and consider them in coaching and mentoring their employees. (See Ch. 2: Types of Facilities and Ch. 4: Developing and Maintaining a Professional Workforce) [5]

Coaching helps leaders increase their effectiveness. And, when they coach others, “they can increase the capacity of the organization by bringing out the best in people: their willingness to be responsible for results, their engagement in solving problems, and their ability to deal with change and complexity.”[5] Coaching skills are enhanced by three primary techniques.

1. Listening without judgment helps to improve trust and encourage communication.
2. As[5]king powerful, open-ended questions rather than directing or giving advice helps to challenge staff members to examine their behavior.
3. Setting up a system of accountability can lead to changes in old behaviors that are ineffective and establish long-term goals that staff adopt as their own.

In addition to coaching, mentoring is an important technique in developing leaders within any organization. Mentoring can be described as the “transfer of knowledge about the work, the organization, and the network of contacts within it from an experienced, knowledgeable person to someone who has less knowledge.”[6] Mentoring may be formal or informal. Informal mentoring occurs when two individuals agree to work together with the goal of leadership development. Formal mentoring involves structure and may include specific goals, schedules, and oversight. Some juvenile and adult correctional agencies establish formal mentoring relationships for new employees or for new supervisors or managers. That system
benefits both the new staff member—through the guidance that is provided—and the established staff member—through opportunities to practice leadership skills and to examine the organization and his or her own knowledge. In some cases, professional organizations may provide mentors. This underscores the value of networking with professional organizations (e.g., National Partnership for Juvenile Services [NPJS], ACA, Council of Juvenile Correctional Administrators [CJCA]), through which a professional may acquire knowledge from peers. (See Ch. 1: Historical Perspective) [6]

Participation in Professional Organizations and Networking

Building and using networks helps leaders at all levels become more effective. Upper-level leaders who learn to develop networks when they are novice supervisors or as they progress through middle management have the benefit of that support system, because they have access to resources at the leadership level. They can turn to the relationships they have developed through professional and interpersonal networks to address challenging issues. Also, through those professional networks, leaders are positioned to be aware and take advantage of current research and innovations and embrace effective practices tested in other facilities and programs.

Staffing Adequacy

Confinement facilities are unique organizations in that they never close; they must be staffed by trained, competent staff 24 hours a day, seven days a week. This makes the need to develop individual leaders—as well as leadership capacity in all employees—even more important. Facilities must have assigned leader decision-makers on duty at all times, and, if the facility has a system for developing them, leaders will be available to make decisions on a routine basis or in unusual, critical situations. In addition to recognized leaders, the facility must also have a sufficient number of qualified line staff who have received training in an accepted juvenile justice curriculum and in facility-specific expectations. The staffing plan must meet accepted staff-to-youth ratios. Those ratios may be based on a variety of factors, which the Prison Rape Elimination Act Standards (PREA) delineate specifically:

(a) The agency shall ensure that each facility it operates shall, develop, implement, and document a staffing plan that provides for adequate levels of staffing, and, where applicable, video monitoring, to protect residents against sexual abuse. In calculating adequate staff levels and determining the needs for video monitoring, facilities shall take into consideration:
(1) Generally accepted juvenile detention and correctional/secure residential practices;

(2) Any judicial findings of inadequacy;

(3) Any findings of inadequacy from Federal investigative agencies;

(4) Any findings of inadequacy from internal or external oversight bodies;

(5) All components of the facility’s physical plant (including “blind spots” or areas where staff or residents may be isolated);

(6) The composition of the resident population;

(7) The number and placement of supervisory staff;

(8) Institutional programs occurring on a particular shift;

(9) Any applicable State or local laws, regulations, or standards;

(10) The prevalence of substantiated and unsubstantiated incidents of sexual abuse; and

(11) Any other relevant factors.

(b) The agency shall comply with the staffing plan except during limited and discreet exigent circumstances, and shall fully document deviations from the plan during such circumstances.

(c) Each secure juvenile facility shall maintain staff ratios of a minimum of 1:8 during resident waking hours and 1:16 during resident sleeping hours, except during limited and discrete circumstances, which shall be fully documented. Only security staff shall be included in these ratios.”[7]

PREA Standards serve as a useful tool in clearly enumerating a range of factors to consider in establishing a staffing plan. PREA Standards must be adhered to; however, to ensure safety and security of both staff and youth while delivering specific treatment programs, a facility may need to exceed those standards. For example, a facility that serves sex offenders may need to increase staffing to provide adequate supervision and programming. A juvenile correctional facility that has a
robust treatment component may need a staffing plan that includes a strong clinical staff in addition to the security staff outlined in the PREA requirements.

Long before PREA Standards were finalized, the NJDA promulgated a position statement on staffing adequacy by supporting “regulation, policy, procedure and practice ensure a minimum ratio of one staff to no more than eight (1:8) juveniles during the day, and a ratio of one staff member to no more than sixteen (1:16) juveniles during the night.”[8] That position statement intentionally emphasized the need for those ratios to reflect minimal numbers to ensure the safety and security of the facility and the provision of necessary programming for juveniles. (See Ch. 9: Admission and Intake: PREA Screening).[7]

Evaluating Performance of the Facility and the Staff

There are two basic types of performance management in a confinement facility: Management and evaluation of 1) the performance of the entire facility or one of its components, such as a particular treatment unit or the school program, and 2) the performance of individual staff members. Both types of evaluations are important and are interrelated; their goals and objectives are mutually dependent.

Performance Management and Organizational Performance

The use of performance measures is important for any organization, and it is critical for a publicly funded program. Accountability in the use of tax dollars is the responsibility of the facility, its parent agency, and of each employee. “Few public sector programs are evaluated systematically to determine whether they are achieving their objectives and doing so in a reasonably efficient fashion. Informal judgments of program effectiveness and efficiency tend to be subjective, based on anecdotes of program success or failure, the glowing testimonials of program proponents, or the harsh criticisms of program opponents.”[9] Accountability and, as a corollary, productivity in a public agency have been defined as “responsiveness to the needs, desires, and resources of the community, client, user, or customer.”[10] In confinement facilities that serve youth, this refers to the expectation of improved public safety through effective confinement and the transformation of youth into contributing, law-abiding citizens through the prudent use of resources. And, the “needs, desires and resources of the client, user, or customer” refers to the needs of young people and their families for such services as treatment and education and successful reintegration home, while considering their skills, abilities, and personal and environmental assets.
To measure the performance of an entire facility or one of its components, leaders must help staff set meaningful, specific, measurable, and achievable goals. Goal setting should be a shared activity that provides participants—including all members of the staff—with a clear understanding of their purpose. “It is not the responsibility of management to set goals. Rather, it is management’s responsibility to create an atmosphere where workers set their own goals and feel committed to achieving them.”[11] In addition to establishing organizational goals, the group must also determine how those goals will be measured. Measurement consists of tracking both process or tasks and products or accomplishments. For example, a school program in a facility might count the proportion of youth who attend class at least 90% of the days held, which would be a process measurement. Then, they might count the number of youth who pass their GED exam, receive enough credits to graduate, or enroll in college and complete a full semester. Those would be product measurements. The two types of measurements complement each other and contribute to the success of the facility. Reliable measures of performance in organizations that serve people in any way are rare, and measures of group performance are even rarer, despite the need to evaluate group performance. It is arduous but important to develop relevant criteria to use in evaluating the performance of a group, unit, or facility. The fact that measuring and evaluating a facility’s performance is difficult should not be an obstacle to doing so.

Performance of Employees

A more familiar type of evaluation for most practitioners is the measurement of individual employee performance. Unfortunately, all too often, many managers view employee evaluation as an interruption of their primary duties, rather than an essential one of those duties, and, as a result, conduct it in a perfunctory manner, if at all. If a manager fails to recognize the importance of honest feedback and tries to avoid the sometimes emotional process of evaluating performance, neither the employee nor the organization benefits. Employees should expect constructive criticism, guidance, and training for their continued growth and development as professionals.

An effective performance-evaluation system begins with a comprehensive job description on which the evaluation criteria are based. A job description should include the major objectives of the particular position and then list specific tasks to be completed in accomplishing each objective. For example, an objective might be “to maintain safety and security for detained youth.” Tasks would then be identified for the employee(s) in that position for that objective. In this example, tasks could include such things as, “complete visual, random room checks of all confined youth no less frequently than every 15 minutes” or “complete head counts of all youth
before and after any group movement within the facility or its grounds.” In addition, the accomplishment of those tasks would be documented in specific ways. The first task might require the completion of room check logs, and the second task might require the completion of unit logs that document head counts. (See Ch. 4: Developing and Maintaining a Professional Workforce: Hiring Professional Staff) [3]

Related to job descriptions are performance plans, which refine the job description and provide levels of ratings, which relate to the employee’s performance. The performance plan uses the major objectives from the job description and defines levels of assessment. For example, if an objective in the job description is to provide quality programming for confined youth, the performance plan would designate the kind and the amount of programming (dosage) to result in a rating of “exceptional,” “above standard,” “standard,” “below standard,” “and unsatisfactory” on a five-level scale. An “exceptional” rating may be achieved if “the employee keeps youth engaged in mentally and physically stimulating activities for the entire programming period and introduces at least six new programming activities during the one-year evaluation period. When surveyed, youth report a positive response to these activities.” An “above-standard” rating may be earned if the “employee keeps youth engaged in mentally and physically stimulating activities for at least 75% of the programming period and introduces at least three new positively reviewing activities.” A standard rating may be earned if “the employee provides moderately stimulating programming on all shifts but introduces no new activities.” A below-standard rating may be earned if the employee fails to provide programming on some shifts and introduces no new activities.” And, an unsatisfactory rating may be earned if “the employee fails to provide programming on most shifts.” Of course, there are limitless variations, but it is important for performance objectives to be as specific as possible and relate to the mission and goals of the facility. In addition, performance plans should be negotiated between the supervisor and the employee. In general, all employees in a particular job category would have identical or similar performance plans that are individualized based on the employee’s experience, performance goals, and training needs. Performance plans should be reviewed at least annually and updated as needed.

The final step in employee performance management is the actual performance evaluation. Often, agencies have a designated form for evaluating performance, but that form should allow for the flexibility to consider the employee’s performance plan. In evaluating employee performance, “most criteria fall into the following general categories: output quality, output quantity, work habits and attitudes, accident rates, learning ability, and judgment and problem-solving ability.”[12] Many performance evaluations “tend to concentrate too much on subjective personality
traits or on the peripheral aspects of the worker’s performance (e.g., attitude, punctuality, orientation to managers) and not enough time examining the degree of attainment of specific outcome criteria for the job.”[13] Closely tying the performance appraisal to specific expectations in a negotiated performance plan can also mitigate the impact of the “halo” or “horns” effect. The halo effect occurs when an employee receives unreasonably high ratings based on such things as past performance, pleasant personality, or friendship. The horns effect occurs when an employee receives arbitrarily low ratings based on a tendency to disagree with management, membership in a poorly performing team, or weak past performance.

A successful employee performance appraisal occurs when the supervisors and employees have jointly developed performance plans that spell out specific tasks to be accomplished, based on major objectives that draw from the mission of the facility. That job description informs a performance plan that is negotiated by the employee and supervisor and that clarifies the levels of performance required for designated ratings. The evaluation is based on the performance plan and includes quantifiable measurements that are fair and are perceived as being so. Such a system should not result in surprises at the annual evaluation. It is advisable to meet at least one time mid-year to review the performance plan to help keep the employee on track and focused.

### Labor Law Issues

#### Union and Nonunion Staffing

Confinement facilities may have unionized or nonunionized staff; there are advantages to each model. However, the most significant issue in an effectively operating facility is not whether or how the staff is represented, but whether there is a positive culture that encourages collaboration between management and direct care staff and between staff and youth. Unions have tended to oppose differential treatment of employees based on varying levels of productivity, employee reductions, civilianization, contracting out government functions, innovations in personnel deployment, and use of technology when the result is considered disruptive or threatening to employees.[14] On the other hand, “in some instances, adversaries have become allies with major productivity gain achieved through the cooperative efforts of management and organized labor.”[15]

One successful superintendent at the country’s largest juvenile detention center in Cook County, Illinois, has worked well with employee unions by viewing them as partners and “bringing them to the table.” Teresa Abreu says that believing that there is a shared goal—“a safe and secure environment for kids”—has helped her and
facility employees to address concerns and deal with real or potential conflicts.[16] Abreu reports that the union representatives often have very good ideas, and it is helpful to have them involved in as many issues as possible. They are experienced workers who can provide insight and identify issues that management may not see. Unions and the collective bargaining agreements that they negotiate with management can help establish clear rules for employees, can help ensure fairness and due process when management fails to consistently do so, and can encourage management to meet with and address difficult issues with employees that they might otherwise be able to sidestep.

Union representatives in high functioning facilities also acknowledge that it is important to have a healthy working relationship with management. Shop Steward George Sanchez, of Cook County states that it is important to “remember that each side has an assigned role and it is a professional relationship, not personal.”[17] Sanchez points out that a union can be an asset to employees in representing their position by presenting their perspective to management and helping to examine a situation in comparison to similar situations. Both Abreu and Sanchez agree that a disadvantage of unionization is that the political aspect of the union can lead to losing sight of the ultimate goal of the facility as serving youth. In addition, the average union member might say they want more of a voice, especially when the union is large and influential, and some employees feel that if they do not get their individual needs met, the union is not representing them. A union has to represent all of its membership. It has to consider long-term needs that may only be achieved by short-term sacrifices. To serve its membership, the union may need to compromise in the short term and work with management in the process. Unions can protect their employees from capricious and unfair decisions by management while cooperating to achieve shared goals.

Many facilities operate in jurisdictions that have no or limited union involvement. When these facilities are government operated, and there is typically a civil service system that provides protections for employees, based on federal and state statute and case law. Even when there is no collective bargaining agreement, employees have protections under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA), the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and civil rights laws enforced by the Equal Employee Opportunity Commission (EEOC). In addition, states and localities have related laws and ordinances that protect employees. Generally, states have employee indemnification laws that shield government employees who do not act with maliciousness or negligence. Those laws vary, and it is wise for practitioners to be familiar with protections available in their own states.
Even in the absence of union representation, employees have rights, and they should be aware of those rights while meeting the obligations of their jobs.

**FLSA Exempt Salary, Hourly, and Contracted Employees**

Another element of facility staffing is the use of salaried employees, employees who are paid by the hour, and contracted employees. Generally, administrators, managers and—usually—supervisors are paid by salary and are classified as “exempt” under the FSLA. The exempt status basically means that those employees are not eligible for pay at a time-and-a-half rate for hours worked above 40 each week. The U.S. Department of Labor classifies jobs as either exempt or non-exempt based on a number of factors, including salary level and professional or administrative duties. Under the FSLA, exempt employees have “‘no rights at all’” other than the right to receive “the full amount of the base salary in any work period during which s/he performs any work.”[18]

Employees who are non-exempt under the FLSA are entitled to be paid time and one-half for every hour they work above their regular work period, usually a seven-day week. Normally, overtime pay is due after an employee works 40 hours in the workweek. Most employees in a juvenile or adult confinement facility are classified as non-exempt and must be paid overtime. That includes direct care staff, many supervisors, clerical employees, and support staff. It is often necessary to have employees work extra hours to ensure that a facility is adequately staffed.

Some agencies also have part-time employees who work a limited number of hours or who work exclusively in place of full-time employees who have time off. Those part-time employees are limited by law and policy in the number of hours they may work and generally are not allowed to accrue overtime pay.

Many facilities also use contract employees to meet specific staffing needs. There may be services that do not require a full-time employee, and it is more cost-effective to contract for that service. For example, a small confinement facility may need only occasional or part-time psychiatric services, and—rather than hire a psychiatrist as an employee with a salary and accompanying benefits—that facility may contract only for the number of hours of service provided. In many cases, entire programs within a facility may be contracted such as food services or custodial services. Again, that relieves the facility of the costs of hiring employees. When contracting for any type of service, it is important to balance the monetary value of the contract with the benefits of having committed, loyal employees as part of the organizational team.

**Foundations for Sound Facility Operations**
Policy and Procedure Manual

Experience has shown that direct care staff members who work with youth are best able to perform their jobs and provide the services those youth most need when they work in an environment that includes:

- A clear mission statement.
- Goals and objectives.
- A departmental code of ethics.
- Written standards that meet requirements for state or national accreditation or certification.
- Comprehensive training and continuing education.
- An ongoing program of personnel evaluations.
- Written policies and procedures.

What Is a Policies and Procedures Manual?

The NIC discussed the importance of all juvenile and adult correctional agencies having “clear and concise written directives for staff, offenders, and the community. Given the issues of administrative liability, accreditation standards, case law, and the need to support professional behavior, written policy and procedure is a necessity.”[19] That NIC statement goes on to say that “well-written policy and procedure is the core of modern correctional operations. It informs and governs staff behavior, sets clear expectations, and confirms that the administration has performed its role. It is also the basis for staff supervision, training, and supporting a defense when things go wrong.”[20] Policy should be based on defensible rationale and legitimate correctional outcomes, such as safety, security, sanitation, resident programs, and legal rights. Sources of policies may be established standards such as those promulgated by the ACA. Policies must address applicable case law in the jurisdiction. The procedures that accompany written policies offer more detail to help the practitioner implement the policy.

A policy and procedure manual contains the department’s or the facility’s mission statement, goals and objectives, code of ethics, and guidelines that facility staff require in performing both their routine and nonroutine tasks. The manual is intended to be a tool that makes the job of the confinement facility professional easier. It contains an accumulation of information handed down from previous juvenile professionals—information that the field believes is good practice.
Staff members in confinement facilities for youth are entrusted with the responsibility of supervising troubled young people and must have common sense and knowledge about interacting with challenging youth in a secure environment. Acquiring a good command of the information in the policies and procedures manual is the first step for staff to gain that knowledge and fulfill their responsibilities.

Specifically, a policy and procedure manual may provide:

- **Parameters for making decisions.** Facilities usually develop written policies that govern the use of discretion in decision-making. Within the policy guidelines, staff members are able to make informed decisions about relating to and providing for the juveniles. Guidelines help ensure that staff will not handle juveniles based on personal values, working conditions, or other factors that may lead to arbitrary decisions.

- **An overall picture of the connection between one unit and another** and between each unit and the facility’s mission. As staff members see their part in the picture, they will be more willing to work as a team and be more accountable for their own actions.

- **A method for communicating more effectively** with other staff, board members, families, youth, placing agencies, and other involved agencies and individuals. The policies and procedures manual provides a common language and reference points.

- **Consistency in the program,** especially among the staff in their actions and behaviors. Consistency is crucial for the safety and the mental well-being of the youth and staff.

- **Assurance of compliance** with legal requirements, including respect for the legal rights of youth in custody.

- **Protection from liability,** audit exceptions, and criminal procedures. The threat of liability is reduced when staff members function in a proactive manner, using sound principles.

- **Assurance that emergency procedures will be carried out effectively.**

- **Protection from any sanctions** for noncompliance that may be built into the personnel policies of the agency.

**Definitions**

**Policies.** In general, a policy reflects the facility’s philosophy about a particular issue. For example, each facility should have policies that cover a range of issues, from the security of the building (key and tool control, the use of official vehicles, and
emergency procedures) to the discipline of youth (rules and regulations for resolving minor violations).

Policies are statements of the general course of action a facility wishes to take. They give staff the reasons and the directions needed to function effectively in the facility. Policies tend to be general and goal oriented. For example, a policy statement on “Visitation” might read:

“To encourage healthy family and community ties and to increase the likelihood that a youth will succeed after release, visits with family members and others who may have a positive influence are encouraged. Visits shall occur in a manner that allows maximum contact between the youth and the visitor while ensuring the safety and security of the facility.”

In a few limited instances, however, an item of specific information, such as a time or location, may be of such importance to the understanding of the policy that it should be included in the policy statement. Timing in an emergency is critical; therefore, emergency procedures should be highly specific, although staff members may have to make some on-the-spot judgments. In most instances, however, such detail should be left out of the policy statements and included only in related procedures.

The policy answers the question, “what?” as if to say, “This is what we stand for, this is what we do.” The format of the policy and procedure manual may have a statement of Purpose or Rationale component for each policy or that may be included in the policy statement. The purpose answers the question, “Why?” “It is the rationale and basis for the policy, documenting that it is grounded in more than preference or administrative whim.”[21]

**Procedures.** A procedure is the detailed, step-by-step description of the sequence of activities necessary to implement the policy and achieve the stated goals. The procedure answers the questions who?, where?, when?, and how? In the example above, the procedures would describe who is able to confine the youth, where the youth would be confined, how long the youth can be confined, how the confinement should be documented, and what information should be recorded.

Because procedures usually involve a series of actions to be performed by certain responsible persons under certain circumstances, include the following information in the procedure:

- The steps involved in completing the action in the order in which they occur.
• The individual (by title) or operational unit responsible for the actions described by the procedure.
• The times and locations relevant to the operating procedure.
• The relevant forms to be completed.
• The form of communication involved (telephone, written notice, etc.) in completing the procedure.
• When and to what extent discretion is allowed.
• Provisions for handling major problems or emergencies that may occur during the implementation of the procedures.

In addition to the policy and procedure, a section that lists “References” is often included. References provide the background and sources behind the policy and serve as supporting documentation. References might include information like a national or state standard or a court order.

Content Sources for the Policy and Procedure Manual

Ideally, the development of policies and procedures should flow from the fundamental agency philosophy. That philosophy generates the facility’s vision and mission discussed above. Therefore, before the first draft is written or before the manual is revised, the agency leadership should set aside time for defining and reviewing organizational philosophy, vision, and mission.

A workable philosophy statement should include:

• The purpose of the facility.
• The facility’s responsibility to its youth, the funding sources, the community, and other agencies and organizations with which it has a legal or professional relationship.
• The short-term, intermediate, and long-term goals or the direction in which the facility is or should be headed.

In general, policies and procedures are also based on a variety of other sources, including:

• The facility’s charter or bylaws.
• Existing written policies and procedures.
• Administrative rules, regulations, and memoranda.
• Recommendations of staff, unions, and youth (when appropriate).
• Existing but unrecorded practices.
• Problems encountered in the past.
• Local codes for fire, building, safety, sanitation, and health.
• Standards issued by a variety of groups, including the ACA, National Commission on Correctional Health Care (NCCHC), American Bar Association (ABA), American Medical Association (AMA), the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI); the Performance-based Standards (PbS) of CJCA, the U.S. Attorney General; state agencies; and others.
• Model policies and procedures manuals from the ACA, other states, agencies, or institutions.
• Issues identified in audit reports.
• Suggestions from the community and involved agencies.
• Legal and professional requirements, including:
  ○ Court decisions that determine the legal criteria for facility operations.
  ○ Federal statutes and administrative rules and regulations relevant to the operation of confinement facilities that serve youth.
  ○ State statutes and administrative rules and regulations relevant to the operation of confinement facilities.
  ○ National and state corrections standards.

Key Content Areas

Although policy and procedure manuals will differ slightly in their format, ACA identified the following four areas commonly addressed: administration, support services, programs, and security.[22] 

Administration includes:

• General facility administration.
• Fiscal affairs, including purchasing.
• Personnel services.
• Public information.

Support services include:

• Food.
• Health care.
• Laundry.
• Supplies and storeroom.
• Maintenance.
• Communication—mail, visiting, telephone.

Programs include:

• Court liaison.
• Intake and admission procedures.
• Programming—education, recreation, counseling, nutrition, reading, communications, religious, medical, and health care services.
• Release preparation.
• Community volunteers.

Security includes:

• Security and control.
• Youth supervision.
• Rules and discipline.
• Emergency preparedness.

These four areas can be further sub-divided into sections of the policy and procedure manual. Major sections of the manual may be selected to meet the needs of the facility’s operation. Often facilities use the table of contents from the related standards manual—usually ACA or state standards—to set up a policy manual to ensure that policies and procedures are written to meet those standards. Policies and procedures are then written on each topic within the major headings.

A policy and procedure manual should be a fluid document that evolves as issues arise or change. All policies and procedures should be reviewed on a regular basis—at least annually—and updated as necessary.

The Policy and Procedure Format

A number of jurisdictions use the following format, which is based upon ACA standards, to provide structure for the development of facility policies and procedures manuals.

**Administration.** The administration section formally sets the direction for the facility and includes admissions, goals, staff patterns, and critical program accountability. Sections cover the following topics:
• **Vision, mission, and values.** Policies should clearly state the philosophy and goals of the organization, which flow from the overall mission.

• **Policies and procedures.** Procedures should be set forth that detail staff access, training, and opportunities for revising policies and procedures.

• **Incident reporting.** A system should be in place to ensure the timely reporting and documentation of such issues as major behavior violations, emergency medical situations, threats to the security of the facility, and professional misconduct. Additional procedures should be in place to report child abuse allegations, address sexual abuse allegations as required under PREA, respond to new crimes, and preserve evidence of crimes that may have occurred within the facility.

• **Organizational staffing.** The facility should define staff responsibilities, assign staff to units to promote efficiency, and provide a clear chain of command.

• **Population accountability.** Maintain a daily population roster as an accountability system that notes changes in the population status or in the physical or emotional condition of youth.

• **Referral, screening, and placement of youth.** Procedures should define placement criteria so that youth are placed in the least restrictive level of supervision. Placement may involve the use of a risk-assessment tool. The requirements of PREA should be considered in screening and classification decisions.

• **Program reporting.** An effective information system must include the opportunity for reporting and monitoring the program activities at every level of the organization. Reporting may include shift reports, monthly reports, or statistical reports.

**Fiscal Management.** General accounting practices should be detailed, including a specific protocol for small and large purchases and an annual audit process of all facility finances. Guidelines should delineate how resident funds and cash income are to be handled within the facility. Strict accounting procedures should be in place to protect the integrity of those handling such funds. Also, information should be available on employee liability insurance, insurance for volunteers, and vehicle insurance.

**Personnel.** Although most facilities are part of a larger organization (e.g., county or state government), personnel guidelines should include compensation and benefits, performance evaluations, codes of ethics, and an employee grievance process. Employees should be aware of procedures to access personnel files, and they should receive training in how to report harassment in the workplace.
**Facility Management.** Guidelines should be in place to demonstrate compliance with zoning and building ordinances. In addition to specific procedures on how the facility space is to be used, policies should define the following:

- **Rated bed capacity.** Procedures should address the licensed, rated bed capacity of the facility, which provides optimum operation for a safe, secure environment and meets the standard for conditions of confinement. Procedures should clearly define strategies to maintain the rated capacity of the facility and offer guidelines when that capacity is exceeded. Procedures should address sleeping arrangements, activity areas, dayrooms, population movements, and staff responsibilities when the facility is under or over capacity.

- **Facility utilization and access.** Clear procedures should detail use of the facility’s resources (e.g., recreation equipment), specific access, and perimeter control.

- **Hazardous chemicals and materials control program.** Standards should be in place to coordinate the identification, use, and storage of any hazardous chemical within the facility. Potentially hazardous materials may be found in maintenance areas, storage areas, the kitchen, the arts and crafts area, and general supply. All containers of hazardous chemicals should be properly labeled and inventoried. Material safety data sheets contain manufacturer’s cautions, ingredients, and usage guidelines should be prominently displayed on each container. Strict control should be in place to prevent unauthorized access by the youth. All staff should be trained in the use of hazardous materials.

- **A cleaning or housekeeping schedule.** Procedures should detail a schedule for routine and specialized cleaning of every area in the facility, detailing the responsibilities of direct care staff, maintenance staff, and youth.

- **Risk management program.** Regular inspections of the facility should review the hazardous chemicals and materials control program, health standards throughout the facility, fire prevention measures, and facility maintenance. Findings should be reported to the director and key staff responsible for addressing these concerns. Routine inspections ensure ongoing compliance with critical quality of life issues.

**Security and Control.** The security and control sections of the policy and procedure manual should address the following topics:

- **Perimeter control and surveillance.** Procedures should identify staff and visitor access, control of contraband, guidelines to address visitor problems, and public access to the facility (e.g., tours).
• **Key control.** Staff should be assigned security keys according to specific work assignments. Key control should include a process for signing regular inventories in and out on each shift.

• **Searches.** To maintain security of staff and the population, frisk searches of the resident population or strip searches, when needed, should occur as established by protocol that has been reviewed by legal counsel. The use of strip searches should be restricted, and the policy and procedure manual should include specific guidelines for the protection of the youth and staff. Search policies should include schedules for regular room and property searches, guidelines for the use of metal detectors, and procedures for handling uncovered contraband.

• **Fights, disturbances, and use of force.** Specific procedures should be established to address emergencies related to behavior, using only the minimum amount of force necessary to control a youth or situation within the facility. Guidelines should detail the use of mechanical and humane restraints, including authorization for use, duration of use, and documentation of use. Safe physical management approaches, use of facility and external resources available to address major disturbances should be included in training.

• **Escape and absence without leave (AWOL).** Guidelines should be established to identify measures that prevent escapes or attempted escapes. In the event of a completed escape, procedures should detail staff response, guidelines for apprehending escaped youth, notification of administration, and guidelines for returning to normal programming.

**Emergency Procedures.** An emergency procedures section of the policy and procedure manual should be posted at each work site and easily accessible to staff at all times—physically, electronically, or in both forms. Emergency procedures should detail the fire and other emergency evacuation plan, routinely documented drills, emergency notification procedures for facility administration, the community response, and specific guidelines for natural disasters (e.g., snow, tornado, earthquake, and flood). Annual training for staff and review of these procedures with the local fire marshal can help ensure staff readiness. Procedures should identify responsibilities for all staff members during an emergency situation. (See Ch. 19: Complex Issues and Vulnerable Populations: Facility Emergency Preparedness)

**Healthcare.** The mental and medical healthcare sections in the policies and procedures manual should address the following topics:

• **Access to medical and mental health services.** All facility staff should be aware of the process of access and notification for routine and emergency medical care.
• **Health hazard and exposure control plan.** Employees have a right to know about potential health hazards associated with their work. However, information available to employees may not include specific facts about health hazards or risks protected under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). An exposure control plan should include policies, procedures, and responsibilities involved in eliminating or minimizing employee exposure to hazards. Employees should have access to applicable safety information and appropriate personal protective equipment to avoid potential risks. These are federally mandated guidelines.

• **Health services delivery.** All staff should be aware of and trained in the initial medical screening process and youth access to medical services, including sick call. Specific procedures and training should occur for the distribution of medication.

• **Suicide prevention plan.** A detailed plan reviewed by mental health and social service professionals should address levels of risk identified during the initial screening. For each level of risk, staff should be trained in behavior indicators, monitoring guidelines, housing guidelines, referral guidelines, counseling, and reporting notification.

• **Communicable disease precautions.** Procedures should address the prevention and handling of any potential communicable disease within the facility.

• **Medical emergency response.** Staff should be trained in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and standard first aid.

• **Staff health responsibilities.** All facility staff members must meet proper health guidelines as specified in policy. Food service handlers must meet special guidelines.

**Communications.** The communications section in the policies and procedures manual should address the following topics:

• **Internal staff communication.** Procedures should include staff guidelines for primary communication within the facility. Clear lines of communications and authority ensure timely reporting during emergency situations.

• **Resident communication.** Procedures should address youth access to staff, the court, their attorney and probation officer, mail, and telephone. Detailed visitation guidelines should also be in place.

**Youth Rights and Responsibilities.** Policy should grant youth personal, programmatic, and environmental rights, including the right to nutritious meals, the right to exercise, the right to be housed in a safe environment, the right to be treated
fairly, and the right to privacy. The youth rights and responsibilities section of the policies and procedures manual should address the following topics:

- **Youth complaints.** Policy should detail a youth’s right to file a grievance about services, and should offer youth at least one level of appeal.
- **Reporting rights.** Written policies should describe multiple means of reporting allegations of abuse in a safe manner and should protect the individual from retaliation. That includes the reporting of sexual abuse as required by PREA.
- **Responsibilities.** Staff should communicate the general responsibilities of youth during the orientation process.

**Resident Behavior Management.** Policy should address the following guidelines to properly manage resident behavior:

- **Orientation.** An orientation process should include general youth rules, expected behavior in different areas of the facility and at different times of the day, access to medical services, staff-youth relations, and access to all basic youth rights.
- **Encouraging positive behavior.** The behavior management program may include specific behavior levels in achievement, offering privileges and opportunities at each level. Youth should be well informed of what options they have related to their positive behavior within the facility.
- **Discipline.** Policy should include specific training and guidelines for staff on verbal intervention, the use of time out, and the use of minor and major behavior consequences. Due process hearings are required for major facility infractions prior to imposing discipline. The use of isolation, which refers to separating youth from other residents during non-sleeping hours by placing them along in a room or cell, and should be used only when no other means can reasonably be used to accomplish the safety and security of the youth and staff. (The use of isolation is under intense scrutiny at present; therefore, the current thinking about what constitutes best practice is in flux.) Policies and procedures should identify specific reasons for use, options for early release, and strict staff monitoring guidelines.
- **Program variety.** Staff and residents should be aware of schedules and opportunities to access a variety of programming features, such as education, religious services, libraries, social services, and recreation. (See [Ch. 15: Service and Treatment](https://info.nicic.gov/dtg/print/14/3).

**Youth Records.** Procedures should detail a record management and accountability process that includes official records content, signatures, monitoring of record...
content, release of information, and confidentiality.

- **Admissions and intake.** Procedures should address the initial legal authorization for confinement, the process for medical and mental health screening, and a youth’s basic rights during the admission and intake process. The youth orientation should include immediate access to medical services, the nature of the charge, the opportunity for a phone call, and details of the intake process. Procedures should detail property control.

- **Food services.** Procedures should detail access and the use of dietitian-certified cycle menus. Specialized procedures for training food services staff should include food service preparation and handling, meal service, and equipment control.

**Optional Materials.** Policy and procedure manuals may also include materials of administrative interest, such as organizational charts, personnel rules and regulations, and copies of relevant forms. These optional addenda should be carefully selected so that the manual does not become a catchall of miscellaneous or marginally valuable materials.

**Evaluating Policies and Procedures**

Before policies and procedures are finalized or placed in the manual, they should be evaluated for their effectiveness. In terms of **policies**, the following test questions may be helpful:

- Does this policy conform to overall agency philosophy?
- Does this policy conform to the general policy guiding a special operational unit?
- Is this policy consistent with other policies, or are there contradictions?
- Is this policy repetitious, unnecessary, or trivial?
- Does this policy conform to relevant laws, codes, and standards?

In terms of **procedures**, further checks should be made by acting out the various steps involved (when needed) and by asking the following questions:

- Is the information needed to carry out the procedure complete?
- Are the steps in a logical sequence?
- Could the procedure be simplified or made more efficient?
There are many possible variations in the format for presenting policy statements and procedures. Any format must include certain key elements and facts. The following list includes information that should be included and placed either in a masthead or in the body of the document:

- A classification or policy number that uniquely identifies and distinguishes each policy and procedure.
- A date to indicate when the policy was issued or revised.
- An indication of whether the policy or procedure supersedes another policy or procedure document, memorandum, or directive.
- A chapter title that covers a particular area, such as “Budget and Finance” or “Personnel.”
- A subject title that describes or identifies the specific subsection of the chapter, such as “Budget Request and Justification” or “Personnel Records.”
- A signature that indicates that the policy or procedure has the approval of an issuing authority.
- A citation that references the official document, law, regulation, or opinion (including the specific article, chapter, or section) that served as the foundation of the policy. The appropriate authority for the policy could be a federal or state law, regulation, or guideline; a court decision; an attorney general’s opinion; or an executive order.
- A briefly stated purpose or goal of the policy.
- An indication of the division, department, or personnel to whom the policy is directed.
- A list of definitions for key terms and phrases that have a specific meaning in the policy or procedure or that could be misinterpreted.
- A statement that indicates when the policy will be put into effect and how frequently it will be reviewed and updated.

**Performance-Based Policies**

When policies, procedures, or standards are not based on performance or results, they fail to connect to identifiable practice and fail to help the facility improve that practice. A 1993 Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) study pointed to the lack of a clear relationship between complying with standards and improving conditions of confinement, reflecting the need for further study in this area. [24] After that study, the field recognized the need for outcome or PbS to improve accountability and the quality of data and to enhance conditions of confinement for youth. In 1995, OJJDP funded the CJCA to develop and implement PbS in juvenile jurisdictions and facilities.[25] The ACA has also promulgated PbS
for several of the facility and program types for which it sets standards and is in the process of updating other standards manuals to a performance-based format.

PBS is designed to ensure regular and consistent data collection, to use that data to develop performance reports and outcome measure analysis, and to create a facility improvement process that focuses on conditions of confinement for youth. When a facility has adopted PbS, its policies and procedures should be modeled after those standards so that daily practice and expectations are motivated by continuous improvement efforts. Experience with PbS has indicated that this internal quality assurance approach can lead to safer conditions for youth in custody and the promotion of public safety, offender accountability, and rehabilitation. (See Ch. 17: Quality Assurance) [10]

Who Develops the Policy and Procedure?

The manual is usually developed by the facility’s administration. However, to ensure that the manual is useful and meets legal and professional standards, it is important to have input from a range of stakeholders, including the governing body; its legal consultant; its human resources advisor; its fiscal and budget specialists; its citizens advisory board or other community volunteers; and key representatives from the court, probation, child welfare, local colleges or universities, law enforcement, and medical and mental health agencies. In addition to these subject matter experts, policies and procedures should have input from staff at all levels and even—where appropriate and possible—from the facility’s youth.

How are the Policies and Procedures Communicated?

After policies and procedures are developed, written, and signed by the appropriate person, they become the basis for all activities and programs carried out in the facility. For this reason, communicating the policies becomes essential for putting them into effect. Administrators need to be sure that many avenues of communication are used, especially when they change policies or introduce new ones. These avenues might include individual memos, posted memos, email distribution, staff meetings, supervisory sessions, or formal training sessions. There also should be a special announcement of the policy or policies on the effective date.

The policy and procedure manual must be easily accessible to all facility staff and other relevant parties. A small agency may find it feasible to issue a copy to each staff member. In most cases, however, if the manual is large, the cost of printing a large number of copies may be prohibitive. The agency can provide access to electronic
copies of the manual by using agency intranet systems or issuing manuals to staff on data storage devices. At the very least, distribution should include the following:

- Each agency working directly with the facility.
- Each administrator and section chief within the facility and all staff in the section.
- At least one copy in each area of the facility including the school, the mental health office, and the medical office or clinic.
- Several additional copies in a central location for staff and public access.

Usually, staff members who receive a manual must sign for the manual. In most facilities, direct supervisors are responsible for ensuring that their staff members are familiar with the contents of the manual, particularly with those sections that relate directly to a staff member’s tasks and duties. However, the facility administrator has the ultimate responsibility for training on new and revised policies and procedures. Direct care workers should receive initial as well as ongoing in-service training on the content of the policies and procedures manual.

**Process for Making Changes**

Because the manual provides the framework for facility operations, the policies and procedures need to be sound, realistic, and current, which means that the manual is never a finished document. Sometimes, agencies will discover changes in the philosophy that guides existing policies and procedures. Sometimes—especially with changes in the administration or with shifts in the current belief systems—facility mission statements, goals, and policies that reflect those goals also shift. For example, the goals of the juvenile justice system historically have fluctuated with regard to the philosophies of justified punishment (let the punishment fit the crime) and *parens patriae* (the State takes the place of the parents). In addition, current legislation and case law may require changes in specific procedures. When the philosophy of a department or facility changes, policies and procedures may also need to be changed.

Furthermore, as laws change, as legal decisions are made, and as research reveals new and better ways to run the facility or relate to the youth, the administration (with input from the staff) needs to revise the policy and procedure manual. In fact, every facility should have a policy for ongoing review and revision of their policy and procedure manual on both an annual and an ad-hoc basis. At least once a year, the administration and all staff should review the manual formally. Non-administrative staff, especially, should be urged to provide criticism and suggestions for its improvement, because only through active staff participation of everyone does the
manual become a truly useful aid or guidebook. Supervisors need to ensure that each staff member is familiar with the facility’s procedures for making changes, additions, and deletions.

During the review, policies and procedures should be rewritten if they are not clear, complete, or representative of what the staff are actually required to do in certain situations. Other policies and procedures that have become outdated should be removed. Also, policies that reflect new or expanded agency operations and practices should be written, evaluated, and added to the manual.

After the revisions are completed and approved, all staff must be notified immediately about changes. Bulletins should be distributed to all staff, telling them which pages in the manual have been revised, removed, or added. Staff should be asked to sign a form indicating that they have received the updates. These measures ensure that all staff members are aware of changes, revisions, and deletions as soon as they are made.

In the final analysis, putting what a facility does into writing is a definite and necessary stage in the development of a quality program. The policies and procedures manual must be treated as a living organism, responsive to change, growth, and refinement. The review process ensures a level of continuing creativity and flexibility in identifying and meeting the needs of the staff and youth.

**Policy Cycle**

The policy cycle is more than writing or developing policies and procedures. The cycle includes additional steps to ensure that policies and procedures are meaningful and workable for a specific facility; are consistent with accepted juvenile justice philosophy, theory, research and practice; and retain relevance and applicability. To maximize the manual’s effectiveness and relevance, staff must be trained on its contents, and thoroughly understand how to implement the manual’s directives.

The implementation of policies and procedures requires monitoring by administration or, if available, outside reviewers to ensure that practice is consistent with policy—that the written policy is doing what it is intended to do. Daily monitoring requires administrators to review documents, observe activities, and interview both youth and staff. Administrators should expect implementation of new or revised policies to take time and consistent effort. Customary practices and habits do not change readily. To facilitate that process, it is important to involve staff in the development of policies to the extent possible. And, it is essential that staff understand the purpose and rationale behind each policy and procedure to achieve
their buy-in. Monitoring of implementation may also be done through an established, structured quality-assurance process using individuals or bodies that are either internal or external to the facility. (See Ch. 17: Quality Assurance) [10]

A parent agency or facility may also conduct a formal or informal policy analysis through which individual policies are scrutinized to determine whether there are other alternatives to that policy and procedure. If statute, case law, or research findings recommend changes to practices outlined in written policies, a formal analysis can be of help in determining more appropriate, permissible, or effective approaches. For example, when research on suicide in juvenile confinement facilities became available in 2009,[26] many juvenile facilities in the country revised their suicide prevention policies to limit isolation and ensure that youth were observed more frequently than had previously been the case. As discussed above, the entire policy and procedure manual should be reviewed annually, and individual policies and procedures should be analyzed more frequently—if necessary—as new information becomes available.

Adult facilities that serve youth will follow the same procedures described here in implementing and updating their policy manual. In addition, it is important that those facilities also have specific policies and procedures that address any and all issues involving youth, including instructions for staff members who work directly with those youth. Those policies and procedures may be in a separate manual or in a distinct section of the facility’s general manual.

**Effective Communication**

Effective internal and external communication is essential in a confinement facility of any kind. “Organizational survival is related to the ability of management to receive, transmit, and act on information. The communication process links the organization to its environment as well as to its parts.”[27] It is important to establish numerous lines of communication, both formal and informal. Communication should occur vertically between management level staff and line staff and horizontally, among or within workgroups. Communication must be two-way and open.

Vertical communication may be downward or upward. The former type “flows downward from individuals in higher levels of the hierarchy to those in lower levels. The most common forms of downward communication are job instructions, official memos, policy statements, procedures, manuals, and other publications.”[28] An effective organization needs upward communication as much as it needs downward
communication. In such situations, the communicator is at a lower level in the organization than the receiver. Direct care staff members can offer feedback on the effectiveness of a policy and procedure when it is implemented on a trial basis. Based on that feedback, the procedure may be modified to achieve its stated purpose. For example, a facility’s grievance procedure states that youth may submit grievance forms to any staff member of their choice, assuming that a youth will feel safe delivering those forms to at least one staff member. But, the direct care staff members recognize that youth often distrust that system and recommend that a locked grievance box be available where youth can place completed forms. That information can result in a process that is more effective for both youth and for the facility.

Horizontal communication is often overlooked in structuring facility operations, which can result in silos of activity wherein specialty groups do not integrate and, as a result, youth are not fully served. For example, unless key staff who work in the facility’s education and mental health units, and staff in the living units (who spend upwards of 40 hours each week with the youth) share information regularly, youth needs may go unmet or be dealt with inappropriately. Or, unless routinely and timely communication occurs across the various components of the facility, security breaches may occur. As communication improves within or among groups in a facility, confidence is enhanced and communication increases even further.

The effective communication process includes “who says what, in what way, to whom, with what effect?” Those elements break down as the communicator sends the message through a selected medium to the receiver and gets feedback.

When the structure does not include a feedback loop, the communicator or sender cannot know how effectively the message was received or how it was interpreted.
Too often, confinement facilities use communication systems that are exclusively downward, which do not provide feedback. That can be frustrating for the sender and cause confusion for the staff. That frustration can be aggravated when the medium used to communicate does not readily allow for feedback. Memos, written policies and procedures, and emails, as methods of communication, may not provide feedback unless the sender—usually an administrator—actively solicits it. Feedback must occur if internal communication is to be effective. And, it is important to be alert to “noise,” or factors that distort the intended message. Noise can occur in any of the elements of communication—in the sender, the message, the receiver, or the feedback. Noise can occur in written communication that is ambiguous and unclear. Noise may occur through nonverbal communication. Nonverbal factors include such things as head, face, and eye movements; posture; distance; gestures; and tone of voice. It is important to be aware of one’s nonverbal cues and not let that distort or confuse the intended message.

Effective communication requires appropriate timing and means of delivery. Ideally, material will be communicated in more than one way with enough advance notice for the receiver to fully absorb and utilize the information. Advance notice is not always possible, but every effort should be made to at least ensure the message was received as intended. Using multiple instruments and tools of communication can help to ensure understanding and is always advisable. Information may be relayed in a staff meeting where minutes are taken; copies of those minutes go to each attendee either in hard copy or electronically. Follow-up of formal communication occurs through informal means, such as staff meetings or memos, to see if staff understand what is expected of them.

External communication is also an important aspect of effective leadership. The facility director or a designee should be assigned to provide official information to community stakeholders and the media. Press releases or press conferences are useful ways to respond to questions or concerns about ongoing or crisis-related issues. Media relations should also be cultivated when the facility is not in an emergency situation and there are positive events and news items. An astute administrator develops relationships with members of the local media and calls on those professionals when there is a human-interest story. It is wise to reach out in a proactive way to representatives of the local press rather than expect them to make the contact. Media outlets often want ideas for stories and can easily be persuaded to provide positive publicity. When an administrator fosters relationships with members of the media, they are more likely to treat the facility honestly and fairly if and when problems arise. A representative of local media on the facility’s advisory board or council can be helpful in this process.
In addition to the media, a wise leader will maintain open lines of communication with other community stakeholders such as judges, law enforcement officials, school district administrators, religious leaders and community groups. Operating in an insular, secretive manner fosters mistrust. Open and straightforward communication with the public can facilitate support and advocacy for the youth at the facility. One way of developing that kind of support is through a citizen advisory board or council that brings together a group of interested parties to advocate on behalf of the facility and the young people it serves. The fact that such a group is advisory does not negate its potential influence. Listening to a citizen board’s advice does not necessarily translate into compliance, but it can bring new ideas and a fresh perspective. This will only work, however, if the administrator is willing to listen while reminding the board that its function is advisory rather than governing.

Finally, the most critical communication that a facility leader engages in and encourages in his or her staff is communication with family members. It is important for youth to maintain contact with the people who are important to them during periods of confinement. Family members, particularly parents or guardians, often feel that they are held responsible for their child’s problem behavior. When the facility staff deal with family members in a supportive and non-judgmental manner, that family is more likely to reinforce the facility’s efforts on behalf of the youth. Effective family engagement can help a youth successfully reenter the community after release. Family engagement should occur through flexible and generous visitation, phone, and mail policies and procedures. (See Ch. 12: Healthcare [11]; Ch. 15: Service and Treatment Plans: Engaging Families and the Community). [9]

**Critical Incident Debriefing**

A final aspect of sound accountability in facility operations is the need for critical incident debriefing to review any errors that may have occurred and to promote improvement going forward. It is a reality that human beings learn in many different ways, including visually, auditorily, and through action (experientially). People can also learn indirectly from the experiences, mistakes, and failures of others. A critical incident “can involve any situation or event faced by emergency, public safety personnel (responders) or employees that causes a distressing, dramatic or profound change or disruption in their physical (physiological) or psychological functioning.”[29] Debriefing following a stressful incident can “mitigate fall-out and enhance recovery and sustainability in the event of an acute or short-term, man-man or natural workplace stoppage.”[30] Debriefing is also recommended for events that are less dangerous in nature but which create a disruption for the facility.
Critical incidents that result in psychological trauma can result in either immediate or delayed emotional and physical reactions. They may “include such diverse symptoms as shock, denial, anger, rage, sadness, confusion, terror, shame, humiliation, grief, sorrow and even suicidal or homicidal ideation.” [31] A trained, crisis response specialist must conduct such a debriefing. Timing is important to achieving effectiveness. Initial debriefing may occur soon after the event, but it will likely need to be followed by multiple subsequent sessions, usually with individual staff members. A facility or its parent agency should have clinical staff available or a contract or other arrangement with an agency or clinician who will be available for debriefing a crisis incident.

In addition to considering the psychological or emotional damage experienced by staff involved in critical incidents, youth may also experience trauma. The emotional and mental health needs—both acute and ongoing—of those youth must be addressed as well. In addition to debriefing the critical incident with youth to examine what occurred, it is essential to provide group and individual clinical intervention to address the emotional impact on each youth. Those clinical services should occur as soon as possible after the incident. In addition, staff and clinical consultants should attend to subsequent behaviors and reactions of youth to ensure that their ongoing mental health needs are addressed through appropriate treatment services.

Debriefing following incidents that are deviations from normal operations should also occur to analyze the event and better prepare for the future. The key questions in that debriefing session are:

- What did we do well?
- What did we do poorly?
- What did we learn from this?
- How can we do better the next time?[32]

There must be established rules for such a debriefing session. Everyone must check his or her ego “at the door.” All staff members—including management—must be comfortable talking about errors they might have made, be ready to provide constructive criticism, and be willing to accept it. [33] The debriefing session must have a designated leader, who might be selected specifically for that assignment from either within or from outside the facility. The facility director or other administrator might also lead the session. In that case, the leader must maintain an atmosphere of safety and openness for all participants. A facilitator who was not involved in the incident has the advantage of being perceived as fair and objective. The leader
should present a process to the participants. The session should have attainable goals and should ensure that thorough notes are taken and subsequently distributed to all participants. The leader should use group work techniques to encourage participation and draw out quieter staff members. Most important, the debriefing session must not be used as an occasion for assigning blame or creating divisiveness. It is an important aspect of ensuring facility and staff accountability and should be an opportunity for team growth and cohesiveness.

Facility Security

Security (secure) is defined as: “being free from danger or risk of loss; safe, free from fear or doubt, anything that gives or assures safety.”[34]

Security is an intricate and essential component of every confinement facility. Historically, security was limited to locks, blocks, and bars. As the field of juvenile and adult corrections has grown, security has also moved beyond the “hardware” definition of security and incorporated the notion of safety of the confined youth. Today, security is incorporated in budgets, specific policy and procedure manuals, training seminars, and the daily operation of every shift.

Facility security is a combination of personal security, youth security, and building security. In addition to the security issues discussed in a facility’s policy and procedure manual, the following suggestions may be helpful.

Personal Security

The notion of personal security may seem unimportant at first, but the most basic of security precautions starts at home, before the employee even gets to the job.

Clothing. When uniforms are not required, the articles of clothing an employee chooses for the job are important. Just as one would not wear a tuxedo to change motor oil, an employee should not wear certain articles of clothing to work. The following concepts apply:

- Tight-fitting clothing may restrict movement in crisis situations.
- Loose-fitting clothing may get in the way during emergency situations or be easy for a youth to grab and hold.
- Revealing clothing may elicit from youth inappropriate advances and comments or distract other staff from doing their job.
- Slogans on T-shirts can be very troublesome. The agency’s policies and procedures manual should offer guidance, but staff should not wear clothing
that contains words or graphics that advertise or promote alcohol, drugs, sex, violence, or political positions.

- Clothing should be comfortable, neat, clean, and professional.

**Hair and Hygiene.** The length and style of a staff member’s hair may affect job performance. Long hair (shoulder length and longer) worn loosely may interfere with vision, specifically peripheral vision. Long hair may also be grabbed more easily by a youth and tangled in his or her fingers. If the employee chooses a longer hairstyle, the hair should be pulled back and secured. However, shorter hairstyles are often recommended. Good personal hygiene is also very important to demonstrate professionalism and individual and professional pride. Poor hygiene can result in ridicule from both youth and staff.

**Accessories.** Employees should be familiar with agency policies and procedures on wearing jewelry on the job. Jewelry is also potentially dangerous.

- Necklaces are the most dangerous because of the ease with which they can be grabbed by a youth, damaged, broken, or used for strangulation. The same principles apply to neckties and scarves.
- Pierced earrings pose a significant danger of being ripped out.
- Rings pose a danger to both youth and to staff. Large rings and rings with raised stones or insignias can scratch or cut youth or other staff members during restraint maneuvers.

Whenever possible, staff should wear minimal jewelry. It is recommended that any jewelry should be small, not raised or exposed, and not valuable. Staff should understand that they wear jewelry at their own risk.

**Position.** The position that a staff member takes when interacting with youth is essential. Staff should always know where the nearest exit is located and how to get help in case of emergency. It is wise for the staff member to keep his or her back to the wall or at least keep youth in the line of sight to prevent them from getting behind the staff person. Staff should also be careful not to allow youth to surround them and not to become separated by youth from other staff working on the unit. *(See Ch. 14: Behavior Management)* and *(Ch. 16: Behavior Observation, Recording, and Report Writing)*

**Shoes.** Shoes should be comfortable, fit securely, and have rubber soles for good traction. Leather-soled shoes tend to slip when staff need a strong foothold. Clean athletic shoes are very effective but should not be worn unlaced or untied.
Inappropriate and potentially hazardous footwear include sandals, flip-flops, loafers, high heels, and combat boots.

Note that the initial letters from these items—clothing, hair and hygiene, accessories, position, and shoes—spell CHAPS, which makes it easier for employees to remember a checklist for personal security.

Youth Security

Youth security is the most important component of facility security. A line worker will be with the youth at least eight hours per shift. In some facilities, staff work ten- or twelve-hour shifts or even back-to-back eight-hour shifts. In addition to knowing the facility’s policies and procedures, employees should also know the individual youth under their supervision. The more staff members know about the youth they supervise, the better they will be able to ensure youth safety. Furthermore, staff should know the rules that govern youth behavior to enforce the rules consistently and create and support a secure environment. The following basic guidelines apply to youth security:

Smell. Alert staff use their sense of smell as they make the rounds (routine checks) among the youth. Staff should immediately investigate smoke from cigarettes, fire (paper, clothing, or electrical), marijuana, or anything else that can burn.

Observe. The critical part of youth security in any type of confinement facility is observation of the youth. Every youth will have a particular pattern of behavior, and any deviation in this pattern should prompt the staff’s increased attention. Suicidal thoughts, intimidation by other youth, depression, and other factors associated with confinement cause youth to act differently. Any deviation from an established behavior pattern should be reported immediately to a supervisor, social worker, or mental health professional. (See Ch. 16: Behavior Observation, Recording, and Report Writing) [13]

Youth often intimidate each other for various reasons and in many different ways. Several youth crowding around a single youth usually indicates some form of intimidation, and it is staff’s responsibility to investigate and intervene appropriately. Gang members often try to recruit new members, exact revenge against rival gang members, or enforce gang rules on recruits who do not conform. In an adult facility, despite the requirement of sight and sound separation, there may still be times when youth are in the presence of adult offenders. In those instances, staff should always be present and closely observe and limit any interactions between youth and adults.
In addition, the alert staff will always be looking for anything out of the ordinary in a youth’s clothing. Unusual bulges may be caused by contraband and should be investigated immediately. Staff should also notice a youth’s movement and body positioning, which could also indicate that the youth is concealing something under his or her clothing.

Because youth in confinement facilities possess numerous risk factors, self-mutilation and youth-on-youth assaults are an unfortunate part of life in a confinement facility. Surveys by the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) also reveal that staff-on-youth sexual assault is even more prevalent than youth-on-youth.[35] Staff should always be observant of a youth’s physical appearance and affect for this reason and should ask questions and investigate whenever they suspect that a youth has been injured or abused or may be in fear of harm.

Listen. One of the greatest tools a staff member has, other than vision, is the sense of hearing. Staff should always be listening for plans of illegal activity, such as assault or escape. Eavesdropping on youth conversations is viewed by youth as a sign that staff mistrust them, but security requires that youth in confinement facilities forfeit some of their privacy. Listening closely to what youth are saying will help to keep staff informed of youth plans and activity. Staff should make it clear to all youth that listening is a part of the job.

Youth will often tell each other about some illegal or harmful activity in a voice loud enough for the staff to hear. In these cases, preventive action should be taken. When staff members develop a relationship that is based on mutual honesty and when staff demonstrate genuine concern for the young people they work with, the youth will often come directly to them to offer information about planned illegal activity. Listening for key words and tone of voice—not just surface content—will also alert the staff about how youth are feeling or what they are experiencing. Such listening during telephone calls with parents and others will tell staff if the youth is upset, depressed, or angry.

The alert staff will get to know the normal sounds of the institution. An increase or decrease in noise levels may be an indication that something is happening. Other sounds offer clues about the proper functioning of security equipment. For example, security locks usually have a distinctive click when they shut, or hand-held room monitoring devices may beep to indicate that a check has occurred.

Explore. Walking around the area where youth are present is called “exploring.” While exploring, the alert staff will use the senses of smell, sight, and hearing as
described above. Exploring should be random and frequent. Staff presence should not be predictable or anticipated. Certainly, when a staff member feels something is wrong, he or she should explore and take appropriate action to prevent or resolve an incident.

Note that the initial letters from these items—smell, observe, listen, and explore—form the acronym SOLE, which makes it easier to remember youth security.

Building Security

The last component of facility security is building security. All staff members must be familiar with all aspects of the physical plant itself. Building security includes the following:

**Building.** Every employee must know the physical layout (floor plan) of the facility. In the event of an emergency, all employees must know how to get from any point to any other point using the most direct path. Fires, bomb scares, and other emergencies that require building evacuation must be practiced on a regular basis. Staff must also know where emergency equipment is stored and what is contained in closets, offices, and rooms.

For the safety of the staff and youth, all employees should know:

- Where the boiler room and maintenance areas are located.
- Where hazardous materials are stored.
- Where electrical panels and controls are located.
- Where exit doors are located and whether they are clear of hazards and obstructions.
- Where basic maintenance tools (screwdriver or pliers) are located.
- How to shut off water supplies to rooms or commodes.
- How to loosen a stuck (water control) valve.
- How to summon maintenance staff on weekends and evenings.

It is always a good idea for the staff member to walk through the facility, or at least the area of his or her responsibility, prior to beginning a shift.

**Utilities.** In the event of emergencies, staff should know where all utility shutoff controls are located—for example, the main shutoffs for water, gas, electricity,
lights as well as the alarm panels for fire and door alarms. Staff should know where the emergency generator is located and how to operate it. The telephone numbers of utility companies should also be readily available to all staff in case of emergencies.

**Illumination.** Lights are critically important for safety and security. All staff should know the location of the switches for all lights needed for security. All staff should also be familiar with the emergency generator for lighting. Emergency flashlights should be readily available in strategic locations throughout the facility.

**Locks and Keys.** Security always depends on adequate, well-functioning locks. All staff members must know the purpose for every key on the set they carry. In the event of an emergency, staff should know where the keys are for various “off limits” sections of the facility. All locks must be in proper working order. If a staff member discovers a lock that is in disrepair, that should be reported immediately to the designated maintenance staff person. Keys should be checked at the beginning of every shift to ensure that they are all accounted for and that they are in good condition (not cracked or bent).

**Doors and Windows.** The most frequent breaches of security come from unlocked doors and windows. Many people use the doors and windows during the day, including maintenance workers, probation officers, social service staff, and administration. However, it is every staff member’s responsibility to make sure that doors and windows are secure at all times. It is a good habit to physically check each door and window as one walks by. It is always best practice for a line staff or the shift supervisor to check them prior to every shift.

**Individuals.** Many individuals are in the facility at various times during the day and night. All staff members on duty must be aware of the location of youth, staff, and visitors in the facility, particularly in their own area of supervision. The following are helpful strategies:

- Each employee should have some form of identification.
- Visitors should have some form of identification so that line workers can determine who belongs in certain parts of the facility and who does not.
- Head counts are suggested at regularly scheduled intervals, including after each group movement in the building or on campus, after shift changes, and after evacuations or fire drills.

**Notations.** Because of the amount of information facility staff need to track, careful note-taking is essential. If an employee notices faulty equipment, fixtures, or other hazards in the facility, he or she must make written notation (often in the form of a
Work Order) to inform fellow staff, administration, and maintenance staff as soon as possible. Staff should regularly document head counts, youth schedules, activities (e.g., court, social worker interview, medical services), locations of staff or visitors, and youth disciplinary actions, using the agency’s forms and following the facility’s policies. Most facilities have requirements for regularly recording occurrences during the shift by making log entries. Doing so helps to effectively communicate important information about a group or an individual to other staff on subsequent shifts. Those logs notes are also a record for supervisors, mental health clinicians, and others who need essential information to meet a youth’s needs and to ensure the smooth operation of the facility. Staff must record their information leaving his or her shift, in addition to any information they provide verbally. Even if the staff member’s notations are just feelings based on observing or listening, they should be noted to inform other staff. (See Ch. 16: Behavior Observation, Recording, and Report Writing) [13]

**Grounds.** The alert staff member must also be familiar with the grounds (outdoor area) of the facility. The most basic perimeter security should include a patrol of the outside yard before the youth enter the area. Staff should check for contraband that may have been thrown over the fence or planted (hidden). Facilities may also have surveillance cameras to monitor perimeter security. Staff must know directions (north, south, east, and west) to describe the location of an incident or problem, to give directions about an escaped youth, or to pinpoint the location of a stranger approaching the outside of the facility.

Note that the initial letters from these items—building, utilities, illumination, locks and keys, doors and windows, individuals, notations, and grounds—spell BUILDING, which makes it easier to remember building security.

**Searches**

Searches are an integral component of a facility’s overall security program. By conducting searches judiciously and conscientiously, facility staff can help to provide an environment that is safe and to minimize incidents. There are several types of searches that may be conducted in a confinement facility. Some searches are intended to discover any contraband that may be concealed. In addition, regular searches can serve as a deterrent to youth who might be otherwise tempted to bring contraband into the facility. (See Ch. 9: Admission and Intake) [7]
Searches must always be conducted in accordance with the facility and the parent agency’s rules, regulations, policies, and procedures. Those policies and procedures must adhere to state and local laws and to relevant case law. Administrators should become familiar with current statutes and case law and be aware of any changes that could impact policy. Search policies and procedures must be written specifically to provide clear guidance to staff and to ensure that a youth’s constitutional rights are not disregarded. Policies and procedures should designate when searches occur, who is responsible for conducting them, and how they must be documented.

Types of searches and guidelines for each of them include:

**Frisk Search.** The frisk search, or clothed-body search, is a thorough pat-down of a youth’s body and outer clothing. The frisk search does not require a youth to remove any clothing, except a coat or jacket and, sometimes, shoes. A frisk search should be conducted anytime that a strip search is not allowed, either by case law, statute, or policy. Generally, youth should be frisk searched immediately upon entry to the facility for admission, upon return to the facility from outside, after contact visits, and in some cases subsequent to movement from one area of the facility to another, such as return from school or recreation. PREA Standards prohibit cross-gender frisk or pat-down searches in juvenile facilities except in exigent circumstances.[36] A frisk search may also be accompanied by a wand search.

**Wand Search.** A search using a magnetometer, often referred to as a “wand” search, involves the use of a hand-held device that detects metal. That device may be used alone or in conjunction with other types of searches. Wand searches do not involve touching the person and are not intrusive, so they are often used to search visitors at confinement facilities.

**Strip Search.** Strip searches are more invasive and are subject to closer scrutiny. Court rulings regarding strip searches of youth in juvenile facilities have varied around the country, and it is essential that the facility policy be consistent with the relevant court’s rulings and state statute. Court rulings and well-crafted policies often require that strip searches may only be conducted when staff have reasonable suspicion that contraband may be found. Reasonable suspicion is a legal standard that “exists when a reasonable person under the circumstances, would, based upon specific and articulable facts, suspect that contraband will be found or that a crime has been or will be committed.”[37]

Rules regarding strip searches of youth in adult facilities vary, depending on whether the youth has been transferred or certified as an adult for purposes of prosecution or
whether that youth is considered a juvenile under state statute. In the latter case, the youth may still be under juvenile court jurisdiction and subject to relevant juvenile facility PREA Standards. Administrators and line staff members in adult facilities that serve youth should be familiar with both juvenile and adult PREA Standards and ensure that policies, procedures, and practices are in compliance.[38]

Some juvenile facilities conduct strip searches on all youth immediately upon admission; others have more limited criteria, such as the seriousness of the admitting offense. Limitations are often the result of court rulings or legal advice mandating or recommending the “reasonable suspicion” criteria. Adult facilities that serve youth often have a single procedure for their inmates, regardless of their age; they commonly strip search both youth and adults in the same way. However, some adult facilities also adhere to the “reasonable suspicion” criteria for all inmates, either at the time of admission or at other times.[39]

When the admission staff of a juvenile or adult facility are authorized to conduct a strip search, they should observe following guidelines for the protection of both the staff and the youth:

- A strip search may occur only by staff members who have had training on how to conduct a strip search.
- Only staff of the same gender may conduct strip searches. Policy may require that two staff members be present for all strip searches.
- Strip searches must be conducted in a private area of the facility.
- Staff must maintain a professional demeanor throughout the process.
- Youth should be asked to remove all of their clothing, and staff should refrain from inappropriate comments and staring.
- Staff must not touch a youth during a normal strip search.
- Strip searches must be documented as required by agency policy, including documenting the justification for the search, such as reasonable suspicion. Justification may include unusual, visible, or partially visible bruising when fully clothed, and cuts or marks or other concerns that could indicate abuse; a medical professional should examine the youth. Strip searches may require administrative approval, which also should be documented.

**Body-Cavity Search.** Body-cavity searches are extremely invasive, should rarely be necessary, and should occur only within strict guidelines. If a body-cavity search must be conducted, the following guidelines should be followed:
• Only a licensed healthcare provider with authorization from the responsible physician and facility administrator should ever conduct a body-cavity search.
• The facility’s policy and procedure must require that body-cavity searches be allowed only if there is reasonable suspicion that contraband will be found.
• Body-cavity searches may only be performed by same gender medical staff and must be conducted in private. It is generally advisable that two professionals be present during a body-cavity search.
• The primary role of facility healthcare staff is to serve the health needs of their patients. Conducting body-cavity searches for contraband can create an ethical conflict. Therefore, some agencies’ policies require that body-cavity searches be conducted by outside professionals or someone on the facility staff who is medically trained but not involved in a therapeutic relationship with the juvenile.
• Body-cavity searches must be documented as required by agency policy, including the justification for the search, such as reasonable suspicion.[40]

Inventory Search. The inventory search is a thorough search of a youth’s clothing or personal property that they have brought into the confinement facility at the time of admission, visitation, or official activity outside the facility. The youth’s property is itemized, and the written inventory is stored securely with the property until the youth is released. Youth should be asked to sign the property inventory sheet to confirm that all items brought into the facility are listed in the inventory.

Room, Cell, or Dormitory Search. The living quarters of confined youth should be searched regularly to discover any hidden contraband and to deter efforts to conceal unauthorized items. Such searches shall also address maintenance needs such as the operation of doors, locks, lights, plumbing, intercoms, and graffiti or other damage. The facility should have a regular schedule for such searches (such as daily) and should conduct random searches as well. In doing random searches, staff must not discriminate or appear to discriminate against any individuals or groups.

Searches of the living quarters should generally be conducted by two staff members with the youth present or in the vicinity, to avoid false accusations by youth that a staff planted items or damaged property. Searches of the living quarters should be documented on the facility’s designated forms, including notification of maintenance personnel of any needed repairs.

Perimeter Check or Grounds Search. Searches outside the building or buildings (for a campus-based facility), should also occur regularly and after any unusual occurrence at the facility. Minimally, perimeter checks should always occur before youth are allowed to go outside for recreation. A staff member should visually
inspect the security fence and the ground near that fence for any potential contraband. If the employee discovers any contraband or damage or if it appears that there has been an intruder or that fencing or equipment has been tampered with, he or she should report it to administration and to maintenance staff.

**Vehicle Search.** Before any youth is transported in an official vehicle, the transporting officer should search that vehicle to ensure that no unauthorized objects or potential contraband is present.

Staff should document all searches of property and youth as specified in facility policy and procedure and in accordance with any statutory or other legal requirements.

*(See Ch. 9: Admission and Intake)*

**Conclusion**

Leadership in a confinement facility that serves youth requires a range of skills that are developed through training, experience, supervision, coaching, and mentoring. Effective facility management and administration requires ongoing attention and dedication to broad issues such as the establishment of a philosophy and mission, resource management, evaluation and planning, and staff and leadership development. However, an effective facility administrator must also emphasize operational details such as the implementation of a current, comprehensive policy and procedure manual and a safety and security program. The effective administrator must be engaged with the staff and with confined youth while also maintaining active communication with outside stakeholders. No leader can succeed without the involvement and participation of key individuals and groups. The success of a facility and its programs requires commitment from its administration as well as internal and external participants.

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Endnotes


[13] Ibid.


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[17] Sanchez, George, Chief Union Steward, Cook County Juvenile Temporary Detention Center, phone interview, September 9, 2013.


[20] Ibid.


[28] Ibid., 556.


[31] Ibid.


[34] Merriam-Webster, adj. “secure.”


[37] Legal Information Institute, Cornell University Law School, “Reasonable Suspicion.”

[38] National PREA Resource Center, “Standards for Prisons and Jails.”