

Multisite-Restorative Justice Programs: Benefits and Challenges

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Presenters

Andrew McWhinnie

Andrew McWhinnie Consulting

to


Correctional Service of Canada, Chaplaincy Division,
Circles of Support and Accountability,

and

Tanya Ruge

Public Safety Canada, Corrections Research Branch
Ottawa, Canada

The views expressed here are not necessarily those of Public Safety Canada or the
Correctional Service of Canada



As Restorative Justice and restorative Practices
continue to proliferate
Multisite programs are becoming more common.

This presents opportunities and challenges



Method

This session will explore some of the opportunities and challenges of multisite models.

A recent examination of the Canadian **Circles of Support and Accountability (CoSA)** initiatives will be used as an example.

CHALLENGES



LETSGODIGITAL



COMMUNITY

CoSA Canada Multi-Sites



CoSA Sites in Canada

- * Victoria
- * Vancouver
- * Fraser Valley
- * Calgary
- * Regina
- * Saskatoon
- * Prince Albert
- * Winnipeg
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- * Peterborough
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- * Montreal Southwest Community Ministries (MSCM - Montreal)
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Our Notions of Community Can Have a Dark Side





Notions of Community can be Positive or Negative

“**Community**” can be seen as “town” but also as “regional” or “ethno-cultural”, urban/rural, geography and “confederation”

“**Community**” can broaden and draw together, and unite individuality into a common, shared experience.

“**Community**” can also define boundaries and borders and isolate by dividing, separating, define “otherness” as “us” and not “them.”

Notions of Community can be POSITIVE



*The town of Pomeiock and true forme of their houses, covered
and enclosed some wth mats, and some wth barrels of trees. All compassed
about wth small poles stuck thick together in stead of a wall.*



Notions of Community can be NEGATIVE



The towns of Pomeroock and true forme of their houses, covered
and enclosed some wth mats, and some wth barkes of trees. All compassed
about wth small poles stuck thick together in stead of a wall.





BOOKVILLE

A FIGHT AGAINST DESTRUCTION





Our Preconceptions

Community-based

versus

Community-owned

**Not interchangeable but distinct terms,
with a fine-line between them.**

Community-Based

Usually means a program, initiative or undertaking that is based in – physically located in - a community as opposed to being based within, located or “of” the structure of a government, private or public institution (a bank, school, business enterprise).

Community-owned

This is quite another kettle of fish.



Community “Owned”

**Is a local project actually “owned” by its community?
What does this mean?**

When we invoke the terms, “community,” “community-based,” “community-owned,” do we mean my project has the support of my community, “Castlegar,” “Ottawa,” “Cheticamp,” etc., or even my local neighbourhood association and residents?



Are We Being Honest?

Or do I mean by these terms, the people in my church, or my corps of volunteers, my steering committee, Board of Directors, or only the “community” of people involved in my singular project?

While “community” can be all of the above, or be limited to just one of the above, the real question is, why am I invoking the term(s) I am using.

Or do I mean, “This is my idea, my baby, and you can’t mess with it”?

Observation: Community “Ownership” as a Continuum

**Garrison
Mentality**

**All Things to
All People**



Worked very hard to establish program and strong sense of needing to survive. Need to defend against outside influence; wants to define who clientele will be, what processes will be used.

If a person – anyone – is in need, we will help them; Over-resourced, unfocused and at risk of burn-out, compassion fatigue; often unable to delegate; sometimes wants to stand as an example of “best practice;”

Garrison Mentality

“Small and isolated communities surrounded with a physical or psychological ‘frontier,’ separated from one another and from their American and British cultural sources: communities that provide all that their members have in the way of distinctively human values, and that are compelled to feel a great respect for the law and order that holds them together, yet confronted with a huge, unthinking, menacing, and formidable physical setting—such communities are bound to develop what we may provisionally call a **garrison mentality**.”

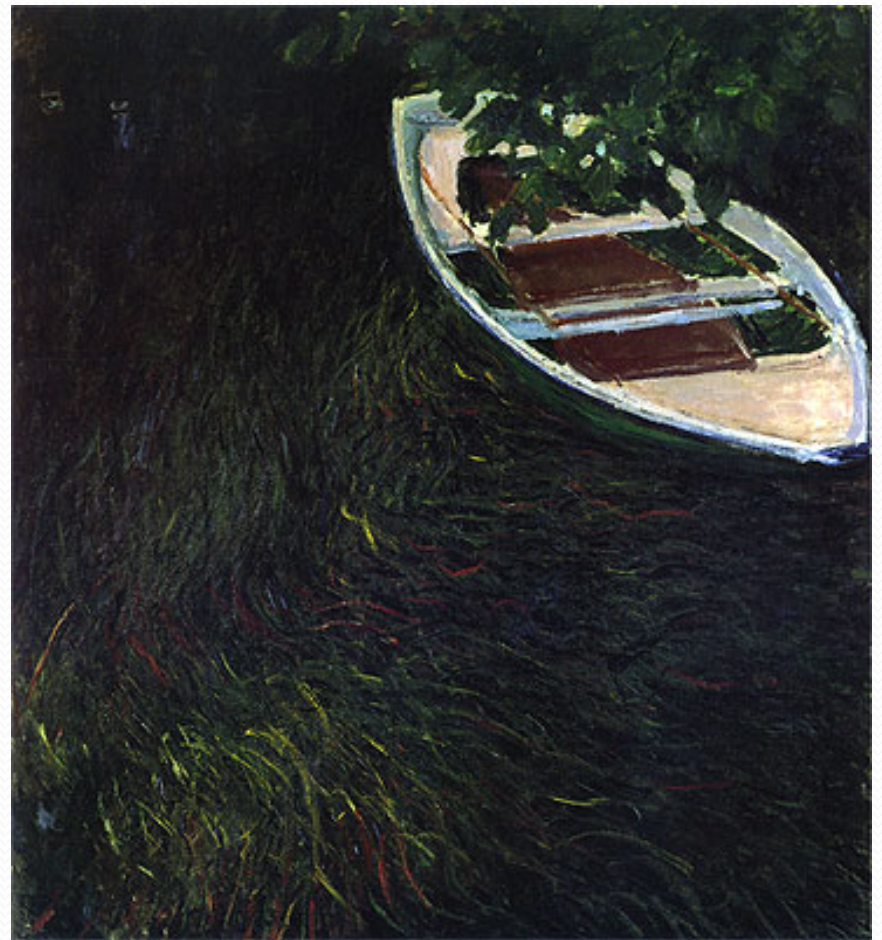
“Susanna Moodie in the Peterborough bush ... is a British army of occupation in herself, a one-woman garrison.”

Frye, Northrop "Conclusion to a *Literary History of Canada*." *The Bush Garden: Essays on the Canadian Imagination*. Toronto: Anansi, 1975.

Community “Ownership”

When trying to manage multi-site projects, how do we respect initiatives that are “built by” local people in a certain community? With respect to Restorative Justice, Restorative Practices, (CoSA).

Who properly “owns” the local project? Can anyone “own” a model?



Protocols and Standards





Standards and Protocols

Debates continue – are these “community-based” standards and protocols?

Are they broader in terms of provincial, state and national standards?

What about concerns of real or perceived loss of local autonomy, vision, innovation and uniqueness associated with “Standardization”?

How does the management of and adherence to standards and protocols work in terms of multi-site programs?



Standard, Standardization

Does *Standardization* mean

- “sameness” or homogenization versus uniqueness, or
- “a standard of practice,” like an “ethical standard” or standard of excellence – a commonly accepted best practice?
- Other things?



Protocols

A formal etiquette, code of behaviour, precedence, or procedure or formal agreement.

Local, “community-based,” practices may arrive at certain protocols that are very similar to other locations; and some will be very different or non-existent.

How are these managed in terms of multi-site, provincial, state or national practices, and/or when local and multi-site protocols duplicate and/or conflict?



Other Challenges

- **Geography** Incorporating geography into standardization
- **Maintenance:**
 - commonalitiesPrograms developing a different speeds, in different ways;
 - addressing good practices and bad habits;
 - Maintaining relationships and linkages;
 - Need for constant evaluation/assessment to ensure commonalities over time.




Other Challenges

- **Communications:**
 - Communications between locations and sites;
 - Process for communicating best practices,
 - but what if it doesn't work in another site?

Benefits of Multi-Site Collaboration






✓ Increased abilities for networking and support from others doing same work (brainstorming burn-out, mentoring, problem solving and conflict resolution);

✓ Increased opportunities to build relationships, to collaborate on small projects;

✓ To share knowledge and test “best practices.”

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- ✓ **Governance Structure**
 - ✓ **Reduced redundancies;**
 - ✓ **Credibility**
 - ✓ **Increased “Sample Size”**
 - ✓ - **increased likelihood of “testability,”
evaluability, and ability to generalize knowledge
of both what works and, more importantly,
what does not.**
 - ✓ **Access to resources and resource management;**
 - ✓ **Ability to “leverage”**
 - ✓ - **resources**
 - ✓ - **influence on national, regional and local
governmental policy;**
 - ✓ - **liability insurance;**
 - ✓ - **grant applications;**

**Stronger, wider
sense of community,
reduced sense of
isolation, and
the experience of
“many hands.”**



Recommendation: Adopt a Common “Skeletal Format”

Safety of skeleton (e.g., standardize core process, core documentation, liability and safety guidelines (rules), resourcing, evaluation.



While allowing for communities to adapt the outer layer (or flesh) of the skeleton to what fits within their community: a practical use of “function” (skeleton) and “form” (flesh).



CoSA Canada Multi-Sites

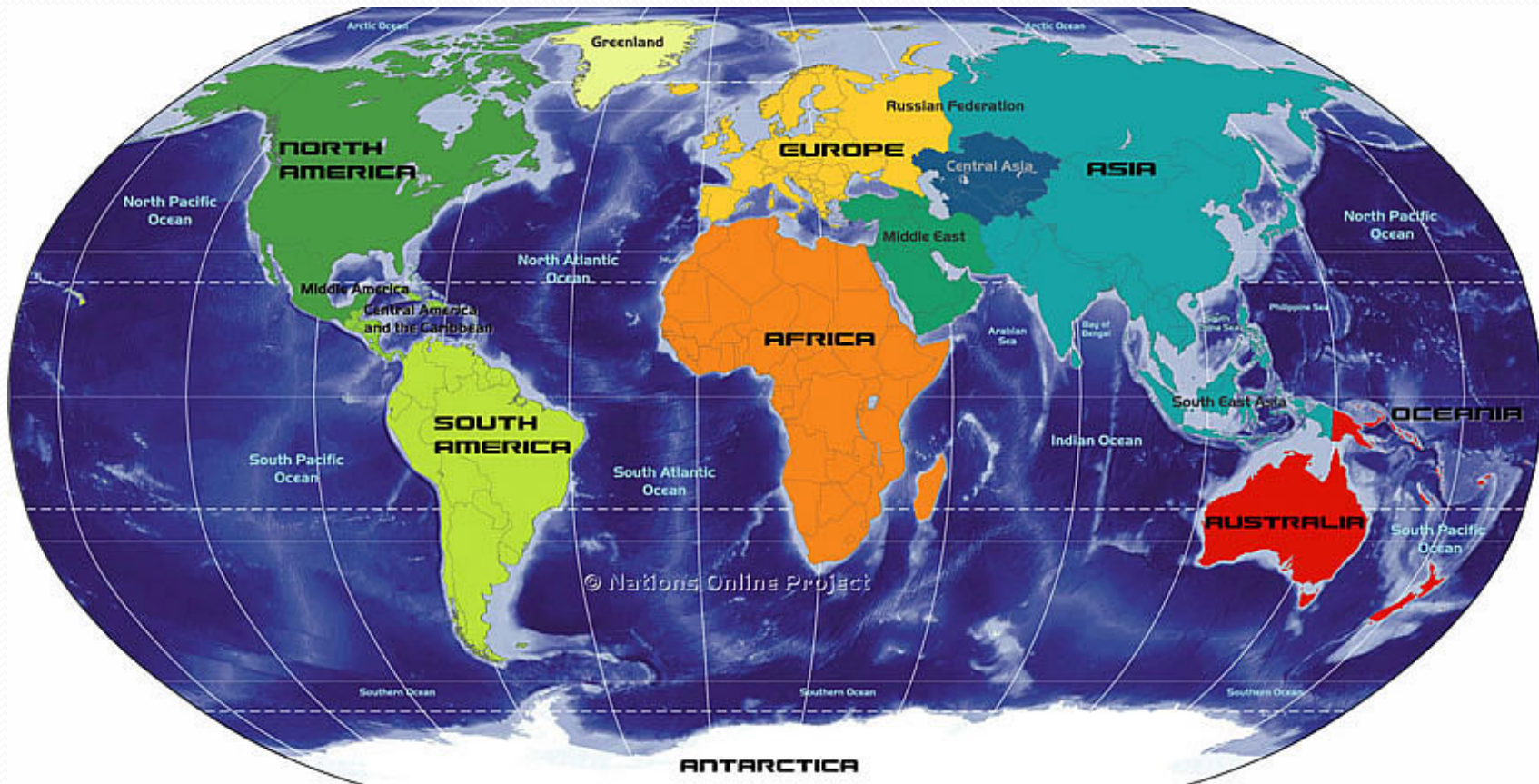


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“Multi-Site” Soon Comes to Mean International Collaboration and Global Management Strategies



Contact

Andrew_McWhinnie@telus.net

www.andrewmcwhinnieconsulting.com

250-881-1151

250-889-2321 (cell)