



Aboriginal Corrections

QUICK FACTS

Absoriginal offenders continue to be disproportionately represented at all levels of the Canadian criminal justice system. As of the end of March 2009, Aboriginal people comprised 17.3 per cent of federally sentenced offenders, while the Aboriginal population is 2.7 per cent of the Canadian adult population.

THE STRATEGIC PLAN FOR ABORIGINAL CORRECTIONS

The Correctional Service of Canada's (CSC) *Strategic Plan for Aboriginal Corrections* (SPAC), approved in 2006, ensures a federal correctional system that responds to the needs of all Aboriginal offenders, and contributes to safe and healthy communities. The SPAC has three main priorities: an expansion of the *Continuum of Care* model (referred to as the Continuum) for Aboriginal offenders; horizontal collaboration across CSC and other government departments; and the elimination of systemic barriers in policies and programming.

The ultimate goal of the SPAC is to ensure integration of the Continuum across all areas of the Service, with a resulting decrease in the gap in results between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal offenders.

THE ABORIGINAL CORRECTIONS CONTINUUM OF CARE

The Aboriginal Corrections Continuum was developed in consultation with Aboriginal stakeholders to develop new approaches to addressing Aboriginal offender needs. Research indicates that the major factors contributing to Aboriginal offenders' success upon release are participation in spiritual and cultural activities, as well as programs (preferably delivered by Aboriginal people) and the support from family and community.

The Continuum:

- Starts at intake by identifying Aboriginal offenders and encouraging them to bridge the disconnect between them, their culture and communities;
- Helps direct the healing process in institutions to better prepare Aboriginal offenders for transfer to lower security and for conditional release;
- Engages Aboriginal communities and involves them in supporting reintegration;
- Ends with the establishment of community supports to sustain progress beyond the end of the sentence and to prevent re-offending.

THE WAY FORWARD

First Nations, Métis and Inuit Elders and spiritual advisors play a critical role in narrowing the gap in correctional results between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal offenders. They participate in the identification and orientation of Aboriginal offenders upon admission. They provide access to ceremonies and teachings of their unique cultures. They help offenders re-establish connections with families and communities. They also assist CSC and communities in planning for the offender's eventual return.

Where an offender chooses to initiate a healing journey, the Elder or spiritual advisor becomes part of the case management team. He or she participates in developing a healing plan that will guide all CSC staff in supporting the offender during incarceration and after release.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

If you would like more information on the strategic plan for Aboriginal Corrections, please visit our Web site at www.csc-scc.gc.ca.

January 2010

