

Sacro Annual Conference 2008

*“Community Sentences –  
Making Scotland Safer”*

5 March 2008

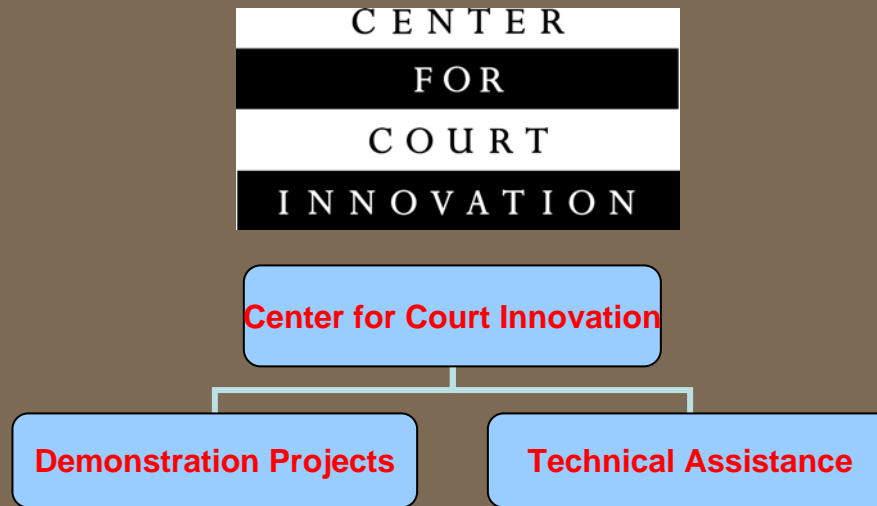
# Community Sentences – An International Perspective



Julius Lang

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COURT  
INNOVATION





## Goals:

- reduce crime,
- aid victims,
- strengthen neighborhoods, and
- promote public confidence in justice

# Business Model

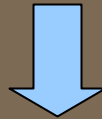
## **Demonstration**

Field-testing new ideas on the ground



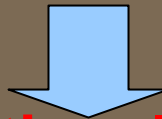
## **Documentation**

Tracking both process and impacts of experiments



## **Replication**

Providing technical assistance to help other jurisdictions innovate



## **Institutionalization**

Attempting to 'go to scale' with innovation

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# Case Study

**Red Hook, Brooklyn  
New York  
USA**

# Red Hook, Brooklyn



- **Isolation** – surrounded on three sides by water
- **Poverty** -- more than 70 percent live in public housing
- **Crime** -- notorious for the murder of elementary school principal Patrick Daly
- **Resources** – parks, waterfront, natural light

# Red Hook Needs Assessment

## Community Issues:

- High concentration of visible public disorder, as well as more serious crime
- Public housing-related problems
- Concern for youth
- Lack of services in community
- Low trust + confidence in justice system

# Red Hook Needs Assessment

## System Issues:

- Long arrest to arraignment times
- Lack of information
- Few sentencing options
- Low offender compliance
- Fragmented court system
- Little focus on outcomes

***Red Hook DVD***

# Community Courts:

*hubs to shift practice in high volume areas*

- neighborhood focus
- harness power of justice system
- help solve local problems



## What if . . .

- . . . **one judge** assigned to cover particular area?
- . . . **community involvement** in planning and operation?
- . . . full menu of **community sentences**?
- . . . community “paid back” through **unpaid work service**?
- . . . linkage to **social services**, through combination of mandate and voluntary engagement, within building if possible?



Do

Community

Sentences

Work?

# Community service suggestions

- Provide highly visible, useful service
- Seek community input
- Actively look for projects
- Link to offense when possible (ex: painting over graffiti)
- Begin work as soon as possible
- Track compliance; report promptly
- Use partners



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- Ensure secure, respectful work environment
- Maintain high standard of compliance
- Track and publicize accomplishments (number of hours, value of work, locations of sites cleaned up, etc.)
- Offer options for offenders with special needs
- Promote compliance through flexibility

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# The Other Side of the Ledger

- Support: dealing with “needs as well as deeds”
- Individual and group counseling
- Drug, alcohol and mental health treatment, job training, health education for sex workers, anger management, etc
- KEYS:
  - immediacy
  - accountability (incl. judicial monitoring)
  - engagement



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# Examples of Outcomes

- **Paying the Community Back:** use of community service sanctions rose from 29% to 69%
- **Increased Compliance:** 75% vs 50%
- **Swifter Justice:** 40% reduction in arrest to arraignment time
- **Crime Reduction:** Street prostitution drops 56%; Unlicensed vending down 24%; Red Hook top NYC precinct for two-year reduction in major crime
- **Public Support:** 57% would pay more taxes; Approval ratings of courts from 11% to 71%
- **Levels of Fear:** Percentage of Red Hook residents afraid to go to the parks or subway has dropped 45 percent – from 77% to 43%
- **Procedural Fairness:** 85% felt case handled fairly; 93% felt that the judge treated them fairly

# International Experiments

- Australia
- Canada
- England and Wales
- Ireland
- New Zealand
- South Africa
- USA

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- **Scotland?**
- South Africa
- USA

# www.courtinnovation.org

The screenshot shows the website's navigation menu with links for ABOUT, DEMONSTRATION PROJECTS, EXPERT ASSISTANCE, and PUBLICATIONS. The main header reads "CENTER FOR COURT INNOVATION". A search bar and "CONTACT LINKS" are in the top right. A large image of a graffiti-covered wall with people is on the left. The "LATEST NEWS" section features a story about Bronx Community Solutions, and the "LATEST PUBLICATION" section features "Good Courts". A footer lists various court types and services.

SEARCH CONTACT LINKS

ABOUT **CENTER FOR COURT INNOVATION**

DEMONSTRATION PROJECTS

EXPERT ASSISTANCE

PUBLICATIONS

**LATEST NEWS**  
An ambitious experiment in going to scale with problem-solving justice, Bronx Community Solutions officially opened its doors in the fall of 2005. | [read more](#)

**LATEST PUBLICATION**  
*Good Courts* is the first book to describe the problem-solving court movement and features in-depth looks at Center for Court Innovation projects. | [read more](#)

Community Court Drug Court Domestic Violence Court Mental Health Court Community Prosecution  
Problem-Solving Justice Reentry Juvenile Justice Mediation Technology Research

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