

Violence in California Prisons

The problems in California's prisons, including inadequate health care, overcrowding, racism and gangs, are well documented, if not always a focus of public attention. In such an environment, violence is the norm. Inmate violence over the past three years resulted in over \$8 million in workers' compensation and health care costs for injuries to prison staff, and the high-security confinement of prisoners involved in violence costs the state over \$400 million per year. What is more, people incarcerated under these brutalizing conditions frequently return to society unprepared and angry, and the violence continues. More than a half million California children have a parent who is incarcerated, and this problem affects them, their families and the wider community.

The Alternatives to Violence Project

The Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP) started 30 years ago, when a group of inmates at New York's Greenhaven Prison asked a group of Quakers to help them come up with a way to teach skills to young people to stay away from violence and out of prison. The workshops they created together were the seed that became AVP, and the program is now active in prisons and communities through locally organized councils in 40 states and 20 countries, including parts of the world torn by political strife and human suffering, such as Rwanda and Burundi.

AVP/California, the requesting organization, is an affiliate of AVP/USA, a nonprofit educational corporation comprised of a network of local organizations such as ours that exist for the sole purpose of conducting nonviolent conflict resolution workshops in prisons and communities with the goal of reducing societal violence one person at a time.

The Challenge

Though there is a history of successful AVP work in prisons and communities in California, these past efforts have been relatively small-scale and uncoordinated. In January 2005, there were programs in only two state prisons, one California Youth Authority site, one county jail and a federal prison. Getting access to California correctional facilities has historically been a challenge, in large part due to resistance by prison authorities themselves.

But a change has taken place that provides a unique challenge and opportunity. As part of an effort to reform California's prison system, the Department of Corrections was recently reorganized and given an encouraging name-change, to become the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (DOCR). This spring, the new director, Jeanne Woodford, invited a group of trained AVP facilitators to make an unprecedented presentation to the wardens of all 30 DOCR prisons, with the result that 23 requested that AVP be introduced into their institutions.

In response to this exciting development, a large group of California AVP facilitators who were gathered at the AVP/USA national conference at the end of May formally constituted AVP/California as a regional affiliate of the organization and appointed a steering committee to carry forward the work of bringing AVP into the California prisons on a scale previously almost unimaginable. The steering committee has 11 members, two of whom are former inmates, and was selected by consensus. Subcommittees meet by telephone conferencing weekly, the steering committee has monthly conference calls and plans to meet quarterly.

In its 30 years of existence, AVP has always been a grassroots, all-volunteer effort, powered by the work of its local councils. AVPUSA, the national umbrella organization, which came into being only 15 years ago, is governed by a board drawn from these regional and local groups. It puts on an annual educational and networking conference, develops and distributes workshop manuals and other training materials and maintains a website.

In communities where AVP is present, organized local councils have total responsibility and authority to organize workshops both inside the prison and outside in the community. All decisions are made by

consensus within each local council and by the facilitating team of each workshop. The national organization functions only at the behest of the local groups and provides no funding to them.

The Goal: Developing AVP leadership in prisons and communities

AVP/California's goal is to organize a local AVP group in the community surrounding each prison in the DOCR system, with the intention of establishing a self-sustaining program in the prison with a regular, at least monthly, schedule of workshops.

The task of expanding AVP workshops from the existing two facilities to the entire correctional system requires a disciplined and focused effort to recruit, train and monitor new community and inmate facilitators. "Outside" facilitators need training not only in the AVP philosophy and technique but also in the realities of prison life and culture if they are to be effective in their work. Inmates trained to organize and facilitate workshops are also a vital part of the leadership of this program of developing an AVP culture within each prison. Former inmates are included in AVP local organizing as well as at the state level as consultants to the steering committee.

Experienced outside facilitators must travel to prisons in all corners of the state in order to launch these new workshops and provide training and mentoring for new facilitators. Even though they are volunteers, these trainers will incur the ongoing expenses of travel and materials for each new program initiated in the state.

The AVP model is characterized by community participation; therefore, diverse, community support groups need to be established in towns near each prison where AVP workshops are held (10-12 areas of the state.) For example, in the Blythe community, where we recently initiated our expansion with a workshop in Chuckawalla Valley State Prison, contacts have been made with the local Rotary club, the Museum of Black History, families of inmates, local churches, drug rehab programs and prison staff. All are invited to be involved in community workshops. This community link not only provides understanding and support for the program as it gets going, but insures the sustainability of the project once it is established.

Systemic social change happens when all parts of a system are involved. The Secretary of the Youth and Adult Correctional Agency, Roderick Hickman, DOCR director Woodford's boss and a member of the governor's cabinet, is initiating broad changes from the top to reform the state prisons. AVP offers the inmates who populate those prisons a chance to participate in this movement. AVP/California is also working with the DOCR to train staff and correctional officers in nonviolent conflict resolution. In addition, Secretary Hickman is inviting the community to play a part in these changes, and AVP can help this to become a reality.

Considering the shifting political scene in California state government, it is important for this program to be launched quickly. The first of the 23 prisons initiated into this project, as mentioned, was Chuckawalla Valley State Prison in Blythe, to be followed by Valley State Prison in Chowchilla and Sierra Conservation Center in Jamestown. Telephone interviews with the remaining prison wardens are determining the readiness and timing of the next AVP programs. (See supporting materials for a description of the workshops.)

Philosophy of social change.

AVP's fundamental belief is that there is a power for peace and social good in everyone and that this power can transform violent into nonviolent behavior, resulting in a ripple effect within society. As incarcerated people connect with this power in themselves, it has the potential to reduce violence not only in prisons but in society, one person at a time, starting with the individual inmate and extending to his or her children, family and social relationships. Through AVP's highly experiential program (less than 15 minutes of the workshop is spent in lecture), inmates are empowered to lead nonviolent lives. Crime is reduced in neighborhoods and the fabric of society is mended by returning skilled, empathetic, nonviolent communicators to participate actively and healthily in their communities and with their families. AVP also brings together people inside and outside prisons into a single working community.

How the organization raises funds

The beauty of AVP is that local programs grow organically and are self-sustaining. Traditionally, one individual or local group decides to introduce workshops into a nearby prison. Beginning by offering workshops in their community, AVP groups working within a local prison then continue to raise money through fee-based community workshops. While the graduates of community workshops typically go off in many directions with their nonviolence work, many of the facilitators in prisons come out of these workshops. Since they are usually going to a prison within two hours of their homes, personal expenses for food, travel and lodging are funded by the volunteers themselves. This direct relationship between a community and the prison, both financially and in terms of volunteers, just makes sense.

Launching a statewide program where new sites are developed and local support needs to be discovered requires a different level of funding. Volunteer-mentors are traveling hundreds of miles, being away from home multiple days in order to develop community support and local volunteers. Thus new methods are being developed, which include:

- A statewide, web-located database (www.avpcalifornia.org), developed courtesy of an anonymous donor, for facilitators and donors. From this list regular updates have been sent as things amazingly develop with the DOCR. (See Related materials.) The Steering Committee is developing an individual mail solicitation program from this database and their own contacts.

- Pacific Yearly Meeting (California Quakers statewide) has been in support of AVP for many years with volunteers, and more recently with an AVP Subcommittee of the Peace and Social Order Committee. AVP/California is developing a letter to local Friends Meetings for volunteers; an appeal for funds will follow this.

- Part of the building of local groups includes visits and presentations to local organizations seeking financial and other kinds of support. On our first visit to Blythe to explore the possibilities of establishing a program at Chuckawalla Valley State Prison, a local Rotary Club member who owns a motel agreed to contribute all the lodging for incoming volunteers for the next year (a \$4,000 value), and the Black History Museum and Multi-Cultural Society of Blythe offered space for a community workshop and entrees into local churches.

- Steering committee members are donating not only their time, but their travel expenses to attend meetings and facilitate workshops, which represents \$70,000 in in-kind donations.

Within a year of starting a local program, it should be functioning on its own local funding, in-kind donations and volunteers. However, in order to maintain the credibility and the "professional" approach expected by the DOCR and AVP itself, an ongoing method of supporting local groups in their consistent adherence to AVP values and standards is being developed. This will involve some ongoing additional expense that the local organizations will have to defray as well.

Steering Committee Occupations

The Steering Committee of AVP California was formed and elected by consensus by all California AVP facilitators in attendance at the annual conference in May 2005. All made a significant time commitment and are all on sabbatical, working part-time or retired.

Two former-prisoner facilitators function as active consultants to the Steering Committee.

Pat Hardy, President, Santa Barbara,
Co-founder /Co-CEO national association, 15-year AVP facilitator trainer, Clerk of Quaker Meeting

Stephen Matchett, Treasurer, San Francisco
Editor, criminal defense lawyer, regional American Friends Service Committee Finance Committee chair

Steve Birdlebough, Santa Rosa
Former deputy district attorney, criminal defense lawyer, legislative liaison for the California Judicial Council

Katherine Youngmeister, Berkeley
Retired CPA and CFO, American Friends Service Committee regional and national board and committee member

Alice Waco, Santa Rosa
Retired teacher/counselor, 13 years AVP in prisons and community and Friends Outside facilitator in Sonoma County jail

George Ramos, Ph.D., Nipomo
Retired computer scientist / manager. Full -time Beyond War volunteer, 1983-84. 9-year AVP facilitator

Bob Barns, Nevada City
12 years AVP: 10 states, 16 prisons, eight countries, Quaker

Vicki Rumbaugh, M.S., Torrance
Trained therapist, worked with probation/at risk youth, 5-year AVP facilitator

Evelyn Cohen, MSW, LCSW, La Jolla
Retired clinical social worker, 14-year AVP facilitator-Donovan Correctional Facility

Consultants:

Rossie Johnson, Lancaster
Termite Control Technician, became AVP facilitator in 2002 at California Men's Colony

Mark Thomas, M.A.
Transpersonal social psychologist/educator focusing on individual/social psychospiritual development, 15-year AVP facilitator

**Alternatives to Violence Project/California
Budget
June 1, 2005 to March 31, 2006**

Costs to launch 10 new Prison/Community Programs

Materials costs for trainings	
Prison	
recurring	1,260
non-recurring	3,000
Community	
recurring	1,125
non-recurring	1,500
Promotional costs for community trainings	
Promotion to groups	500
Publicity and recruitment	2,000
Outside facilitator costs	
Remote trainings	53,865
Local trainings	36,000
<i>Total costs for trainings</i>	<i>99,250</i>
Administrative costs	
Office supplies	600
Office equipment rental	1,500
Rental space	1,800
Secretarial/bkkpg staff	4,500
Mailings/postage	525
Fundraising	1,500
Mileage to mtgs/fundrais	7,500
Telephone	1,875
Mail box	375
<i>Total administrative costs</i>	<i>20,175</i>
Total 9 month cost	\$119,425

Income sources

Administrative in-kind donations	
Office supplies	600
Office equipment rental	1,500
Rental space	1,800
Secretarial/bkkpg staff	4,500
Telephone	1,500
Lodging donations: Hotels or homes	25,000
Volunteer in-kind donations	
Mileage/gas/meals	64,525
Individual solicitations	5000
Grants	15,000
Total estimated income	\$119,425

Additional information attached

List of Upcoming workshops

Establishing AVP workshops in CDCR Prisons

FCL article

About AVP workshops

Local flyer

Peaceful relationships flyer used in prison and community presentations

Making a difference – fundraising...

Map of CDCR prisons

List of Upcoming Workshops

Prison Workshops

California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation

R. J. Donovan Correctional Facility, San Diego: quarterly

California Mens Colony – San Luis Obispo: monthly

*Chuckawalla Valley State Prison, Blythe: monthly

#Sierra Conservation Center, Jamestown

#Valley State Prison for Women, Chowchilla

California Youth Authority

Heman G Stark Youth Facility, Chino: monthly

Federal Prison System

Dublin Women's Facility: quarterly

Community Workshops

San Diego Hands of Peace

Basic Serenity House in Oceanside: September 21-22, 2005

Basic for St. Clairs in Oceanside: October 24-25, 2005

Training for Trainers: August 13 and 20, 2005

Basic for Americorps in Sacramento: September 5-7, 2005

Los Angeles:

Basic: Claremont - September 17 and 24, two consecutive Saturdays

Central Coast (San Luis Obispo)_

Basic: October 21-23__

Santa Barbara, Ventura_

Basic: September 23-25, 2005

Quaker Center,

Basic: September 23-25, 2005

Advanced: November 4-6, 2005

Training for Facilitators: December 2-4, 2005

San Francisco (North Bay)

Basic: September 23-25, 2005

*Recently begun, now ongoing

#Scheduled

AVP (Alternatives to Violence Project)

Establishing an AVP Program in a CDCR Prison

Purpose of an AVP program:

- The Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP) is a multicultural volunteer organization that is dedicated to reducing interpersonal violence in our society.
- AVP workshops present conflict management skills that can enable individuals to build successful interpersonal interactions, gain insights into themselves and find new and positive approaches to their lives.
- The AVP program offers experiential workshops that empower individuals to liberate themselves from the burden of violence.

AVP/California goals:

- AVP workshops offered monthly within CDCR prisons to volunteer inmate-participants.
- Workshops led by volunteer facilitation teams of outside and inmate volunteer facilitators.
- An outside volunteer liaison at each prison, keeping in regular contact with prison officials and with state program representatives to assure the program's success and the maintenance of appropriate relationships between inmates and outside volunteers.
- Provide an ongoing understanding of program concepts to the broadest number of both prison inmates and the local community through peer and facilitator involvement.

Process of developing an AVP program:

Step One: The Request

- A CDCR prison requests an AVP program be developed, at which time the local community is approached. Or,
- The local community requests that AVP be offered and approaches AVP or the prison.

Step Two: Trainer Assigned and Local Community Commitment

- Experienced AVP trainer(s) from the area council or a state AVP group is/are assigned to work with the prison and the community to develop facilitators as well as prison and community understanding of the program.
- The experienced trainer works with the local community sponsor(s) (Quaker Meeting, service or religious group, etc.) to develop their roles and responsibilities in the ongoing support of the program. This support or care comes in multiple forms, including: assisting in promoting community workshops; handling registrations for community workshops; supplying housing and meals to facilitators coming from outside the community; providing funds for materials to supporting the community workshops with a location and food; and, of course, taking the workshops.

Step Three: Community workshops

Three levels of community AVP workshops are offered (Basic, Advanced or Second Level, and Training for Facilitators (T4F)) in order to create a body or team of a dozen trained volunteer facilitators.

Step Four: Initial Prison Contacts

- A local community AVP liaison is assigned to communicate with the prison on an ongoing basis.
- This individual then involves the local prison in the development of infrastructure, including, where appropriate:
 - Meeting with the warden
 - Working with prison staff sponsor
 - Meeting with the Inmate Family Council,
 - Meeting with Men's/Women's Advisory Council
 - Possibly offering the AVP workshop to staff

A prison contact is assigned or developed to work with the outside liaison.

Step Five: Developing and Maintaining Appropriate Relationships within Prisons

- A local system based on AVP California standards is developed and accepted whereby all volunteers understand their proper roles in relation to inmates and vice versa.
- The prison processes volunteers efficiently to enter the prison to facilitate workshops as well as developing a method for inmates to volunteer to participate in the workshop.
- AVP works with the prison to get inmates signed up for workshops.
- AVP facilitators are re-oriented annually on their responsibilities as representatives of the program.
- This system is reviewed annually by the prison contact and the community liaison.

Step Six: Workshops Begin Inside the Prison

- Through the system developed in Step Five, inmates are signed up for workshops on a voluntary basis.
- Basic workshops are offered to inmate volunteer participants for several months by a team of outside volunteers.
- Second Level workshops are offered to inmates who have completed the Basic workshop.
- Training for Facilitators workshop is offered to inmates who have completed the Second Level workshop.
- Trained inmate apprentices begin working with the outside facilitation team on the next workshop series. During this process intense evaluation and oversight takes place until the council of outside facilitators approves the apprentice.

Step Seven: Regular Monitoring

Supervision of AVP prison programs takes place on several levels:

- Outside facilitators and local liaison relate to state organizations and area councils to track progress of program and individuals, through statistical reporting and in-depth evaluations of each workshop. (Facilitators, apprentices and the program are evaluated following each workshop and these forms are submitted to the area council.)
- Regular meetings of the area council provide opportunities to review and solve problems as well as check the progress of program.
- AVP/California facilitates training in preventing and handling problems.

AVP/USA functions as a resource for how problems and new programs have been handled elsewhere. Expertise from other states and countries is always available to local programs.

ABOUT AVP WORKSHOPS

Workshops are open to whoever wishes to attend - the only requirement is that the participant attends voluntarily. Fees are modest and scholarships are available.

Each of the three levels of AVP workshops runs 18-21 hours and is facilitated by a team of volunteers. Common workshop configurations are a three-day block or a series of two-day chunks. Mini-workshops for demonstration purposes are also available.

WORKSHOP LEVELS

Level One: Basic Workshop

Every Basic Workshop involves:

- Establishing a base of self-esteem, affirmation, trust and cooperation.
- Exploring methods of communication.
- Learning about creative ways of resolving conflicts.

Each workshop is unique because the individuals who attend have different personalities and experiences. AVP workshops seek to assist individuals in personal growth and change. AVP is not psychotherapy.

Level Two: Advanced Workshop

After you have attended a Level One workshop, you might be interested in taking part in this more advanced level.

Advanced Workshops focus on:

- The underlying causes of conflict such as fear, anger, stereotyping, power and powerlessness, and “old history” and behavior.
- Taking a deeper look at ways of resolving conflicts, including communication and forgiveness.
- Experiencing consensus as a decision-making process.

Usually the participants choose the focus of the work.

How to become a facilitator

- Begin by participating in the Basic and Advanced AVP Workshops
- If you find you would like to become a volunteer facilitator of the AVP process, take the Training-for-Facilitators/Trainers (T4T) Workshop. This workshop is designed for those who expect to be active in community and/or prison workshops.
 - A T4T teaches the skills needed to help run workshops:
 - Group process skills
 - Working as a cooperative team
 - Hands-on experience
 - Specific AVP methods: Agenda Building, Exercises, Transforming Power, Light and Livelies, Role Plays.
- As a last step in the training, you will apprentice with one or more facilitation teams in workshops and work with a local group to develop your skills and confidence until you are a full-fledged facilitator.

Peaceful Relationships...

In a weekend, learn skills to increase your effectiveness and enrich your own personal world

ENJOY a hands-on, experiential workshop where you'll connect deeply with others, laugh, share, listen while learning ways to reduce conflict in your world, your classroom, your family, or at work.

* Take **no** notes... Come prepared to discover new ways of approaching disagreement.

* Treat yourself to this workshop purely for personal growth. Or make it a first step toward facilitating *ALTERNATIVES TO VIOLENCE PROJECT (AVP)* workshops in prisons and the community or classroom. AVP, begun in 1975, is active worldwide. See www.avpcalifornia.org for details on the program and concept.

* This workshop is led by experienced volunteers currently facilitating workshops at California prisons, as well as with youth.

When: September 23- 25, 2005

Friday: 5:30 Registration 6-9 p.m. Workshop

Saturday: 8:30 a.m. - 9:00 p.m.

Sunday: 8:30 a.m.-1 p.m.

Location: Santa Barbara location to be announced.

Fees: \$45-100 depending on your ability to pay. Scholarships are available. Includes materials, training, snacks and Saturday dinner. Please bring a sack lunch for Saturday and Sunday. Complimentary overnight lodging in homes is available for those coming from out of town.

For more information, please contact: Wendy –805/450-5422 or wjwittl@cox.net

Sponsored by Santa Barbara Friends (Quaker) Meeting

TO REGISTER: Tear off and mail to AVP, 886 Cheltenham Rd. S.B. 93105.

Sign me up for the Alternatives to Violence Workshop

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____ City/State/Zip _____

Email _____ Occupation _____

Check to "SB Friends Mtg" enclosed for \$ _____ or _____ I would like to talk about a scholarship.

Making a difference in society is now simpler...

Contribute to the highly effective Alternatives to Violence Project workshop program!

When you support to AVP California, you make a real difference...

- By decreasing the crime possibilities in your community
- By stopping the cycle of crime with the parents who are incarcerated
- By making prisons safer for correctional staff
- By saving money for the prison system

Select your level of commitment:

- ___ \$35 – Felt pens, masking tape and flip charts for one AVP workshop
- ___ \$50 – Three sets of Tinker Toys for an AVP Kit
- ___ \$60 – Sponsor one scholarship for community workshop
- ___ \$75 – Manuals for a Training-for-Facilitators workshop
- ___ \$175 – A complete workshop kit in a container for carrying, includes re-fill for two workshops
- ___ \$400 – Travel /lodging costs for one facilitator to train local AVP facilitators
- ___ \$2000- Sponsor an initial Basic workshop
- ___ \$15,000 – Sponsor one year of launching AVP community-prison workshop partnership in your town (8 workshops with outside facilitators training local teams to carry on in the following years)

And possibly you can donate some thing that can help reduce the costs:

- ___ Snacks for a community workshop
- ___ Saturday dinner for community workshop attendees
- ___ Motel overnights for visiting facilitators
- ___ Meals for visiting facilitators
- ___ Promotion of community workshop
- ___ Materials for workshops (office supplies, felt pens, flip charts)
- ___ Copying of handout and promotional material
- ___ Meeting space
- ___ Sponsor an AVP program in your community under your non-profit status

Support Alternatives to Violence Project - California,

a time-tested, proven program to reduce crime in California

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____

Email: _____

___ I want to take a workshop

Send to AVP California; P.O. Box 3294, Santa Barbara, CA 93130 or call 805/682-3277

