

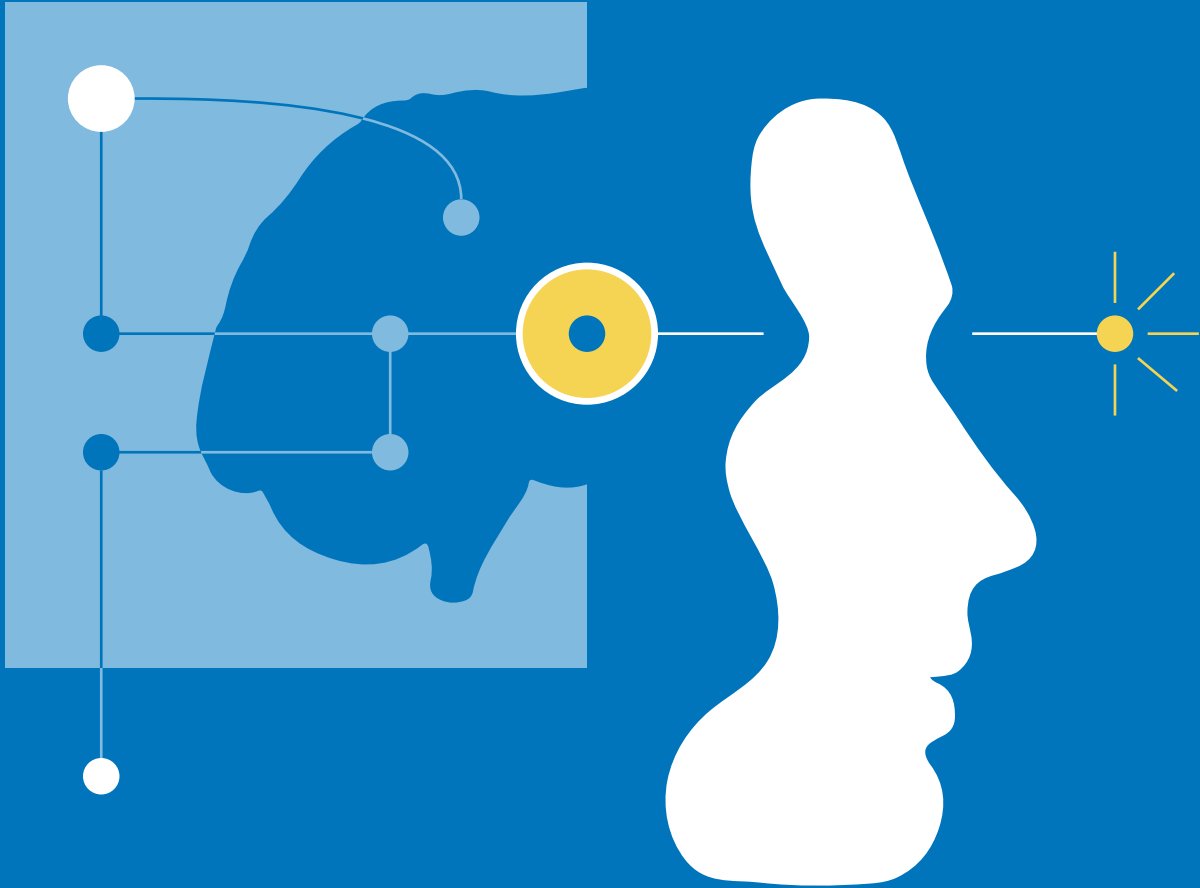
IACFP Bulletin

RESEARCH
PRACTICE
POLICY



from The International Association for Correctional and Forensic Psychology

NOV / DEC 2023



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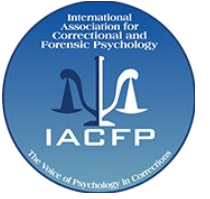
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WHO WE ARE

The International Association for Correctional and Forensic Psychology (IACFP)



The International Association for Correctional and Forensic Psychology (IACFP) is an organization of behavioral scientists and practitioners who are concerned with the delivery of high-quality mental health services to justice-involved individuals, and with promoting and disseminating research on the etiology, prevention, assessment, and treatment of criminal behavior.

IACFP members are not all psychologists and are not all active in the practice of forensic evaluations or correctional mental health. However, they typically have advanced degrees in behavioral sciences and engage in the administration, practice, teaching or research relating to incarcerated populations and those under community supervision. We have been promoting evidence-based and practitioner-informed practices and research to support correctional and forensic psychologists and other helping professionals who work with justice-involved individuals since 1954. Our goals are to:

- Promote the development of psychological practice in criminal justice and law enforcement settings.
- Contribute toward appropriate teaching of the psychology of crime, delinquency and criminal justice.
- Support the development and application of effective treatment approaches for individuals in the care of the criminal justice system.
- Stimulate research into the nature of criminal behavior, to exchange such scientific information, and to publish the reports of scholarly studies of criminal behavior.
- Concern ourselves with relevant public, professional and institutional issues which affect or are affected by the practice of psychology in the criminal justice system.

Our current areas of focus for funded projects are:

- Professional development
- International practice and an international leadership network, and
- Community corrections.

We are now accepting submissions.

The *IACFP Bulletin* has six issues per year, and is now accepting submissions. To inquire how to submit, please email executivedirectoriacfp@gmail.com with your proposed article topic.

Transformative Lessons from a Small-Scale, Community-Embedded Youth Justice Remand Facility

KAYLA KIRSHENBAUM / NOV 2023

Background

The development and evaluation of a small-scale, community-embedded youth justice remand facility in the Netherlands have yielded transformative lessons. This approach, designed for a diverse youth population, aligns with a graduated justice system, balancing developmental needs with security. Over three years of action research, key insights emerged, reshaping traditional notions of juvenile justice. The article also underscores the imperative for youth justice settings to shift towards safe and therapeutic environments that cater to the specific needs of young individuals. The prevalent existing models are criticized for prioritizing security at the expense of care, ultimately impeding positive development. The three-year evaluation in the Netherlands focuses on small-scale, community-embedded facilities with an emphasis on relational security. The objective is to provide guidance for professionals and policymakers interested in effective youth justice strategies.

Shift in Placement Criteria

Initially, professionals favored placing first or second-time offenders in the facility. However, a pivotal shift occurred during the pilot, emphasizing that offense history alone does not gauge a young person's current motivation for positive change. The focus shifted from rigid criteria to a nuanced understanding of individual circumstances.

Trial and Error Learning

A critical realization was the importance of allowing young people to learn through trial and error. Each placement was treated as a unique situation, emphasizing the dynamic nature of a young person's journey toward rehabilitation. This adaptive approach recognized the evolving needs and motivations of the youth. As the pilot progressed, professionals also de-emphasized the severity of alleged offenses. They contended that offense circumstances, such as motive and provocations, were more indicative of a young person's suitability for placement than a rigid severity scale. This shift highlighted the need for a holistic evaluation.

Reevaluation of Substance Abuse and IQ Criteria

Initially considered strict contraindications, substance abuse and low IQ were later weighed against other criteria. The emerging approach emphasized the importance of balancing these factors with a comprehensive understanding of the individual, challenging preconceived notions of exclusionary criteria.

Active Involvement of Young People and Their Network

Recognizing the limitations of assessing a young person solely based on a case file, active involvement of the youth and their network became imperative. This

7 Key Operational Elements in Youth Justice Facilities



approach ensured a more comprehensive understanding of a young person's current volitional state, attitudes, and feelings, fostering a more holistic rehabilitation process.

Small-Scale and Tailored Approach

The facility's design, featuring a small scale with eight beds, allowed for a personalized approach. Staff could identify and understand each young person's unique risks, needs, skills, and strengths, tailoring trajectories accordingly. This emphasis on customization underscored the importance of individualized care in juvenile rehabilitation.

Relational Security

At the heart of the security framework was relational security, emphasizing relationships between staff and young people. A basic attitude of connection and attunement, constructive collaboration, and physical

presence of professionals were identified as key components. This relational approach aimed to create a safe and therapeutic environment. The facility's integration into the community also proved crucial. Its location near each young person's home environment and collaboration with local resources maintained connections to school, work, and other community activities during confinement. This community-embedded approach aimed to bridge the gap between incarceration and societal reintegration.

Integrated and Multidisciplinary Approach

Adopting an integrated, multidisciplinary approach to assessment, treatment planning, and service delivery, the facility ensured continuity beyond the period of incarceration. Collaboration with external professional stakeholders post-release became integral, recognizing the importance of a seamless transition back into society.

[This article] emphasizes that fostering a safe, supportive environment, grounded in relationships, can be pivotal in guiding young individuals towards positive, lasting change.

Active Collaboration with Young People and Their Support Network

The principle of active collaboration involved young people and their support networks in intervention planning and service delivery. This tailored approach considered the perspectives of young people and their caregivers, emphasizing the need for their input throughout the confinement period. The collaboration aimed to reduce risks and strengthen protective factors.

Selection, Guidance, and Supervision of Staff

Staff selection prioritized skills over professional qualifications, particularly the ability to genuinely connect with young people. Continuous reflection and weekly supervision sessions, combined with transformational leadership, contributed to a positive work climate and high job satisfaction. This emphasis on staff support recognized the pivotal role they play in creating a safe and therapeutic environment.

Conclusion

The article concludes by highlighting the positive outcomes and wide support for the Amsterdam facility in the Netherlands, emphasizing reduced recidivism and promoting positive youth development. The authors aim to contribute to the knowledge about implementing viable custodial alternatives for young people and provide lessons learned for replication in different contexts. By challenging traditional paradigms, this article argues that considering different models offers valuable insights for policymakers, practitioners, and stakeholders involved in shaping the future of youth justice systems worldwide. It emphasizes that fostering a safe, supportive environment, grounded in relationships, can be pivotal in guiding young individuals towards positive, lasting change.

Source

[The Prison Journal 2023, Vol. 103\(5\) 679–701](#)

Navigating the Intersection of AI in Mental Healthcare

KAYLA KIRSHENBAUM / NOV 2023

Background

In the article *Is AI the Future of Mental Healthcare?*, authors Francesca Minerva and Alberto Giubilini explore the potential integration of artificial intelligence (AI) into mental healthcare. The article explores and unpacks the following key findings:

- AI's Diagnostic Capabilities
- Cost-Effective Healthcare Assistance
- Concerns of Dehumanization
- Human Dimension of Therapy
- Inefficiencies in Traditional Mental Health Care
- Genetic Influences on Treatment Response
- Bias in Healthcare Practitioners
- Ethical-Philosophical Considerations

Shift in Placement Criteria

Minerva and Giubilini begin their exploration by highlighting AI's increasing role across various professional domains, including recent applications in education, the judicial system, and entertainment. The focus then shifts to healthcare, emphasizing AI's superior diagnostic capabilities due to its capacity to learn from extensive datasets and identify patterns, addressing the growing demand for cost-effective healthcare assistance.

While recognizing the benefits of AI in addressing mental health challenges, the article raises concerns about potential dehumanization if machines replace human practitioners, particularly in areas where empathy and

trust are crucial. Despite AI's ability to excel in certain medical tasks, the authors argue that the human dimension of therapy, including empathy, may be irreplaceable, prompting ethical considerations regarding the balance between AI benefits and the preservation of essential human aspects in mental healthcare delivery.

Traditional Healthcare

The article continues by delving into the inefficiencies of traditional mental health care, citing instances where treatments, such as antidepressants, are marginally more effective than placebos. The authors propose that genetic differences influencing individuals' responses to antidepressants could be addressed by AI, which could match patients with the most effective therapy based on genetic information. AI's potential in predicting suicide attempts is also highlighted, showcasing higher accuracy compared to psychiatrists using large datasets and social media tracking.

The article underscores biases present in healthcare practitioners, suggesting that AI could provide impartial and objective diagnoses, although acknowledging AI's potential biases. Ethical-philosophical considerations are raised regarding the categorization of mental health disorders, questioning whether AI's fine-grained information might challenge or alter existing diagnostic categories. This prompts discussions about new responsibilities for mental health professionals in redefining mental disorder categories based on AI-generated data.

Potential Integrations of Artificial Intelligence (AI) into Mental Healthcare



AI's Diagnostic Capabilities



Cost-Effective Healthcare Assistance



Concerns of Dehumanization



Inefficiencies in Traditional Mental Health Care



Human Dimension of Therapy



Genetic Influences on Treatment Response



Bias in Healthcare Practitioners



Ethical-Philosophical Considerations

Conclusion

The conclusion that Minerva and Giubilini stress at the end of their findings is that the adoption of AI in mental healthcare requires careful consideration of empirical evidence regarding its benefits and drawbacks. Potential scenarios include AI significantly improving patient outcomes, proving useful but with notable downsides, collaborating with healthcare practitioners, or being less cost-effective than anticipated. The article underscores the need for ongoing evaluation based on evidence and outcomes and acknowledges the essential role of human involvement in healthcare.

Source

Minerva F, Giubilini A. Is AI the Future of Mental Healthcare? *Topoi* (Dordr). 2023 May 31;42(3):1-9. doi: 10.1007/s11245-023-09932-3. Epub ahead of print. PMID: 37361723; PMCID: PMC10230127. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC10230127/>

IACFP International Correctional Mental Health Leadership Network

CHERYLN TOWNSEND / DEC 2023

The IACFP International Correctional Mental Health Leadership Network (IACFP Leadership Network) was established in 2019. Its purpose was to:

- Provide a forum for leaders of correctional and forensic mental health:
- Learn about correctional mental health delivery systems around the world
- Collaborate in arriving at a set of principles for improving care for mentally ill offenders, both inside and outside of prison
- Promote ways to expand and to share the applied research literature on correctional mental health and

- Improve on the professional development of both licensed mental health practitioners and line staff (direct-care providers).

Since the inaugural in-person meeting in Boston, MA, the group has met virtually every quarter, has grown to thirty-two members, and represents fifteen countries, eight states and three provinces. They have continued to learn about the correctional and forensic mental health delivery systems of their jurisdictions, share ideas and research on innovation, and engage in dialogue about the challenges and opportunities that they face as leaders in this field.





Dr. Judy HUI

“I thought that I knew what others did; that has now been disproved.”

– CONFERENCE PARTICIPANT

In October 2023, the second in-person meeting of the IACFP Leadership Network was held in Ghent, Belgium. Eight members of the IACFP Board participated in the meeting since they held a board meeting the day before. The agenda was filled with information exchange, a tour of FPC Ghent, a presentation on, “Application of Modern Technology in Psychological Intervention: Hong Kong Experience” by Dr. Judy HUI, a dialogue about the role of technology in correctional and forensic mental health delivery systems, and a spirited discussion on staff recruitment and retention.

During the two days of the IACFP Leadership Network meeting, individuals had the opportunity to get to know other leaders and the systems they represent. As one participant said, “I thought that I knew what others did; that has now been disproved”. All participants introduced themselves and shared three challenges they face in their lives, as well as their expectations for the meeting. The recurring themes identified as challenges for participants were:

- Recruitment and retention of staff
- The role of psychological services in establishing, changing, and sustaining healthy organizational cultures
- Fragmented systems
- Number of incarcerated individuals
- Complexity of mental health issues, substance use and traumatic brain injury
- Funding
- Outsourcing

There was also time for each of the eleven countries represented to be presented in terms of scope of jurisdiction, programs that are particularly effective, challenges being faced, strategies to support improved outcomes and plans for the future. The participants found this very informative, supportive, and had rich source material to take home.

The presentation by Dr. Judy HUI was outstanding. She shared the experience that the Hong Kong Correctional Services Department had with the use of Virtual Reality (VR), digitized psychological interventions, and telepsychology.



Dr. HUI first shared some of the research that her team relied upon before developing any of the interventions. She then described the process that was used to develop the use of VR and the scenario-based VR role play system. They learned from each version and applied those learned outcomes to enhance it in the next version. They have utilized this tool in group treatment, specifically with anger management and relapse prevention skills. One of the interesting benefits of this approach is that by engaging younger staff in the development of this tool, retention has increased significantly.

Dr. HUI shared the following reflections with the IACFP Leadership Network Group:

- VR is very immersive and helps skills practice
- It provides a realistic yet safe environment
- Simulating situations can be difficult/expensive
- Therapists can provide immediate feedback
- Persons in custody are enthusiastic about the tool and are more engaged

- There is a significant monetary cost for development, including human resources
- Cybersickness
- Therapists may need additional training to expertly use this tool

As Hong Kong has developed its digitized psychological interventions, they have found it has four functions. It is useful for psychological testing, psychoeducational programs such as mindfulness and coping with depression, exercises to induce behavioral changes, and as an incentive zone.

The main key to successful use of telepsychology is that the first few individual sessions must be in-person.

In discussing their conclusions, Dr. HUI shared the following:

- The application of IT is inevitable.
- Research shows that it can enhance treatment (as a supplementary tool).

- There must be an integration of the human aspect with IT.
- Additional factors for consideration:
 - Cost
 - Learning mode, e.g., age and feedback from participants
 - Room for further extension to other types of clinical problems
 - Training needs for therapists
 - Ethical and regulatory principles and international standards

On the last point, the IACFP International Network also read, in advance of the meeting, “Is AI the Future of Mental Healthcare” by Francesca Minerva and Alberto

Glubilini, recently published in *Topoi*. The combination of this article and Dr. HUI’s presentation provided the foundation for a rich dialogue among the network participants.

The next steps for the IACFP Leadership Network are to plan a quarterly calendar of meetings for 2024 based on the input provided by the participants. In addition, the IACFP Board will be incorporating their input into a plan for additional steps that can be taken to support the Network, particularly in the area of technology and professional development.

IACFP International News, Research, and Resources for Nov/Dec 2023

CHERYLN TOWNSEND / DEC 2023

We’ve compiled top highlights from recent research, policy, and practice resources across the world for our latest IACFP International News summary. Our topics for November and December, 2023 include recent research; policy updates; considerations for practice; and upcoming conferences.

1 IACFP Updates

New Board Members

Please join us in welcoming Joel Dvoskin (United States) and Jessica Borg (New Zealand), new at-large IACFP board members. They will begin their 3-year terms of board service 1 January 2024.



Joel A. Dvoskin, Ph.D., ABPP, currently serves as Assistant Professor (Clinical) University of Arizona College of Medicine, Independent Monitor of selected systems, co-founder and Partner, Heroes Active

Bystandership Training, Consultant, Training Instructor and Psychologist, Project ABLE (Active Bystandership for Law Enforcement), and a private practice in forensic psychology. All this if after a significant career leading forensic services’ systems in New York, Virginia, and Arizona. Joel’s honors include Diplomate in Forensic Psychology, American Board of Professional Psychology; Fellow American Psychological Association; and Fellow, American Psychology-Law Society.



Jessica Borg currently serves as the Chief Psychologist/General Manager Psychology & Programmes at Ara Poutama/Department of Corrections. As the Chief Psychologist, she has

strategic responsibility for the design, development, implementation and monitoring of psychological services and rehabilitation programmes and interventions.

Jessica has worked for Corrections for 15 years holding both frontline and National Office roles as a Senior Clinical Psychologist. Prior to joining the Department of Corrections, Jessica worked for the Waikato District Health Board in Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services. Jessica has a special interest in the human rights field and prior to becoming a psychologist she completed a MA in Human Rights sponsored by the European Union.

Criminal Justice and Behavior Leadership Changes

As 2023 draws to a close, IACFP would like to recognize **Jaime S. Henderson, Ph.D., Managing Director of *Criminal Justice and Behavior***. Professionally, Dr. Henderson serves as Director of Data Science and Research for The Innocence Project. Jaime’s leadership and involvement with *CJB* spans nearly twenty years. For the last nine years, she has served as Managing Editor; prior to that she served for ten years on the Editorial Board and before that as an Editorial Assistant.

As Jaime steps back from her leadership role at *CJB*, it is important to note that all the *CJB* Editors-in-Chief and SAGE editors and production staff she has worked with sing Jaime's praises. And, the authors of articles published in *CJB* have often written her notes of thanks for making their research and writing better than it was before her feedback and magic touch. Jaime has provided steady and gifted leadership to *CJB* during her tenure as Managing Director. The IACFP Board applauds her work!

Dr. Mark Olver's current term as **Editor-in-Chief of *Criminal Justice and Behavior*** will be end December 31, 2023. IACFP is grateful to Mark for the leadership he provided to *CJB* during a time of transition and for his previous work as an Associate Editor of *CJB*. He did an outstanding job! Mark Olver, Ph.D. is a registered doctoral psychologist with the Saskatchewan College of Psychologists and Associate Professor in the Department of Psychology at the University of Saskatchewan. He will continue his academic responsibilities and areas of research interests as he leaves *CJB*. And, he will continue to nurture his sweet daughter!

We hope that Jaime and Mark will continue to be involved with *CJB* in less demanding roles.

2 Research

Criminological Highlights

The September 2023 issue of *Criminological Highlights*, Vol. 21, Number 1, is available [here](#). It is published by the Centre for Criminological and Sociological Studies at the University of Toronto.

This issue of *Criminological Highlights* addresses the following questions:

1. [Is morality in our society really declining?](#)

2. [What businesses increase firearms homicides?](#)
3. [Do mothers who were incarcerated neglect their children's education?](#)
4. [Why are Black defendants less likely to get pretrial release?](#)
5. [What if police strength in a community changes?](#)
6. [Does skin darkness make a difference for people other than Blacks charged with offences?](#)
7. [Does climate change contribute to crime?](#)
8. [Do body worn cameras improve the reputation of police?](#)

This issue highlights a wide range of issues, including morality, climate change, mothers who are incarcerated, skin darkness bias, and policing. *IACFP Bulletin* readers will find them interesting and well-written summaries.

Advancing Corrections Journal-Issue 16 (2023)



The most recent issue of *Advancing Corrections Journal*, published by the International Corrections and Prison Association, focuses on "Reforming Corrections Through Technology".

The articles in this journal will be of great interest to readers of the

IACFP Bulletin. They provide summaries of research on implementation, guides to decision making about technology and its role in correctional systems, ways in which systems have applied technology to improve safety, security, service delivery, outcomes, and reintegration. Technology is not just for improving efficiency! While we often talk about human rights in corrections, this journal

issue also explores individual's digital rights. It expands our view of what it means to reform corrections. It is highly recommended!

3 Policy and Practice

IACFP is the founder of IACFP Europe, a public interest foundation in Belgium. IACFP Europe has been a partner in the REEDU Project, an inclusive approach to inmate social rehabilitation and education, since 2020. The project coordinator is CIK Trebnje; project partners are University of Malta, Association of the Centres for Social Work of Slovenia, Bremen Senate of Justice and Constitution, Nemčija, and Baia Mare Penitentiary, Romunija.

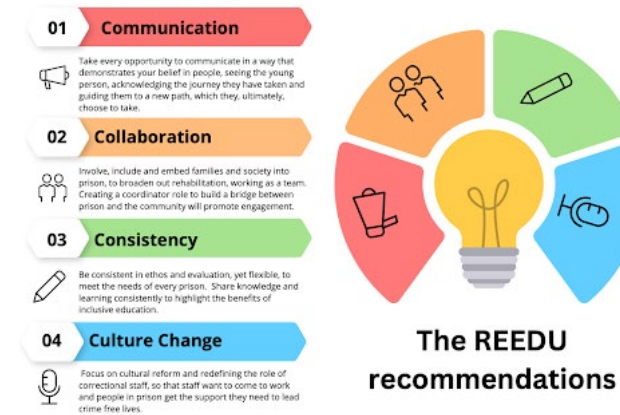


The final conference for this project was recently held at Rimsek-Terme in Slovenia. Cherie Townsend, Executive Director, IACFP Europe and IACFP, presented on one of the project's work products, i.e., "Guidelines for Implementing a Project Based Learning Approach with Systemic Practice and Positive Criminology to Education



and Rehabilitation". Access to the "Guidelines" can be found by accessing this QR code. Dr. Sarah Lewis and Ruth McFarlane were also involved in the presentation.

IACFP Europe worked with Rhianon Williams from Bremen Senate of Justice and Constitution to develop the policy recommendations of the project. They are illustrated here:

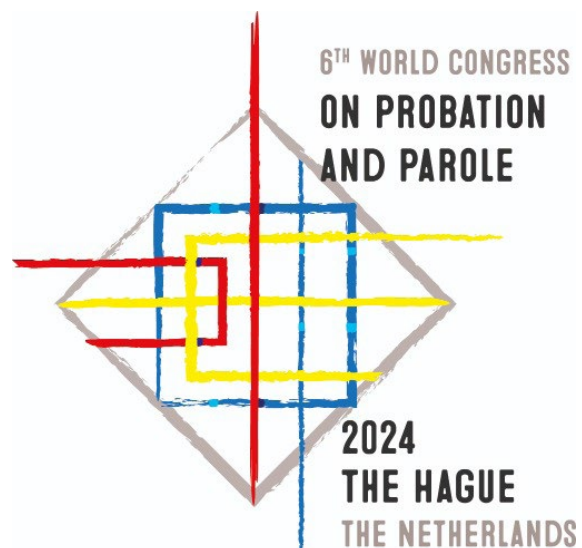


4 Upcoming Conferences



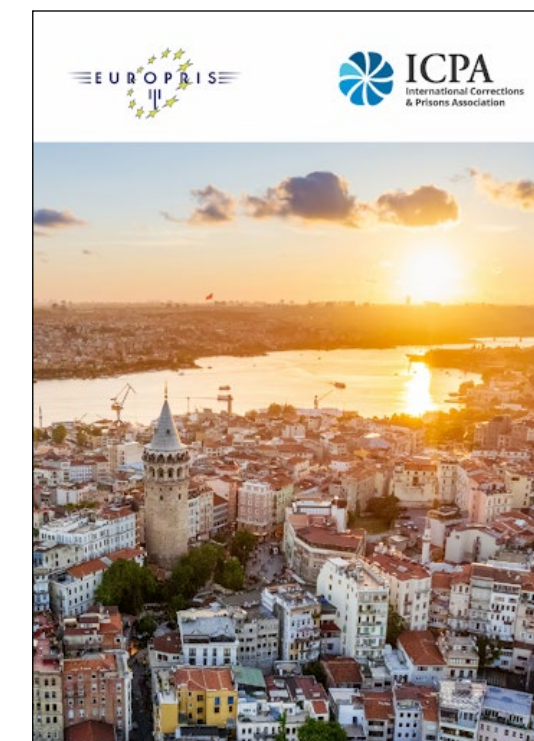
American Correctional Association (ACA) Winter Conference, January 4-7, 2024

Additional information on ACA's winter conference can be found at www.aca.org.



6th World Congress on Probation and Parole, April 16-18, 2024

The Netherlands will host the 6th World Congress on Probation and Parole in The Hague. Reclassering NL invite interested parties to a varied and inspiring congress on the theme 'The future of probation and parole': how do we see and utilize probation and parole in different settings and developments? What can we learn from the past? And what can we learn from each other? More information can be found [here](#).



Technology in Corrections (TIC), April 21-24, 2024

More information can be found [here](#).



Spring Conference on Correctional Health Care, April 27, 2024

More information will be available soon at [this link](#).

Schedule of Events

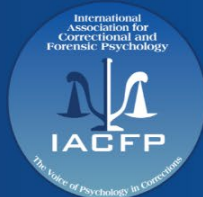
Saturday, April 27 – Preconference seminars

Sunday, April 28 – Preconference seminars, CCHP exams, Exhibit hall opening reception

Monday -Tuesday, April 29-30 – Conference Sessions, Exhibit Hall



Happy Holidays



International Association for Correctional and Forensic Psychology (IACFP)

Promoting evidence-based and practitioner-informed practices and research to support correctional and forensic psychologists and other helping professionals who work with justice-involved individuals since 1954.

Learn more about IACFP or become a member at www.myiacfp.org.