

### DRUG TREATMENT COURTS - ON THE RIGHT TRACK!

**New headlines from across Canada and abroad tell the same story:**

*Drug court provides way out (Winnipeg Free Press)*

*Drug treatment court truly inspires (Oshawa Express)*

*Drug court signals end to an addiction (Calgary Sun)*

*Drug Courts: "the best way to keep drug offenders from returning to prison" (The Economist)*

*Mom buoyed as addict son climbs back (Toronto Star)*

*Success of Drug Treatment Court touted (Calgary Herald)*

*From Life on the Streets to the Road to Recovery (Ottawa Citizen)*

This newsletter is dedicated to the many Drug Treatment Court alumni across Canada who had the courage to change their lives. Read their stories of hope, courage and inspiration. Stories where Drug Treatment Courts have saved lives, eradicated drug use, stopped crime, reunited families and restored members of society.

In this edition, we also feature evidence-based findings that Drug Treatment Courts reduce crime and drug use while saving tax dollars, increasing public safety and restoring lives and families.

Extensive research and evaluation has demonstrated that Drug Treatment Courts which adhere to the core principles of the Drug Treatment Court method have successful outcomes five times those of Drug Treatment Courts that fail to adhere to these principles.

To this end, it is the CADTCP's objective to seek the assistance of government to establish a national training program to develop and provide ongoing training opportunities for problem-solving court practitioners across Canada. CADTCP continues to provide training and conference opportunities in Canada and abroad. The next scheduled conference will be international in scope and broaden its focus to include other problem-solving courts. (See page 3).

Drug Treatment Courts are part of a global problem-solving court effort, which is working diligently towards finding effective solutions in circumstances where criminal conduct arises as a result of underlying social, medical or psychological problems. These courts have demonstrated significant results and we continue to develop innovative strategies aimed at rehabilitation without compromising public safety. The evidence-based results and inspiring personal accounts of DTC participants tell us that we are on the right track, but there is still work to be done. Sustained support from all sectors is required to ensure that DTC and Problem-Solving Court practitioners continue to make significant strides towards achieving this objective. As 2011 draws to a close Canada's Drug Treatment Courts are still unsure whether they will continue to receive the resources necessary to enable them to operate beyond March 2012. As these courts continue to carry out the important work of increasing public safety, such sustained and long term support is crucial.

*Honourable Justice K. Barnes, CADTCP President*

CADTCP supports ongoing practitioner-focussed discussion forums, national alumni discussion and support forums, periodic newsletters, evaluation results, and other DTC and Problem-Solving Court news.

Point your browser to [www.cadtc.org](http://www.cadtc.org) for additional details.



### IN THIS ISSUE...

- **Message from the CADTCP President**
- **Canadian DTCs by the Numbers**
- **International Conference on Problem-Solving Courts**
- **Ottawa Drug Treatment Court, Cost and Quality**
- **Solution-Focused Judging Bench Book**
- **Camping Trip for EDTCRC**
- **Alumni Stories**
- **The multi-site adult drug court evaluation**

## Canadian DTCs by the Numbers

*In this edition of the CADTCP Newsletter, we include a selection of interesting, informative facts collected by Canadian DTCs. That Drug Treatment Courts change lives and improve our communities is evident. We look forward to an exciting future as best and promising practices continue to emerge.*



### DTC – an option of last resort:

- As many as 90% of DTC participants have a lengthy history of prior convictions; for example, in one Western Canadian DTC, participants had an average of 24 prior convictions.
- Up to 70% of DTC clients suffer from depression or anxiety disorders, as well as their addiction, with many also having PTSD symptoms and acute or chronic health needs.
- In some jurisdictions, up to 95% of participants are unemployed upon entering the program, with 22% of participants reporting criminal activity as their sole source of income.
- In some courts, 75% of participants had unsuccessful treatment experiences prior to entering DTC.
- 86% or more of DTC participants began using drugs before their 18th birthday, with some starting as young as age 12.



## Once again a productive member of society

Without the help of drug court, I would still be stuck in the cycle of addiction, homelessness and in and out of jail. Through the program, I was given the counseling I needed to overcome my childhood traumas that lead up to my dependence on substances. Drug Treatment Court gave me the opportunity to heal in a safe environment until I was able to move out on my own. I was also reunited with my family after 12 years who, at the end of my addiction, was sure that the next time they saw me would be to identify my body. Now, we have a positive relationship and I am once again a productive member of society. Currently, I am following my dreams of helping other addicts achieve sobriety by working in a women's treatment centre.

Since my graduation, Drug Treatment Court has given me ongoing support through their aftercare program. It is a safe place to come and talk whenever I feel I need to reach out for help.

*Tamara B.*

## It's changed my life

Getting into this program saved my life. This program got me away from coke, which I thought I'd never be able to do. The program's awesome: really, it's changed my life.

*DTC Alumni*

## I'm not just a low-life thug

For the last 18 years, I have been addicted to crystal meth and spent 8 of those years in jail - if I wasn't in jail, the cops were always looking for me. In the last year, I started setting goals and for the first time in my life, I finished goals - I did this sober. I got off the medication, I got a job, I started apprenticing in roofing, I got my driver's license. I'm not just a low-life thug - I feel proud of myself and that's the greatest feeling.

*C.B.*

Community restoration means that I'm paying back to society what I once took. I've taken from society for many years and now I can give back and be active in my community. I can be happy knowing that I'm no longer destroying people, places or things in my community.

*DTC Alumni*

# INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON PROBLEM-SOLVING COURTS

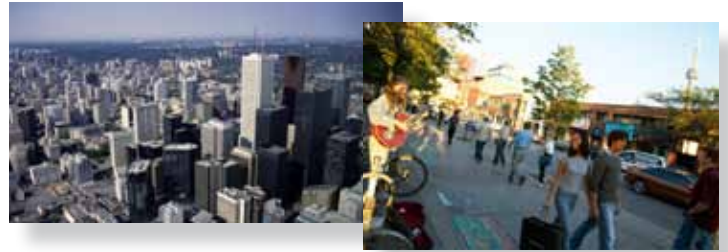
The CADTCP is pleased to announce its 4th International Training Conference at the Sheraton Hotel, Toronto, Ontario from February 29th to March 2nd, 2012. This year, the scope will be expanded to include other Problem-Solving Courts and Innovative Approaches to Justice.



This is Canada's most comprehensive multidisciplinary conference on Problem-Solving Courts and Innovative approaches to justice.

The conference will feature national and international experts who will discuss innovative approaches to justice and treatment including the composition, method of operation, challenges, best practices and outcomes in Problem-Solving Courts such as Drug Treatment, Mental Health, Gambling Treatment, Homelessness, Aboriginal Programs, Youth Courts, Gang Violence, Domestic Violence and Community Courts.

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## **Register today – space is limited!**

For further information on the conference, visit the conference website at [www.CADTCPconference.com](http://www.CADTCPconference.com)

- ✓ Over 40 training sessions
- ✓ Highlighting: Drug Treatment Courts, Mental Health Courts, Innovative Programs and Youth Intervention Strategies
- ✓ Network with over 350 Canadian and International professionals
- ✓ Follow the CADTCP Conference on Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn

## **Cost and Quality of Access to Justice: Ottawa Drug Treatment Court**

The Research and Statistics Division of Justice Canada is currently conducting a research study in cooperation with the Ottawa Drug Treatment Court and the Rideauwood Treatment Centre to examine the experiences of Ottawa Drug Treatment Court participants.

The purpose of this study is to identify whether participant success is related to their positive experiences with the program, understood in terms of the language of justice – basically participant's perceptions of fair process and just outcome. Consistent with the client-centered approach and therapeutic justice foundation of DTC, the research examines the Ottawa DTC participant's point of view from an access to criminal justice perspective - an approach emphasizing that justice and access to justice must be viewed from the perspective of the individual who has experienced the problem and who is experiencing the process to resolve it.

The study is using a model for studying access to justice developed by researchers at the University of Tilburg in The Netherlands and modified by Justice Canada researchers for use in the drug treatment court. The model is organized in terms of three broad factors: the cost of justice, the quality of the process and the quality of the outcome. The cost of justice largely reflects intangible and opportunity costs, since direct

costs are borne by the state. The quality of the process and of the outcome is measured in terms of individual perceptions of the fairness of the process and of the outcomes. These are measured on several dimensions of access to justice: restorative justice, informational justice, retributive justice and transformative justice. Specific indicators within each of these three factors measure the individual's perception of the DTC program.



Both file and interview data will be gathered for this study. Drug Treatment Court participants will be interviewed up to four times, at different stages of their experience with the program. Former DTC participants who successfully completed the program or withdrew from the program between January 2010 and June 2011 are also eligible to participate in the study and are required to participate in just one face to face interview.

Data collection for this study began in June of this year and will continue until June of 2012. As of August, 20 participants have completed the baseline interview and 5 participants have completed their first follow-up interview. The final report of this study is expected to be completed in the fall of 2012.

Menaka Raguparan and Ab Currie  
*Research and Statistics Division*  
*Justice Canada*

## Canadian DTCs by the Numbers

### DTC is not an easier, softer way:

- DTCs provide intensive treatment services, case management and judicial supervision.
- DTC participants are released with a strict set of bail conditions, which include rules for curfew, living arrangements and limitations on people and places. In many cases, participants are subject to these conditions for a much longer period of time than their sentence would have been if they had not entered the program.
- Every week, DTC participants are required to attend court for 9-12 months or more.
- Residential treatment programs can last from 30 days to 6 months; some DTC programs provide 700 hours or more of outpatient treatment.
- DTC requires participants to provide random urine drug tests at least once or twice per week.
- To graduate, participants must: have an extended period of abstinence; have no new criminal charges; have stable housing; and be involved in pro-social activity such as employment, education or volunteer work.



## Solution-Focused Judging Bench Book

In Melbourne, Australia, the Chief Justice of Victoria, Marilyn Warren, launched a new bench book to aid Judges and Magistrates to apply therapeutic jurisprudence principles in problem-solving courts as well as in mainstream lists. Amongst other things, Her Honour spoke of its potential to effect cultural change within the judicial system.

The bench book notes the association between certain mental disorders and substance abuse and that these individuals are particularly vulnerable to alienation from the court process and the legal profession. Noted is that by engaging in dialogue with participants, courts can assist participants to acquire a clearer understanding of their thoughts, feelings and motivation in relation to their legal problem and its underlying issues, and harness participants' problem-solving skills to address them. The use of appropriate manner of speech, language selection, body language and listening skills is important in the solution-focused judging process.

The bench book highlights the need to formulate appropriate judging strategies according to the needs of each case. These strategies include having high expectations; supporting self-efficacy, goal and strategy setting; behavioural contracts; persuasion techniques; and motivational interviewing processes. In taking a solution-focused approach, courts should, as far as possible, avoid a confrontational, paternalistic



or coercive approach. The bench book also encourages the application of general therapeutic principles such as promoting voice, validation and respect in judging generally. Also noted is that a more comprehensive solution-focused approach involving judicial supervision may be appropriate in contexts outside designated problem-solving courts if there are underlying issues associated with the legal problem.

The bench book concludes that by reason of the unique nature of solution-focused judging, there will be professional and personal challenges in adopting this approach, many of which will differ from those experienced in a conventional approach to judging. At the same time, solution-focused judging offers opportunities for job satisfaction not available to those taking a conventional judging approach.

To view the bench book visit the Australian Institute of Judicial Administration at [AIJA.org.au](http://AIJA.org.au) and click on the "AIJA Publications" tab.

It's a known fact: if it weren't for this program, I'd either be locked up for a really long time – and wouldn't have learned anything – or I'd be in a grave.

*DTC Alumni*



## Camping Trip for EDTCRC

From August 5th to the 7th, the Edmonton Drug Treatment and Community Restoration Court (EDTCRC) alumni put on a camping weekend at Miquelon Lake near Edmonton. Through donations received by various individuals, tents and sleeping bags were purchased for all who needed them. About 60 participants, alumni and their family, along with the treatment team attended this function. With the exception of an extended downpour on Saturday night, it was a great weekend. For some, it was their very first camping trip! It was a chance for alumni to bond and share their experiences with current participants while enjoying the beautiful surroundings. Participants enjoyed swimming, playing volleyball, hiking, fishing and eating smores by the fire, but mostly everyone just hung out and enjoyed each other's company.

Thanks to all those who organized and participated in the weekend!



## Progress - not perfection

My life growing up was wonderful – loving family and great friends. At age 17, I started dabbling with mild drugs and alcohol. By age 29, from the outside looking in, my life appeared to be intact. I had just graduated from college with distinction and acquired a promising career in the oil patch as a legal surveyor - wife, kids, house, and even a dog. But, on the inside, I was a mess on all fronts. My dabbling with drugs had turned into daily abuse. I was an emotional wreck. The guilt and shame of being a closet crack user was tearing me apart, not to mention the thousands of dollars I was spending to maintain my habit. My life went from a downward spiral to an outright free fall. I had finally lost my wife, kids, house, career and even the dog. The only thing that still remained, stronger than ever, was my addiction. At this point I didn't use to feel good; I had to use to stop feeling bad.

I recall my darkest hour, Christmas Eve 2008; I was in a urine-filled stairwell, struggling to stay warm with other addicts. The sad part isn't the geography in this scenario, but the fact that I had completely turned my back on my friends and family reaching out to me to a point where sleeping in a stairwell had become normal. With criminal activity as my only means to fund my addiction, it was only a matter of time before I was arrested and facing federal time. I thank God today that I was. That day, I hit my bottom hard enough to promote change. Drug Treatment Court was the start of many new and positive events to come.

Of course, while in the program, there were many ups and downs. As an addict, I've learned to be proud of "progress – not perfection." As long as I could learn from my mistakes, and move forward from them, Drug Treatment Court was there to support

me every step of the way. My Graduation in July 2010 was an epic event, not only for me, but my family and friends as well. They finally had the person they know and love back in their lives.

Today, I am a Drug Treatment Court Alumni and a father my children can be proud of. This of course doesn't mean I'm "fixed" and yes, life still has its challenges. Drug Treatment Court has given me the opportunity to seek out support when times are tough and to live life on life's terms. As bad as it does get, and it DOES get bad from time to time, today is still far better than my best day in that old life! Thank you Drug Treatment Court for saving mine!

*Ryan P.*

## Beaten down, worn out

I came into DTC completely beaten up, beaten down, worn out, tired and in general, a complete mess in every way. I had distanced myself from anybody that loved or cared for me and had no trust for anybody. The drugs ruled me! Because of my drug addiction, I missed out on so many family celebrations, including Christmas, my younger brother's high school graduation and even my own birthdays. I also missed out on family vacations. Those years are gone forever but I will do my best to enjoy every precious moment from here on in. I have relearned how to enjoy life without drugs; realized how much of my life drugs stole from me and learned what I have to do so that drugs will never regain control over me.

*B.P.*

## Canadian DTCs by the Numbers

### DTC reduces substance use and crime:

- A western Canadian DTC tracked participants for up to 18 months after graduation; over half had remained entirely crime free.
- Providing criminogenic treatment in DTC helps clients change their criminal thinking patterns and can reduce recidivism by 70%.
- A DTC in Ontario found that, in that city alone, DTC resulted in an annual reduction of \$3 Million spent on drugs. Criminal activity required to support that drug use (goods stolen and/or drugs trafficked) is estimated at another \$9M, for a total savings of approximately \$12M.
- One DTC reports frequency of drug use declining from an average of 28.5 days per month to only 0.8 days per month during participation in the program. Another in western Canada found about one-third of DTC participants remained clean and sober for a year or longer in the program.
- When a comparison was made between one DTC's participants and court-involved clients of a residential treatment program, 100% of the DTC participants were abstinent at follow-up compared to only 64% of those who had received addiction treatment, without the other supports and supervision of DTC.



## Drug Treatment Court is an amazing program!

I am 37 years old and the last 21 years of my life revolved around heavy drug use. I spent 14 of those years in and out of jails and institutions. Last year, I hit my rock bottom. As an intravenous drug addict, I used cocaine, Oxycontin and heroin, shooting up as many as 15 times a day. My drug use cost me \$300 to \$600 a day. I supported my use by committing crimes. I would walk into businesses, stores and colleges and steal from purses and wallets. I would take whatever money and credit cards I could find. I would purchase over \$1,000 of merchandise on the stolen cards and sell it on the street to buy drugs. I needed to steal \$3,000 to \$5,000 each day to support my habit.

The last time I was arrested, I knew I was under surveillance and my arrest was imminent. I remember the day before my arrest, as I was about to shoot up, I was thinking and hoping that this would be the end for me – I wanted to die. The feelings of guilt and seeing the hurt and fear in my wife and kids, I just didn't want to go on. The next night, on my way to score, I got arrested and it saved my life.

The DTC program has helped me in so many ways. Today, I am 8 months clean, sober and crime free. DTC has given me strength and hope and helped me believe in myself. I am currently in community college, upgrading to get my high school equivalency. My goal is to enroll in an addictions college program so that I can learn to help other addicts find recovery and achieve what I have. I am also now able to help my wife raise 3 beautiful little girls who love me and look up to me. They don't have to ask "where's daddy" anymore. I can see the happiness and hope in them.

Drug Treatment Court is an amazing program! The judges and crown attorneys are very understanding and I feel like they genuinely care about me. They take time to know me and my

needs and are very supportive in bettering my life. I am truly grateful to them and the treatment staff for this opportunity. They have given me the tools to live clean, sober and crime free. It is thanks to DTC that an addict like me can get a second chance. I can live my life without the use of drugs.

*Marcel B.*

## My husband goes and gets high

Last year I had the shock of my life. My husband goes and gets high. That part wasn't shocking, I've spent a lot of time watching him use, lie, not be home day and night, commit crime and become a man with no soul. He got arrested – that part wasn't the shock either. While in jail he heard about a program called Drug Treatment Court, I looked it up on the internet and told him he should talk to his lawyer and see if he could get in. He was accepted. The shock was that he went to treatment every day and things started to change! He stopped using drugs and stealing. Now he's home at night and I don't have to make up stories for the girls when he's in jail.

After a couple of months I decided to get help for myself and DTC put me in a program for family members. The next thing I knew I was sitting in a room with lots of other people who, just like me, live with somebody else's addiction. I never knew I would learn so much. The lady was standing in the front of the room describing me like she was living in my house and in my head! I found myself venting and telling my story and then couldn't wait for the next Monday and the ones after that. This experience has been extremely helpful and has strengthened my relationship. I looked forward for the next 8 months of groups and all the things I'm going to learn. Thank you, DTC!

*Candace B.*

## The multi-site adult drug court evaluation

*Drug Courts can reduce substance use and crime, five-year study shows, but effectiveness hinges on the Judge.*



The most extensive study of drug courts -- a five-year examination of 23 courts and six comparison jurisdictions in eight states -- found that these court programs can significantly decrease drug

use and criminal behaviour, with positive outcomes increasing as participants sensed their Judge treated them more fairly, showed greater respect and interest in them and gave them more chances to talk during courtroom proceedings.

The study, funded by the U.S. Department of Justice's National Institute of Justice, was conducted in two phases. The first, in 2004, surveyed 380 Drug Courts. In the study's second phase, researchers selected 23 drug courts in Florida, Georgia, Illinois, New York, Pennsylvania, South Carolina and Washington, and six comparison sites in Florida, Illinois, North Carolina, and Washington. Between March 2005 and the fall of 2009, the team visited each location multiple times to document program characteristics and operations. A sample of 1,156 drug court participants and 625 comparison group members were interviewed as many as three times. Criminal histories and recidivism data from state agencies and the FBI were analyzed, and a drug test was administered at the 18-month mark.

### Findings:

- ✓ Judges are central to the goals of reducing crime and substance use. Drug court participants who had more status hearings with the judge and received more praise from the

Judge later reported committing fewer crimes and using drugs less often than those who had less contact and praise.

- ✓ Court programs whose Judge exhibited the most respectfulness, fairness, enthusiasm and knowledge of each individual's case prevented more crimes than other courts and prevented more days of drug use. When drug court participants reported more positive attitudes toward their Judge, they cut drug use and crime even more.
- ✓ Drug Court participants who perceived the consequences of failing the program as more undesirable engaged in less substance use and crime.
- ✓ Participants who received more judicial supervision and drug testing, or who attended more than 35 days of substance abuse treatment, reported fewer crimes and fewer days of drug use.
- ✓ Drug Court participants, compared to similar offenders processed through standard dockets, reported fewer days of drug use and fewer crimes.
- ✓ Relative to similar offenders in the comparison group, those initially reporting more frequent drug use showed a larger reduction in drug use, and offenders with violent histories had a greater reduction in crime than others.
- ✓ The study also found that, although drug courts prevent a great deal of small-cost crime, overall savings is driven by a reduction in the most serious offending by relatively few individuals. Drug Courts are especially likely to save money, therefore, if they enroll serious offenders.

To learn more about this evaluation, visit [www.urban.org](http://www.urban.org) and enter "multi-site drug court evaluation" in the search box.

## Living a purpose-driven life

I am a woman of colour who was addicted to crack cocaine for over twenty years. I have a history of childhood sexual, emotional and physical abuse. I started using drugs to stop the pain and nightmares. I was feeling lonely and unworthy. I believe that I must have done something to deserve all the abuse that I had gone through.

It wasn't until November 11, 2002, when I was arrested and I heard about the Drug Treatment Court program, that I was able to start my recovery process. The Treatment I received in this program helped me to deal with the underlying issues I had. It was hard work, but I knew if I wanted to have my life back, I had to stop using drugs and deal with my past. I was so amazed in the changes in my life, I decided that I had to give back. Some of my Advocacy work includes speaking at the 2005 United Nation Office on Crime and Drugs in Vienna; my story has also been published in *Chatelaine Magazine* (March 2008). I have received the Courage to Come Back Award from the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH) and also the Ted Tremaine Award of Excellence. I also went back to school to become a sous-chef. I had not been in school in over 25 years! I also volunteered at CAMH for eight years. When I finished school, I began to work as a chef at CAMH cafeteria. I continue to be of service to those

who are afflicted with addiction, doing public speaking, telling my story of recovery, especially from a woman's point of view. I remind people that it is possible to recover from addiction and move forward with support. I encourage them to set goals and achieve them through hard work, determination and a great support system. Today, I work as a Peer Support Worker in the Drug Treatment Court program. I also returned to school at George Brown College and will graduate from the Community Support Worker program in spring 2012. Today, I am grateful to be "living a purpose-driven life." If I can recover, anyone can!

*Paulette W.*

Since I started at Drug Court, I have seen a change in my health and well-being. I've gained weight. I feel healthier. I've noticed little things -- now my fingernails grow. When you are living with active addiction, it just depletes your whole body of all nutrients and everything. It affects your hair, your fingernails, your skin; everything. A lot of people make the comment that I look healthy now.

*DTC Alumni*

## Canadian DTCs by the Numbers

### DTC improves and saves lives:

- DTCs help reunite families. Approximately 50% of DTC participants re-establish a connection with supportive family members after entering the program.
- DTCs providing employment/education preparation services show impressive outcomes of up to 75% of participants moving on to educational or employment activities.
- At least 61% of participants enter DTC with acute or chronic health issues. At any given time, as many as two-thirds of participants in some DTCs may be Hepatitis C positive. These issues are addressed through: onsite health services located in some DTCs; community health care partnerships; and intensive case management.
- A western Canadian DTC administered Cantril's Life Ladder – a simple scale measuring client quality of life perceptions – with 1 as the worst, and 10 as the best life. Client overall satisfaction with their lives improved from an average score of 1.8 on admission to 7.8 at graduation.



### A dope-less hope fiend

Drug Treatment Court helped change this “hopeless dope fiend” into a “dope-less hope fiend.” When I first came into the program, I was hopeless, useless, lost and desperate. With no dignity, low self-esteem and coming from 30 years of lying, cheating and stealing, I was ready to do whatever was asked of me to help the broken man I had become. I was placed into a treatment program where I learned a lot about myself and tools to help me make better life choices. Weekly visits to court kept me accountable and in the courtroom, honesty was demanded of me and those two things I hold near to my heart today. I had a team of people working with me to help me through some tough times and that was at times not an easy task.

I graduated May 27, 2010 and that day I will never forget. My mom was there and all my supports that I had developed over the year in Drug Treatment Court. It was an emotional day. I was no longer a liar, I didn't cheat, and my stealing days were over. I had dignity and a sense of belonging, with hope for a future. My mom had her son back and society gained a

valuable member. I completed 72 of 74 goals, which was a major accomplishment.

I have remained active as an alumni and I go to court as often as I can to remember the people that helped change this man's life into a productive one and to give support and encouragement to the participants. Drug Treatment Court is a valuable asset to the community and it helps so many people change into active members of society. The ripple effect goes on and on and on . . .

*Darren P.*

### Thank you

Thank you for this second shot at life - before I came into this program, I was in and out of jail and living life by stealing for the day. Getting high was just a way of life. This program gave me feelings again. I never thought the day would come when I would consider my probation officer as a friend.

*J.B.*