

CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND PUBLIC SAFETY MEETING

PROBATION AGENDA

4/23/19

- I. **Committee Meeting called to order by Chairman**
- II. **Motion to approve minutes from prior Committee Meeting**
- III. **Action Agenda**

**Resolution Request** – To Amend Contract with Northeast Polygraph Services to remove language in scheduled “A” that directs payment from Enhanced Probation Supervision Services of Sex Offender Funding Grant.

**Rational** – The Enhanced Probation Supervision Services of Sex Offender Funding Grant no longer exists. Funding for Polygraph Services is included in the DCJS Block Grant to Probation.

- IV. **Pending Items-** There are no pending items.
- V. **Information and Discussion -** Bail Reform, Girls Circle-Juvenile Probation Supervisor Amy Secor
- VI. **Attachment** – Resolution Request and Information on Girls Circle

## **RESOLUTION REQUEST FORM NO. 4**

### ***Request for Extending, Rescinding or Amending Existing Contract***

**DEPARTMENT NAME: Probation**

**DATE: 4/23/19**

- (a) Purpose of Contract Change: **To remove language in Schedule "A" that directs payment from Enhanced Probation Supervision Services of Sex Offender Funding Grant \*\* Funding is included in DCJS Block Grant (\$3,900)**
- (b) Resolution Number, or Numbers if Amended, which Authorized the Original Contract: **324 of 2009**
- (c) Name of Contractor: **Northeast Polygraph, Inc.**
- (d) Address of Contractor: **55 Pulver Avenue, Ravena, NY 12143**
- (e) Contractor's Contact Person and Telephone Number: **Ronald Hotaling  
(518)281-4580**
- (f) Commencement Date of Extension: **3/21/10**
- (g) Termination Date of Extension: **Open**
- (h) Payment Provisions:
  - i) lump sum amount
  - ii) hourly rate amount
  - iii) total amount not to exceed
  - iv) how will payments be made (i.e. monthly, quarterly, upon completion of the project, etc. **\$300 per Polygraph**)
- (i) Where are the Funds for this Contract? List Budget Code, Object Code, Full Title\* and Amount: **OR Capital Project OR Capital Reserve Project Number, and Title, and Amount: A.3140.470 Probation - Contract- \$3,900.00**

**Sample: A.1010 470 Legislative Board – Contract \$xx.xx  
Capital Project No. H289.9550 480 – Old Jail Renovations \$xx.xx**

\*as listed in budget and LOGOS

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The Girls Circle model, a structured support group for girls and youth who identify with female development from 9-18 years, integrates relational theory, resiliency practices, and skills training in a specific format designed to increase positive connection, personal and collective strengths, and competence in girls.

It aims to counteract social and interpersonal forces that impede girls' growth and development by promoting an emotionally safe setting and structure within which girls can develop caring relationships and use authentic voices.



Girls Circle is the FIRST gender-responsive program in the country to demonstrate effectiveness in reducing delinquency for girls... Now listed on SAMHSA's National Registry of Evidence-based Programs.

### Girls Circle Format

The **Girls Circle Activity Guides** are designed to help you, as a facilitator, set a safe, creative environment and provide weeks of age-appropriate themes and activities.

Girls Circles are most often held weekly for 1 1/2 to two hours. Each week as the facilitator, you lead your group of girls through a format that includes each girl taking turns talking and listening to one another respectfully about their concerns and interests. The



### Enhances Current Programs

The Girls Circle format is applied to programs in areas such as schools, peer leadership, health education, juvenile justice, economic literacy, outdoor adventure, athletics, school advisory groups, pregnancy prevention, boys and girls clubs, scouting groups, gang-prevention, and substance abuse prevention in such settings as schools, agencies, group homes, parish halls, clinics, and



girls express themselves further through creative or focused activities such as role playing, drama, journalling, poetry, drama, dance, drawing, collage, clay, and so on. Gender specific themes and topics are introduced which relate to the girls' lives, such as being a girl, trusting ourselves, friendships, body image, goals, sexuality, drugs, alcohol, tobacco, competition, and decision-making.

homes. In this way, the Girls Circle provides the opportunity for authentic relationships within a context of a girl's own setting and community.

The model responds to recommendations from national organizations, including the National Council on Research for Women, the Girl Scout Research Institute Report, United Way of the Bay Area, and the OJJDP that have pointed to the need for gender-relevant girls' programs that allow girls to voice their experiences, develop positive connections, and gain skills to pursue meaningful goals in education, careers, and relationships.

**Circle Guidelines**

The Girls Circle does not aim to provide advice, but encourages girls to share experiences that are helpful to one another. To participate, girls need only have the desire, make a commitment to attend the meetings, and agree to follow the circle guidelines, i.e. respect, no put-downs or interruptions, offer experiences - not advice, keep the focus on oneself, and keep what's said in the group private. Girls are free to share at their own pace.

**Want to run a Girls Circle service learning project? Read how one University has done so.**

**Giving Voice to Feelings**

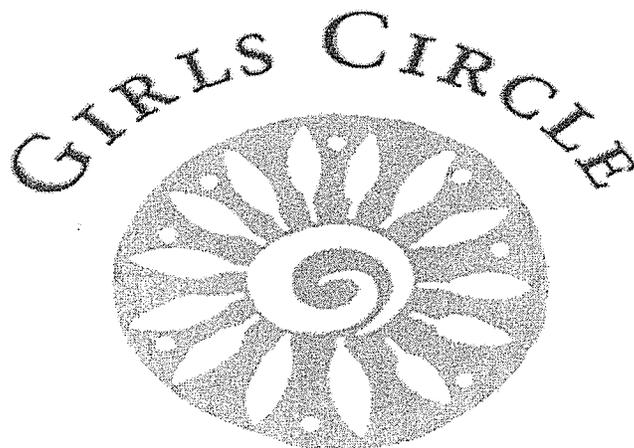
When girls voice their ideas and opinions in a safe environment, it strengthens their confidence and self-esteem and encourages them to express themselves more fully and critically think through their behavior and choices. By examining cultural expectations in a safe and supportive setting, girls gain greater awareness of their options and strengthen their ability to make choices that are consistent with their values, interests, and talents.

**Learn more on  
Implementing Girls Circle  
at your agency.**

**Read about Girls  
Circle as a Rites of  
Passage program**

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## **Girls Pathways into the Juvenile Justice System**

*The majority of girls who come into the juvenile justice system are often victims of crime themselves.* Many have “broken hearts and bad attitudes” due to past experiences of being controlled or treated in harmful ways. It is often not only a “crisis of connection,” but a “crisis of survival” as well. A study by the *National Council on Crime and Delinquency* showed that 95 percent of girls were assessed as lacking a stable home environment and had not had the benefit of consistent parenting. (Acoca, Dedel, 1998)

In a joint report by the American Bar Association and the National Bar Association, “*Justice by Gender: The Lack of Appropriate Prevention, Diversion, and Treatment for Girls in the Justice System,*” the following outlines girls’ main pathways into the juvenile justice system.

- ✓ Childhood sexual abuse, physical abuse, neglect
- ✓ Domestic violence
- ✓ Conflicted family relationships
- ✓ Family substance abuse
- ✓ School failure
- ✓ Poverty
- ✓ Early teen pregnancy

## **Use of Power and Authority**

*“For abused kids, past experiences of being controlled in harmful and frightening ways and being on the wrong end of misuse of power may bring about severe reactions to others trying to control them.”*

*“The Impact of Restraint on Sexually Abused Children and Youth.” Child Welfare League of America, 2004*

Staff must respond to conflict and crisis in a way that builds connections rather than increases separation. To empower girls requires that we share power.

## Recent Statistics

## Juvenile Justice

- Girls are the fastest growing segment of the juvenile justice population.

*(OJJDP, 1998)*

- Physical and sexual abuse and neglect play a significant role in girls' involvement in the juvenile justice system. For example, 66.7% of the young women in the California Youth Authority reported ongoing physical abuse and 44.7% reported sexual abuse.

*Bloom, PhD, & Covington, PhD, from "Effective Gender-Responsive Interventions in Juvenile Justice: Addressing the Lives of Delinquent Girls", presented at the 2001 Annual Meeting, The American Society of Criminology, Atlanta, GA*

- Girls are three times more likely than boys to have experienced sexual abuse, which is often an underlying factor in high-risk behaviors that lead to delinquency.

*(OJJDP, 1998)*

- Girls account for 32% of the arrests for assault.

*U.S. Department of Justice (www.ojp.usdoj.gov)*

- The largest proportion of juveniles arrested for status offenses [running away, underage drinking, truancy, and curfew violation] are girls, which disproportionately affects them and entangles them in the juvenile justice system.

*(OJJDP, 1998)*

- 3 out of every 5 arrests, for running away from home, are girls.

*U.S. Department of Justice (www.ojp.usdoj.gov)*

- 7 out of 10 juveniles in custody are comprised of minority youth.

*U.S. Department of Justice (www.ojp.usdoj.gov)*

- In 2003, an estimated 9 million (36.1%) youths aged 12 to 17 had engaged in at least one delinquent behavior in the past year.

*Office of Applied Studies, National Survey on Drug Use and Health, Female Youths and Delinquency (2004); (www.oas.samhsa.gov)*

- In 1997, for every 100,000 non-Hispanic black female juveniles in the population, 234 were in residential placement—for Hispanic females the rate was 100, and for non-Hispanic white females it was 75.

*Statistical Briefing Book, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. www.ojjdp.ncjrs.org/*

## The Female Brain

According to Louann Brizendine, M.D., author of “*The Female Brain*,” (2006), girls’ brains function in a unique way that supports the relational theory and gives us insight to a girls’ reasoning and behavior processes.

✓ ***The prefrontal cortex – the seat of reasoning – is the last to develop in the teenage brain.***

The prefrontal cortex is the principal structure that manages impulses, organizes time, weighs options, and makes decisions –yet it is the LAST structure to reach maturity (somewhere between 20-25 years of age). Thus, while the brain's development can compel adolescents to behave in reactive, impulsive, or novel ways - its' decision-making structure is still under construction.

✓ ***Connecting through talking activates the pleasure centers in the female brain.***

Talking reduces stress and promotes neurobiological rewards including the release of the powerful “bonding” hormone - oxytocin.

✓ ***The primary goal of the girl’s brain is to forge connection and create community.***

The female brain is literally designed for connection, relationships, and kinship.

✓ ***For a girl, the brain’s stress response is strongly triggered by social rejection.***

Girls’ brains react intensely with the stress hormone “cortisol” when triggered by social rejection.

Environments that provide predictability, social contact, and perceptions of control can decrease stress levels (Vance, 2001).

Girls Circles can provide opportunities to assist girls in the tasks of critically thinking and reasoning through the options and choices they make, connect with one another in their community through sharing and discussion, and reduce and prevent the sense of alienation and rejection by experiencing a safe, supportive, and respectful environment.

## The Adolescent Brain

Very significant brain growth influences all aspects of adolescent development. Hormones and brain chemicals, structural changes, pruning of unnecessary or unused cells, and myelination - the tissue shaping process that brings increased efficiency to neural pathways - all combine to do the following in teens:

- ✓ Alter physical routines
- ✓ Intensify emotional states and impulses
- ✓ Affect thinking
- ✓ Promote risk taking and novelty-seeking as products of these changes

Keep in mind:

- ✓ The adolescent years hold a "window of opportunity:"  
"Use it or lose it" applies to relational and critical thinking skills
- ✓ Adults who support the decision-making process with adolescents, such as in guided discussions, offer teens skill building experiences
- ✓ Safe and healthy risk-taking by adolescents meet vital, innate needs
- ✓ Trauma impacts brain development: it slows or inhibits some neural pathway development
- ✓ Providing structured time, safety, and structured activities can protect and support healthy brains in adolescence

## Resiliency Factors

**Recognition of these risks in adolescent development** has induced comprehensive studies and programs designed to meet girls' and boys' needs.

In *Resiliency, What We Have Learned*, researcher Bonnie Benard delineates the *strength-based perspective* on youth development. She describes resiliency as a “universal capacity” of youth, in which individual and community strengths overpower adversity and foster healthy development for most people. The “strengths perspective” assumes that humans have innate and social abilities to develop healthy coping styles and creative responses to stressful conditions, and that these abilities can be fostered with environmental supports, or protective factors.

An abundance of research identifies **four significant "protective factors"** which facilitate risk reduction and "the development of youth who do not get involved in life-compromising problems." These factors, all components of the Girls Circle model, include:

1. **Caring and supportive relationships with adults:** even one adult matters! Unconditional love and respect, witnessing, listening, having compassion, being there for that youth.
2. **High expectations:** the resiliency message says to youth, “You can make it! Yes, it’s hard, but you can do it.” It means something real *when it comes from someone who matters*, whose relationship is important to her/him. Clear, fair, and consistent limits and expectations, with youth input and emphasis on both individual and group needs.
3. **Meaningful participation in the community:** belonging is a primal need; youth learn they do “matter” and they can make a difference, i.e. opportunities to join into team activities, creative expression, group reflection and exploration on relevant issues, decision making, service and community projects, and taking on roles and responsibilities in activities.
4. **Positive cultural-ethnic identity:** honoring and voicing the traditions, meanings, practices, challenges and oppressive forces to one’s heritage; identifying role models; developing strategies to resist oppressive systems and relationships; creating alliances between cultures and groups.

## **A Trauma-Informed Approach**

Girls Circle recognizes trauma as a pathway to delinquency.

- Safety is #1
- Girls' behavior can be understood as a response to trauma, not a defect of character
- Girls seek connection in negative ways as a survival strategy
- A Girls Circle group meets girls where they are at and empowers them with options and choices
- Avoids re-traumatizing girls by offering non-authoritarian group facilitation

## **Looking for Connection**

***Ultimately, all troubled youth are “looking for connection.”***  
***How does connection happen?*** Real connection occurs through empathy. Relationships are built or restored through listening, which brings about empathic connections. When girls receive empathic responses, they see and know themselves more clearly, and their self-worth develops.

If they have been let down by their primary caregivers, they will seek other places of “connection” in search for safe relationships. The following points should be kept in mind when working with troubled youth:

- ✓ Delinquents act when their bond to society is weak or broken
- ✓ Searching for safe relationships to connect emotionally
- ✓ Peer groups are their primary means to validate personal and social growth
- ✓ Conformity is held in place by “social connectedness” Adolescents will conform to norms of the community if these structures are friendly and not oppressive
- ✓ Healthy relationships are the key to good conduct

The emotional connectedness they seek can be repaired and strengthened by offering safe, respectful places for girls with adults and peers that create a social climate of caring and support.

## Theme Ideas:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <b>Gender Issues</b> – Being a Girl, Defining Ourselves, Relational Aggression, Being Female, Being Pretty and Smart, Feminism, Gender Roles and Stereotypes, Holding onto our Voices, Menstruation, Physical Development, Motherhood, Self-Defense, Women’s History, Women’s Talents and Achievements, Media: Portrayal of Bodies, Personal History of their Lives, Values and Its’ Affects</li> <li>■ <b>Relationships</b> – Relationship to Self, Family (Changes, Rules, Expectations), Friends, Teachers, Communities, Relationship with Boys/Men (Intimacy vs. Sex), Ancestry (family origins, stories), Relationships to Authority Figures</li> <li>■ <b>Mental/Psychological Health</b> – Feelings, Understanding and Naming Feelings, Coping with Difficult Feelings, Identity: Who Am I, Definitions of Strength, Stress Management, Handling Anger/Anger Management, Handling Loss, Grief, Death, Divorce, Mental Illness</li> <li>■ <b>Diversity</b> – Cultural Differences (types, styles, expression, spirituality, dress), Celebrating Differences, Understanding Differences in Dress, Social Customs, Sexuality, Family Structure, Spirituality, Self-Expression, Language, Heroes, heroines, Mythical Figures, Religious Figures, Holidays</li> <li>■ <b>Values</b> – Courage vs. Fear, Compassion vs. Mockery, Choice Making vs. Passivity, Truth Telling vs. Making Nice, Differences vs. Fitting In, Goals, Dreams, Aspirations, Envisioning a Future Self, Responsibility for Self and Responsibility to Others, Success- What is it in Our Society? Our Families? Defining Success for Myself</li> <li>■ <b>Female Energies</b> – Archetypal, Mythical, Goddess Qualities</li> <li>■ <b>Dreams</b> – Aspirations, Goal-Setting, Daydreams, Night Dreams</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <b>Activism/Advocacy</b> – Political Activism, Social Advocacy- Girls Voices in Action, Ending Violence Against Women, Human Rights, Homelessness, Higher Education, Global Warming, Endangered Species, Community Activism, Hunger, Global Warming, Endangered Species, Resistance Strategies, Sustainable Living, Natural Resources</li> <li>■ <b>Bodies</b> – Media &amp; Cultural Images, Beauty Myths, Consumer Products: Healthy vs. Hype, Self-Care, Sexuality, Nutrition, Sports, Physical Strength</li> <li>■ <b>“Ism’s”</b> - Racism, Sexism, Homophobia, Classism, Labeling, Size-ism</li> <li>■ <b>Conflict</b> – Tolerance, Communication Skills, Choices, Resolution, Anger Management</li> <li>■ <b>Life Skills</b> – Finances, Money Management, Care-taking, Independent Living, Communication, Visioning, Goal setting</li> <li>■ <b>Addictions</b> - Drugs, Alcohol, Nicotine, Bulimia, Anorexia, Cutting, Sex, Perfection, Achievement</li> <li>■ <b>Boundaries</b> – Personal Boundaries, Sexual Boundaries, Dating Violence, Domestic Violence, Harassment Issues, Legal Aspects of Harassment, Peer Pressure</li> <li>■ <b>Sexuality</b> – Sexual Preferences, Healthy vs. Unhealthy, Sexual Addictions, Rape, Safe Sex, HIV Prevention, Birth Control, “Stud vs. Slut” Messages, Love vs. Lust, Desire</li> <li>■ <b>Nature/Earth/Spirituality/Holidays</b> – Interconnection of Life, Seasons &amp; Cycles, Spirituality – Differing Expressions, Responsibility to Earth, Roles and Relationship with the Natural World, Holiday Themes, Natural Holidays (Fall, Spring, Equinox, Winter, Summer Solstice), Meanings, Rituals, Our Gift to the Earth, Prayer, Meditation, Guided Imagery, and Visualization</li> </ul> |
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## What is a Girls Circle?

The Girls Circle is a model of structured support groups for girls from 9-18 years. It is designed to foster self-esteem, help girls maintain authentic connection with peers and adult women in their community, counter trends toward self-doubt, and allow for genuine self-expression through verbal sharing and creative activity.

Each week, a group of six to ten girls of similar age and development meet with a facilitator for a couple hours. During this time the girls take turns talking and listening to one another about their concerns and interests. The girls can express themselves further through creative or focused activities such as role playing, drama, journaling, poetry, movement, drawing, collage, clay, computer, and so on. Oftentimes, themes are introduced which relate to the girls' lives - such as being a girl, trusting ourselves, friendships, body image, goals, competition, and decision-making.

To participate, girls need only to have the desire, make a commitment to attend the meetings, and agree to follow the circle guidelines: no put-downs or interruptions, offer experiences - not advice; keep the focus on oneself; and keep what's said in the group private. Girls are free to share at their own pace. Through listening and respect for themselves and others, participants can reflect on and express their own thoughts and feelings with peers:

The Girls Circle does not aim to provide advice, but encourages girls to share experiences that are helpful to one another.

When girls voice their ideas and opinions in a safe environment, it strengthens their confidence and encourages them to express themselves more fully. By examining cultural expectations in a safe and supportive setting, girls gain greater awareness of their options and strengthen their ability to make choices that are consistent with their values, interests, and talents.

The Girls Circle model has been applied to programs in areas such as juvenile probation, schools, peer leadership, health education, economic literacy, outdoor adventure, positive youth development, athletics, pregnancy prevention, boys and girls clubs, scouting groups, school advisory groups, gang-prevention, and substance abuse prevention – wherever girls come together!