

The Many Dimensions of Correctional Staff Health

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ACA's 2017 Corrections Staff Wellness Resolution

- “... correctional employees’ wellness is a **critical issue** and has reached **crisis proportions**; ...”

ACA RESOLUTION SUPPORTING CORRECTIONAL EMPLOYEE WELLNESS 2017-1



What We Know

KEY RESEARCH FINDINGS



ACA's 2017 Corrections Staff Wellness Resolution

- “... the unique inherent risks correctional employees are exposed to have resulted in increased health risks; ...”

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Some Corrections Work Challenges

Built-In Risk Factors

- Violence, injury or death
- Harsh physical conditions
- Work overload
- Overtime
- Organizational structure and climate



ACA's 2017 Corrections Staff Wellness Resolution

- “... very few resources have been used on researching correctional employees’ wellness and very few resources have been used to provide tools to improve correctional employees’ wellness; ...”

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Corrections Work Challenges



- Occupational stressors

Traumatic

Operational

Organizational

- Corrections Fatigue



Context

- Insufficient understanding by:
 - Family and friends
 - Supervisors
 - Employers
 - Even themselves
- Culture of “toughness”
- Negative public image



ACA's 2017 Corrections Staff Wellness Resolution

- “... the nature of the correctional environment can be a causative factor in high-risk behaviors, such as the abuse of alcohol, prescription medications, and illegal substances; ...”

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ACA's 2017 Corrections Staff Wellness Resolution

- “... **traumatic events** in a correctional environment may result in employees experiencing **post-traumatic stress disorder**; ...”

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Signs of Declining Health and Functioning



- Hypertension
- Overweight/obesity
- Anxiety
- Depression
- PTSD
- Substance Use Disorders
- Work-family conflict
- Elevated suicide risk





Solutions Basics

BALANCING ACT



What is Needed?



“Hazmat suit”

Preparation to deal effectively with what is encountered



“Tool box”

Means to process and cope with what is experienced

“Hospital”

Means, conditions and resources for recovery

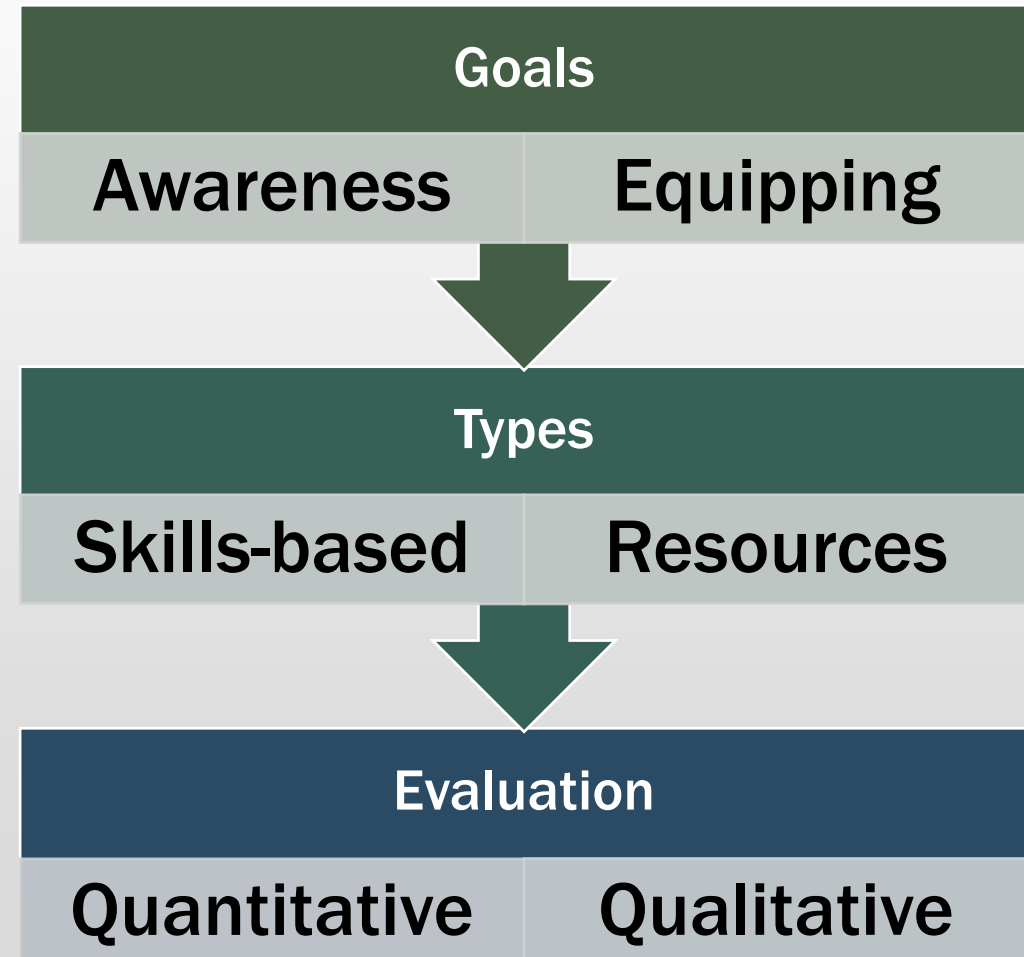


ACA's 2017 Corrections Staff Wellness Resolution

- “... the American Correctional Association **urges** correctional agencies to **raise awareness** and **educate employees** regarding **employee wellness** in a **corrections environment**, including emphasis on **employment-related stress**; ...”

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Solutions Elements

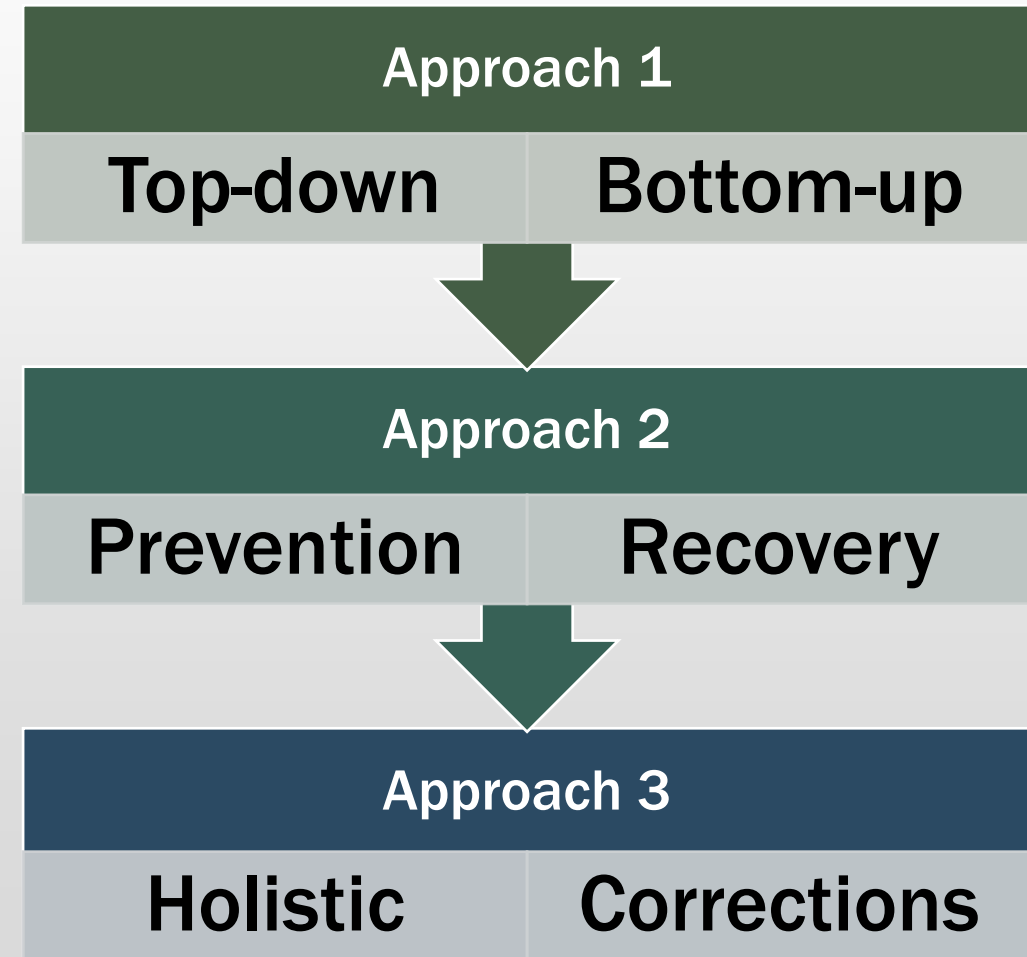


ACA's 2017 Corrections Staff Wellness Resolution

- “... the American Correctional Association encourages agencies to develop and implement wellness initiatives and convene wellness committees regarding all the dimensions of wellness, including emotional, environmental, financial, intellectual, occupational, physical, social and spiritual; ...”

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Solutions Approaches



Solutions Approaches

Approach 4

Multi-faceted



Approach 5

All-inclusive



Approach 6

Evidence-informed



ACA's 2017 Corrections Staff Wellness Resolution

- “... the American Correctional Association is committed to supporting and improving the overall wellness of correctional employees.”

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Solutions Elements



M.O.

Marathon



In Conclusion

- Effects of occupational stressors on corrections workers' health and functioning can be severe.
- Psychosocial skills that promote wellness/resilience CAN BE TAUGHT.
- Combinations of organizational and individual initiatives can be expected to be the most beneficial.





Thank you!

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