



First International CoSA Conference

CoSA – Some Volunteer Perspectives
Stephen Hanvey Circles UK



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- ❖ Meet the volunteers
- ❖ The England / Wales
Volunteering picture
- ❖ Volunteering themes – Leeds
University research
- June 2014



To all those people saying that sex offenders should be hung/imprisoned for life/ tortured, etc you are being completely unrealistic. In reality these people are let back into society, and there is nothing you can do about that. Circles are there so that when these people are let out there is a preventative measure put in place to reduce the risk of them creating more victims. Is it not more beneficial to actually get out there and try and prevent more victimisation than to sit at home ranting about the death penalty and whatever other sentences you dream up? I volunteer for Circles myself and am proud to think that I am helping to prevent more child victims of sex abuse.

Emily - a Circles volunteer



**GONZALO LÓPEZ RAMÍREZ
&
LIDIA FERNANDEZ**



The Circle Volunteers

- ❖ 884 volunteers in England and Wales
- ❖ 2014 Vols survey ; 75% female ; 64% heterosexual ; 16% over 50yrs ; 9% with a disability; 82% White British: 40% no religious affiliation.
- ❖ Magistrates / Funeral director / Banker / Builder
- ❖ Samaritans / Victim Support / youth work



The Leeds Study

Assessing the impact of Circles of support and Accountability on the reintegration of adults convicted of sexual offences in the community

Terry Thomas, David Thompson & Suzanne Karstedt
Centre for Criminal Justice Studies, School of Law,
University of Leeds

June 2014



Sample

- ❖ 20 volunteers
- ❖ 16 female & 4 male
- ❖ Key age groups 30-39 & 60-69
- ❖ 3 aged 20 -29
- ❖ 14 had experience of working in criminal justice
- ❖ 15 had been a member of more than 1 Circle



Key Themes

- ❖ Motivation-
Nearly half quoted improving career prospects but majority referred to more 'altruistic' reasons.
- ❖ Volunteer / Coordinator relationship –
critical re recruitment and then as “ever-present support”



- ❖ The informal get-together pivotal social –skills practice & ‘fun’ which helps CM see their progress.
- ❖ “Accountability” confusion ?
Is ‘it’ looking back, or current & future? (but effective!)



The Leeds Study

<http://www.law.leeds.ac.uk/research/projects/assessing-impact-cosa>

www.circles-uk.org.uk



Thank you for your attention!

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