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**TO: All Probation Directors/Commissioners
ATI Program Directors**

**FROM: Robert M. Maccarone
Deputy Commissioner and
Director of Probation and Correctional Alternatives**

DATE: June 10, 2011

RE: “Thinking for a Change” Cognitive Behavioral Program

As you know, Cognitive Behavioral Programs target many of the major criminogenic need areas and challenges identified in our offender populations. The NIC *Thinking for a Change* (T4C) is one of the nationally recognized cognitive behavioral change programs that have proven to be effective with both the adult and juvenile offender populations.

Since 2008, OPCA has trained more than 150 community corrections representatives from 42 different probation departments, ATI programs and other community organizations to be *Thinking for a Change* facilitators. Attached you will find a summary of Departments and Programs which have participated in this training. The majority of these trained facilitators, in teams of two, are now conducting T4C groups with completion rosters being submitted from 110 different cognitive groups across New York State. Facilitators are enthusiastic about implementing this program and are seeing a positive response from those who have participated in both their adult and juvenile groups. As one experienced facilitator has expressed, the T4C Curriculum provides the medium for the probation officer (and community correction professional) to establish a relationship of trust with the individual, and commence a dialogue to begin the self-examination process. Dr. Faye Taxman’s research indicates that the power of that relationship is the most important component of effectuating offender change.

In June of 2009, seven of our facilitators attended the *Thinking for a Change Advanced Practicum* training and are now able to train other facilitators in this cognitive behavioral program. These advanced trained facilitators are from Schenectady County, Ulster County, Washington County, Oswego County and OPCA. It is these representatives that have assisted OPCA with our ongoing training of T4C facilitators. In addition, Ontario County has also had a staff person obtain this advanced training certification and has subsequently trained other facilitators in their probation department, their local jail and other community agencies. And in Cattaraugus County, virtually every Probation Officer has been trained in either the T4C or

Workforce Development Specialist (OWDS) Programs. Essex, Ulster and Schenectady Counties have now conducted juvenile groups utilizing the T4C Curriculum.

As a nationally recognized cognitive behavioral change programs, *Thinking for a Change* is available for county probation departments and ATI programs to utilize in their efforts to reduce recidivism through positive offender change. OPCA is committed to advancing the implementation of cognitive behavioral intervention programs in probation and community correction agencies throughout New York State, effectuating genuine offender change, lowering recidivism and protecting community safety. If you would like more information about this program or the training, please contact Bill.Schaefer@dcjs.state.ny.us.

Attachment

T4C Facilitator Summary