

# Youth Custody Employee Development

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## Describe study

For a Master of Education, Psychology and Leadership Studies at the University of Victoria.

2003-2004 study based in BC Youth Custody Centres.

Purpose: investigate reasons for decision to make a career in youth custody. Not glamorous nor is there a high success rate. Stereotypes negative.

Qualitative interviews of five seasoned employees (3 male 2 female) from three different youth custody centres in B.C. Ninety minutes each, transcribed audiotape. Anonymity via pseudonyms.

Emerging themes: hiring, training, employee development.

Literature focuses on offender topics and adult corrections. Little in youth relevant to employee topics.

Ethical issue of power over as an instructor, perception of investigator as management.



## Discussion

Participants enjoyed the energy, challenge, camaraderie, varied duties.

Gender bias: women working with girls precluded from role variation.

Perceived games, favourites and politics. Negative lens frames conversation and interaction.

Recruiting and acculturation. Formal and informal learning.

Knowledge of successes minimal.

Lack of formal mechanism for career planning.

Vision statement focussed on youth, programs and community re-integration. Employee involvement absent.

More formal research needed in the area of youth custody employees in Canada.