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Providing Resources for Probationers, Behavioral Health, and Substance Abuse

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California State University Monterey Bay

11/25/19

Abstract

Probation Department of San Benito County is daily targeted by defendants having an issue with drugs, violations, domestic violence, battery, drug court, PRCS. The main issue is that the defendant's relapse into drugs leading to committing a violation of probation. Due to a certain level of stress, depression and bad influence defendants decide to make a wrong decision and drug relapse or commit a violation. Which lead to incarceration, loss of family support and sometimes even death because of a drug overdose. A Referral Resource Handout was created from different resources available in the community. These resources were gathered by the preference from probation officers that decided their defendants needed the most outreach for services in the community. Since the handout will increase awareness to the defendants there should be a high level of the defendant to make use of the handout and resources available in the community. Implementing the project started with learning about a new program being implemented at San Benito County Probation Department called Mental Health Court. Overseen the defendants a decision of making a referral resource handout was going to be helpful since the agency didn't have an existing one. Some resources that will be needed for the project will be programs that could help them succeed, such as classes, counseling, transportation, job search, housing, shelter, child development, and medical care, it will all depend on their caseload. The referral resource handout was to be given to probationers or defendants in a 3-week timeline followed by a survey to answer. Gathering the survey results there should be a high percent shown in a graph about defendants using the referral resource handout.

Agency and Communities Served

The mission of San Benito County Probation Department is to protect the community, provide services to the court and assist clients to change their behaviors. Once defendants are placed under supervision by a specific Probation Officer, on their first meeting they talk about their future goals through their supervision time. When they are placed in a program it depends upon the judge assigning the defendant to the specific program. The programs offered in the county are, Intensive Supervision, Placement Services, Treatment Referrals, Restitution for Crime Victims, Court Report Services, Traffic Court, Court School Truancy Programs, Community Services, Home Supervision, Electronic Monitoring Program. For adulting programs there are Adult Supervision, Drug Intensive Supervision, Treatment Referrals, Restitution for Crime Victims, Court Report Services, Domestic Violence Program, Community Service Program, Family Preservation Program, Community Transition Center (CTC). Behavioral health department helps with alcohol and drugs services, within substance abuse service plans, and help out with specific goals. These programs are usually more than a year, the judge sets them court once a week to check if they are meeting expectations, and meeting with a Probation officer once a week, it all depends if the defendant is a high, medium or low risk defendant. The grade level of risk defendants depends on the amount of violations they committed and cruel they are. The county department serves in Hollister, San Juan and Tres Pinos juveniles and adults. The community serves White American, Black and African American, Hispanic and Latino Americans, and Asian Americans who are currently under probation department supervision. Currently there are no demographics that can show a variety of information about ethnicities of defendants who relapse in drugs or go back to jail.

Problem Description

Substance abuse refers to the harmful or hazardous use of psychoactive substances, including alcohol and illicit drugs (World Health Organization, 2019). It can also lead to dependence syndrome, which is a cluster of behavioral, cognitive, and physiological phenomena that develop after repeated substance use and that typically include a strong desire to take the drug. Substance abuse and committing violations impacts the Probation Department, and the defendants themselves who drug relapse and commit violations while on probation because committing a violation can put themselves to change their probation jurisdictions. Besides legal action, they can be incarcerated, may lose family support, or even die due to a drug overdose.

The most common drug used in the agency when defendants come in and get tested positive is, methamphetamine, also known as “meth”. But they also test positive on other different types of drugs such as alcohol, cocaine, black cocaine, and cough syrup with codeine that could get the defendant in the “high mode”. Other drugs that aren’t that common but do sometimes test positive are Heroin, Opium, Crystal Meth, Morphine, Crack, and Anabolic Steroids. Once they are tested positive, they are put back into jail. In an article of “San Benito Home of the Free Lance”, mentions that meth has being the drug mostly used in the county. Bob Cooke is the commander of Unified Narcotic Enforcement team; he mentions that meth is half cheaper than cocaine and the effects of the drug is even longer than cocaine. This is a reason why the addicts are making the use of meth more, instead of cocaine. He also says, once using the drug you can become addicted the first time trying it. Meth is also known in another word as “crank” developed in the last century from the parent called “amphetamine”. This drug was mostly used to decongest nasal or use in bronchial inhalers. Around the 1970s drug dealers learned how to mix different over the counter drugs, that made this drug very

scary to use because now children were being involved. Cooke says that about 80% of their referrals are addicted to “meth” (Hollister Free Lance, 2002). Personally, have been in a situation where an arrest happens due to a violation in any substance not supposed to be taken by the defendant. Also, information coming from Lisa Saucedo, the Supervisor in the Probation Department has presence many arrest due to defendants violating their probation because they made the wrong decision to intake drugs.

Contributing Factors

One contributing factor to the problem is Stress. Stress can have wide ranging effects on emotions, mood and behavior, there are also other effects on various systems, such as organs and tissues all over the body. But defendants tend to drug relapse while in stress because when they usually end a program or are out of prison, they look for housing, or a way to get money and they can't get that help within days. It can take a while for a defendant to get a job because most of the jobs that are well paid require a background check. Most employers don't take into consideration any applications that appear to be criminals. Due to that situation, it causes them stress and that's when they make bad decisions. Northpoint Recovery (June 26, 2015) describes stress is a natural part of life and that everyone has to deal with it at some point in life. There's a variety of situations that cause stress, such as, a problem within marriage or a relationship, in which frequent arguments or domestic issues.

A second factor is Depression. Substance abuse is common among people who are battling a depressive disorder. Since alcohol is a central nervous system depressant, defendants use this drug that triggers depression symptoms such as lethargy, sadness and hopelessness. This is a way defendants' relapse again because drugs or alcohol has a way to lift their spirits or to numb painful thoughts.

The third factor are friends and colleagues who are negative influences. The least factor but that does contribute to the problem are friends. When defendants get out of jail they get out and sometimes have to complete a program while in probation. While in probation they shouldn't be in contact with friends or colleagues who are a bad influence because usually they are the ones who provoke drug relapse just by drinking a beer and could lead to a violation or more. It even happens that when the defendant comes in on a Monday to get tested, they admit they are under alcohol influence or drugs. This information was found under a case file. This person admitted before being tested and was taken into custody again due to the violation of consumption of drug, while in probation supervision (San Benito County Probation Department).

Consequences

One consequence that can be caused by drug relapse is drug overdose. Overdosing can cause a defendant to die. Even if it's just alcohol. They can put themselves at a risk level of dying. The article of Drug Policy Alliance describes that accidental drug overdose is currently the leading cause of death in the United States for those under 50. More Americans died from a drug overdose in 2017 alone than died in the entire Vietnam War (Drug Overdose).

Second consequence is being incarcerated because they violated the rules of staying sober. When a defendant is put into probation the probation officer assigned to the defendant has to read the contract form to the defendant. Based on the crime or violation the defendant committed the contract may be either easy or hard. Meaning that it could be strict or simple with less rules to follow. The form has already the rules written, and the officer just must add a checkmark on which rules they have to follow. For example, if the defendant got into probation because caught on drugs he may be put into "Drug Court", which is a specific program assignment by the judge and the probation officer already knows what rules to add a checkmark

so that the defendant follows. If the defendant doesn't follow to stay out of drugs, he or she may get incarcerated (San Benito County Probation Department).

The third consequence and the saddest one is the loss of family support. Usually this happens because the family gets tired and stops giving the defendant their support. When this happens, they end up in the streets and become homeless. While in the streets they tend to drug relapse and sometimes end back into jail. The Frontiers in Psychology, article describes that the current context, ambiguous loss relates to situations where surrounding the psychological loss of a family member have not been clearly communicated it can be experienced in different stages of the incarceration process, beginning with the arrest, carrying over to the procession of legal arrangements, continuing throughout the duration of imprisonment, and even persisting upon the release. Families may sometimes struggle on how to incorporate them into the new rituals of the family (Wing Hong Chui, June 14, 2016). This example can be put within the father, mother, son or daughter of the family.

Problem Model

Contributing Factors	Problem	Consequences
Stress		Incarceration
Depression	Defendants relapse into drugs leading to committing a violation of probation.	Loss of family support

Bad Influence		Die of an overdose
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Capstone Project Description and Justification

Capstone Project

A capstone project was implemented to address one of the consequences addressed in this paper. Specifically, a resource handout was created and distributed to defendants in order to increase awareness of local services and resources that can be utilized to reduce or prevent drug relapse and violations.

Project Purpose

The purpose of this capstone is for defendants to have better knowledge about resources available for them in the community and to utilize them to help them stay sober and not commit any violations. A community-based resource handout will provide defendants with information that will help access Services should they need it. The project is an evaluation of a program or process. Through research and court observations, local agencies will be identified for further research. The overall goal of this project is to help defendants find an alternative to substance use and prevent them from committing more violations and potentially returning to jail.

Project Justification

The project was to be useful for defendants who are unaware of resources that are out there in the community. Especially for those who have a diagnosis of bipolar, schizophrenia, or simply by being under drugs that they aren't aware of their functioning (Brain and Behavioral Research Foundation, N.D.). It should impact the agency by reducing the criminal activity from

the probationers and improving their quality of life by following the program rules. It should also make the community look better by crime reduction and staying sober. The citizens in the community will feel safer if there are less criminals that can possibly be harmful. A final report on “Mental Health Task Force” in the section of, Implementation of Recommendations, describes why it’s recommended for mental ill criminals to get the necessary resources to receive treatment (Judicial Council of California, 2011). Task force indicates that smaller counties have limited resources, and that is why it recommends collaborating with other partnerships and have connections to treatment services. It is recommended that jails and prisons as well as, probation and parole, recognizing that the implementation of such recommendations will look different depending on the jurisdiction (Judicial Council of California, 2011).

Project Implementation

Existing agency plans were reviewed to learn about a new program being implemented at San Benito County Probation Department starting May 8,2019. Mental Health Court is a type of problem-solving program that combines supervision and community mental health treatment and other support services in order to reduce criminal activity and improve the quality of life of participants. Mental health courts are established to make more effective use of limited criminal justice and mental health resources. Also, to improve outcomes for defendants with mental illness in the criminal justice system. Respond to public safety concerns, and to address jail overcrowding and the disproportionate number of people with mental illness in the criminal justice system. Once they are diagnosed Probation Department receives the diagnosis from Behavioral Health department and then proceed to receive special treatment.

The project component will be a resource handout given to defendants. The information in the handout will be resources available in the community that can help them achieve better

while in probation and access supportive services to reduce criminal activity and improve their quality of life. The resource handout can be distributed to defendants. First, observation will be made to learn about the various services and resources defendants need in order to successfully achieve probation. At court, the judge talks to defendants if everything is going well, for example, if they are keeping themselves sober. The judge will also address any issues defendants are facing in completing their mental health treatment. Also, when they attend Probation Department meetings, and other programs that are connected to the Probation Department, the probation officers are notified if the defendant appeared to their program class, court, or meetings.

Then, a meeting will be held with Lisa Saucedo, my supervisor to review notes and outline the type of information that will be used for the resource handout. Some editing and draft reviews will take place before printing the resource handout. This may involve getting approval from administration before printing.

Applying the role and responsibility will follow from the information of the program supervisor. Those who will be involved and make decisions for the defendants are mainly the Judge, District Attorney, Probation officers, Behavioral Health Department, and also many programs that they will be referred to, depending on their diagnosis. The defendants assist court once a week and office visits.

Resources that will be needed for the project will be programs that could help them succeed, such as classes, counseling, transportation, job search, housing, shelter, child development, and medical care, it will all depend on their situation.

The Scope of Work in the project implementation will be based on the referrals received from other agencies. Based on that information, the defendants will mainly receive a resource

handout that could help them succeed in their life. Once the handout is researched by helpful resources, it will be printed and delivered to probation officers to be distributed to the defendants. It will take about a week to show if it helped. To show the outstanding of the handout a survey with open ended questions will be created and distributed and defendants will answer the survey questions. Finally, data will be collected. (See Appendix A).

During the past semester defendants were overseen during court time every Wednesday or once a week. By most of the hearings at court many of them lacked knowledge of resources they could use in the community. At the Probation Department, when officers had appointments with defendants sometimes, they had to go online and look for a resource that could help the defendant depending on their needs. It could have been a job, attend a class, transportation or food, it's always different for every defendant. That is when the referral resource handout was in need to the department. Probation Officers were then interviewed and asked in what the defendants usually needed the most help. A list was then created of the most important resources available in the community for the defendants. All the resources were gathered and combined in one page, front and back was printed. The handout has 13 resources available in the community that the defendants should make use of and help them in many ways. The resource handout has employment opportunities, where they could get help building a resume and look for a job. Also get free food, get help in drug abuse, transportation, college classes, housing, childcare, domestic violence, homeless shelters, medical and Cal fresh assistance, and behavioral health department. The handout will be printed in yellow colored paper for the resources to stand out. Once the resource handout is given to the defendants, they are first been advised of different resources available in the community, then they are asked to fill out a survey. Once all surveys are collected from the defendant's data will be collected and show the results of what the defendants

thought of the handout, if it was helpful for them, and if they were going to make use of the resources available in the community. Some resources that were put in the handout are sometimes recommended by the judge when they have court this is why defendants should not struggle too much and get help as it is been offered to help them stay sober and away from misbehaving and committing any violations to their probation.

Assessment Plan

During the month of October, the referral resource handout was given to probationers or defendants. The handout was passed during a time of 3 weeks. Followed by the referral resource handout the defendants had a survey to answer. The survey contained 3 questions asking if they were going to use it and help them succeed in probation by looking for resources available for them in the community. By getting answers to the surveys the graphs will show how many will use them and what resources will they mostly contact. This outcome should show criminal activity being reduced, staying sober, attending any other program classes that taught them skills because they won't commit violations and try to stay busy. The evidence may be depending on each case, and in what circumstances they increase their good behavior and knowledge skills or have a decrease in their criminal activities. They will show their improvement by not being incarcerated, receive special medication depending on their diagnosis, and get tested on drug use when they come to office visits at the Probation Department.

Expected Outcome

The agency's overall goal is to help to reduce or prevent drug relapse and committing any violations. The expected outcome for this project was to increase the defendant's knowledge of local resources and services in the area that can help them continue with their sobriety and successfully complete their probationary status. Making a resource handout for the defendants

was going to be helpful for them because it should increase their knowledge of resources they probably weren't aware of and in the handout there are resources that could help them access other services that aren't necessarily drug related (such as housing, health insurance, and employment). . With this handout their lives could change.

Project Results

The outcome measures were evaluated when a proposed resource handout was going to be made for defendants, to make the defendants more aware of resources available in the community. They were observed when they came into the office for their appointment with the Probation Officer and at court once a week, every Wednesday. Probation Officers were interviewed and asked what their defendants needed the most help from a resource available for them, in the community. A survey was also made and should have data collected to show that__76.2%__ increase their knowledge by using the resource handout. The project achieved its outcomes because__76.2%__ used the handout and increase their knowledge of community resources that are available for their needs. Since most of them said it was helpful it seemed like they reached out for resources they weren't aware of in the community and will now utilize them so gain skills for themselves and help them from committing any violations and staying sober.

Conclusions & Recommendation

The project should be continued to be passed out because defendants need the support about resources they could reach out in the community. Also, because 76.2% said that they would make use of the handout. This states that they will reach out for any type of help available in the handout. Also, because I presence when some defendants asked for information that was available in the Referral Resource Handout. Which means that the handout should be kept in the lobby for them to grab or given to the probation officers so that they are able to distribute in the

future. It should prove some type of reduced violations because the Referral Resource Handout will keep them busy with to look for help such as food, housing or a job. If some need a program, or college classes there are listed in the handout to reach out for it. If it's a mental health issue, Behavioral Health and Domestic Violence solutions are also listed. This should be the start for them to leave their problems behind and prevent drug relapse and violations to their probation.

Personal Reflection

Personal Growth:

These past months in Probation Department I have learned that in criminal activity there are plenty of penalties that can cause a defendant either fail or succeed. I think it is the responsibility of the adults who make their own decisions. From being in the department I was able to observe that the department is always willing to help the defendants while in probation. It is upon the defendants if they make use of resources that are available for them to succeed. Many of them fail while being in probation because they have problems going on in their lives and think they can distress by doing drugs. When they do drugs is when sometimes they make bad choices and are involved in criminal activity, get caught, and then they get a violation. If they start behaving like this it goes on and on and their fees increase, and sometimes is hard for them to pay. There are also many who are good. I've seen when they graduate from a 1-year program, they come to the office to see their probation officer and show the certificate. They seem happy because they didn't believe they were able to succeed on a program and change their lives, when before they made wrong decisions. When I see this, it makes me happy because that shows that

there are people who want to change. Usually they do and they behave for their rest of their probation time.

Successes:

This is a main issue that my mentor stood out to me when I started, which is drug relapse and violations. Therefore we decided to do this project to help they stay busy, look for classes or programs that could help them. But I put the most resources that probation officers though it be best to help them succeed in probation. The handout has employment information, for those who need a job could know where to go to look for employment and also help them build a resume. It also has food information, personal assistance information such as the department of health and human services. Mental and Substance use information for those looking for rehab help or trying to see a therapist. Transportation information for those who don't have a car and need to get somewhere. Educational classes such as college classes or programs available for criminals depending on their case. Childcare information for those who don't have a babysitter. Housing assistance and Domestic Violence assistance. This is the time when they could decide to change. Look for resources that could help them depending on their main need or issue and could change their lives if they want too.

Limitations/ Challenges:

There was a limit to my project design because I had many more resources to add but had no more space because I only had to do one full front and back page. So, I had to put the most important ones that can all combine to make a defendant succeed while in probation. Followed by a survey questionnaire. The answer to it was going to outcome my project. Although my responded that they didn't reside in this county, so they weren't going to use it.

Broader Social Significance:

Since the main issue is drug relapse and committing violations. I decided to put in something that could help them stay busy and not stress out, be on depression or be close to bad influence. Those are contributions that put them more at risk of misbehaving.

I don't believe there was more to do because I am only an intern there and should follow specific rules. But the probation officers always do their best to help out the defendant is mostly the defendants who decide if they are going to be good or not.

I would advise to speak up and ask questions from their beginning of the internship. Also try to shadow in the front desk at the beginning of their internship so that they are able to get the experiences with the defendants. It's a great department that always has different things to learn while being an intern. Every case is different and the high-risk criminals are always a tricky way to handle when they come in to the office because anything could change either from giving a chance to getting arrested and giving a violation.

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Appendix A

A. Scope of Work

Activities	Deliverables	Timeline/Deadline
Knowledge of the new program at court on May 8, 2019.	Those who are diagnosed will be assisting court.	May 8, 2019
The start of receiving new referrals from Behavioral Health Department, who is giving the diagnosis to the probationers.	Probation officers will receive the case referrals.	continuation...
Depending on the diagnosis, they will be referred to a program of needs that could help them succeed.	Be already in probation, the judge will assign him/her to a program if needed, come once a week to the office for check ups.	Once a week. When they assist court.
Once they are being observed a creation of different resources will be created in a handout for the probationers to distribute to defendants.	The resource handout will be given to defendants.	October 14, 2019
During a 3 week process they will be given the handout together with the survey question	There should be a knowledge of resources for the defendants.	October thru November
Data will then be gathered	By getting the answers	November

to show if the resource handout helped them.	from the surveys a graph was created	
Graph shows results	76.2% completed the survey and are going to use the handout	November

Figure 1. Question 1.

Count of Will you use the referral resource handout provided?

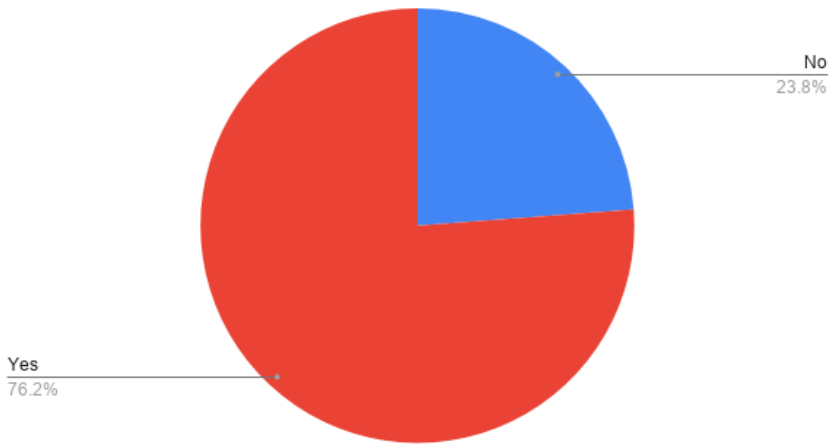


Figure 2. Question 2.

Count of Will you contact any agencies provided in the list to help you succeed on Probation?

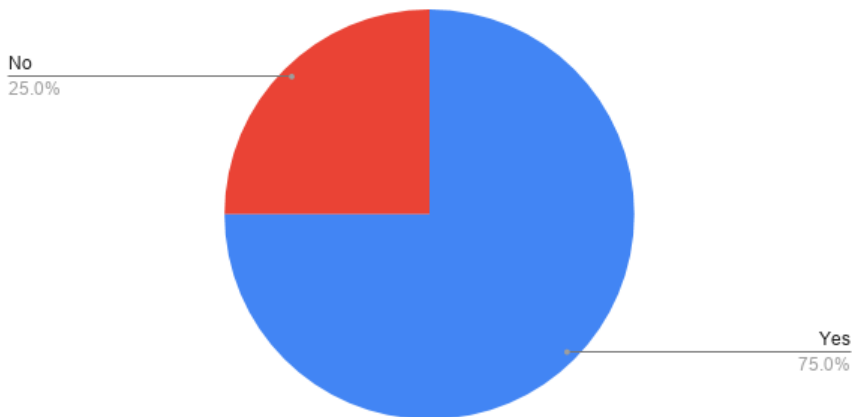
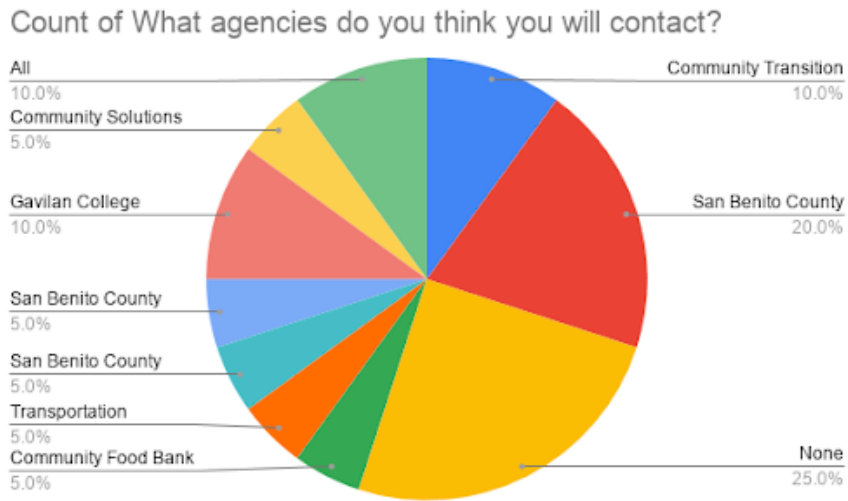


Figure 3. Question 3.



Referral Resource Handout

Employment Information



1111 San Felipe Road Suite 107
Hollister, CA, 95023
(831) 637-5627
Open Monday-Friday 8am-5pm
* Unemployment benefits

Food Information



Women’s, Infants, and Children Program

351 Felice Drive
Hollister CA, 95023
(831) 637-5606
Open Monday- Friday 8am-7pm & the 2nd and 4th Saturday of every month.
*Provides supplemental nutrition and other services.



Community Food Bank

1133 San Felipe Rd
Hollister CA, 95023
(831) 637-0340
Open- Tuesday- Friday 8am-4pm
Saturday’s from 9am-12pm & Marketplace is open Fridays and Saturdays 9:00 a.m.-12 p.m.

Personal Assistance Information

COUNTY HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES AGENCY
PUBLIC HEALTH OR WELFARE

Health and Human Services Agency

1111 San Felipe Rd, Ste 206
Hollister CA, 95023
(831) 636-4180
Open Monday-Friday 8am-5pm
*Medical, Cash Aid, CalFresh assistance

Mental and Substance Use Information

San Benito County
Behavioral Health Department

Mental Health & Substance Use Disorder Services

San Benito County Behavioral Health Department

1131 San Felipe Rd
Hollister CA, 95023
(831) 636-4020

Open Monday- Friday 8am-5pm

Transportation Information



County Express

(831) 636-4161
*Transportation Services available in Hollister, San Juan, and Tres Pinos
*Rides may cost up to \$1.00 & should be scheduled only Monday 9:30am- Friday 4pm

Educational Classes Information



**Gavilan College Hollister Site
Briggs Building**

365 Fourth St.
(831) 636-3783
Open Monday-Thursday 8am-5:30pm
Friday 8am-12pm
*Contact: Josefina Olivares Program
Services Specialist



**San Benito County Probation/
Community Transition Center**

1111 San Felipe Rd, Ste 101
Hollister CA, 95023
(831) 636-4173
Open Monday- Friday 8am-5pm
*Contact: Rene Hankla for more
information



Hollister Child Development Center

331 Gateway Dr
Hollister CA, 95023
(831) 635-9284
*Infant and toddler, preschool, and
afterschool care

Housing Information



San Benito County Housing

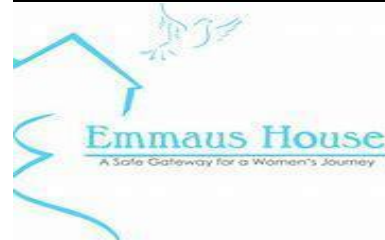
211 Fifth St.
Hollister CA 95023
(831)636- 4356
Open Monday- Friday 8am-NOON 1pm-
5pm
Contact Program Coordinator: Jamila Saqqa



**Home Resource Center Warming
Center**

1161 San Felipe Rd
Hollister CA, 95023
(831) 801-4234

Domestic Violence Information



Emmaus House

24 Hour Hotline- 1-877-778-7978
Emmaus House Daytime phone-
(831) 636-7224

*Call HOT LINE for an intake qualification
*Women and children victims of Domestic
Violence Shelter



Community Solutions

310 4th St
Hollister CA, 95023
(831) 637-1094
Open Monday - Friday 8:30am -5:30pm