



Factors Contributing to Chronic Offending – an Educational Perspective

Participation and success in a coordinated educational program



Oral Language and Juvenile Offenders

Research by Dr. Pamela Snow (La Trobe University) and Professor Martine Powell (Deakin University) on the oral language skills of male juvenile offenders – their findings clearly indicate significant levels of previously unidentified impairment on both expressive (spoken) and receptive (comprehension) tasks



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Education, oral language and young offenders

- **Foundations of language**

Processing and understanding spoken language; vocabulary; conversation rules; shades of meaning; sound system; narrative discourse (story telling)

- **Language of feelings & emotions**

- **Levels of Questioning & Chunking Instructions**

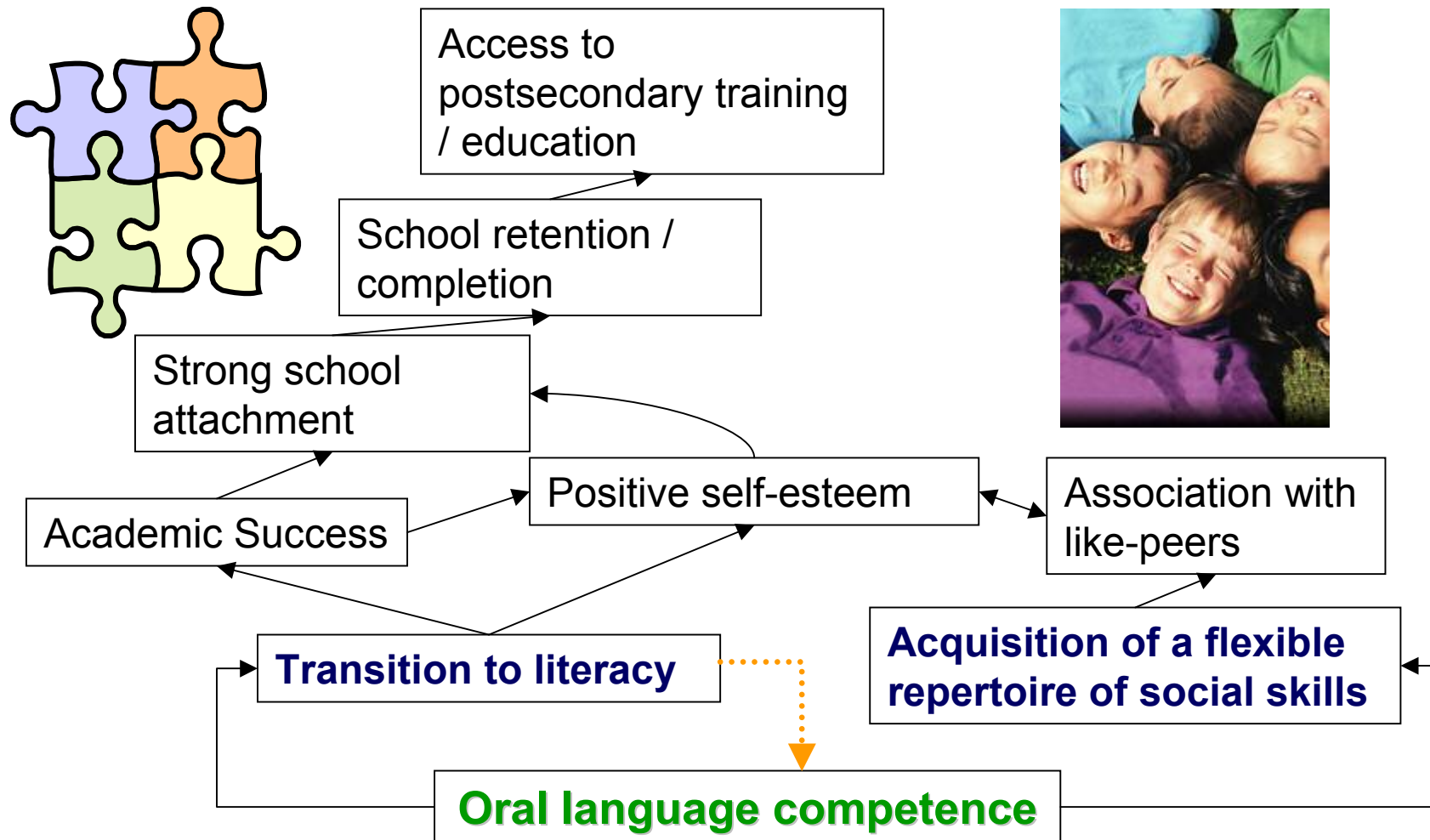
- **Code Switching - (language used) in different contexts eg with mates, school, home, at work....**

Relevance of oral language to juvenile offenders

- **Language skills are strongly linked to academic success – one of the best “protective” psychosocial factors**
- **Body of knowledge about learning problems, i.e., difficulty learning how to read and write**
- **Learning (literacy) problems may be a surrogate indicator for developmental language problems - oral language competence is often not specifically considered esp. if conduct problems are present**

*Dr Pamela Snow, LaTrobe
University*

Oral language competence as a protective factor – Dr Pamela Snow, LaTrobe University





Factors in Participation, Success and Coordinated Education

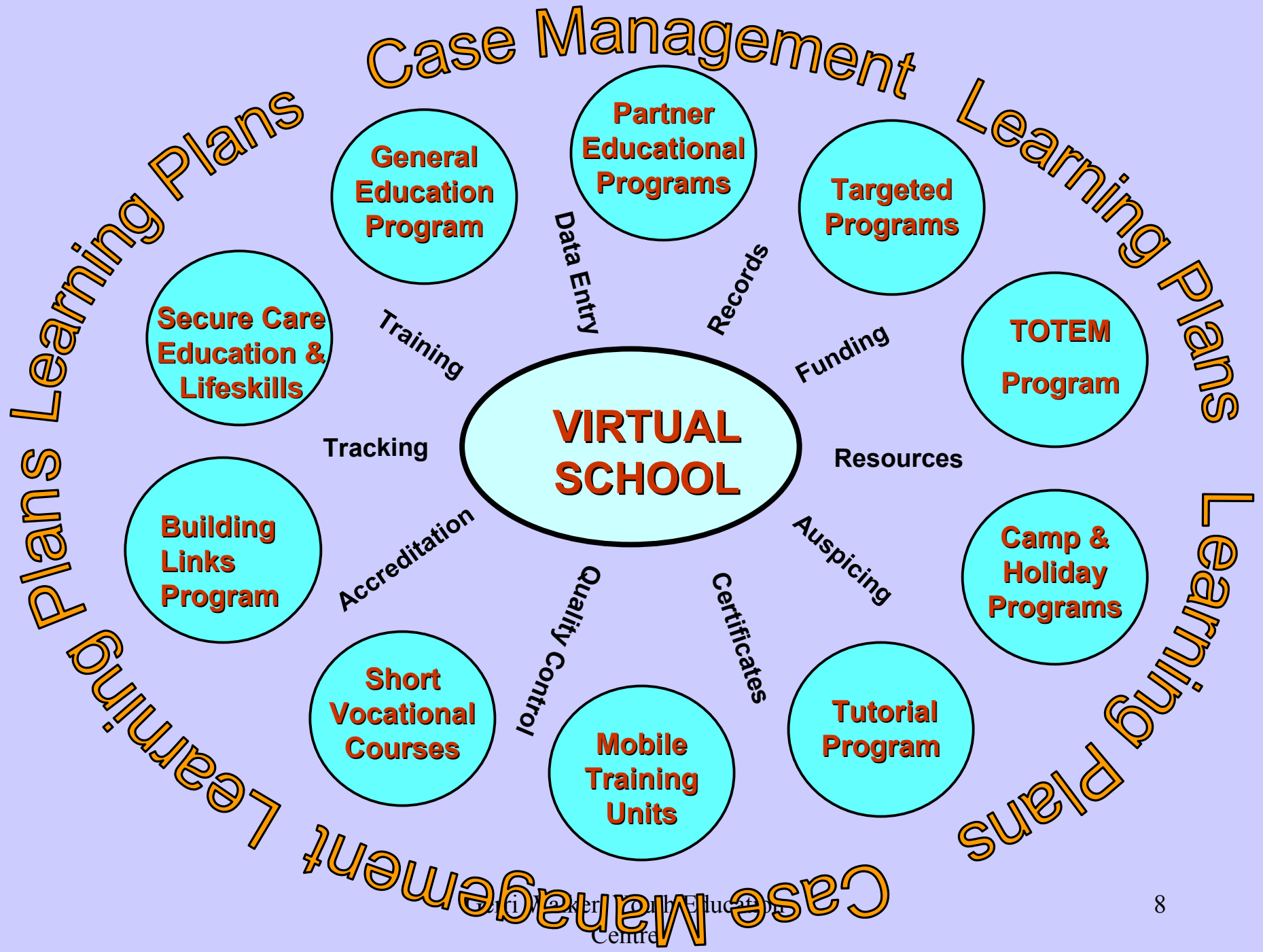
- **Connection to Education**
- **Valuing/accrediting current educational learning experiences**
- **Connecting services working with young offenders**



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So What Needs to Happen?

- **Diverse needs need to be met by an equally diverse range of options**
- **Interdisciplinary blend of skills required**
- **Flexibility within structured responses**
- **Participative adult learning principles**
- **Youth having the responsibility**
- **Culturally appropriate and relevant responses required**
- **Safe and success-oriented environments**
- **Realistic timeframes – not artificially imposed time limits do not work**



Sarah's Speech



“Thank you to the Virtual School, you have made me who I am today. This is my story, but I know that all of the students here today would have a similar story and on their behalf I thank all of you – the way that you work together and believe that we can make it is so important.”

