

Presentation title:

Prison project: Little Scandinavia

Speaker: John Stark and Tomas Lindh (Sveriges Television/SVT, Sweden)

Following the efforts at SCI Chester since 2019, an independent documentary team from the Swedish Television SVT has recorded the development of the Little Scandinavia unit. By showing, in detail, the challenges to penal reform posed by differences in institutional culture and values, changes in staff and administration, and an unprecedented pandemic, the viewers of the documentary series "Prison Project: Little Scandinavia" will be able to be a part of that journey. A Scandinavian audience can directly observe how American correctional professionals reacted and experienced prisons in Sweden, Norway, and Denmark – and understand the stark contrasts between the approaches to punishment in Scandinavia and the US. In observing how the officers seek to implement certain practices and values at home, the audience will be able to reflect on the differences between focusing on punishment and rehabilitation and what those values mean for society at large. The documentary seeks to give perspective on ongoing debates about "tough on crime" policies and sentencing reform.