

# THE PARTNERSHIP

National Partnership for Juvenile Services

## Desktop Guide to Reentry For Juvenile Confinement Facilities

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# Foreword

An estimated 100,000 youth are released from confinement facilities every year, and due to the shorter length of confinement for juveniles than for adults, a relatively greater percentage of juveniles return to the community each year (Sickmund, 2000). Equipping youth with the necessary tools to succeed in the community for the long-term reduces re-offending and the negative effects of institutionalization, which reduces the cost to society both in terms of tax dollars and victimization. Therefore, it is necessary to address the successful reintegration of juvenile offenders into the community after confinement. However, to date, there have been few models and guidelines that exist to develop initiatives in juvenile confinement facilities to ensure successful reentry.

OJJDP, the Department of Justice, the National Partnership for Juvenile Services have made reentry a priority for confinement facilities and have provided the needed models and guidelines to ensure successful reentry. The *Desktop Guide to Reentry for Juvenile Confinement Facilities* is one such product aimed at providing this framework as well as demonstrating the need to make juvenile reentry a priority.

It is my hope that the *Desktop Guide to Reentry for Juvenile Confinement Facilities* will fulfill its promise to reformulate policy, procedures, and practices in juvenile confinement facilities, resulting in the development and application of successful reentry programs and services.

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# Preface

An important juvenile justice initiative from the President George W. Bush Administration is Juvenile Offender Reentry (JOR). The U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Justice Programs (OJP) describes reentry as a priority for effective justice services. Reentry is the successful reintegration of offenders into the community after incarceration. A major challenge facing juvenile justice is how to make the OJP concepts and principles of reentry useful, applicable, and operational for practitioners in juvenile confinement facilities.<sup>1</sup>

*Desktop Guide to Reentry for Juvenile Confinement Facilities (DGR)* helps juvenile confinement practitioners to think about juvenile reentry throughout incarceration and how to redesign institutional operations so they facilitate reentry successfully. *DGR* offers an overview of the history, theory, and practice of juvenile reentry systems. Each chapter addresses one or more aspects of reentry and how each applies to the challenges of the juvenile justice system today. While the importance and efficacy of reentry systems vary from state to state and facility to facility, these guidelines are a bridge to practical implementations at the community, court, and family levels. A cohesive reentry focus, while not always easily quantifiable, will ensure the best results and a strong foundation for the future of incarcerated youths as they return to their communities.

For the *DGR*, a wide range of authors was selected with the goal to represent the many voices of reentry. To this end, each chapter has a unique voice. Each chapter of the *DGR* ends with Promising Practices -- examples from jurisdictions that have successfully handled the concept of reentry. Some of these examples lack full empirical outcome data, but they are highlighted because preliminary anecdotal evidence points to successful outcomes and they provide unique and varied approaches that may stimulate innovations in juvenile offender reentry. In addition, each chapter was written to be a stand-alone document, independent of the whole. However, for a complete understanding of reentry, it is necessary to read the *DGR* in its entirety.

The goal of the *DGR* is to expand the juvenile justice discussion about juvenile reentry, particularly the need for confinement facilities to change the way they do business and include a reentry focus. Fully embracing reentry means a change in the traditional ways of juvenile offender incarceration. With these changes come challenges. The design of the *DGR* identifies many of these challenges and describes ways to address them.

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<sup>1</sup> Juvenile confinement refers to a continuum of restrictive custody imposed by the juvenile court, such as home detention, shelter care, group homes, detention centers, training schools, and confinement education programs, to name a few.

# Introduction

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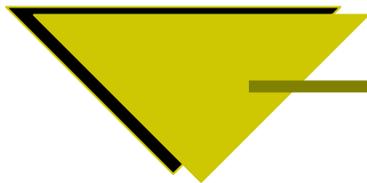
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## The Desktop Guide Model

The Desktop Guide to Reentry will follow the Desktop Guide model, a strategy begun and supported by OJJDP that has improved juvenile probation and juvenile detention practices nationally. Desktop Guides explain concepts and principles (in this case, a discussion of the “what” of reentry) *and* describe the application of the concepts and principles through a “nuts-and-bolts” analysis of best practices (a description of the “how” of programs). The content remains understandable to the practitioner through the use of practitioner experts to develop, monitor, and edit the development of written material. The Desktop Guides move from abstract to concrete when addressing critical and complex topics.

The National Center for Juvenile Justice (NCJJ) recently completed the second edition of the NCJJ/OJJDP *Desktop Guide to Good Juvenile Probation Practice*. It is the most commonly used juvenile probation document and can be found on the desk of probation officers anywhere. It spawned the popular Training for Trainers Curriculum on the use of the *Desktop Guide to Good Juvenile Probation Practice*. The NJDA/OJJDP *Desktop Guide to Good Juvenile Detention Practice* found widespread use in both juvenile detention and corrections facilities. NJDA has also begun developmental work on a new *Desktop Guide to Good Confinement Education Practice*. The Desktop Guides are popular because of their useful practitioner orientation and their cost-effective approach to juvenile justice services.

## The Business of Reentry: Why Invest?

There is a lack of public discussion and political interest in reentry despite the reality that young offenders adjudicated as juveniles – even if they are placed in secure facilities for years – will return to society at large. We spend millions of dollars locking up young people in an effort to largely protect society and to rehabilitate. Why is it then that after spending millions of public dollars locking up juveniles, we spend so little public energy, political attention and capital to assure long-term success for these minors at the point at which failure will be most likely and most costly? Why is reentry not the focus of our emotional, public, professional, scholarly and political investment?

There are many reasons that reentry is a difficult subject to raise and sustain on the public agenda. Put simply, it is intangible, largely invisible, seemingly intractable, and messy. In contrast, training schools, state institutions, and detention centers are tangible, controllable, and heavily structured places. It is a system, a place, a program, and a politically definable entity. Reentry, on the other hand, is not.

Reentry is complicated with factors of community temptations, criminally-leaning friends, struggling families, poverty, and even just the pressure and stressors of the everyday living; all which make reentry a fluid, uncontrollable, and transitory state of being. Beyond the basics of a humane existence, true and successful entry would have to include some means to equip youths with the internal and external means to thrive peacefully and productively in the community, equip communities to provide those external forces to channel peaceful behavior for returning delinquents, and some means to dignify the emotional and physical needs of victims. Since reentry is difficult to fully describe, implement, assess, and to do well, it often fails. It involves an entire constellation of people, resources, and programs. Therefore, it is difficult to make reentry into a practical, publicly embraced, and politically viable agenda item.

## The Desktop Guide to Reentry from Juvenile Confinement Facilities

Reentry remains a potentially valuable investment opportunity but one without the portfolio that would make it attractive to those with the power to invest. In this *Desktop Guide*, we will try to build the shell of a portfolio to help those within the “business” of juvenile reentry from confinement to community. This Guide is designed to help practitioners struggling with the concept of reentry. We will attempt to clarify the company mission and the business plan for reentry by drawing on theory and

research. We will present a mission that defines success at several levels from communicating the value of reentry to equipping offenders to addressing the harm they have caused to their victims and community. We hope to open up our reentry offering to all who could invest in and profit by an investment in reentry. Therefore, we will attempt to benchmark successful and promising practices that others in juvenile justice and corrections are using to chart new paths as well as integrate and improve existing plans. We will also try to change our view of reentry as a program to seeing it as an interwoven net with a capacity to support victims, community peace, and the earned membership of the youths into the community. We will try to sharpen the image and clarify the mission of that net so that the potential payoff of successful reentry can be seen.

## Chapter Synopses

**Chapter 1** addresses the roots of reentry – how history, research and theory can inform practice. The chapter argues that reentry is not a new concept – successful reintegration of juveniles after confinement has been sought after for the past 200 years. It also discusses how theory can inform institutional practice in order to attain successful reentry after confinement. It examines several areas of research and how they influence reentry as well as how to translate theory into practice.

**Chapter 2** examines how to equip youth for reentry success through the development of partnerships, coalitions, and programs. The chapter introduces the many partners of reentry, including the court, law enforcement and public safety agencies, victims, family members, and community agencies and service providers. In addition, coalition-building with governmental agencies is discussed to improve the likelihood of reentry through education, work force development, and independent living. Funding sources for agencies are also discussed.

**Chapter 3** examines the need for confinement facilities’ overarching mission to be focused on the successful reentry of youthful offenders, and to have this mission permeate every aspect of institutional operations. The chapter identifies how a reentry-focused institution differs from a traditional institution in terms of views on safety, treatment, and accountability. It also examines how agencies can reinvent confinement process to reflect a reentry mission. The importance of transitioning is discussed as well as how to build case plans under a reentry model.

**Chapter 4** examines how short-term confinement (detention) facilities define and can carry out a reentry focus amidst the varying and distinct challenges that face these types of facilities. The chapter identifies the need of detention reform efforts, which go hand-in-hand with a reentry focus, by reducing the impact of removal from the community. The chapter addresses how a short-term confinement (detention) facility can make reentry a focus by involving the community, defining staff roles, and viewing detention as linked to the entire justice continuum.

**Chapter 5** discusses how data are important to the success of reentry programs. It examines how agencies can develop data that are useful for policy and decision makers, as well as garner support and buy-in through data. The chapter also examines the importance of measures of performance beyond recidivism. The chapter concludes with a discussion centering on how data can improve reentry practice and outcomes.

**Chapter 6** examines the importance of public attitudes, issue framing, and political agendas in garnering funding and support for reentry policies and programs. It identifies how to frame the issue of reentry to bring reentry to the public agenda through utilizing support and a policy window. Utilizing the media to gather support for reentry policies and programs is also discussed.

# Chapter 1: The Roots of Reentry: What We Can Learn from History, Research and Theory

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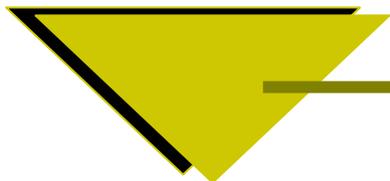
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## Learning from History, Research, and Theory

We are fortunate to have a rich historical record that details the various attempts to eliminate juvenile delinquency. In addition, we are fortunate to have a rich body of research literature and sound theoretical models from which to develop, implement, and evaluate juvenile correctional programs within confinement facilities. The use of the modern confinement facility grew out of past strategies such as treating juveniles as adults and using Houses of Refuge and reformatories. We have focused on treatment and rehabilitation as described in the medical model with an emphasis on longer sentences and more punitive measures. Practitioners in juvenile confinement facilities can learn much about which strategies work better than others, why, and what challenges lie before them through an examination of history, research, and theory.

### What History Tells Us

#### *There's Nothing New Under the Sun*

For many juvenile justice practitioners today, the history of juvenile justice began with the “get tough” era of the 1980s and 1990s. Perhaps for some it began with the changes of the 1970s, in which state after state adopted new statutes affording juveniles certain due process rights that had until then been unnecessary because of the “benevolence” of the juvenile court. For others it began with the implementation of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act of 1974 which introduced the concepts of “core requirements” related how juveniles were differentiated from adults in the system. Some even may recall the landmark case of *In re Gault* (1967) that led to many of the changes we now accept as commonplace in the juvenile justice system and process.

It may be natural to assume that many of the issues related to juvenile justice, including reentry, are relatively new. That is not the case. Those working in the field today would be able to relate easily to discussions with line staff and scholars working a century ago. In fact, many of the questions asked over the course of the past two hundred years about how best to address delinquency and reentry will seem remarkably familiar to modern scholars, decision-makers, and practitioners, including:

- Are we confining youths to protect society, to serve in place of a parent, to prepare them for entry into society (as their families or current environment in the community are not), or to reorient criminal behavior so they can lead successful lives in society?
- What should be done in the confinement setting to give youths the best chance at successful reentry? Is this a matter of changing the youths’ thinking processes and attitudes? Is this a matter of preparing youths with practical skills?
- How much emphasis should be placed on diverting youths from secure confinement, and how much emphasis on returning youths from confinement to the community?
- Is leading a youth toward successful reentry best done by volunteer members of the community or by paid professionals? Can religious instruction help youths find a more successful path to reentry?
- Why is the idea of reentry so difficult to convey to policy-makers outside the field of juvenile justice and corrections?
- Why is successful reentry so difficult? Why does it so often fail?

#### *The Punitive Approach and Its Impact on Juvenile Justice*

Beginning with Supreme Court opinions in the late 1960s and gaining ground in the 1970s, there was a tendency for our society to treat children like adults (Szasz, 1963). The failure of juvenile confinement facilities to stem the public’s fear of juvenile crime and to show robust results in rehabilitating youthful offenders led to an increase in presumptive, definite, and mandatory sentences and guidelines, as well as lowering the age of adult jurisdiction (Cavender, 1982). In addition, attention was

focused on incarceration of what appeared to be an ever-increasing percentage of serious and violent teens. Public debate in the 1980s and 1990s turned to sentencing options, including the appropriate use of statutory exclusion to allow for automatic waiver of some juveniles to the adult system, blended sentences, and the problems of confining minors in adult prisons. Little of the debate in the public and among legislatures focused on the need to match juvenile – and now adult – reentry programs to the needs of predatory youths.

### ***Changing Directions for Juvenile Justice***

At the scholarly and the practitioner levels, however, the need for a reinvention of parole for juveniles was still on the agenda during the 1980s and 1990s. Through this period, a paradigm for intensive aftercare was developed by scholars including, Doctors David Altschuler and Troy Armstrong. Their efforts, supported by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, allowed juvenile systems direction and assistance in channeling youths toward peaceful reentry (see Altschuler & Armstrong, 1994a, 1994b, 1994c, 1995, 1996, 1997).

In the 1980s, other scholars also began to have an effect on the practitioners' views of the mission of the juvenile justice system. The balanced approach to juvenile probation began to emerge as an alternative to the dialectic rehabilitation vs. punishment debate in legislatures, research, and literature (Maloney, Romig, & Armstrong, 1988). Restorative or reintegrative paradigms from the work of those such as Dr. John Braithwaite and a balanced model of justice framed by Dr. Gordon Bazemore captured the attention of system stakeholders (see Bazemore & Umbreit, 1994; Bazemore, Pranis, & Umbreit, 1997; Braithwaite, 1989). The idea of community and victim involvement in juvenile justice and correctional programming began to filter into public and political agenda setting.

By the dawn of the twenty-first century, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), in concert with a host of other federal departments, set about framing the issue of reentry for decision-makers across the United States. With publications, workshops, and funding, the business of offender reentry began to emerge as an effective means to address the ever-mounting fiscal and human costs of the widespread use of confinement as a correctional sanction. It is an attempt to shift the mission and viewpoint not just of scholars and practitioners, but also of politicians and the public, away from viewing confinement as the end product of justice and correctional systems. Instead, reentry presents a peaceful and productive community life as the true goal of justice and correctional systems.

It is hoped that with this new direction, sustained by OJJDP and other federal departments, reentry will become an important point on the public agenda. While history gives no assurances that society will be able to sustain a reentry focus, it does help prepare us for its unique challenges. For a strategy to be successful and maintain itself, it must be undergirded by good theory and research, structured by proven protocols, and administered well.

### **What Theory and Research Tells Us**

Theory and research can provide the impetus for community reentry planning and interventions. The objectives of successful reentry are ultimately to reduce the risk factors that are predictive of future delinquent and criminal behavior for the youth and to increase the strengths that are predictive of prosocial and responsible behavior. This is the exciting and dynamic link between theory and practice.

However, in examining theoretical models and relevant research, it is also critical to understand the existing value systems of the community. Models may stress different means and even slightly different end states or goals. Theory and research must be utilized in the context of community value structures in order for a model for successful juvenile offender reentry to be embraced and successfully implemented.

Many juvenile justice practitioners are attempting to incorporate available research on effective interventions in order to improve the system's outcomes. This research demands that practitioners take

a nuanced view of the individual and contextual social factors associated with juvenile crime and encourages practitioners to examine the merits of the customary interventions of the justice system and to question the wisdom of continuing many of these practices.

### ***Establishing a Theoretical Framework***

An important first step in improving reentry outcomes is to establish a theoretical framework and system of values that guide and link interventions throughout the entire justice system. The theoretical framework should be informed by the best available research and knowledge of effective practices. It should be understood by all stakeholders, which include juvenile justice administrators and staff, victims, juvenile offenders and families, community-based service organizations, volunteers, and community members. This framework should be guided by a juvenile justice mission that encourages and relies upon shared involvement and ownership by these stakeholders.

### ***Balanced and Restorative Justice***

One framework that builds on solid research and practice is Balanced and Restorative Justice (BARJ). BARJ principles, practices, and goals provide an ideal framework for a juvenile justice system that is interested in holding offenders accountable for their crimes, enhancing community safety, and fostering a reintegration process that enhances the capabilities of youthful offenders and improves relationships within the community (see Bazemore & Maloney, 1994; Bazemore & Umbreit, 1998; Moeser, 1997).

Restorative justice requires an active partnership with the community, which is an essential part of a successful reentry plan. Under this framework, the plan must incorporate and take into account the conditions, needs, and responsibility of the community. BARJ principles and practices can be applied within institutions, in the community, and to support the transition from placement to the community. Combining restorative justice practices and principles with a balanced approach to working with youthful offenders is a powerful framework on which to build successful intervention efforts, including reentry.

### ***Making Reentry Successful through Research and Theory***

There is much to be learned from the best research over the last 10 to 15 years presented and gathered in juvenile delinquency literature and in related fields such as youth development, resiliency, asset development, and system theory. Several areas of research are highlighted below and can be successfully integrated into a coherent and thoughtful approach to successful reentry programming.

## **Addressing Criminogenic Risk and Need Factors**

One model which the juvenile justice system utilizes to explain why some juveniles become delinquent and others do not is based upon identifying risk and protective factors (see Appendix D for a summary of risk and protective factors). For example, Mrazek and Haggerty (1994) define a risk factor as “those characteristics, variables, or hazards that if present for a given individual, rather than someone selected from the general population, will develop a disorder” (p. 127). In the case of juvenile justice, this disorder is delinquency (Hawkins, Herrenkohl, Farrington, Brewer, Catalano, & Harachi, 1998; Lipsey & Derzon, 1998). The more risk factors a youth has, the more likely the outcome of delinquency will occur. However, there are also protective factors, which mediate the effect of the exposure to risk factors and hence reduce the likelihood that the problem behavior will occur (Pollard, Hawkins, & Arthur, 1999). Identifying risk factors and protective factors for youths helps programs target their efforts in a more efficient and effective manner (Shader, 2003).

Andrews and Bonta (1994) take risk and protective factors a step farther in their meta-analysis of the delinquency research, which zeroes in on “criminogenic risk and need factors;” that is, the factors which are predictive of high-risk acting out/criminal behavior. Based upon an understanding of these factors, research suggests that in order to reduce recidivism with medium to high-risk offenders, the criminogenic risks of the offender must be targeted (e.g. peer associations, family connections and

support, enhancing educational connections, and increasing self-management and problem-solving skills). Additionally, this focus can include such things as changing antisocial attitudes and feelings, promoting a prosocial/non-criminal identity, and ensuring that the client is able to recognize and avoid risky situations (Walsh, 2000).

## **Strategically Addressing Sociological Factors that Influence Reentry**

Some theoretical frameworks stress the importance of positive interactions between the youthful offender and his or her supporters (the family, peers, and other community adults and role models) as the keys to successful reentry. Other models address factors such as socioeconomic status, religion, school, social opportunities, and gender. To promote successful reentry, Walsh (2000) argues that family interventions should focus upon:

- Increasing family structure and cohesion, (bolstering the parental subsystem);
- Increasing parental supervision, effective discipline, and clear and consistent rules and expectations;
- Increasing familial affection and communication; and
- Problem-solving and addressing barriers to effective parenting such as criminal behavior, substance abuse, psychiatric conditions, low social support, and ineffective parenting strategies.

Because the environment can greatly impact the reentry of juveniles into the community, neighborhoods that are socially disorganized and characterized by concentrated poverty, high residential mobility, population heterogeneity, and high rates of single-parent households tend to have high rates of offending (Bursik & Grasmick, 1993; Shaw & McKay, 1969). There is evidence to suggest that no matter how many protective factors are built around a child, a socially - disorganized neighborhood can still prompt the child to commit serious offenses (Wikstrom & Loeber, 2000). Thus, the environment can “trump” any and all of the institutional programs that try to instill protective factors in these youths.

In addition, improving the economic status of the family or reducing the strain of achieving monetary success may be beyond the scope of many juvenile justice departments. Nonetheless, ignoring the powerful impact of unmet basic needs or the social disorganization and economic challenges that may exist in the youth’s surroundings could hamper reentry efforts.

One way to address the environment and sociological factors that impact juveniles is through a social-ecological perspective. The social-ecological perspective proposes that neither people nor their problems exist in a vacuum (Walsh, 2000). Individuals both influence and are influenced by their environments (Bandura, 1986; Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Therefore, any attempts at prosocial change must take into account the influence of multiple systems such as the family, the institution and institutional programming, education, and peers (Brendtro & Cunningham, 1998).

In addition, reentry planning should:

- Reinforce the important link between education and delinquency, providing support for youths to become successfully engaged in learning activities (Elliott, 1978; Farrington, 1986; Hawkins, Herrenkohl, Farrington, Brewer, Catalano, & Harachi, 1998; Hirschi, 1969; Rhodes & Reiss, 1969; Thornberry, Moore, & Christenson, 1984).
- Replace delinquent peer relationships with opportunities and reinforcement for youths to form relationships with prosocial and success-oriented peers and adults (Elliott & Menard, 1996; Gottfredson & Hirschi, 1987; Thornberry, Lizotte, Krohn, Farnworth, & Jang, 1994).
- Build on positive spiritual/religious connections for youths (Chard-Wierschem, 1998).
- Provide social opportunities that allow youths to demonstrate a crime-free lifestyle (Baldwin-Grossman & Garry, 1997; Keating, Tomishima, Foster, & Alessandri, 2002).

## ***Translating Theory into Practice***

While theory is helpful in directing practices, it sometimes may be difficult to synthesize all we know into concrete programming and interventions. Some scholars have already translated theory and research into practice through instructive models that may direct what an institution needs to do to support the successful reentry of juveniles back into the community. Three examples that provide such guidance are the cognitive learning model, the social ecological model, and multi-systemic therapy.

### **The Cognitive Learning Model**

The cognitive learning model makes it clear how new behavior is acquired and then maintained over the long-term. It includes the following (Walsh, 2000):

1. Verbal instruction on the skill (cognitive rehearsal)
2. Staff or peer modeling of the skill (behavioral rehearsal)
3. Cognitive rehearsal of the skill by the youth (with visualization or creative imagery):
4. Behavioral rehearsal of the skill by the youth (with staff and peer observation)
5. Positive feedback and evaluation (4 positive feedbacks to 1 negative feedback)
6. Over-correction (have the youth exaggerate the new behavior)
7. Replay the behavior until it becomes second nature
8. Reinforcement by staff (until mastery)
9. Application in real life situations (then repeat steps 5-8)
10. Build in ecological supports by having the youth's support people look for, notice, and reinforce new behaviors

No matter how well designed, the ultimate criterion regarding the effectiveness of any program or service is whether the new learning carries over into the real world (Walsh, 2000). This principle is called "ecological validity." That is, does the treatment intervention, or the skill or lesson that is taught, have real world application? The youth's behavior in placement is not necessarily indicative of what his or her behavior will be out in the community. In fact, the correlation between behavior within a treatment facility and the youth's behavior when he or she leaves the facility and reenters the community is almost non-existent. Delinquent youths, in particular, are masters at reading the motivations of other people and giving them what they want or opposing what they want, depending on their desires at the moment. Neither behavioral compliance nor opposition is necessarily indicative of the youth's potential adjustment in the community (Walsh, 2000).

Social learning theory argues that the characteristics in which learning or skills can be better maintained from one context to another include: (1) the treatment environment is similar to the community environment, (2) the youth has ample opportunity to practice the learned behavior in the new environment, (3) there are consistent incentives/reinforcers to maintain new thinking and behavior within the community environment, (4) learning is slowly phased from the treatment environment to the community environment, and (5) the behavior has some real world application (Akers, 1997). These characteristics clearly suggest that programming needs to approximate and include the set of contingencies the youth will face in the community so that the new behaviors and skills will be practiced under a variety of conditions, first in treatment and then gradually transferred to the community (Walsh, 2000). In addition, it suggests that the youth's real world has to be structured to support his or her new thinking and behavior (Walsh, 2000).

## ***The Social-Ecological Model***

The theory of social ecology states that individuals are growing entities that actively restructure their environments (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). The individual interacts with and influences the environment and the environment interacts with and influences the individual, which results in mutual accommodation or “reciprocal determinism” (Bandura, 1986). The theory also proposes that behavior is influenced by settings and persons who do not come in direct contact with the individual. The youth’s ecology, therefore, encompasses the family, community, school, peers, involved professionals, court systems, etc (also known as systems)<sup>2</sup>. It is through those circles of influence that change is supported or rebuffed; therefore, the ecology becomes a major factor in the youth’s ability to maintain change over time.

The influence of a system can orient a youth towards certain patterns of behavior. The behavior within or between multiple systems can maintain the identified problems. Behavior that happens within and between systems either supports the youth’s success in maintaining responsible, healthy, and law-abiding behavior, or will aggravate his or her established delinquent patterns. When the behavior within or between multiple systems supports delinquent patterns, that system is said to be dysfunctional (Walsh, 2000).

How we define relationships, behavioral role models, and “normal” behavior all influence personal choices. Therefore, any attempts at therapeutic change must take into account systems-influence; otherwise the system will counteract the change. As one of a youth’s risk areas goes up, it interacts with and aggravates other risk areas. For example, association with negative peers can erase the progress the youth has made in one area (e.g. a new job or education plan).

Interventions are thus targeted and delivered with ecological validity; that is, directly in the home, school, peer, and neighborhood settings in which problems arise. The interventions are designed in full collaboration with family members and key figures in each setting (e.g. teachers, counselors, principals, etc.). The point is to get the system to orient itself towards new sequences of behavior that support the success of the youth (Walsh, 2000).

## ***Multi-Systemic Therapy***

Multi-systemic therapy’s treatment principles are helpful in organizing effective treatments and interventions. The treatment principles include the following guidelines (Henggeler, Melton, Brondino, & Scherer, 1997):

- Therapeutic contacts should emphasize the positive and should use systemic strengths as levers for change.
- Interventions should be designed to promote responsible behavior and decrease irresponsible behavior among family members.
- Interventions should be based in the present and action-oriented, targeting specific and well-defined problems.
- Interventions should target sequences of behavior within or between multiple systems that maintain the identified problems.
- Interventions should be developmentally appropriate and fit the needs of the youth.
- Interventions should be designed to require daily or weekly effort by family members.

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<sup>2</sup> Brendtro and Cunningham (1998) built upon the idea of ecologies and recommend several important areas or “ecologies” which should be addressed in program development for the successful reentry of incarcerated juveniles. These ecologies include the family, institution, education, and peers.

- Intervention efficacy is evaluated continuously from multiple perspectives with providers assuming accountability for overcoming barriers to successful outcomes.
- Interventions should be designed to promote treatment generalization and long-term maintenance of therapeutic change by empowering caregivers to address family members' needs across multiple systems.

Multi-systemic therapy, then, is one way to organize an intervention that may help ensure reentry success.

## **Conclusion**

Theory and research can help shape and refine successful reentry programs and practices. By grounding stakeholders and all levels of staff in basic theory and research, reentry programs can begin to orient programs, policies, and practices to best prepare and support youths in becoming fully functioning members of the community. In addition, by understanding the past, we are better prepared to know what challenges we face as well as what has and has not been successful in dealing with juvenile delinquents.

Questions lie before us all. Can more be done to provide community-based services to youths without sacrificing short-term public safety, thus avoiding the very difficult process of reentry from secure confinement? Which offenders truly require such a separation from the community setting? For those juveniles who are confined, how do we focus every staff member, every program, and every dollar on the means to best assure that youths will live peacefully and productively upon return to the community, that victims will be best served by the justice system, and that the reentry of youths will lead to reductions in further delinquent behavior? Through knowledge of the past and knowledge of research and theoretical models, we may have answers to these questions.

## **PROMISING PRACTICE: House of Joseph III -Transitional Living Program, Delaware Department of Children, Youth, and Their Families**

**MISSION:** To *Think of the Child First* and for every child to have safety, stability, self-esteem and a sense of hope. For some homeless adjudicated youth leaving the Department's care, there is no supportive environment to help them attain future success.

**POPULATION:** The House of Joseph III serves up to five youth between 16 and 18 years old who are transitioning out of Ferris School for Boys in the custody of the Department's Division of Youth Rehabilitative Services (DYRS) on aftercare. These youth do not have a biological or adoptive family to reside with and are in need of a supportive and safe place to live. Youth must have the capability to succeed in the public schools or alternative education programs and be able to function in an open setting as has been determined the most appropriate living environment for the youth.

**PROGRAM DESCRIPTION:** The House of Joseph III began in September 2003 and is similar to other independent living programs, which do not accept adjudicated youth. The youth residing at the program will agree to attend school and/or work at a job, play a part in house management, receive counseling, and partake in group activities. Youth will also be expected to comply with DYRS conditions of community services.

The program will also provide continued transitional housing and a supportive environment for youth past their DYRS maximum discharge date up to age 21 if necessary through other networked residential/shelter programs.

The House of Joseph III will prepare youth for self-sufficiency and provide ongoing services during the placement. They will strive to meet developmental and therapeutic needs of each resident who has been determined to have behavioral or emotional problems. All residents will receive drug and alcohol educational awareness classes.

Lastly, the House of Joseph III will be responsible for coordinating linkages for each resident to appropriate treatment services within the community based on an individualized assessment and treatment plan.

**JURISDICTIONAL ENVIRONMENT:** This program is operated in a geographically small state that has a population slightly over 796,000. The Department of Children, Youth, and Their Families DYRS operates one secure care treatment facility, Ferris School, which receives adjudicated youth statewide. Ferris is an 80-bed capacity facility with an average monthly population of 76. DYRS also has jurisdiction over two detention facilities and community services probation and aftercare with a total annual operating budget of about 40 million dollars.

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## **PROMISING PRACTICE: The Five Factor Model, Kansas Juvenile Justice Authority**

**MISSION:** To promote public safety, to hold juvenile offenders accountable for their behavior, and to improve the ability of youth to live productively and responsibly in their communities.

**POPULATION:** The Kansas Juvenile Justice Authority's (JJA) Five Factor Model serves males and females between the ages of 10 and 23. They have specialized services for juvenile offenders, including those who commit sexual offenses, or who have substance abuse issues, mental illness, or a physical disability.

**PROGRAM DESCRIPTION:** The Five Factor Model began in August 2002 to define the treatment and training needs that are essential to the successful reintegration of juvenile offenders into their communities. The five factors are school, character education, treatment, skill development, and community connections. The first factor is a **school initiative**, through which the goal is to improve the high school graduation rate of incarcerated juvenile offenders to mirror the graduation rate of the general population. The second factor, **character education**, is designed to develop good values and address offenders' personality issues. One of the major programs in this area will be mentoring, an aspect Kansas hopes to soon develop. The third factor is a **treatment approach**. Kansas has found that many of the juvenile offenders in the juvenile correctional facilities have mental health and/or substance abuse issues, and some have physical disabilities. They are currently establishing an evaluation of all the approaches for these special populations in order to establish a baseline of care. **Skill development** is the fourth factor, through which the JJA will prepare youth with real skills for jobs and community living. They plan on offering certificates of training for vocational work (electrical, welding, etc.) that will allow the youths to make a living. This area also addresses leisure and social skills. The final factor is **community connections**, in which they attempt to connect youth to resources within their community. The focus will be not only on teaching youths the duties of a citizen and the functions of the government, but how to participate in the community using services are available to help them establish themselves as successful adults. While these factors are viewed as a fairly viable model for the community, Kansas recognized that a residential services curriculum needed to address youth in the long-term care facilities (youth who serve more than six months).

The JJA uses a battery of tools to assess each juvenile offender who comes into a juvenile correctional facility, to identify each individual's specific needs as well as risk factors for re-offending. The juveniles become involved in programming to address those needs during their stay in the juvenile correctional facility. These services are then continued once the youth is released into community supervision and aftercare. Community supervision lasts a minimum of six months, and aftercare supervision can last up to two years. In truth, however, because the youth learn skills and develop support applicable to their long-term success, they are encouraged to continue to access that support on a voluntary basis even after release from supervision.

**JURISDICTIONAL ENVIRONMENT:** Kansas is a relatively large state geographically, with a population around three million. The Juvenile Justice Authority is a mid-size juvenile justice agency with an average daily juvenile correctional facility population of roughly 500, total custody population of roughly 2,100 juvenile offenders, and an annual operating budget over \$85 million.

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## **PROMISING PRACTICE: Minnesota's Reentry Initiative, Minnesota Department of Corrections**

**MISSION:** To assist ex-offenders to become productive, responsible and law-abiding citizens. Objectives include: obtain and retain long-term employment for participants; maintain stable residences for participants; address substance abuse and mental health needs; and establish a meaningful, supportive capacity in the community.

**POPULATION:** The program serves males and females between the ages of 16 and 34. The youth must fulfill the following requirements in order to be able to participate: must have multiple challenges of chemical dependency/substance abuse, serious mental health issues, sex offenses and/or be developmentally disabled; scored high on the Youth Level of Service Inventory (YLSI); released to Hennepin County; and released from a long-term correctional facility.

**PROGRAM DESCRIPTION:** The program will provide institutional and community-based transition services to offenders between the ages of 16 and 34 from Hennepin County. Services will include employment assistance and training, substance abuse treatment, mental health treatment, sex offender treatment, restorative justice programming, incentive-based programming, housing assistance, community support services, life skills training, victim advocacy services, family support services, and intensive case management. There are three phases. **Phase I is Institutionally-Based Programs.** It includes assessment and treatment. Designated offenders will be placed on a priority treatment track within the institution. The offender will also be transferred, when possible, to an institution close to the offender's support group (which includes family members, faith community, community members, and community service providers) to allow for easier access to the offender and maintenance of important relationships that will be utilized upon release. A case manager will develop a relationship with the community service providers in order to provide continuity in service. They will provide employment services including GED services, vocational training, job fairs, and job readiness preparation. **Phase II is called Community-Based Transition.** All offenders are under the supervision of a community reintegration coordinator (CRC), and will be responsive to community reentry circles of support (which include family members, the supervised release officer, the CRC, and community service providers). At least 120 days prior to the release of the participant, development of the case management release plan will occur. This plan will address the areas of employment, housing, aftercare, health, life skills class, education, restorative justice involvement, and community support. All participants will enter and complete a structured reentry curriculum that is gender and culturally responsive. **Phase III is the Community-Based Long-Term Support phase.** A primary function of the community-based case management is the enriching of the community to which the offender will return. A major function of the community resource developer role will be to arrange connections to resources for that person who will form the support network upon which the reentering offender will rely. The caseworker will arrange for job training and placement, appropriate social services and family development activities, as well as create networks among supportive persons in the program participant's community. This attention to the supportive community is intended to create a capacity to sustain the offender beyond the services offered in this project.

**JURISDICTIONAL ENVIRONMENT:** Minnesota is a relatively large state geographically, with a medium-sized population. The Department of Corrections has a small average daily population of juveniles (approximately 90 youths) with an operating budget over 360 million dollars.

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## Chapter 2: Equipping for Reentry Success: Partnerships, Coalition-Building and Independence-Building

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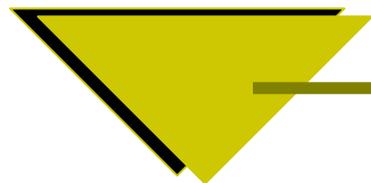
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## Reentry Success through Partnerships and Building Independence

Coalitions or partnerships allow various agents to “combine their human and material resources to effect a specific change the members are unable to bring about independently” (Brown, 1984, p. 3). Thus, central to the effective reentry of the juvenile into the community is the building of partnerships to support long-term success. Before undertaking the discussion of the various partners and stakeholders possible in juvenile reentry, it is necessary to discuss coalitions and partnerships<sup>3</sup> in general.

There are many benefits to forming a coalition or partnership with various agencies. Coalitions allow for the emergence of new ideas and approaches; are a good source of feedback and information; and allow the pooling of resources to reduce the overall burden on one particular agency or member. However, for these benefits to be visible, the coalition or partnership must be devised with care<sup>4</sup>. A necessary component in building any coalition is strategic planning.<sup>5</sup> The environment of the coalition must be analyzed, a sound organizational structure devised, an overarching, unifying mission statement developed, an action plan developed, specific objectives and tasks for each member or agency handed out, and a process for continual assessment and monitoring devised. Issues such as leadership, staffing, communication, decision-making, distribution of resources, budgeting, and recruitment must all be examined and guidelines prepared (Cohen, Baer, & Satterwhite, 2002; Kaye & Wolff, 2002; Sherow & Weinberger, 2002).

Another necessary component in any coalition is maintenance. Maintenance of the coalition is partly achieved through sound strategic planning. Another element, however, is effectiveness. It is necessary for coalition leadership to act upon continual monitoring and assessment outcomes. A deliberate effort to identify and fix conflicts, problems, and barriers is necessary to maintain the effectiveness of the coalition (Sherow & Weinberger, 2002). Leadership must be able to anticipate and identify change in the environment, as well as adapt the coalition to that change (Sherow & Weinberger, 2002). An important element for the maintenance of any coalition is celebration of successes and marketing of the coalition itself (Kaye & Wolf, 2002; Cohen, Baer, & Satterwhite, 2002). Strategic planning and maintenance are two necessary components in coalition-building. However, an essential component of coalition-building is the identification of and dealing with possible stakeholders and/or partners to accomplish long-term success.

Coalition-building between government agencies, nonprofit agencies, faith-based entities, and local service providers in conjunction with families, neighborhood centers, educators, and employers all can help support juvenile reentry. It is therefore important to understand what each of these partners can bring to the table. In addition, it is necessary to acknowledge and address the concerns and challenges of these partners in order to ensure a well-working relationship toward long-term reentry success.

## Partners in Reentry

### *The Court*

Juvenile courts administer justice for victims, offenders, and the community. Generally, victims expect justice and amends. The community expects public safety. The offender wants fair and humane treatment, and he or she needs accountability and rehabilitation. The court takes these variables into consideration as decisions are made with the end in mind, which is the moment of reentry. Therefore,

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<sup>3</sup> In this text, coalition and partnership are interchangeable terms.

<sup>4</sup> A complete discussion of coalition-building is impossible in this text, please see Brown, 1984; Cohen, Baer, & Satterwhite, 2002; Kaye & Wolff, 2002; Sallade & Ryan, 2004; and Sherow & Weinberger, 2002 for a more detailed discussion.

<sup>5</sup> The Jurisdictional Planning Assistance (JPA) is an effective, two-day strategic planning workshop developed with OJJDP funding and implemented through the Center for Research & Professional Development at Michigan State University, which focuses specifically on juvenile justice and child welfare issues.

courts have an important and sustained interest in the successful reentry of youths to the community. The court begins by applying the law to the strengths and needs of the youth, assessing the nature of the offense, and considering the interests and input of victims. Ultimately, the court will order some form of successful intervention. Courts also can play a key role in the development of resources, engaging the community in prevention and reentry efforts, and in monitoring outcomes for youths and the community.

### ***Law Enforcement and Public Safety***

Involving law enforcement in a reintegration plan can add valuable resources and knowledge to the planning process. Public safety is not just law enforcement's interest. Other components of the juvenile justice system can enhance the law enforcement's role in reentry through sharing of knowledge and building partnerships.

### ***Victim***

The victim is often a microcosm of all the community's concerns. That is, a victim may have conflicting desires for revenge, justice, rehabilitation, deterrence, and above all, safety. Consequently, the reentry process labors to address these sometimes divergent goals. A victim's sense of safety may be primarily based on a perception of offender accountability and level of confidence in the supervising agency. Victims are all different, and their attitudes about returning offenders largely depends upon the circumstances of the crime, their relationship to the offender(s), and their treatment in the criminal justice system. It is also important to respect and know victims' rights. This can increase the victim's confidence in the system, as well as the likelihood of becoming more willing to participate in the reentry process. Ways in which the victim can be involved in the reentry process include:

- Asking victims to submit a victim impact statement if they so wish. A victim impact statement can convey the victim's perspective on how the offense personally and specifically affected him or her. This input can allow the court to establish victim-sensitive conditions of community supervision.
- Giving the victims a voice (to the extent they may want to have a voice) in the planning for the youth's reentry. To give credence to reentry efforts, there must be a review of the potential role of the victim in juvenile offender reentry. Significant work has been done in the victim-advocacy arena, which outlines the issues and importance of adopting a victim-sensitive reentry plan (see Seymour, 2001).

### ***Family***

To see the family as a resource is to believe that the family has the requisite skills, an intact and vital network of supports, and the social capital within the community to invest in the life of their child. Outside of an effective community reentry model, these assertions about the family may seem off-base since many of the families of the youths in the juvenile justice system have been primary risk factors for the youths in the past. For the family to be seen as a true resource takes a dramatic shift in perspective.

Even though it seems counter-intuitive to return a youth to the very environment that may have supported his or her delinquent behavior, it is generally best to support the juvenile's attachment to the family (Roush, 2002). In fact, the family is the single most important factor in determining a youth's success upon return to the community (Altschuler, Armstrong, & MacKenzie, 1999; Andrews & Bonta, 1994; Lipsey, 1992; Whitehead & Lab, 1989). Empowering parents to become active partners in reentry and transition planning is crucial, and what may motivate and engage them in the process must be carefully considered. For instance:

- Family services must be available and easily accessible for families that need them. A confinement facility can choose from a variety of research-based programs and models to enhance and support the family.<sup>6</sup>
- Barriers to family involvement must be addressed. For instance, transportation problems, scheduling conflicts, cultural differences, and lack of staff training in family engagement must be solved in order to involve the family.
- Assistance conceptualizing what the family needs to do to support the youth is necessary. This may include addressing and repairing broken relationships and the development of plans for crisis management, recreation, and the like.

### **An Example of Engaging Families in Reentry**

Building new partnerships between state juvenile correctional agencies and community-based organizations, whose mission is to work with families, can prove to be an ideal strategy for successful reintegration. One such model in Wisconsin is the coalition between the State Division of Juvenile Corrections, the Milwaukee Parenting Network, and the Social Development Commission. Using grants, these three agencies have agreed partner in the training and delivery of a science-based, research-proven curriculum called “Creating Lasting Family Connections” (CLFC).

CLFC, one of the OJJDP model programs to strengthen families, has demonstrated that youths and families in high-risk environments can be assisted in becoming strong, healthy, and supportive people (Alvarado, Kumpfer, Kendall, Beesley, & Lee-Cavaness, 2000). Through trained group facilitation, youths and parents learn appropriate defenses against environmental risk factors such as substance abuse and violence. Parents and youths learn interpersonal communication skills, refusal skills, and build stronger family bonds. Having Community-Based Organizations deliver the Creating Lasting Family Connections youth module to juveniles while they are in the institution initiates the connection to the community. Simultaneously, parents will be able to receive parent training and support in the community with other families not necessarily involved in the justice system. The curriculum also offers an integrated module for both the youth and his or her parent(s).

### ***Community Agencies and Service Providers***

Community-based organizations that provide support and services to youths and their families are critical to the reintegration process. Finding ways to engage them in the institutional phase of supervision so that youths are connected to them at the time of reentry is an important part of “seamless” reintegration.

The community is an environment that can allow the juvenile an opportunity to demonstrate newly acquired coping skills. This environment must minimize offender risk factors with combinations of accountability and supportive interventions. In addition, the community must maximize the systems and resources that facilitate the reentry process.

A facility that has dedicated itself to a reentry mission must bridge the gap between the institution and the community. One way to bridge this gap is through allowing community partners to run programs in the institution that may then be continued on the outside. However, there are often barriers that must be overcome in order to bring community partners into the institution.

One major barrier to community partnerships is resistance by institutional staff who are hesitant to change “normal operating procedures” to allow an outside community partner with its own volunteers and staff to enter the facility. Institutional staff is concerned about ensuring the safety of the program’s staff and volunteers, but should not hinder the involvement of community partners in institutional programs. Institutions should develop rules and regulations that will promote community involvement

<sup>6</sup> For instance, the 2002 OJJDP publication *Strengthening America’s Families* provides guidance on model funding programs for substance abuse and delinquency prevention.

without compromising institution security. Another barrier to the success of community programs is the skepticism of institutional staff members who do not recognize the value of having these programs in place, nor understand their many benefits. A partnership with the faith community such as Epiphany Ministries is one possibility of community involvement.

An institution that invites community partners inside the facility bridges the gap between the institution and the community and allows youths to be equipped for long-term success outside the facility. Although there are many barriers that need to be overcome, the involvement of community programs only enhances the reentry mission of an institution.

### **Engendering Bonding and Trust: Epiphany Ministries**

Epiphany Ministries is a faith-based organization that recruits volunteers to conduct religious weekend retreats within a juvenile facility. These weekends are designed to help the juveniles (called “Stars”) gain a greater spiritual awareness, as well as engender bonding and trust between the juveniles and the volunteers.

Epiphany ministries have found alternative and creative non-verbal ways to show support to the juveniles, as well as engender bonding, which are acceptable within facility rules. For example, Epiphany found that in many juvenile facilities touching is forbidden between the juveniles and volunteers. Smiles, waves, or brief handshakes were the only acceptable means of non-verbal communication. However, halfway through the weekend, while standing in a circle singing, a volunteer put up her hands and began to bend her pointer finger up and down. This represented a "hug" between the volunteer and the Stars. Other ways of communicating togetherness were found, such as standing in a circle and touching elbows and bending fingers. In these creative ways, bonding was accomplished without violating the facility rule of "no touch."

Bonding occurs on an Epiphany weekend with the sharing of stories and experiences. When team members give a talk or meditation, they share their own life experiences that are age-appropriate. It is a common occurrence that a volunteer will share a story, which is similar to an experience of a Star.

Another way Epiphany volunteers engender trust and bonding is through listening to the Stars without being judgmental. They ask open-ended questions and are willing to wait for answers. Following talks and meditations, there is a time for reflection about where a Star is in his or her life. Several times during the weekend, the Stars are given an opportunity to talk to the group about what they are gaining from the experience, and each speaker is applauded.

Because trust is an issue that both team members and Stars struggle with throughout an Epiphany weekend, volunteer training emphasizes that team members should never promise something that may not happen, particularly a return for reunions. A team member must tell the Stars if he or she cannot return for a reunion during the weekend. In addition, if team members say they will write, they are required to follow through.

Through non-verbal and verbal communication, Epiphany ministries have structured a program that effectively engenders trust and bonding between juveniles and adults. In addition, the program emphasizes trusting God and nurturing a relationship with God.

## **Building Pathways to Independence Through Education, Employment, and Independent Living**

### ***Education and Employment***

Education is essential in ensuring long-term reentry success for a youthful offender. The emphasis on education must begin as juveniles enter the correctional institution. Education can be addressed by:

- Requiring the completion of a comprehensive educational assessment to determine individual academic and vocational curriculum at intake;
- Requiring youths to work towards a high school diploma or GED;

- Requiring youths to set goals regarding their education and career that are realistic and reflect their skills, interests, aptitudes, and labor market needs; and
- Involving community schools in the reentry process and communicating educational and behavioral information on transitioning youths to ensure a smooth academic transition and the development of necessary supports.

Employment is a crucial component in ensuring long-term reentry success. While there are many barriers to employment among young workers with criminal histories, they can be overcome (Holzer, Raphael, & Stoll, 2002). In an institution, the development of a Lifework Education Plan (LEP) can increase the chance a youth will obtain and maintain meaningful employment in the community. The LEP outlines what is needed to enter a specific career and may include career assessment, lifework education planning, lifework programming, development of an individual career portfolio, and the building of social capital through community partnerships. In addition, interventions that are conducted by private intermediary agencies like the Center for Employment Opportunity and South Forty Corporation in New York, the Safer Foundation in Chicago, Top Step in Georgia, the Pre-Release Center in Montgomery County, MD, and Ohio's Job Linkage are proving effective in assisting offenders to find employment (Holzer, Raphael, & Stoll, 2002). Employers who are generally against hiring young ex-offenders and who are unresponsive to ex-offender applicants from regular placement agencies are more open to hiring ex-offenders when they are contacted by these intermediary agencies (Holzer, Raphael, & Stoll, 2002).

Often, funding from various sources must be identified in order to sustain workforce development programs. Funding for these programs may come from:

- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) from the Department of Health and Human Services. TANF targets low income families and provides case assistance, state earned income tax credit, family formation, child care, and workforce development services.

### **Workforce Development Partnerships: REACHing Home Pilot Program**

An example of a program offering long-term sustainability where local/workforce development dollars are spent on juvenile offender reentry is a collaborative partnership recently developed in Wisconsin between the Division of Juvenile Corrections and the Milwaukee County Private Industry Council called the "REACHing Home" pilot, delivered by REACH Milwaukee. REACH is a Department of Labor, Youth Opportunity Grant program providing workforce development programming for youths aged 14 – 21 who reside in the Milwaukee Enterprise/Empowerment Zone. Activities include assessment, case management, career planning, educational, secondary and post-secondary opportunities, employment opportunities, leadership development, and support services.

The pilot program targets up to 20 youths at the Ethan Allen School for Boys who meet the criteria of a reintegration or reentry social worker. Those youth attend an orientation to REACH and meet a REACH Youth Development Specialist. Only boys who demonstrate a commitment are selected for the pilot program. Selected youths meet with their assigned Youth Development Specialist to discuss their transitions back to the community and to develop an individual service strategy.

The Youth Development Specialist attends the Joint Planning and Review Conference to plan for release. Upon release, the youth is formally registered into the REACHing Home Program. The pilot began in November 2002 and has identified 15 youths to date. Currently four are still in the Ethan Allen School; all others have been registered and are participating in REACH programming in the community. Youths receive tutoring, tuition for attending the Milwaukee Area Technical School, GED preparation and testing, and transportation to career centers, job interviews, and places of employment. The REACH Youth Development Specialists are also members of the youth's transition team and broker services needed in the community, while the aftercare agent provides correctional supervision.

- Workforce Investment Act funds from the U.S. Department of Labor. This provides three funding streams for youths aged 14 – 21, adults, and dislocated workers.
- Wagner-Peyser (Job Service) funding, also from the Department of Labor. This offers universal access to the public and funds job centers, resource rooms, JobNet (a database with employment opportunities in and around Wisconsin), and other core employment related services.
- Other sources include vocational rehabilitation funds from the Department of Education for disabled individuals and Job Corps for young adults.

Each of these federal funding streams can be tapped locally by correctional staff through coalition-building with the Workforce Development System.

### ***Independent Living Programs***

With the age of offenders in juvenile correctional custody increasing, as well as victims remaining in the home and families refusing care of older offenders, it has been necessary to develop alternatives to returning a youth to his or her home environment. The need to educate older youths in the skills of living independently is also necessary, since it will increase a youth's chances of long-term success. One such alternative to returning a youth to his or her home is the development of an Independent Living preparatory program. This program educates the youth about how to search for and maintain employment, search for and maintain housing, manage money, budget, grocery shop, take care of his or her health, ensure his or her safety, and contact emergency supports and help in the community. The program must provide transitional supports for the youth as he or she returns to the community.

#### **Community Partnerships: Wisconsin's Collaboration with the Boys & Girls Club**

The collaborative relationship between Wisconsin's State Division of Juvenile Corrections and the Boys & Girls Club of Milwaukee is an excellent example of new partnerships that have been developed to support Wisconsin's juvenile reentry initiative. Here, the Boys & Girls Club of Milwaukee is reshaping its mission to encompass supporting juvenile offender transition and long-term stabilization in the Milwaukee community. The Milwaukee Local Advisory Committee meetings for the Going Home Reentry Project are held at its facility headquarters. In addition, the Boys & Girls Club has agreed to provide the "Passport to Manhood" curriculum for young offenders committed to the Ethan Allan School for Boys, one of Wisconsin's three secure juvenile correctional institutions located 30 minutes from Milwaukee County. This program teaches responsibility and promotes positive behavior in male club members.

The program consists of eight small group sessions covering specific aspects of the personal journey to manhood. The program will be open to any juvenile in the institution. The state will contract with the Boys & Girls Club to cover the cost of group facilitation. While the program operates at the institution, the facilitators also screen youths for their eligibility in a gang prevention and intervention program offered as part of the club within the community. This Boys & Girls Club program will reward youths returning to the community with the following services: club membership, anger management groups, mentoring, tutoring, and employment readiness, as well as other services. The Boys & Girls Club in Milwaukee County has recently opened a Boys & Girls Club center within the Ethan Allen School by utilizing space vacated as the result of reductions in the institutional population. Youth within the institution have access to a wide variety of Boys & Girls Club programs in which they can continue upon reentry. Delinquent youths returning to the Milwaukee community will then be assimilated into a positive peer group, which supports pro-social activities.

A way to provide transitional supports may be through subsidies for those who qualify. The youth may be expected to allow a parole officer access to his or her apartment for inspection, maintain employment, and/or education goals, and sign a subsidy contract that outlines the expectations for the youth (see Appendix E for an example of an Independent Living contract). Failure to comply with these expectations may result in sanctions.

## ***Creating a Local Advisory Committee to Support Reentry***

Building partnerships with community resources is not an easy thing to do. One strategy to build new partnerships in either an urban or rural community is to create a broad-based local advisory committee of community experts who are knowledgeable about juvenile offender reentry and who are willing to help. Holding a series of briefings on the reentry program with local community leaders will educate the community about the importance of successful offender reentry. At the same time, community officials may be invited to participate on a formal advisory committee at the end of these community briefings. Committees may choose to meet quarterly with agendas covering such topics as: updating the status of juveniles returned to the community; identifying gaps in resources needed by juveniles and their families; and identifying problems and brainstorming solutions to issues encountered by families, communities, and victims. Meetings should be held in community sites that promote the mission of juvenile reentry such as Boys & Girls Clubs or neighborhood centers. The advisory committee is also an effective means to build partnerships that will promote long-term sustainability of offenders in the community by coordinating and sharing resources, both paid and volunteer, that will support delinquent youths and their families long after the youths are off supervision. Membership on a local advisory committee should include representatives from the department of corrections, the judiciary, the prosecutor's office, victims' services advocates, public defenders, schools, law enforcement, community-based organizations, employment and/or workforce development agencies, housing agency staff, and others who can contribute in some way to the reentry plan.

The involvement of the media should not be overlooked in local advisory committees. Bringing the press to the table in the early stages of a new initiative is an opportunity to educate them on the challenges and difficulties faced by juvenile justice agencies, gain positive media attention about the importance of reentry, and soften the criticism and second-guessing of what staff could have done to prevent a failure.

## **Conclusion**

Community partners can assure youths' success after agency supervision has ended. By the time of reentry, they have developed bonds, opened lines of communication, built trust, and have equipped the youth with tools for success in the community. However, a major barrier to a youth's success in the community is how that youth is perceived upon return.

Successful communication between adults and teenagers is the primary tool in overcoming fear and other barriers. Both verbal and non-verbal communication must be practiced with patience. The community as a whole needs to develop a sense of pride in juveniles who are being released; they did something wrong, they paid for it, and now

### **Caring Adults: Foster-Grandparent Program**

All youths who successfully complete high school and move into a career that provides economic independence have received counseling and advice along the way from a caring adult, which could be a volunteer or paid mentor, a teacher, a minister, a family member, social worker, or other youth development case manager. A unique caring adult connection promoted in the Wisconsin juvenile correctional institutions is the employment of part-time foster grandparents through a grant from the Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services. These retired foster grandparents establish long-term relationships with individual youths through recreation and leisure time activities. Once these grandparents have established a caring, trusting relationship, they take their mentorship to the next level and offer tutoring, literacy services, and career guidance. Youths benefit greatly from both the formal and informal mentor connections that begin in the institution and continue on in the community.

Ethan Allen School's foster grandparent Rosetta Grady, 91, was recently featured in the *Lake Country Reporter*. Grady, who has spent 30 years as a foster grandparent, said, "They are good kids who just need some love and attention. I spend much of my time playing cards and visiting with the boys, but mostly I listen to them. I encourage them to believe in themselves and to never give up on their dreams. I've never had a problem at all with any of the boys."

they are going to do better. Instead, there is an aura of suspicion surrounding released juveniles – as if it is only a matter of time before they will cause other problems. And they often live up to those expectations. One way to integrate these individuals into the community is through mentoring. Mentors can be recruited through programs that already exist in the community, such as Epiphany and the Boys & Girls Clubs of America.

Because a youth will most likely return to the community from which he or she came, investment in building partnerships and equipping the youth for reentry is critical. Community involvement in the welfare of its youths will ensure that juveniles have the support and tools necessary to be successful in the community, thus bettering the community as a whole.

## **PROMISING PRACTICE: Network Aftercare System (NAS) Transition Program, Boys & Girls Clubs of South Alabama**

**MISSION:** Provide each youth exiting confinement with an optimal chance for success upon reentry into the community.

**POPULATION:** The NAS Transition Program serves both males and females between the ages of 13 and 19 transitioning from community-based alternative commitment programs and two Alabama Department of Youth Services' correctional facilities. Youth participating in the program reside in Mobile County except for a select number of males from the neighboring county Baldwin.

**PROGRAM DESCRIPTION:** The NAS Transition Program derived from the conceptual design of the Intensive Aftercare Program (IAP) model developed by Doctors David Altschuler and Troy Armstrong. NAS began serving males in 1998 at Camp Robert J. Martin Youth Leadership Academy, an alternative community-based commitment program. Also in 1998 Boys & Girls Clubs of South Alabama teamed with Mobile County School System developed an alternative school for juvenile offenders exiting local community-based alternative commitment programs and juvenile offenders (regular probationers) exhibiting behavior problems in the public school sector. The POINTE Academy serve this population to date. Female offenders transitioning out of Girls Reaching Our Womanhood Through Healing, a community based alternative commitment program, began receiving reentry services in 2000.

Alabama Department of Youth Services' Serious and Violent Offender Reentry Initiative collaborated with NAS in 2003 to provide reentry services for juveniles exiting two correctional facilities for their highest risk offenders. Program targets are male offenders committed to their Mt. Meigs facility, and females committed to the Chalkville facility. These are exclusive services for offenders returning to Mobile County. The program provides each youth with services and support across the continuum from intake of confinement through completion of all reentry requirements. Because continuity is essential during this process, the case manager assigned at intake continues service delivery through all phases of reentry. Each youth has a transition team which includes service providers and significant people from the youth's life. This team manages the individual case plan of the youth and develops support networks in the community. The transition period begins when the offender completes 2/3 of his facility treatment plan and continues through the first 4-8 weeks back in the community. The program has two phases: formalized case planning for the offender while in treatment and community step-down at the point of reentry.

Support services for the program include: substance abuse treatment, mental health counseling, employment services, weekly home visits, community service, Boys & Girls Clubs activities, skill-building activities, arts education, functional family therapy, education advocacy, intensive supervision, mentoring, transportation, faith-based support, and recreational activities. Community partners for the program include the Alabama Administrative Office of Courts, Mobile County Juvenile Court, Mobile Mental Health, Catholic Social Services Substance Abuse Program, Volunteer Mobile, Volunteers of America Southeast, Mobile County Teen Center, Mt. Hebron Baptist Church, University of South Alabama, Mobile County School Board, Dynamic Educational Systems Inc., the Bridge Substance Abuse Treatment Program, and the Junior League of Mobile.

**JURISDICTIONAL ENVIRONMENT:** The Network Aftercare System Transition Program serves approximately 200 youth per year. It is a division of Boys and Girls Clubs of South Alabama.

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## **PROMISING PRACTICE: WINGS Transition Program, A partnership between the Sioux Falls School District and the South Dakota Department of Corrections (DOC)**

**MISSION:** To assist students who are returning from DOC placements in successfully adjusting to community and academic life while reducing the amount of student chemical use and the total number of students returning to placement settings.

**POPULATION:** The WINGS Transition Program serves males and females of high school ages, generally between 14 and 18 years of age. It serves youth committed to the South Dakota Department of Corrections who are returning to the area served by the Sioux Falls School District.

**PROGRAM DESCRIPTION:** The Sioux Falls School District operates the education program called WINGS Transition. The program began in 1998. It serves juveniles that have been in out-of-home placement (either in a secure facility or other setting) through the Department of Corrections.

The program consists of a minimum 90-day program of Joe Foss Alternative School divided requiring three “successful” 30-day steps. Students determine the length of each step by managing daily points. While participating in the program, students improve academic achievement, attendance, accountability, consistency, communication; their cognitive thinking patterns, and develop other life skills that will help them make positive decisions about their future. Service learning, leadership projects, and chemical dependency aftercare are also integrated into the program.

A Master’s level educator/counselor who is assisted by a certified chemical dependency counselor and an educational assistant facilitates the program. Certified Joe Foss School teachers and other staff assist with instruction in core and elective classes and extra-curricular activities. Joe Foss staff work closely with each other and the student to maintain accurate perceptions of each student's current successes and academic struggles and assist with development of effective strategies that will help the student succeed. Due to its success, the WINGS program was implemented in each of the traditional Sioux Falls high schools in the 2001-2002 school year. Other school districts across the state are currently seeking funding that will assist them in adding a similar program to their high schools.

**EVALUATION:** This program was evaluated internally and was found to reduce recidivism and increase retention in school. As of May 2003, for the 2002-2003 school year, 117 students have been enrolled in WINGS. 89 of the 117 (76%) successfully stayed in the program, while 28 (24%) were required to return to a Department of Corrections’ placement. 10 of the 117 (9%) had an alcohol or drug violation during the school year. Only 2 of the 117 dropped out of school during the year.

**JURISDICTIONAL ENVIRONMENT:** The Sioux Falls School District is the largest school district in the state of South Dakota. The city of Sioux Falls is the most populous city in the state, with a population over 115,000. This program was developed and operated under funds from a grant from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP).

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## **PROMISING PRACTICE: Independent Living Preparatory Program (ILPP), Texas Youth Commission (TYC)**

**MISSION:** To protect the public, find ways to prevent delinquency, and to rehabilitate offenders through treatment and education. The Resocialization treatment program focuses on rehabilitating offenders through treatment and education.

**POPULATION:** The Independent Living Preparatory Program (ILPP) serves both males and females, ages 16 and older, which are released from the Texas Youth Commission's residential or institutional programs under parole supervision.

**PROGRAM DESCRIPTION:** The Independent Living Preparatory Program (ILPP) is offered at the end of a lengthy stay in the juvenile justice system. The ILPP is performance-based. Youth must complete certain performance objectives, as well as the independent living curriculum, before becoming eligible for a subsidy. Some of the performance objectives are as follows:

- Successful completion of the eight independent living skills modules, which address employment, housing, money management, consumer awareness, health and safety, and leisure time activities
- Complete 80-120 hours of community service
- Complete 30-120 days consecutive employment
- Savings of \$650 -\$900 from employment (to be used for deposits)
- Participation in Texas Youth Commission's Resocialization treatment program

The program utilizes interns and volunteers, and will allocate Independent Living funds to establish a training/employment contract with a local business in areas which have difficulty locating employment opportunities for Texas Youth Commission (TYC) youths. A private contractor provides a structured apartment program, which allows youths to "field test" their acquired skills. Additional support and subsidies are available for housing, food, education, clothing, and transportation. The Independent Living program for housing assistance is usually restricted to youth 18 or above (due to contracts not being legally binding for those under that age). Apartment complexes are found to house the youths (either by the youths themselves with approval of TYC or by TYC itself). The TYC, the youth, and the apartment complex enter into a rent agreement which spells out how much TYC will pay towards rent for the first six months. TYC also keeps in contact with the apartment manager during the first six months and may remove a youth if there are problems. After the six months, the youth becomes responsible for the apartment and any damages.

**EVALUATION:** The Independent Living Preparatory Program (ILPP) was evaluated internally in 1996. The evaluation found that 29% of youth who had completed the ILPP were rearrested within one year, compared to 62% of youth released directly to parole who were rearrested within one year.

**JURISDICTIONAL ENVIRONMENT:** This program is conducted in a geographically large state with a high population. The Texas Youth Commission is one of the five largest juvenile correctional agencies in the United States, and has an average daily population over 4,000. It also has an annual operating budget of about a quarter of a billion dollars.

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# Chapter 3: Reinventing the Process: Shifting to a Reentry Mission, Case Plan, and Transition Plan

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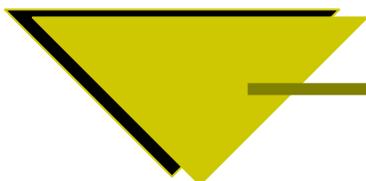
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## **Rhetoric to Reality: Making Successful Reentry a Living Part of the Institutional Mission**

A successful approach to reentry of youthful offenders requires a reexamination of the fundamental role of the institution in relation to the community and the victim, the values and principles upon which institution policies, procedures, and programs are based, and on the role of staff within the institution (see Appendix F for roles and expectations of those involved in the reentry process). The overarching mission of the institution, successful reentry of youthful offenders, must permeate every aspect of institutional operations. A reentry mission helps communicate to other “partners” and “customers” of the juvenile justice system exactly what is and is not important to the system, who is responsible, and who needs to be involved to make it successful. A mission clarifies the underlying values of the organization and how to evaluate outcomes. Each institution and operation has an “organizational culture” that must be transformed to be consistent with this reentry mission.

It is not possible in this Guide to fully explore all the aspects of organizational culture that will be affected in developing a reentry mission in this chapter. Suffice it to say that every organization, institution, and program has a set (perhaps not coherent or agreed upon, but nonetheless existing) of values, beliefs, and patterns of action that may be said to reflect or define the organization’s culture.

### **Safety from a Reentry Perspective**

A focus on reentry need not compromise either the legitimate purpose or the sound safety practices of secure confinement facilities. At least for the time youths are placed in the facility, the short-term role of ensuring community safety is being met. Yet, there is no doubt that both community expectations and the commitment of juvenile justice professionals go well beyond that short-term goal. Some, if not most, staff will have some legitimate concerns about changing practices when the internal organization is transformed to support a reentry mission. Some staff may be concerned such change will jeopardize safety within the institution. However, a focus on safety (even when augmented with sound treatment programs) that is based solely on offender compliance and security diminishes the important role that institutional staff can play in teaching offenders new skills that can be utilized upon reentry to the community. Defining safety merely as compliance with institutional rules may hinder a youth’s ability to function upon return to the community. Defining the mission more broadly, in the context of ultimate community safety, does not mean abandoning the baseline goal of facility safety. It does mean, however, that a focus on reentry will require different skills, priorities, and practices.

In many states, the underlying principles of the juvenile justice system are based on the goals of the balanced approach (Bazemore & Umbreit, 1998; Maloney, Armstrong, & Romig, 1988). The three goals of the balanced approach (community safety, competency development, and accountability) can be readily applied to the mission of an institution. In that context, community safety means not only teaching youths to successfully manage their behavior within the institution but also teaching the youths to make law-abiding decisions upon reentry into the community. This mission of an institution builds successful reentry practices by providing a broader context from which to view institutional operations.

Some examples of how staff roles and behavior may “look” different when viewed from a more traditional focus on institutional goals when compared with a reentry focus are illustrated in Table 3.1.

**Table 3.1**  
**A Traditional View of Safety Compared with a Reentry Focus on Safety**

Institutional View	Reentry View
Rules and expectations for behavior are based on institutional needs. Staff view their role as enforcing rules and maintaining order.	Rules and expectations for behavior promote both institutional safety as well as critical skills that are applicable in the community. Staff view their roles as developing and enforcing rules that can be explained and related to socially responsible behavior.
Discipline is focused on control. Staff consider their jobs done when consequences have been imposed.	Discipline is focused on teaching new behaviors. Staff view their role as “interpreting” how to apply the lessons from “within” to applications on the “outside.”
Changes in youths’ behavior are viewed primarily as the result of coercive staff controls. Staff define success as creating sufficient controls to manage the youths’ behavior.	Changes in youths’ behavior are viewed primarily as the result of changing choices made by youths. Staff define success as creating opportunities for youths to learn and practice new decision-making skills.
Attention is focused on individual behaviors of youths. Staff view their role as being responsible for monitoring and controlling the youths they oversee.	Attention is focused on both individual and environmental factors that promote behavior change. Staff view their role as focusing on both individual youths as well as creating conditions that promote and reinforce learning.
Rules are almost always stated in terms of what the youth is “not” to do; staff determine what behaviors they want the youth to avoid.	Rules are almost always stated in terms of desired behavior(s) that can be carried over to the family and community. Staff view their role as identifying goals and skills that will be useful for youths upon return to the community.
Youths are seldom, if ever, involved in establishing rules or expectations for their living unit(s). Staff view youths as incapable of being responsible.	Youths may be given some responsibility for discussing and establishing desired expectations for conduct toward each other within their living unit(s). Staff view youths as capable of contributing to problem-solving within the institution.
Incidents of misbehavior are viewed as violations of institutional rules. Staff explain reasons for rules in terms of “learning to follow expectations” of authority figures.	Incidents of misbehavior are viewed as impacting others in the institution. Staff explain reasons for rules in terms of the mutual responsibility youths have for each other within their internal “community” and how that applies on the “outside.”

## Treatment from a Reentry Perspective

Treatment programs consistent with the balanced approach competency development goals need to be consistent and integrated with the on-going community programs and supports that will become part of the everyday life of a recently released youthful offender. While the quality of many institutional programs is often quite high and offenders make great progress while in the institution, there is often too little connection between the specific programs delivered within the institution and those in which the youth will continue once returned to the community. Just as with the comparisons noted above related to a traditional versus a reentry view of safety, a similar contrast can be made in how these “rehabilitative” programs are viewed. Table 3.2 outlines some potential areas of comparison.

**Table 3.2**  
**A Traditional View of Programming Compared with a Reentry Focus on Programming**

Institutional View	Reentry View
Programs are “remedial” in nature: focused on eliminating or ameliorating the negative conditions/behaviors that are believed to have contributed to the youths’ offending behavior.	Programs are “competency based” in nature, focusing on developing the kinds of skills and abilities that will be useful to the offender when back in the community.
Programs are developed by professionals and “experts” within the institution or within the agency with minimal input from the community.	Programs may be developed by professionals within the agency but are done so in an open and collaborative manner with community-based providers, professionals, parents, and others who are familiar with the community’s strengths and needs.
Programming is most often “delivered” by specific professionals within the institution, most often social workers, psychologists, and other specially trained staff.	Programming is delivered by a wide range of personnel within the institution and much of it is delivered by community professionals/partners who will be working with the youth.
Youths generally “complete” the programming through participation or process outcomes (e.g. attending a certain number of sessions) and/or the lack of negative behavioral indicators.	Youths “complete” the program when they can demonstrate they have the capability to perform the desired skills. Programming includes incorporating opportunities for youths to practice and demonstrate those skills.
Youths take little with them when they leave the institution that can be used to document the things they have learned and/or the progress they have made.	Institutions find ways to document a youth’s progress and achievements in a manner that can be utilized by the youth to provide evidence to others of those achievements.
Treatment programs either overtly or indirectly reinforce the youths’ perception that their behavior was the result of factors beyond their control and that completion of treatment is all that is expected.	Treatment and other programs reinforce the youths’ sense of responsibility for making law-abiding choices in the future and provides the necessary skills to do so.

Of course, it is uncommon for an institution to be completely “traditional” or “reentry” focused in its programming with youths. Most often, institutions have some aspects of both frameworks in operation. However, without a clear mandate to move programming toward a reentry focus and a commitment to “take the next step” and build on otherwise successful institutional programming, many institutions fall unintentionally short of achieving successful reentry outcomes.

## Accountability from a Reentry Perspective

Youthful offenders learn accountability from much more than simply “doing time.” A similar contrast may be drawn with accountability as with safety and programming. Table 3.3 provides some examples of differences in accountability when comparing a traditional view with one focused on reentry.

Perhaps the most important aspect of a shift to a reentry focus emphasizes the future and restoration rather than the past and placing blame. It reinforces a youth’s sense of responsibility while at the same time providing an opportunity for a new start upon return. Viewing confinement facilities as primarily responsible for preparing a youth for reentry will change the existing organizational culture of an institution and will lead to observable behavioral changes in staff as well as youths. In addition, it can provide the impetus to reinvent the transition process through a reentry lens.

**Table 3.3**  
**A Traditional View Compared to a Reentry View of Offender Accountability**

Traditional View	Reentry View
A youth views completion of “doing time” as being sufficient to be held accountable. Therefore, accountability is measured by “how much” of an impact there is on the youth.	A youth views accountability as doing something constructive to “pay back” the community and/or victim. Therefore, accountability is measured by “how much” the youth understands the impact of his or her behavior on others and takes steps to repair the harm resulting from it.
The focus of attention and efforts are youth-centered.	The focus of attention and efforts are victim-sensitive, at a minimum, and victim-centered, when possible.
The youths’ and staff’s focus is on “fixing” what went wrong and assigning blame.	The youth’s focus is redirected to the future, and the youth is encouraged to understand his or her need to “earn” the way back into the community.
Youths are viewed from a deficit perspective, in which they have few skills or interests that can be put to use by the community.	Youths are viewed from a strength-based perspective, and matching their skills with restorative activities is productive for all.
Little attention is paid to rebuilding relationships with the community to which the youth will be returning.	Significant attention is paid to creating and/or restoring key relationships within the community that will help reinforce the youth’s ability to “pay back” and be accepted upon return.

## The Importance of Transitional Planning in Reentry

The importance of the transition phase in client movement cannot be over-emphasized (see Appendix G for an example of Transition Planning). Especially for youths who have been held in secure confinement, transition to the community is a major shift in terms of structure and service delivery (see Appendix H for a list of transition tasks). If a youth has been held in a traditional secure program where nearly every hour of the day and night is structured and controlled by staff, both youth and staff will have grown accustomed to a structured set of goals and a routine means to measure compliance. Without this level of structure in these very controlled circumstances, defining goals in the uncontrollable setting of the community poses challenges to both staff and the youth. Goals and measures are much more

difficult to define, monitor, and measure in the community setting. For example, there are some obvious differences in how a youth's environment changes from institution to community, including:

- Changes in the accessibility of programs and services. Within the confines of a secure setting, services and programs are generally available just down the hall from the youth's living quarters. In the community, services and programs – from medical care to adequate clothing – are not so easily accessed.
- Changes in the youth's relationships to adults. A transition to the community almost always means that the youth will be under the supervision of a new set of staff and service providers than he or she has grown accustomed to in the confinement setting.

Facility staff work with the family, youth, and supporters to transfer learning and plans from the institutional setting to the community setting. All other factors being equal, community-based intervention is almost always more effective than institutional-based intervention (Andrews & Bonta, 1994). Reentry programming is more likely to successfully rebuild the youth and family's world if the treatment is structured from the beginning to be similar to the community environment.

There are many changes in reinforcers, requirements for making responsible decisions, completing educational and/or employment requirements, and more. All of these eventual changes need to be considered very early on in the development of institutional programming and in the transition phase of reentry.

### **Building a Community Accountability and Support Team (CAST)**

The bulk of reentry work is really done by the youth, family, and their natural supports—people indigenous to the youth and family's normal, every day life. In the case planning process, the supports have committed to the responsibility of supporting and holding the family accountable. Institutional staff must continually engage these supporters in following through on reentry tasks. In addition, correctional staff must continually look to replace themselves with someone in the community. Through a coalition-consensus seeking process<sup>7</sup>, the youth and family learn to constructively address problems and conflicts and develop solutions for interpersonal issues.

During the “step-down” process<sup>8</sup> from the facility to the community, staff can help the family to pick out meaningful “homework” assignments for the youth to practice new cognitive-behavioral skills during a home visit or special leave from the institution. In the latter stages of reentry, homework is not only practice but provides experimentation with new strategies to see what works and what doesn't for the family.

Since the inertia of the family is to revert back to its former way of functioning, the reentry team will need to provide monitoring and reinforcement of the family's steps to access and obtain community support. The family may not recall or know what resources are available, including whom to contact, how to ask for support, what information to seek and when, and how to utilize resources. Staff may instruct the family and youth, and their key supporters, on how to be self-advocates and can structure the “step-down” process so that the family can begin to achieve reentry goals while the youth is still in an institutional phase.

Facility staff (preferably a professional who specializes in education transition) can initiate the youth's phase back to his or her home school or an alternative school. In the development of the educational plan, a home-school representative should be invested in the team and be a committed

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<sup>7</sup> Examples of the coalition-consensus seeking process include restorative conferencing, a wraparound approach, or circles of support and accountability.

<sup>8</sup> “Step-down” is the transitional phase from the facility to the community within a structured, supervised, supported setting, but which also allows the youths to practice new thinking and behavior and make “safe mistakes” (e.g. home, visits, placement visits, outings, transitional placement, work release or productive day).

advocate for the youth. While in the facility, the youth can be assisted in enrolling and getting financial aid for post-secondary school, completing requirements that can be applied upon return to a school program, applying for an apprenticeship, or attaining a General Equivalency Diploma. The reentry team leader works with the school representative on transferring records, updating or revisiting the individualized education plan, ensuring transfer of credits, and discussing how helpful supports can be integrated into the youth's school day. Simple accountability by one or more members of the reentry team goes a long way.

The reentry team can insist that the youth develop and maintain a schedule, which envelops school, work, extracurricular activities, appointments, and family time. The reentry team can also assist the youth as he or she prepares for employment by working with the youth on a vocational skills curriculum. Some simple mentoring goes a long way in helping the youth get to work on time, maintain a presentable appearance, follow instructions of the supervisor, apply conflict-resolution skills with co-workers, distance from anti-social co-workers, and build relationships with prosocial co-workers.

Taken as a whole, the successful reentry plan for the youth is a full schedule, with minimized contact with antisocial peers and increased positive interactions with adults and the supports that the family will need to be successful. The plan may seem overwhelming to the family at first, but it will actually simplify their lives over the long term as the burden of chaos and dysfunction is lifted and supports are in place.

## **Building Reentry Case Plans**

Most institutional programs serving youthful offenders already have in place some form of reentry case planning process on which they can build a successful reintegration plan for incarcerated juveniles. Common practice often includes a case planning process following an initial period of intake and assessment (e.g. 30-60 days after admission to the facility), followed by periodic case planning reviews at prescribed intervals (e.g. every 90 days; every six months). The stated purpose of these reviews is typically to develop a case plan that guides the programming and services provided for the offender while at the institution and to set goals related to his or her eventual return to the community. Transforming these processes with a focus on successful reentry of youths to the community requires consideration of a number of factors:

- A clearly defined purpose for the process. Clarity of purpose is critical as it guides many aspects of the case planning process, including who is involved in developing the plan, when and where the planning is conducted, what issues are addressed in the process, developing criteria and tools for monitoring progress toward case planning goals, and who is involved in monitoring progress.
- Offenders have a role in assessing their own progress toward case plan goals.
- Case planning is truly individualized. While there may be a set of standard categories or issues addressed in the planning process, each offender's plan is developed to build on the individual strengths and needs of the youth, his or her family, and his or her community.
- Staff understand what behaviors, skills, and attitudes are targeted in the youth's case planning and they play a key role in documenting progress toward meeting goals.

One of the most useful and instructive efforts in transforming systems into achieving the goal of successful reintegration is the Intensive Aftercare Program (IAP) model developed by Altschuler and Armstrong (1994a, 1994b). Within that model, the authors present five key principles that embody the best research and practices related to successful reintegration case planning. Those principles are:

- Preparing youths for progressively increased responsibility and freedom in the community.
- Facilitating youth-community interaction and involvement.

- Working with both the offender and targeted community support systems on strategies needed for constructive interaction and the youth’s successful community adjustment.
- Developing new resources and supports where needed.
- Monitoring and testing the youth and the community on their ability to deal with each other productively (Altschuler & Armstrong, 1994a, 1994b).

These principles of reentry may be applied to the overall case plan and have specific importance to the youth’s adjustment in the institution and reentry phases of the program. A reentry focus will influence who is involved, what is considered completion or success, and how plans are communicated. Some of these differences are illustrated in Table 3.4.

**Table 3.4**  
**Institution-Based Case Planning Compared with Reintegration Case Planning**

Institution-Based Case Planning	Reintegration Case Planning
The focus of case planning is on “compliance” and/or other process measures related to institutional programming (e.g. participate in “x” program). Expectations for the offender are expressed in terms of compliance or participation.	The focus of case planning is on learning and demonstrating skills and behaviors that are useful in the community. Expectations for the offender are expressed in terms of observable improvements in behavior.
Case plans are developed by treatment staff with little involvement from line staff.	Case plans may be developed by treatment staff but include significant input and communication from line staff, family members, community members, and others likely to be involved with the youth upon return to the community.
Case plan goals are documented and generally reviewed only by selected treatment staff.	Case plan goals are shared with all who will be interacting with the youth.
Progress toward treatment goals is in the “domain” of professional staff who may or may not communicate it to other staff in the institution.	Progress toward achieving goals is monitored by line staff based on understandable benchmarks for behavior, and constant corrective feedback is directed to the youth.
Resources allocated toward aftercare services take a “back seat” to allocations for institutional services. Funding is often what is “left over.”	Resources are allocated with a priority of supporting effective reintegration programming and services.
The focus of case plans is solely on the youth’s individual efforts to make changes that support reentry.	Case plans are focused on “external” or environmental changes that need to occur to support successful reintegration as well as focusing on youth changes.
Staff within the institution know little about the “real world” into which the offender will return and/or pay little attention to the uniqueness of that environment in as they construct the plan.	Those involved in the planning are very familiar with the unique environment that the offender will be returning to and are engaged in developing new resources to strengthen that environment.

To accomplish a restructuring of case planning, state juvenile correctional organizations should consider piloting a comprehensive case management system that connects the institutional social worker and the aftercare field agent through a common individualized case plan. A “reentry case manager” position responsible for continuous case management from the point of reception through return to the community is an example of a way to link all three phases of the IAP reentry model.

## ***Motivational/Strength-Based and Multi-Systemic Models***

Community-based interventions based upon a motivational or strength-based approach have had success at reducing criminogenic risk factors and increasing developmental assets/strengths. Effective reentry and treatment is based upon these methods, which focus on the youth and family's inclination (or lack thereof) to enter into, continue, and adhere to the reentry plan (Miller & Rolnick, 1991; Prochaska & Diclemente, 1986; Serin & Kennedy, 1997). Strength-based approaches to working with youthful offenders are generally characterized by:

- Focusing on what is possible versus what is problematic in assessment and interview processes (Saleebey, 1996).
- Identifying experiences, attitudes, and skills that have contributed to success versus identifying limitations that result in failure (Saleebey, 1996).
- Utilizing the offender's/family's perspective as the basis on which to build a successful plan versus starting with the professional's perspective (Clark, 1996).
- Identifying concrete steps that will contribute to measurable changes in the offender, family, and environment (Clark, 1996).
- Building a positive relationship with the offender and family by respecting their culture, language, perceptions, abilities, resources, and relationships and using them as the starting point for planning (Saleebey, 1996).

In addition, case plans must take into account multi-system or socio-ecological theory, which advocates taking the assets that are part of the ordinary, responsible youth's life and inserting them into the (former) delinquent's life to see if new patterns emerge and old behaviors fall off. Consequently, multi-systemic efforts can have an impact in a number of ways, including:

- Modifying the patterned interactions in the youth's life to encourage appropriate behavior.
- Using disciplined and structured systems to achieve behavior modification.
- Building upon the child and family's natural supports within the community: their assets, strengths, and positives (Miller & Rolnick, 1991). A robust social support network – high quality support from extended family, friends, co-workers, neighbors, and community organizations – is strongly connected to positive family functioning and to increased capacity to promote prosocial behavior (Search Institute, 1994, 1997).
- Reducing those aggravating factors which predispose the youth to delinquent behavior and block the family from effectively progressing toward their goals.

In these models, practical principles translate well into targeted goals, and goals are translated into productive strategies. Effective community reentry goals for the family are focused, action-oriented, and well defined. Change is practical and real, and above all, achievable.

### ***A Restorative Perspective***

Building on the principles inherent in the Balanced and Restorative Justice (BARJ) framework, there are a number of practices that are consistent with and contribute to successful reentry and are complementary to those built from a motivational/strength-based approach.

A restorative case plan must consider those most negatively affected by the delinquent behavior of the youth and identify ways in which the youth can make amends during the reintegration process. There are many aspects of the planning process that impact the restorative value of the reintegration plan, including:

- Ensuring a careful assessment of offender interests and abilities, utilizing a youth’s strengths and interests to increase motivation to make behavioral changes.
- Placing youths in a supportive environment that offers opportunities for restoration.
- Resolving legal requirements related to planning. In order to work toward restoration of victims and the community, the youth has to go beyond the minimum requirement(s) of the court. Legal restrictions placed on youthful offenders may complicate restorative goals.
- Finding opportunities to recognize youths for service provides a way to begin changing their attitudes and values (Bazemore & Maloney, 1994).
- Integrating restorative goals with the personal goals of the youthful offender.

In summary, restorative case planning builds on strengths and interests of the youth and his or her support system. The plan also reconnects youths with the community, utilizes community-based supports where possible, and provides meaningful service to the community. An effective restorative case plan increases the likelihood of long-term community safety through changing attitudes, values, and skills of youthful offenders.

### ***Individualized Planning and Wraparound***

Strong reentry case planning is an ongoing, fluid, and flexible process that rarely goes in a nice, neat, planned sequence. In fact, too strong a focus on pre-planned steps can sometimes lead to “routinized” case plans that look conspicuously like one another and are not adaptive. Systems have often developed an array of pre-packaged reentry services that meet institutional requirements, (e.g. requests for proposals, purchasing services in “blocks” or “slots,” etc.) forcing case planners to match identified problems to available services rather than asking the fundamental questions about what it is the client has to offer and what it is he or she really needs.

Successful reintegration case planning requires working within a framework that ensures a wide range of typical concerns are addressed, such as educational planning, methods of monitoring compliance with expectations, completion of restorative obligations to meet victim and community needs, mental health and/or alcohol and drug abuse services, dealing with antisocial peers and associates, leisure and recreational needs and interests, and so on. In addition, defined guidelines should include a description of who should be involved in the planning and the steps in the process. Wraparound and a variety of collaborative planning models have recently been developed that provide this framework. In these models, individualized planning is encouraged by breaking with some of the traditional ways in which services are purchased and provided. Redefining the role of the case planner and more actively engaging a variety of individuals in the case planning process are examples of change.

Most wraparound case planning processes are characterized by focusing efforts on having the planning team perform the following (Franz, 2002):

- Set the context for the current situation, including who is involved, reviewing what has happened so far and what is supposed to happen next;
- Identify resources which means learning about both the immediate and hidden strengths of the youth, the family, and others that are helping to support the reintegration plan;
- Define a vision of what a positive future looks like for the youth and his or her family;
- Sort out challenges, identifying what needs to be taken care of and in what order;
- Brainstorm options, which requires going “deeper” than the normal provision of services and really finding what ideas exist for reaching goals; and

- Put the plan into action with strategies that build on functional strengths (strengths that can be applied to meet the challenges), decide who is going to do what, document the plan, and identify some “benchmarks” for success.

The youth, family, and team will repeat this cycle as they work through the issues and challenges toward achieving a successful reintegration goal. And, as noted earlier, efforts need to be made to work through each of these categories thinking about not only the youth and his or her family but other environmental factors that will impact a youth’s reentry.

### ***Re-offense/Relapse Plan***

One way to prepare youths for a successful reentry is through the development of a re-offense/relapse prevention plan. A good re-offense/relapse prevention plan will help a youth to identify what usually happens *before* he or she relapses or re-offends by defining antecedents, precursors, cues, and risk factors. Facility staff look for patterns in the youths’ thinking and behavior by asking the following questions:

- Who are risky people for them?
- What is lacking at the times they re-offend?
- What stressors or losses usually precipitate their offense and relapse cycles?
- What are the hangouts or environments in which they usually relapse or re-offend?
- What do they usually do *during* the onset of their relapse or re-offense?
- What do they do when they know they have begun their re-offense or relapse cycle?

Consistent with a strength-based approach, staff also help the youth and family to be conscious of what they are doing when they are engaging in risky behavior. The youth’s reentry team should be coordinated to intervene in these times and provide accountability where the youth is weak and support where they are doing well. However, a re-offense/relapse prevention plan cannot stand alone. Rather than attempting to prevent a negative outcome, the youth and family can create a positive outcome, such as replacing drugs and crime with positive reentry plan goals. The re-offending/relapse plan therefore must address how correctional staff can support the youth and take action in the following ways:

- Facilitate immediate action by the youth and family, and help them to detail the small steps to achieve their transitional tasks;
- Give them immediate support<sup>9</sup>, reinforcement, and accountability in the first 24 to 72 hours;
- Walk them through what they need to do and do some “hand holding” when they are get stuck;
- Show concern and routinely assess their progress, and take immediate corrective action with the family when the plan gets off track; and
- Help the reentry team<sup>10</sup> to cohere for at least six months after the reentry date, after which the staff will create inertia for change, build upon the youths’ success, change the dynamic of the failed script, and increase motivation and momentum to do additional reentry tasks.

The challenges of the basic habits of living can be lessened with the right support systems and resources, which are crucial elements in preventing relapse. Interactions between a youth and his or her family and other people in key systems<sup>11</sup> are the focus for intervention. New cognitive and behavioral

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<sup>9</sup> Supports include parents, teachers, coaches, mentors, volunteers, and corrections professionals.

<sup>10</sup> The reentry team, at this phase, should be comprised of: family members, volunteers, mentors, school staff, social workers, employers, health care providers, probation officers, case managers, members of faith communities, youth service agency representatives, community resource people, and positively involved neighbors and citizens.

<sup>11</sup> Key systems can include the home, neighborhood, school, peer groups, job, religious community, and support groups.

habits provide an opportunity not only to break old habits, but also to generate new relationships and resources.

## **Making Strategic Use of Consequences**

Successful reentry requires the development of reinforcement strategies, hopefully in the form of positive reinforcement, for successful decisions and actions taken by the youth and family. Of course, it would be naive to believe that positive reinforcement alone will be sufficient, since youths will certainly make some decisions that are not consistent with the goals of the plan. Therefore, the consequences or graduated sanctions will be needed so that the reentry team can deal with these situations. Consequences, in order to be effective, must immediately and consistently follow the problematic behavior at its earliest onset. The strategy is to *selectively* use sanctions to jolt the youth out of a spiraling negative behavior pattern.

Understanding consequences involves a process of learning that can be transferred or generalized to another context. The youth can take new thinking and behavior, relate to it by experiencing it, integrate or internalize it, and then apply it in his or her world. Natural consequences involve allowing a youth to experience the normal effects of his or her behavior (Spencer, 1890). On the other hand, experiential consequences take the learning aspect of consequences one step further (Dewey, 1963). It is important for the youth to experience the very behavioral, emotional, and cognitive processes as the desired change. In this process, the youth is an active participant and interactive in the learning.

On the positive side, the youth and family's successes should be recognized and celebrated in small ways throughout reentry. There seems to be no substitute for a celebration or party to reward and recognize the positive accomplishments of the youth at key milestones such as when he or she graduates from the institutional phase of the program and from the reentry program. The strength-based motivational approach is not only more effective, it is simply more fun.

There are rewards in spending so much time on the relative merits of positive reinforcers and consequences versus punishment techniques in changing habits of thought and behavior. The youth's naturalistic or indigenous supports – people who are a part of their everyday life – have the ability to implement a sustained and effective behavioral management program in the community; the system does not. The youth's support network, working in concert, can provide a consistent and meaningful response to the youth's behavioral progress and regress on the condition that they work with the principles of good behavioral management. Therefore, staff support the potential for long-term change when they empower the reentry team to enact incentives and consequences in the youth's life and only use graduated sanctions as a backstop to the natural systems of informal controls and supports.

## **Conclusion**

Making the transition from institution to the community is a complex, multi-faceted process that needs to begin at the point the youth first enters the institution. Institutions need to modify their programs to build in the youth and reentry team the requisite skills to successfully transition to the less structured and more demanding community. Involving family, the faith community, educators, employers, prosocial adults, and victims (if they choose to do so) in the process as early as possible and throughout the transition is essential for successful reentry. Professionals also need to take on the role of team facilitator rather than the more traditional probation role.

Many staff underestimate the impact of confinement on youths in custody and stop short of making the most out of the time that youths spend in their care. Just as having high expectations for youths will increase the likelihood that they will benefit from the confinement experience, having high expectations for the mission of even short-term confinement facilities can have a beneficial effect on the ultimate quality of the staff interaction(s), skill development of youths, and ultimately on the safety of the community. The mission informs outsiders what the institution is about, and helps to gain support for policy changes to successfully reintegrate youths into the community.

## **PROMISING PRACTICE: Missouri Division of Youth Services**

**MISSION:** To enable youths to fulfill their needs in a responsible manner within the context of and with respect for the needs of the family and the community.

**POPULATION:** The Division of Youth Services serves males and females under 21 years.

**PROGRAM DESCRIPTION:** Missouri has developed a case management system. The services and approaches of the Division of Youth Services (DYS) provides: (1) a continuum of security and programming, ranging from community-based and nonresidential programs; (2) comprehensive, standardized needs and risk assessments that enhance classification and placement decisions and facilitate development of individualized treatment plans; (3) an emphasis on individualized psychosocial, educational and vocational needs; community-based partnerships for job placement and alternative education; (4) incorporation of treatment outcome exploration, quality assurance and program reviews to evaluate efficacy and improve service delivery; (5) demonstrated investment and commitment toward collaboration with local juvenile courts in early intervention and prevention efforts through the provision of more than 4 million dollars for diversionary programs; and (6) a singular case management system in which a service coordinator follows each youth throughout his/her tenure with DYS.

**Service Coordinators** (case managers) are the primary link between the DYS, youths, their families, and juvenile/family courts. Service coordinators are responsible for ensuring that youths adhere to court orders and are appropriately supervised and meet expectations. To that end, service coordinators perform comprehensive risk and needs assessments that lead to development of individual treatment plans. To increase availability to clients and communities, service coordinators are placed in locations that are in close proximity to the communities they serve. Missouri's aftercare consists of an indefinite period of time, in which youths remain on caseloads but have transitioned into the community. The range of services offered in the aftercare phase is consistent with the services provided in residential programming.

**Intensive Case Supervision** uses social service aides or "trackers" to maintain consistent and frequent contact with youths in aftercare or community care. They serve in a variety of capacities from enhancing supervision to supportive functions. In general, they determine which youth should benefit from tracker services, make tracker assignments and supervise involvement with the youth.

DYS has also established **Day Treatment** programs, which provide an effective transitional service for youths re-entering the community following release from residential care. Day treatment programs provide youths with community-based, structured, alternative educational programming. In addition to academic and vocational instruction, day treatment programs incorporate psycho-educational groups and other treatment interventions. During the aftercare phase, service coordinators network with government or nonprofit organizations to place transitioning youths in appropriate sites, where they may gain a further understanding of the work world, as well as the importance of community service.

**JURISDICTIONAL ENVIRONMENT:** DYS operates in a geographically mid-size state with a population ranked in the top 20. DYS is a mid-size juvenile justice agency with an average daily population around 900 youths and an annual operating budget under 80 million dollars.

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## **PROMISING PRACTICE: Project Hope, Rhode Island Department of Children, Youth, and Families**

**MISSION:** To provide wrap around services to youth returning to the community from The Rhode Island Training School, the state's juvenile correctional facility.

**POPULATION:** Project Hope serves adjudicated youth with serious emotional disturbances. They serve both males and females under the age of 21, with an average age of 16.5 years.

**PROGRAM DESCRIPTION:** Project Hope began in 1998 and was founded upon the importance of advocacy for strength-based practices and family involvement in decision making. Services provided are community-based, family-centered, and culturally competent. The Department channels the federal funds to the community through contracts, building upon the interagency and clinical infrastructure already established in the state's 8 mental health catchment areas. Services vary by community and may include any and all of the following: case management, mental health counseling; crisis intervention; therapeutic recreational activities; respite; job and life skills assessment and preparation; educational advocacy; tracking; mentoring; and other non-traditional services as requested by the youth and family.

Project Hope services are available to adjudicated youth completing their sentence at the Rhode Island Training School and transitioning back to the community, as well as their families. Services are accessed through an established referral process, which includes a multi-disciplinary team transition service meeting held monthly at the training school. Participants at this meeting review all youth scheduled for discharge during the next 90-120 days. If appropriate the youth's clinical social worker makes a referral to the local community Project Hope site. The lead time of 90-120 days allows Project Hope's **Family Service Coordinators** time to get to know the youth and family prior to developing a service plan.

The Family Service Coordinator has been the primary caretaker for, or already has a close relationship with a youth who has a serious emotional disturbance and was previously incarcerated at the Rhode Island Training School. The Family Service Coordinator has knowledge of and experience in, negotiating the social service and educational systems in the area. Referred youth and their families will meet with a Family Service Coordinator to conduct a strengths-based assessment, and discuss what services the youth will need to remain in the community and avoid re-incarceration. The youth, their parent(s), their informal support network, and a community provider will meet, preferably before discharge to develop a youth-specific service plan. The Family Service Coordinator ensures implementation of the plan through daily contact with the youth, their family, and service providers included in the plan both while the youth concludes their sentence at the Training School and for a period of 9 to 12 months following discharge. Throughout that time, the planning team will reconvene to change or modify the youth's plan as needed.

Services and supports are funded through Medicaid, other insurance programs and non-traditional resources such as wrap-around funding. Services are provided through (1) the Children Intensive Services which provides counseling, behavior management, medication management, emergency services, and substance abuse treatment; (2) contracts with providers that provide life skills training, job assistance, educational assistance, and recreational assistance; and (3) the state's child welfare system that provides access to small group homes, independent living, and foster care.

**JURISDICTIONAL ENVIRONMENT:** Project Hope is operated in a geographically small state with a small population. The Rhode Island Training School is a relatively small juvenile justice facility with an average daily population under 200 and an annual operating budget under 30 million dollars.

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# Chapter 4: Defining Reentry for Short-Term Stays

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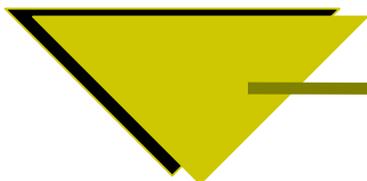
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## Addressing Reentry for Short-Term Confinement

While most discussions of reentry focus on reintegrating youthful offenders who have been placed in long-term facilities, there are considerably more youths who experience short-term placements. OJJDP reported that in 1999, approximately 336,000 youths were detained compared to approximately 155,000 youths that were in out-of-home placements that year (Stahl, 2003). The development of integrated practices and programs that minimize the negative impacts of removal and enhance the likelihood of successful reentry of youths into the community is clearly worthy of attention in short-term placements. It is difficult for short-term facilities to develop the full spectrum of reentry programming that is possible in longer-term facilities, but it is important that programs be developed from a reentry frame of mind.

### Characteristics of Short-Term Detention Facilities

Short-term detention is most often the period of time a youth is held in a juvenile detention facility during the predisposition or adjudication process in juvenile court, as a consequence for violation of prior court orders or other technical violations, and for brief periods after adjudication while a youth awaits residential treatment or community-based supervision and services (Roush, 1996). In some jurisdictions, detention may be used as a disposition, sometimes in lieu of commitment to secured correctional facilities. Unless otherwise indicated, there is no distinction made between those facilities that are secure (detention) and those that may be staff-secure or non-secure. This is consistent with the concept of “detention as a process versus place” (Dunlap & Roush, 1995). Whether the placements are secure or non-secure, the elements of good reentry planning and supervision addressed in program development are essentially the same.

There are variations from state to state on how short-term detention facilities operate, but in almost all cases these facilities are characterized by:

- Wide variations in the length of stay of youths within the facility. Youths may be placed for very brief periods of time (e.g., 8-12 hours pending release/hearing) up to several months or even longer.
- Variations in the purpose of placement, often with a mix of pre-disposition, sentences, probation holds, and other placements within the same facility.
- Wide variations in the ages of youths placed, depending on the jurisdiction.
- Variations in the reasons for placement of youths. While most states have moved toward compliance with the removal of status offenders from secure facilities, there remain wide variations in the underlying reasons for placement of youths in short-term facilities (both secure and non-secure).
- Facilities that often hold both male and female youths raise issues related to the development of gender-specific programming.
- Variations in size. The majority of short-term facilities have smaller average daily populations than do long-term correctional placements (Parent, Lieter, Kennedy, Livens, Wentworth, & Wilcox, 1994). In addition, bed capacity can vary greatly among detention facilities (see the *American Correctional Association’s National Juvenile Detention Directory* for facility sizes).
- Variations in mission, ranging from a focus on providing a safe and secure environment for youths placed there temporarily by the court, to assessment, to providing youths the necessary skills to return to the community. An increasing proportion of youths in confinement are there as a “consequence” or placed in some sort of “holding pattern.”
- Variations in the educational needs of youths.
- Variations in integration of short-term facilities with other juvenile justice system components.

In addition, the resources needed to coordinate case planning and reentry strategies in detention

facilities are often lacking. Youths with multiple risk factors and those who are at high risk of recidivism may spend considerable amounts of time in short-term facilities that often receive the “leftovers” of resources allocated to the juvenile justice system. Given these challenges, it is important that facility administrators and policy makers exercise caution about which and under what circumstances youthful offenders are confined, more effectively utilize the time that offenders are confined, and more strategically integrate short-term confinement within the overall juvenile justice system.

## **The Special Challenges of Reentry from Short-Term Detention Facilities**

Short lengths of stay make it difficult for staff to have an impact on the attitudes and behaviors of incarcerated youths, even during relatively longer stays of between 45-90 days. However, because the impact of removal and separation from the community, family, and ongoing relationships can be dramatic, it is important that even short-term programs are developed to minimize the potential harm of removal and promote the successful reintegration of the youth to the community (Roush, 2002). Unfortunately, a relatively small percentage of short-term detention facilities appreciate the importance of reentry efforts despite the fact that almost all youths who go through their programs are further involved in the juvenile justice system.

A number of goals can provide the impetus for developing programs that support effective reentry of youths, including:

- Maintaining continuity in educational programming.
- Supporting continuity of communication with other juvenile justice programs and services and developing programs that are consistent with their partners in the juvenile justice system.
- Including, involving, and respecting the family and other significant relationships as partners in the ultimate goal of successful reentry, remembering that the vast majority of youths reentering the community return to the same family or living arrangement that they came from (whether immediately upon release from a short-term facility or after some other placement).
- Gathering and disseminating information that can be used by those involved in the case planning for a youth.

There are many ways that short-term facilities can take a reentry perspective and implement practices and programs that make productive use of the limited time that youths are in the facility. A view of reentry can maximize these efforts to ensure that they youths have a proper adjustment to life outside of the facility.

## **Critical Components of Successful Reentry from Short-Term Facilities**

Approaching short-term placements from a reentry perspective will require creative thinking about how to engage other system partners, utilize community-based services and resources, select and train staff, define staff roles, and maintain the youth’s connections with family and community supports. Short-term facilities must coordinate information gathering, stabilization, and preparation for youths returning to the community. Short-term facilities can contribute to the process of reentry by collaborating with ongoing system partners in determining what level of community-based supervision is needed to meet both the needs of the community and those of the youth and his or her family. Facilities may begin to engage youths in restorative practices, including participation in victim impact panels, victim offender conferences, and other accountability measures.

Short-term programs can redefine their missions to be consistent with the goals of the larger juvenile justice system by adopting a Balanced and Restorative Justice (BARJ) approach to program policies, procedures, and programs (Moeser, 1997). Within this mission, short-term facilities may begin to think of the “community” within the facility as a place for youths to begin to:

- Learn new skills that can be applied upon return to the community,

- Learn to live and make choices within an environment that is safe and secure, and
- Learn about how their behavior impacts others, both on the “outside” and within the facility itself.

In many ways, the debate that goes on in short-term facilities related to the purpose of detention is entirely consistent with the nature of the debate about the purpose of juvenile justice as a system. Implementing a BARJ approach can provide a third option in terms of how staff members view their role(s) and how the programs and services within a short-term facility are supported and developed. Without a sound philosophical approach and attention to reintegration as the key mission of short-term facilities, it is shortsighted at best and negligent at worst to ignore the impact of short-term removal on youthful offenders and believe that short-term facilities are simply a “time out” from the youth’s normal development.

## **Detention Reform: The Foundation for a More Successful Reentry Mission**

Both historic and recent efforts on detention reform are consistent with developing a reentry mission for short-term facilities. Detention reform efforts are based on assumptions that the use of confinement should be limited to only those youths for whom it is absolutely needed and then only for the length of time necessary to complete the court process, move the youth to an appropriate residential setting, and/or develop a safe and productive return plan to the community. Many youths can be managed safely in the community, and continued reliance on short-term detention as a “holding area” for youths carries with it as many risks as often-perceived benefits.

A well-operated detention facility should work to eliminate unnecessary confinement, promote humane conditions during confinement, and transition youths expeditiously to the least restrictive level of care with supportive services, and, whenever possible, to live with their families and familiar supports. Many juvenile detention facilities now use structured risk assessments for admission screening. These assessments also can reveal the likelihood of success in less restrictive conditional release programs, such as home supervision or electronic monitoring, as well as identify areas that would need to be addressed to ensure a successful reentry upon release (see Appendix I for an example of a risk assessment). Short-term detention with a focus on reentry is consistent with, and part of, a justice system that embraces some of the following beliefs and values:

- Reliance on detention should be minimized. Confinement is disruptive to healthy adolescent development, reinforces poor peer associations, and isolates youths from their communities and from family and emotional supports. Only those youths that need to be in confinement should be.
- While a detention facility is not designed to provide treatment, it should strive to provide adequate physical health, mental health, and substance abuse assessments to identify appropriate short-term care while in the facility and transition planning for reentry.
- Detention facilities should not only aim to improve the conditions of confinement, but also work in collaboration with other parts of the juvenile justice system to support successful reentry.
- Along with providing a safe and secure setting, detention staff should understand their roles as facilitators of long-term crime control through the provision of programs that improve thinking skills, prosocial behaviors, and linkages to community supports.
- Detention services should be culturally appropriate and gender-specific.
- Detention services should assist in strengthening families and improving family functioning and should involve the community in reentry.
- Reparation to victims and the larger community should be emphasized over incarceration as the desirable form of accountability.
- The justice system should hold the value that it fails when a youth does not exit the system with

greater competency than when he or she entered.

There are many examples of detention reform now occurring across the country. In Albuquerque, for example, a local detention and system reform steering committee was created with all the stakeholders represented. Concrete goals for detention reform facilitated discussion and focused the efforts of the stakeholder committee. In Multnomah County, Oregon, the Annie E. Casey Foundation's Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative (JDAI) resulted in dramatic reductions in the overall detention population, the disproportionate confinement of minority youths, and the reallocation of significant resources to community-based services to support strong neighborhoods and services for families and youths. In Cook County, Illinois, similar efforts in developing a range of reporting centers and process alternatives have resulted in substantial reductions in the detention population.

## **Roles of Staff and Community in Reentry Planning**

Staff working in a short-term juvenile institution that adopts a reentry mission will view their roles quite differently than staff working under a retributive, control-oriented model. Beyond ensuring safe, secure, and humane conditions of confinement, reentry-oriented staff may work with service providers to assist in needs assessment service planning while the youth is in custody and also make connections with community services and supports during confinement that will continue once the youth is released.

One important role for staff is to promote relationships with the stakeholders who are invested in reentry and remain accessible to them to insure the continuation of services once a youth returns to the community. The value of allowing stakeholders a presence within the institution must be strongly supported at all levels of the organization. In addition, institutional staff have a responsibility to make stakeholder partnerships successful. It is advisable that an individual be identified to work on this effort who has broad knowledge of the system and whose time and efforts are devoted solely to this initiative. For example, in Albuquerque, the Juvenile Detention Alternatives Coordinator (JDAI) has frank discussions with the stakeholders individually and as a group and urges the stakeholders to look critically at their practices.

In support of a reentry mission, staff roles change in the following ways:

- The administrators of the facility should ensure that the policies, day-to-day operations, schedules, and staffing patterns support reentry activities. Staff training and seminars should support an understanding of staff's role in promoting long-term community safety through successful reentry of youths to the community.
- Job descriptions should be modified to require collaboration with community partners and promote an understanding of the community to which the youth will return.
- Administrators should form partnerships with other agencies and providers who can make connections with youths (e.g. mental health staff, substance abuse specialists, health care professionals, educators, and community based providers).
- Probation staff working in the courtroom can train community partners on the court process and how decisions are made throughout the adjudication process and can assist partners in the development of reentry plans.
- Detention facility staff can be commissioned to organize a host of community volunteers who can present themselves as "natural helpers" in the community and who can be available to assist youths in reentry.
- Detention facility staff may be assigned to work with case planners to develop an individualized case plan for the youth that can be implemented upon reentry. For example, a facility may encourage youths to develop resumes to help them seek employment.

- Detention facility staff may participate in multidisciplinary meetings composed of professionals and community partners to monitor and adjust working procedures for maximum effectiveness, and to review individual reentry plans, particularly for high-need youths.

These are just some examples of how existing staff roles could be modified to support a reentry mission. Many of these changes will be difficult, requiring the strategic commitment of leadership to this goal.

### **Detention: Linked to the Community**

Virtually every community member has a stake and potential role in juvenile reentry. Given the likelihood that a youth will return to his or her community after detention, it is in the community's interest to provide interventions and reentry services that promote community health and safety. However, not every community member will want to participate in the creation of reentry programs or in the administration of reentry services. Partnerships with community-based agencies that serve youths and their families may be formed to engage the community with offenders while they are still in confinement.

### **Detention: Linked to the Entire Justice Continuum**

Many governmental agencies with overlapping jurisdictions are involved in detention practice. It is helpful to view detention practices as part of a continuum, which is simultaneously a process and service. For example, Albuquerque's orientation unit has a two-fold purpose. One is to keep newly arrived youths separate from long-term residents while they adjust to the routine of being in a secure environment. Second, this unit provides an expedited clinical and mental health assessment of each youth in the unit, and if release is possible, it is used to develop the release plan presented at the initial hearing. Through this relatively simple yet important assessment function, the detention facility staff begin to play a role in integrating what they are doing "on site" into the larger juvenile justice system.

Detention facilities will have to work with various organizations to pass on needed information that will help the youth once he or she is back into the community: official records including information on static and dynamic risk and protective factors; medical and special needs issues; status, activities, and progress; and legal records and requirements. Detention facilities can convey information to the long-term confinement facility on how well-equipped the family is to support reentry efforts, community resources available when the youth moves back into the community, and community readiness to receive the youth.

In Albuquerque, for example, weekly meetings are held between the clinical staff from the facility, the juvenile probation and parole officers, members from the public defender's office, members from the community mental health clinic, and some of the major in-patient service providers. The purpose of these meetings is to share information on the resident, to determine which of the clinical staff are actively working on a particular case, and to ascertain whether or not the clinical staff are all working towards the same goal and not at odds with each other. These meetings have provided broad links between various governmental agencies and have resulted in more focused efforts to develop long-term plans for the affected youths.

### **Conclusion**

While many short-term facilities have developed excellent programming for youths in confinement, there is more work to be done to integrate those programs into a collaborative reentry process. Short-term facilities face often conflicting expectations of the community and others in the juvenile justice system as to how youths are placed. Short-term programs can play a critical role in successful offender integration into the community by building on successful programs. Once staff are convinced that their mission includes transforming procedures, programs, and practices to a reintegration focus, they will be instrumental in developing creative ways to support successful reentry.

## **PROMISING PRACTICE: Santa Cruz County, California Detention Facility**

**MISSION:** To build and support a Juvenile Detention System which utilizes the assessment of risk, eliminates unnecessary detention of youths, provides a safe and humane institutional environment for residents in detention, develops a professional child supervision staff which recognizes and respects the dignity of residents, and demonstrates a level of care which serves as a model to other states and jurisdictions.

**PROGRAM DESCRIPTION:** The Santa Cruz County Juvenile Detention Facility, referred to as the juvenile hall, is operated as a division of the Santa Cruz County Probation Department. The Annie E. Casey Foundation’s Juvenile Detention Alternative Initiative (JDAI) has been working with Santa Cruz to utilize a set of strategies to reduce unnecessary detention. With less youth being detained, the juvenile probation division has actively worked to develop a continuum of services commensurate with the individual needs of youth and families. A continuum for early intervention to intensive treatment was organized to make sense of the programs and resources available to youthful offenders. A regularly revised “Santa Cruz Continuum of Services” document is available for all staff and community providers.

Since the adoption of a risk assessment developed from the “8%” study (Schumacher & Kurz, 2000), the probation department has continued to develop a detention risk instrument, screening processes, assessment tools, and conferencing techniques. These tools have guided decisions made prior to detention, during detention, and post adjudication. They have assisted the detention and probation division in creating a fairly seamless and efficient system that, because of a well-developed service and communication continuum, has assisted in the creation of an expeditious court process: short detention, reduced reliance on institutions and the reentry process where structure, support and supervision moves seamlessly from detention to the community. Community-based dispositions are the preferred option, mostly because there now exists a rich array of community treatment and service options available to the court. The communication and spirit of collaboration is high between government agencies and community non-profit providers. The program outcomes are audited and the outcomes, including public safety measures, are good.

The Juvenile Hall provides a variety of services, including the following.

- At booking, staff conduct risk assessments, educational assessments, and physical health assessments. Staff also inquire about emotional stability and refer any youth with mental health concerns to an on-site mental health clinician.
- All detained youth receive an orientation to juvenile hall rule, programs, and school
- Staff develop a case plan of services for all detained youth and share it with probation staff.
- Behavioral reports regarding the youth’s adjustment, participation in programs, and school performance are made available to the court.
- Staff make referrals to probation, mental health officials, nurses, and substance abuse counselor.

**JURISDICTIONAL ENVIRONMENT:** Santa Cruz County is a mid-size California county, located on the state’s coastline. The area is geographically diverse with redwood forested mountains, the rocky coast, and fields of agriculture. It has a population approaching 300,000. Ethnically, the population is a little over one-third Latino, approximately 60% Caucasian, and a very small percentage of other ethnicities.

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## **PROMISING PRACTICE: Hocking Valley Community Residential Center, Ohio Department of Youth Services**

**MISSION:** To provide rehabilitative care to juvenile non-violent offenders through a program that includes parents and the community.

**POPULATION:** The Hocking Valley Community Residential (HVCR) Center serves males between the ages of 12 and 18 with nonviolent felony offenses.

**PROGRAM DESCRIPTION:** The HVCR Center began in 1993. The facility's programming is based on a cognitive-behavioral model. Services address issues of anger management, communication skills, independent living skills, attitude adjustment, substance abuse, family problems, problem-solving, education, and victim awareness, among others. If youth are receiving services in the community prior to admission, those services will be continued in the facility by the same community providers. The Center has enhanced its services through collaborations with local community service providers. Behavior is reinforced through a behavior modification point system. Youth must pass through four phases before release into the aftercare portion of the program. The aftercare portion of the program consists of providing wrap around services facilitated by family-child teams. These teams are made up of at least the juvenile, his parent(s), a school representative, and the probation officer. The teams also includes any individuals that are supportive of the juvenile in the community, these individuals may include a minister, other family members, police officers, other social services representatives that the juvenile has been involved with previously. These team members will support the juvenile once he leaves the facility. Parent involvement in the program is court ordered. Parents must participate on the teams, and must attend family counseling and a minimum of 10 parent education courses led by a family services coordinator. A juvenile typically serves four to six months in the facility. During this time, the team meets once a month to determine needed services and a treatment plan. The team will also meet at least once after the juvenile is released back into the community. The team will decide when team meetings are no longer necessary for the youth.

**EVALUATION:** The Hocking Valley Community Residential Center Reentry Program was evaluated by Latessa and Holsinger (1999) as part of an evaluation of the Ohio Department of Youth Services' (DYS) Community Correctional Facilities. The evaluation used the Correctional Program Assessment Inventory (CPAI) to measure how well a correctional treatment program meets known principles of effective intervention (including areas in program quality, program implementation, classification and assessment of offenders, and staff characteristics). The Center scored the highest of the 9 Community Correctional Facilities with a score of 76.9 (very satisfactory). The evaluation also showed that at the three month and six month follow up periods that re-arrests were low for the Center, at 6.3% and 15.5% respectively, compared to the other community correctional facilities (Latessa & Holsinger, 1999).

**JURISDICTIONAL ENVIRONMENT:** The Hocking Valley Community Residential Center is one of Ohio's DYS Community Correctional Facilities (CCFs). It serves the counties of Athens, Fairfield, Gallis, Hocking, Jackson, Lawrence, Meigs, Pike, Scioto, Vinton, and Washington. The Ohio DYS provides construction funding for the Residential Center.

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## **PROMISING PRACTICE: The Detention Program, Woodside Juvenile Rehabilitation Center, Vermont Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services**

**MISSION:** To provide an effective detention program, which stresses responsible thinking and behavior within a safe and secure environment.

**POPULATION:** The Detention Program serves both males and females between the ages of 10 and 18. Youth are accepted on a detention status ordered by the court or on a short-term placement status through an administrative process. Maximum stay allowed in the program is 60 days.

**PROGRAM DESCRIPTION:** The Detention Program at the Woodside Rehabilitation Center provides a program of short-term counseling/intervention and education, which offers opportunities for success and the development of a positive self-image, gives frequent and accurate feedback for both positive and negative behavior, reduces/eliminates negative role models and peer support, encourages the use of problem-solving and stress management strategies to address current problems. The following short-term services are offered to both pre-adjudicated and adjudicated youth: contingency-based behavior management, short-term crisis counseling, educational and special educational programming, case management and planning, mental health needs screening and referral, supervised visitations with parents/guardians, supervision of living units, medical services, food service, recreation and physical education, and religious services.

**JURISDICTIONAL ENVIRONMENT:** This program is conducted in a geographically small state with one of the smallest populations in the United States. Vermont has only one building secure juvenile justice facility, the Woodside Juvenile Rehabilitation Center. The average daily population of the Woodside Detention Program is approximately 15 youth, with a maximum capacity of 18. The annual operating budget for the Detention Program is approximately 1.3 million dollars.

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# Chapter 5: Data to Drive Decisions: Measuring for Reentry Success

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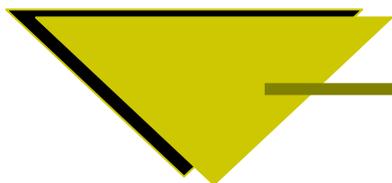
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## Why Data Should Drive Decisions

While juvenile justice practitioners may not be comfortable collecting, interpreting, and acting on data, the absence of sound reasoning based on good information opens the justice system to the risk of being guided by emotion, fear, myth, and politics. Until research methodologies are fully incorporated into the field and used to promote, communicate, and shape policies based on good practices, the justice system will continue to be driven by politics and attitudes that do not necessarily address what is occurring in reality. It is not data alone, but how the data are interpreted and presented that will make a difference in reentry strategies. Juvenile justice is a public system and must be supported by the public. It is important to share findings from the analysis of reentry data with both stakeholders and the community to inform them of the benefits of such data.

Data can also bring vitality to organizations focused on reentry and be used to discover and champion good work and assist in funding strategies and program development. Data can help monitor existing programs and help shape quality policies and procedures and be used as effective communication tools to bring respect and recognition to the impact and efficacy of reentry programs. In addition, data can be used to identify inefficient and ineffective practices.

## Developing Useful Information for Potential Users

It is important to interest managers and staff in the use of data. Research & Evaluation (R&E) staff (or other staff involved in developing data) must create reports that meet the needs of the agency for which they are created. R&E staff should ensure that:

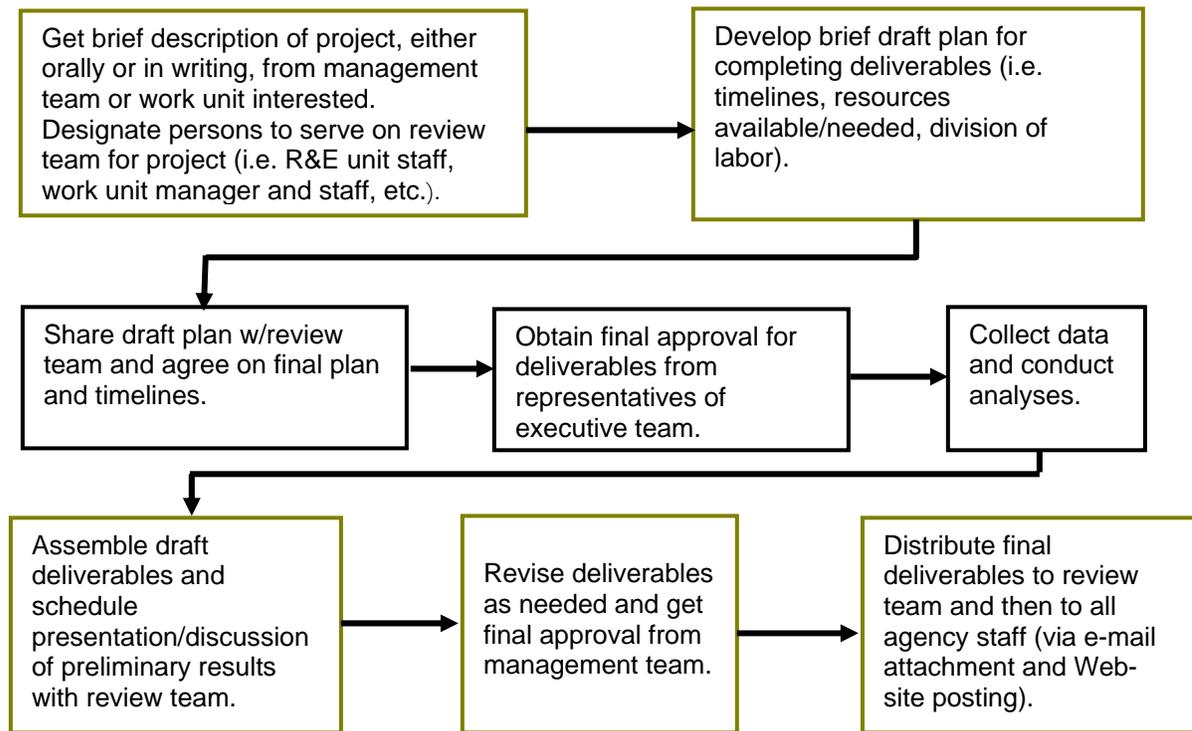
- Reports reflect departmental mission and goals;
- Reports are clear and understandable without being oversimplified;
- Readers understand and correctly interpret the data and information contained in the reports;
- A solid working relationship is developed with the department's management team;
- Departmental managers and staff use data on a regular basis for daily decisions and long-term planning; and
- Data and the staff that generate it are visible to other staff.

If an analysis or study is received well, this may be an opportunity to report these data on a regular basis. To honor data requests in a timely manner, staff should develop a protocol for how reports should be requested, developed, and disseminated in the organization. One example of how results can be shared with the community (and timelines can be tracked and more efficiently met) is in Multnomah County, Oregon.

Attendance at regularly scheduled management meetings enables the R&E unit to determine departmental data needs and provide input on how data could potentially assist management in problem-solving. If the management team feels that the efforts by the R&E unit are helpful, the team will eventually come to think of them as consultants and may even ask them to become regular members of the management team (as was the case in Multnomah County).

As seen in Figure 5.1, Multnomah County's R&E staff follow a guided plan for the collection, analysis, and dissemination of data.

**Figure 5.1. Multnomah County’s process for sharing completed research results and evaluation projects, studies, and reports with staff.**



By integrating data analysis into their agenda, R&E staff can participate and offer insight into the department and offer recommendations for the collection of additional information that could assist the department in future decision-making. R&E staff can also keep the management team on track by making sure any new initiatives or programs being considered for implementation follow the mission of the organization and have measurable outcomes. While many agencies and organizations do not have the staff or capacity to go through this type of process in detail, it is important that data collection and reports be strategized to avoid gathering dust on the shelves of policy-makers, agency staff, and partners in the juvenile justice process. The purpose of data generation and analysis is utility.

### Addressing the Critical Questions

While people may want to use data, they may not know how to interpret them or know what questions to ask. In Multnomah County, for example, staff have learned the “Research Mantra” and ask themselves the following questions:

1. What do you want to know? (What questions do you need answered?)
2. Why do you want to know it? (How will this information help you in your job?)
3. How are you going to use it? (How will you use this information once you get it?)

Once these questions are addressed, the R&E staff can do a better job of gathering the data, the person requesting the data will have greater insight into their own data needs, and it will make everyone aware of the intent behind the data collected. It does not make sense to collect data for a question to which one already knows the answer or if the results of the analysis will not change the outcome of a decision (i.e., programs with “political ties” that have no chance of being changed or resolved). Once management and staff realize this, management can more efficiently utilize the R&E unit’s resources, allowing the evaluation staff to spend more time on issues that can truly be impacted by the results they

are being asked to achieve.

## **Culture Change: Gaining Acceptance from Line Staff for Data Collection**

Data are often responsible for changes in a system. The evaluation team should calm the staff's fears about how data will be used. Although the ultimate goal is to provide information that will work towards making the system more effective for clients of the department (i.e., juveniles, victims, and the community in general), communicating how data can improve their work environment can also be very helpful making a staff more receptive to data usage.

To encourage staff input, all forms and instruments should leave an opportunity for comments (e.g., “other”, “please specify”) and the chance to override any conclusion (with explanations why) reached even through validated instruments. No one instrument can collect all the information needed to make the correct decision all the time. Finally, staff look to their managers and supervisors to see what they consider important. The goal is to help staff understand that the evaluation of information can be a means of continuous improvement and not necessarily an assessment of their individual work performances. The more managers and directors can demonstrate to staff that they value data and use them to make day-to-day and long-term decisions, staff will be more receptive to data in their work environment.

## **Creating Measurements of Performance**

One of the most important ways an agency uses data is in evaluating measures of performance and an organization's outcomes. An organization's performance can be quantified, analyzed, and then managed; recidivism being the most commonly used performance measure. Recidivism information is both a useful measure of program success and a political necessity. However, placing all the department's eggs in one basket, so to speak, can be dangerous. If the recidivism rate turns out to be high (or low), collecting only recidivism data will not enable the department to explain why this occurred. Since looking at recidivism rates means looking at youths who offended over one year ago,<sup>12</sup> recidivism is not actually that helpful in determining what to do with youths *currently* being supervised on probation caseloads.

There are many services and programs that youths are offered while being supervised in the juvenile justice system, and these can be early indicators of a youth's likelihood to recidivate. Tracking the services received and program completion, along with other interim outcomes, is necessary for continuous improvement of juvenile programs. Process evaluations can be used to determine whether a program has been implemented as intended.

Another less objective measure, but nonetheless an important one, is customer satisfaction. Since juvenile justice was not created to be a fun place for youths to be, many responses from them could be negative. However, staff should not shy away from the input provided by their “customers.” If the survey focuses on getting input on the working relationship between the probation officer and the youth/parent/guardian (e.g., officer treats youth with respect, officer listens to youth), the information can be extremely enlightening and affect future policy.

## **Using Data to Gain Public Support**

A system devoted to successful reentry must provide balance to a system weighted towards negative events. New communications must be established to “air the positives” of reentry. Mechanisms must be put in place to provide the structure to document, report, and circulate successes. With these mechanisms in place, new definitions of job roles and duties are developed. Along with

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<sup>12</sup> Recidivism can be measured many ways, but in many jurisdictions, at least 12 months must elapse from initial offense, since one must give all youths the same opportunity of 12 months to re-offend in order to calculate final rates.

collecting quantitative data, success stories should also be collected and shared as examples of good reentry work.

## **Using Data for Continuous Improvement of Reentry Outcomes**

Not every staff person will enjoy or appreciate being asked to collect and sift through a lot of data, and for good reason. Managers would be wise to be selective in what they ask staff to collect on a regular basis, and to set up efficient systems wherein data are collected through normal documentation in existing case management systems. As managers promote the virtues of solid reentry practices, new data may need to be collected as measures of good reentry work.

Using data to promote and monitor reentry work does not have to be a costly enterprise. It is better to choose a few data elements that truly represent quality measures of reentry work and then do something with the data, rather than to collect many data elements that are not used. Here are some examples of efficient data collection processes:

- Measure the number of case plans completed and shared with community providers.
- Measure amounts of restitution paid.
- Measure the time it takes for youths to be placed in school after release.
- Measure the amount of work/community service performed on a monthly basis.
- Measure rates of “clean” or negative drug testing results.
- Have youths measure the number of hours spent on positive activities.
- Measure the number of hours spent by community volunteers assisting youths in reentry.

When data are chosen wisely, are shared among stakeholders, analyzed, and acted upon, a system of continuous improvement is created. This information can be used for program improvement and allow the community to see successful reentry results.

## **Using Data to Develop Good Reentry Practices**

The notion of data driving decisions is often challenging in the juvenile justice/social work field. By nature there is a tendency to view relationships as the nuts and bolts of this field, which of course they are. However, it is often difficult at best and impossible at worst to begin to quantify such relationships to develop outcome data, let alone meaningful outcome data. While outcome data such as recidivism rates and statistics have long been staples of the juvenile justice system, more gradual data sets can be developed to lower youths’ risks to re-offend.

Relationships and interventions related to cognitive behavioral approaches and delinquency reduction can be quantified with the advent of risk/needs assessment tools and the findings of “what works” research. The subsequent data can then be used to make decisions at both the youth level and system level.

For a data system to be successful, it requires a quantifiable and objective continuum of care which focuses on those factors that reduce youths’ risk to re-offend. Such a system can be seen as a cognitive behavioral chain of skills focused on each youth’s risk factors. This chain of skills provides the connection between residential and community interventions, and time and intervention-sensitive. Time served and therapeutic interventions are not always seen as compatible, but both are necessary to ensure public safety and rehabilitation.

The careful documentation of each youth’s progress through a set of goals that address the reduction of risk and enhancement of protective factors provides a concrete bridge between public safety and rehabilitation. The development of incremental steps or levels quantifies casework strategies and allows the youth and the caseworker to have a clear understanding of targeted behaviors and thus lower a

youth's risk of recidivism.

Once a quantitative system has been established, the data can be used to chart and observe concrete progress towards the goal of reentry for each youth. Because the ultimate goal is reentry, not cure, youths should have acquired the skills that will enable them to reenter the community with a lower risk of re-offending. Charting the attainment of skills provides the youth and the caseworker a blueprint for the services that will be necessary in the community setting. The targets for the next successive step (level of supervision) are formed from progress previously made. Each successive step gives the youth the opportunity to exhibit positive behavior.

While data are important to chart an individual youth's progress through a continuum of care, they are also essential to establish concrete goals that a youth must obtain in order to reduce the risk of re-offending. For example, one goal might be to develop strategies for anger management. While this would be an overall goal, it would not be expected that the youth would have attained it in time for reentry. Rather, one would expect that a youth would have accomplished the intermediate steps to that goal (e.g. he is able to identify his triggers for anger and perhaps one or two reduction methods). This objective is then listed in his transition plan as an anger management goal. This schema is continued for other risk factors such as substance abuse or association with an at-risk peer group. A documentation of risks shows that a particular youth might have done well with substance abuse or had few substance abuse issues to begin with, and would be slotted for a prevention group rather than a treatment group in the future.

## **Using Aggregate Data to Shape System Change**

Further, the use of data can provide knowledge to shape programming and systemic changes. By establishing a cognitive/behavioral chain of goals (i.e. levels of supervision), a system can be devised to aggregate the data of all those youths in a program that have moved from one level to the next and thus provide insight into the efficacy of a particular program. Moreover, various types of offenses can be correlated with level movement to determine more realistic time assignments for those offenses.

Data can also be used to determine the types of populations and requisite services needed to meet the demands of those populations. For example, age information is important for reentry due to the types of programming that is necessary for different age groups. Such data, coupled with the ability to predict the exit dates upon entry into a residential program, allow for the ability to shift resources to match the various population needs well ahead of the time they are needed.

Also, data that focus on geographic areas and socio-economic issues can be gathered to determine the kinds of resources that are available in the community and how well they are matched with the types of needs that youths have from those various geographic areas. In addition, data can be used to support policy and spending changes so that money can be directed to programs that work. Data can be used to determine which youths move through the community system with the least problems and in the most quickly.

## **Conclusion**

Juvenile justice agencies must use data to make wise decisions. Without data on what the agency does and how it does it, the agency is unable to determine if it is achieving its goals or fulfilling its mission. Data and appropriate action must not be mutually exclusive. This is especially true for agencies with a reentry focus. Traditionally, solutions to juvenile offending have rested solely on the agency itself through building more institutions and developing more programming. These solutions have failed to successfully reintegrate youths back into the community. Instead, juvenile justice agencies must now look to new solutions to reintegrate youths. Reentry-focused agencies, however, require a philosophy change, which can be supported by data usage.

## **PROMISING PRACTICE: Village-Based Sex Offender Treatment Program, Alaska Division of Juvenile Justice**

**MISSION:** To hold juvenile offenders accountable for their behavior, promote safety and restoration of victims and communities, and assist offenders and their families in developing skills to prevent crime.

**POPULATION:** The Sex Offender Village-Based Treatment Program serves male sex offenders between the ages of 12 and 18. Program participants must not be repeat offenders and the offense must not have included an element of force or coercion. Parents/guardians must consent to open disclosure of offense details, prior history, and assessment recommendations with the entire community-based team.

**PROGRAM DESCRIPTION:** The option for the Village-Based Sex Offender Treatment Program began in 1997. The community treatment teams usually consist of 8 to 20 people, who all agree to support the juvenile within the community. The community treatment team generally consists of the Indian Reorganization Act (IRA) traditional council president, the mayor, the village-based counselor, Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) coordinator, pastor, school counselor or school principal, an elder, the offender, the victim's parents (if applicable), the itinerate clinician with the Norton Sound Behavioral Health (NSBH), the aftercare youth counselor from the Nome Youth Facility, and the Juvenile Probation Officer (JPO) assigned to the case. All IRA Council members, city council members, traditional council members, and elder committee members are welcome to become involved and agree to support the offender for two years. The team is also encouraged to do positive activities with the offender. The team has a chair person that must be notified of any violations within a twelve hour time frame. The chair person then has another twelve hours to notify the Juvenile Probation Officer. For minor violations, the treatment team can decide on the consequences. However, for major violations, the Juvenile Probation Officer solely determines the consequences (which is usually a return to detention). The youth can be returned to the community depending on how severe the offense and/or violation and the treatment team's agreement to continue.

A clinician flies out to the village to do intensive sex offender treatment every three weeks. The treatment includes having the offender work out of workbooks (with the Pathway Series for sex offenders). However, depending on the cognition level of the offender, he may work out of the "good touch, bad touch" book series. The village-based counselor is responsible for teaching social skills, respect, empathy, and education regarding statutes of sex offenses. The Juvenile Probation Officer also flies out to the village once every two months to meet with the community treatment team and review progress. This program is very flexible and designed to address the unique concerns of these rural communities.

**EVALUATION:** Since 1997, the program has served over ten juveniles. None of which has re-offended with a sexual offense. There have been two that re-offended with property offenses.

**JURISDICTIONAL ENVIRONMENT:** Alaska is, geographically, the largest state with one of the smallest populations in the United States. The Division of Juvenile Justice averages around 7,200 delinquency referrals per year. The average daily population of youths in one of its eight state operated juvenile institutions is around 300 incarcerated youths in either detention or treatment. The budget for the Division of Juvenile Justice is little over 34 million dollars.

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## **PROMISING PRACTICE: Specialized Case Management, Colorado Division of Youth Services**

**MISSION:** To develop and maintain a state-wide continuum of care to maintain public safety, improve youth competencies, and make victims whole.

**POPULATION:** The Specialized Case Management System serves all Colorado Division of Youth Services' youths in the central region of the state. The Colorado Division of Youth Services' statutory age limits are 10 and 21. The program particularly focuses on special populations, including females, offenders with severe mental health disorders, sex offenders, and those youths who fit a predetermined profile.

**PROGRAM DESCRIPTION:** The Central Region Specialized Case Management System is an experimental program which is not funded by any grant money. The program enhances services that are provided under the state-wide system for case management to specialized populations. Case managers develop a care plan for the youth and become the parole officer for the youth after he/she is released from a Colorado Division of Youth Services' facility. They have comprehensive assessment programs, which are regionally based, that determine the needs of each offender upon release. There is no standardized package of services available; services are tailored to each offender. Colorado uses a parole level of supervision model, which consists of four levels of supervision that have service restrictions at each level. Colorado has a mandatory parole period of nine months, in which there is generally no follow-up beyond parole. The only exception is with the partnership DYC has made with vocational rehab, in which once a juvenile completes his/her parole, he/she may still receive services. For community involvement, Colorado has regional offices which are deeply involved with the local community. Colorado Division of Youth Services subscribes to restorative justice principles and provides victim-offender mediation, speakers and victim panels in all of their institutions, victim notification, and allows victim impact statements.

**JURISDICTIONAL ENVIRONMENT:** The Colorado Division of Youth Services is a medium-size correctional agency, with an average daily population over 1,300 youths, and an annual operating budget over 110 million dollars.

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## **PROMISING PRACTICE: Youth Re-Entry Transition Program, Treatment Alternatives to Street Crime (TASC), Ohio Department of Youth Services (ODYS), Cuyahoga County**

**MISSION:** To successfully engage youth in drug and alcohol services upon return to the community.

**POPULATION:** The Youth Re-Entry Transition Program serves both males and females ages 14 to 21 being released on parole from an Ohio Department of Youth Services' correctional institution.

**PROGRAM DESCRIPTION:** The goals of the Youth Re-Entry Transition Program is to (1) increase treatment access for reentry youth in need; (2) reduce their use of alcohol and other drugs; (3) reduce delinquent behavior and recidivism; and (4) increase occupational skills, vocational skills, and/or school performance. The program provides substance abuse education/prevention, referrals, case management, drug testing, chemical dependency outpatient counseling, intensive outpatient counseling, day treatment, and inpatient treatment. Youths are identified to participate in the Youth Re-Entry Transition Program both upon intake into an Ohio DYS correctional institution and upon discharge from the institution, based upon assessments that indicate a possible substance abuse or dependence.

The Youth Re-Entry Transition Program in Cuyahoga County is coordinated by the Juvenile TASC and the Alcohol and Drug Addiction Services Board of Cuyahoga County (ADASBCC) along with a local network of adolescent treatment agencies. Catholic Charities Services of Cuyahoga County operates the juvenile TASC program. Upon release from a DYS correctional institution the youth reports to the assigned TASC case manager who conducts a substance abuse assessment and refers the youth to an appropriate level of care. The TASC case manager implements and manages the case plan the entire time the youth remains in the Re-Entry Program, in collaboration with the assigned DYS parole officer

**EVALUATION:** The Youth Re-Entry Transition Program in Cuyahoga County has been in operation since 2001. The program was evaluated in May 2002 and again in May 2003. The evaluation showed that 287 referrals to the program resulted in 233 (81%) open cases for the TASC at the time of the evaluation in May 2003. Of the 184 cases that had begun treatment services as of the evaluation date, 26% successfully completed treatment and 30% were still involved in treatment. Forty-one percent dropped out or did not complete the program for different reasons. Only 16% were unsuccessfully discharged for legal reasons and 10% absconded during treatment.

Trends in the data show that youth who had successfully completed the program were more likely to be employed or in school at program exit and increase their grade level compared to those youth who were unsuccessful in the program. Those youth who were successful, also had less re-arrests and parole violations compared to youth who were unsuccessful in the program.

**JURISDICTIONAL ENVIRONMENT:** The program is operated in the most populous county in Ohio with around 1.4 million people. The Ohio Department of Youth Services is one of the top ten largest juvenile justice agencies in the country with an average daily population of around 1800 and an annual operating budget around a quarter of a billion dollars.

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# Chapter 6: Marketing Reentry: Agenda Setting and the Media

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By

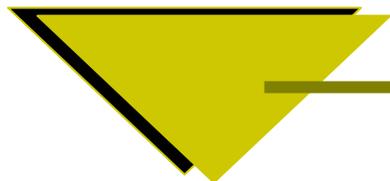
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## Public Opinion and the Criminal Justice

From the dawn of the modern criminal justice system, those attempting to implement public safety and correctional programming have considered public opinion to be – if not the enemy of effective practice – an unreliable standard for judging the appropriateness of interventions. However, the way the media portray the issues surrounding juvenile justice and the interaction of that portrayal with special interest groups help to shape the actions of political decision-makers and the public at large. Ignoring the importance of public attitudes, issue framing, and political agendas can limit the success of those attempting to garner the necessary support and funding for innovative reentry policies.

### What Are Existing Public Attitudes?

Contrary to some common perceptions, the general public is generally willing to give juvenile offenders a second chance and to support rehabilitative – rather than retributive – dispositions for delinquent youths (Flanagan & Longmire, 1996). Americans perceive juvenile delinquents as good candidates for rehabilitative programming (Cullen, Skovron, Scott, & Burton, 1990). In addition, when asked about the mission of juvenile corrections, respondents believe that it is important to “train, educate, and counsel” juvenile offenders (Flanagan & Longmire, 1996, p. 73).

Understanding public opinion toward juvenile justice and corrections provides information that may be useful to those attempting to gain support and funding for reentry programs. Slightly more than half of the population surveyed felt that juvenile justice programs aimed at rehabilitating juveniles - rather than punishing them - did not receive adequate funding (Flanagan & Longmire, 1996). While this majority opinion is a hopeful sign for reentry proponents, only one-quarter of the population surveyed thought such programs were adequately funded. Roughly one-quarter of the population did not know whether such program funding was adequate or should be increased. The fact that many Americans are not familiar with and do not have fully-formed beliefs about such policies and funding issues leaves strategies, such as juvenile reentry programming, open to the effects of issue framing.

### Framing the Issue of Reentry

Social scientists continue to conduct research into how varied presentations of the same issue affect public perception and political action. “Issue frames” refer to the manner in which the issue is presented. How an issue is framed has an impact on how not only the public, but also key decision-makers, understand and act on an issue. Different presentations of the same basic issue can activate different public attitudes toward an issue (Valentino, 1999). Because some issues may not be familiar, such as reentry, Jacoby (2000) argues that issue framing is a “highly rational” strategy for political elites in which favorable public opinion can advance ultimate political objectives, including those of reentry.

How an issue is framed may increase the salience of the issue and also its relevance to underlying public values and beliefs (Sniderman, Brody & Kuklinski, 1984; Zaller & Feldman, 1992). Therefore, “creative elites” or those who are attempting to raise the issue to public consciousness must also attempt to connect the issue to attitudes and beliefs that could form the basis for support for such policies (Campbell, Converse, Miller, & Stokes, 1965). One way to think about this process is to consider that most people – including many key decision-makers – do not encounter the problem of juvenile offender reentry on a routine basis. Given that lack of general awareness, we might think of issue framing as an opportunity to “construct” the issue of reentry. Rather than think of reentry as a subject about which there is common understanding and attitudes, public opinion researchers suggest that when it comes to policies like reentry, “public opinion is not fixed but variable and contingent on how policies are formulated and framed” (Kinder & Winter, 2001, p. 451). The intensity of the message, the degree of elite debate and conflict over the issue, and how the message is fitted with the existing considerations held by the individual may influence whether the person accepts or rejects the elite’s proposed stand on the issue (Zaller & Feldman, 1992).

If reentry could be associated with positive values such as school commitment and success, employment, and independence (including getting a job and paying taxes), the public and political response to the issue would be enhanced. For example, reentry could be framed as a means to ensure that children continue their education and job training so that they can become peaceful and productive citizens. One challenge facing those attempting to increase public and political support for reentry is to consider the values and beliefs of the community that are aligned with the goals of reentry and to work consciously to draw links between those beliefs and the reentry mission.

## **The Power of Framing for Political Action**

Cultivating a better understanding of how public opinion works and forming a strategy to present a positive and persuasive vision of reentry is a vital strategy in framing reentry. Framing reentry in a positive light will allow political decision-makers to see reentry issues as consistent with the values and beliefs of their constituents and potentially prevent political misperception of reentry. The general public's involvement and investment in reentry should not be underestimated by political stakeholders. Flanagan and Longmire (1996) suggest that there is substantial evidence that political leaders misconceive the public mind on crime and justice issues. Moreover, these misconceptions appear to be in one direction: "that of assuming that citizens are more conservative and resistant to innovation in criminal justice thinking that they actually are" (p. 153).

## **Framing the Beneficiaries**

One of the potential problems in gaining support for reentry services is identifying the beneficiaries of the program. If reentry is framed solely as a program to benefit youthful offenders, the base of support for the program might suffer, since law-abiding citizens will feel as if they are being taxed to provide services to youths who violated the norms and values of their community. The model of offenders as beneficiaries and the community as the population taxed to provide offender-based services is a fairly traditional policy model. As one might expect, if the person paying (or being taxed) for a service does not perceive that he or she is receiving some value in return, support for the program is lessened (Ripley & Franklin, 1982). To gain public support for reentry, it should be seen as a policy with multiple beneficiaries, including the victim, the general community, and the business community.

Framing reentry can highlight the benefits of requiring offenders to make amends and restitution to victims; increased safety and security; lowered costs of loss, insurance, and police protection for businesses; lowered crime rates; lowered fear; and an overall increase in the quality of life. A model of reentry policy should stress that the tax dollars expended to successfully reintegrate juvenile offenders from secure confinement provides a potential benefit to the community as a whole.

## **Bringing Reentry to the Public Agenda**

Corrections practitioners, like law makers, are considered formal policy makers as opposed to those groups external to government who might launch a "grass-roots" campaign (Nakamura & Smallwood, 1980). However, those formal policy makers generally cannot force through policies without building support for their ideas because "for the policy maker the job of getting people to agree on a policy can become a goal in itself. It can also be viewed as a means of achieving good policy" (Nakamura & Smallwood, 1980, p. 57). Coalition-building is essential in the improvement of reentry processes from initial development through execution. While reentry may never rise to prominence with the general public, coalition-building can create an attentive public, or a group of people who are interested in and educated about reentry or issues related to reentry (Cobb, Ross, & Ross, 1976).

If administrators choose to build coalitions for reentry, they will probably follow the general strategies of the mobilization model to bring these issues to the political agenda (Cobb, Ross, & Ross, 1976). In this model, the practitioner wishes to initiate a policy, but needs wider support to assure implementation and/or funding. One way to gain wider support is through the utilization of special

interest groups.

## **The Importance of Special Interest Groups**

Consideration of special interest groups has always been imperative to the success of any public policy. However, programs for juvenile offenders have often lacked strong political advocates in the past. The offenders themselves are too young to vote, let alone exercise any political clout. Often the parents of such offenders are of low socioeconomic status and generally not well educated. These traits are typically correlated with low political activity. It is very unusual to find organized lobbying efforts at the statehouse or parents of confined juveniles requesting additional funding for enriched juvenile justice programs at county commissioner meetings. Despite this obvious lack of parental advocacy groups, other groups can be seen as stakeholders in the juvenile justice system and should be courted, informed, and included in efforts to implement reentry programs. Some of these groups include:

- Traditional stakeholders such as the Boys & Girls Clubs of America, Epiphany Ministries, the National Juvenile Detention Association (NJDA), and the YMCA/YWCA;
- Child advocacy groups;
- Clergy and religiously-based support groups;
- Victim advocacy groups; and
- The business community.

If program planners have employed advisory groups and community planning committees, group members can become allies when programs need political support or funding. Likewise, members from the school system, law enforcement, public and private service providers, and members of the general community can all be transformed from planners to advocates.

## **Looking for a Policy Window**

Aside from gathering community support for reentry issues, a wise policy framer will look for a policy window. An open policy window can bring attention to special concerns and allow advocates to push a desired solution (Kingdon, 1984). A positive event, like a new funding stream, or a negative event, such as a highly publicized crime by a reentering juvenile, can both be policy windows. The nature of the correctional field has often meant that windows are linked to dramatic and negative events. Policy windows give the corrections policy maker a unique opportunity to frame reentry if he or she is astute enough to recognize the window and has already understood and gathered the support of important groups and members in the community. In addition to the need to build coalitions and recognize when policy windows open, those interested in bringing reentry issues to the forefront must also have a credible story to tell and strategy for telling it.

## **The Power of Accountability**

Those working in secure confinement facilities focus a lot of effort on counting juveniles to assure the security of their units. However, many practitioners shy away from collecting information about larger measures of success or failure. Many practitioners fear that keeping track of success measures – such as the number of months a youth remains crime-free after release from secure confinement – could also be used against them and their programs.

However, true public service demands courage and accountability. Accurate assessment of the need for reentry programming and its outcome are necessary to inform the practitioner and decision-maker about the value of such initiatives. Accountability on the part of the practitioner helps to frame the information in the proper context. For example, if recidivism is currently at 70% from secure confinement, the practitioner could use that figure as a means to show the pressing need for establishing more promising reentry programs rather than proof of the institution's failure. In addition, presenting the problem in context helps ameliorate (though it does not eliminate) the potential fallout when a negative event happens. If a reentry program had a six-month recidivism rate of 70% for example, and

that rate dropped by 20% after one year of program implementation, a crime spree by one recidivist can be placed in the context of a program that is generally improving public safety. However, if needs and outcome measures are not available, attention is drawn to the negative event and the practitioner has few reliable tools to use in defense of the reentry strategy.

Collaboration with a college or university can be very helpful in the planning and ongoing evaluation of reentry programs. While still a public entity, the use of an outside evaluation of a program will enhance the credibility of reports on the program.

## **Role of Media in Framing Reentry**

In a field such as juvenile reentry where bad news is just one recidivist away, the media can be seen as a stumbling block or even as the enemy. Still, ignoring or prevaricating to media sources is a losing strategy.

While time consuming, creating a working relationship with members of the local media is a key point in reentry strategy. Those who can potentially affect the funding or support for reentry do not take the time to try and understand the field's missions and pressures. Those in juvenile justice certainly understand that frustration. Members of the press corps face constraints that juvenile justice practitioners need to understand if they are to build relationships with media and not feel that coverage is both negative and totally beyond their influence.

First, one must recognize that doing a good job is not news. How often have staff complained that the media only show up when something goes wrong, but do not try to cover the many children and families that the program has aided? Because bad news means that something out of the ordinary has happened, it generally receives more media attention. That is not to say that the strategic and wise practitioner cannot get positive news coverage and limit the effects of bad news.

Building a trusting relationship with members of the media is the first step in a positive framing of reentry. To achieve this, it is necessary to craft rules for staff, advisory members, and volunteers that cover dealing with the media. When staff know the boundaries of public pronouncements, they will become more comfortable in dealing with the media and will prevent a violation of a youth's rights, as well as embarrassment or litigation.

Designating staff members responsible for speaking to the media and discussing how the privacy of staff, children, providers, families, advisory group members, and volunteers may be protected are key components of good media policy. Legal releases from a parent or guardian may be required if underage children are to be photographed or questioned. Private or public providers may have their own rules about access to sites or records.

Another important step is to maintain a strict policy of truth. Aside from thorny ethical dilemmas such as shading information in an attempt to save the life of a hostage, the strict practice of the juvenile justice entity should be honesty. Lying to a reporter assures that the reporter will present the case negatively when the lie is uncovered. Chances are high that a dishonest agency will be cast in a very negative light, and will likely face aggressive and even hostile reporting in the future. Consider as well that a dishonest corrections professional mirrors the unlawful behavior he or she is attempting to correct in those children who come into his or her care and custody.

While it is not always practical to comply with a media request for information, it is wise to never utter the phrase "no comment." If the information is something that cannot be legally (or otherwise) disclosed, say so, and cite why the information cannot be provided. If an answer is unknown, say so. If it is something that someone else knows or something that can be determined, indicate as much, and say when the information will be available.

Having accurate information about programs also enhances trust and credibility with the media. Being able to provide reliable and consistent information on the type and number of youths served, as

well as the effectiveness of variable program elements, will establish an agency as efficient and forthcoming. An agency that has an appropriate management information system in place will have access to many types of information that can be passed along to reporters. If a reporter requests information that the agency does not gather, say so. Do not make up data. Do not change data. Do not guess. Prevaricating will injure the agency's credibility and its ability to work effectively with members of the media in the future.

To forge a good relationship with the media, find the best and the brightest reporters in your area. Find out who covers correctional issues. Invite them in – one at a time and in groups – to get to know the programs and the players before news happens so it can be presented in context. Make sure that reporters know the contact person, the mission of the agency, the service population, funding sources, advocates, and problems. Let them know who will be available to answer their questions and let them know why this work is important. It is also beneficial to put a human face on the story and remind the media representatives that troubled youths and their victims each have their own stories and are worthy of attention. Knowing local reporters and understanding their medium and the nature of news coverage in the facility's location is critical to conveying an accurate message. If four of the five of local reporters work for a radio station, do not do a balloon launch for the new reentry program, which cannot be broadcast over the radio.

An opportunity for positive issue framing is a victim empathy curriculum in which inmates may participate. In this scenario, victims and their families come to the facility to share their experiences with youths and allow them to consider ways of acknowledging and addressing the harm that they have done. One example from a girls' secure facility was an amends garden, in which the girls planted flowers and made markers expressing apologies for the hurt they had caused. Without showing the girls' faces, members of the media were allowed to interview them. The television reporters used the visuals of the markers and flowers with the girls' voices. Volunteers from victim empathy programs were also interviewed in the garden to explain how the program worked and their impressions of the benefits for victims and offenders. As a result, media coverage was positive.

Community members and volunteers are crucial players in framing media coverage. Administrators, staff, and researchers do not have the ability to evoke a human response in the way that a community member, youth, or victim can. Programs that use members of the business community to train youths and allow them to earn money to make amends to victims should be featured when such a story is offered to the press. It is wise to think creatively about when and how to offer the story. Is there a business section in the local paper? Would a story like this fit in that section? Does the volunteer group come from a local church? Is there a reporter who covers the religious community for the local news or a faith editor from the local daily? Successfully framing reentry as a news story should be premised on knowing the local media. Agencies need internal directives and training on media access and good information to identify and court good reporters. It is also helpful to think like a reporter and provide a clear but human picture of the program you want them to cover.

## **Conclusion**

Much of this desktop guide attempts to break down the visible and invisible walls that separate reentering offenders from the community. The framing of a clear mission that both serves and builds coalitions with the victim and the greater community sets the stage for effective reentry practices. However, an effort to build partnerships should not end at the steps of the court house. Breaking down barriers and building understanding about reentry with key decision-makers should be seen as a necessary and logical extension of a successful reentry strategy. Even the best and most strategic reentry program should not be expected to gain instant support and respect without a concerted effort on the part of its framers to advocate its potential to the media and key decision-makers. Reentry is a difficult and often misunderstood and neglected concept, so struggling to gain public and political understanding and acceptance will be a difficult task, but one in which none of us can afford to fail.

## **PROMISING PRACTICE: McLaughlin Transitional Services Unit (TSU), Alaska Division of Juvenile Justice**

**MISSION:** To hold juvenile offenders accountable for their behavior, promote the safety and restoration of victims and communities, and assist offenders and their families in developing skills to prevent crime.

**POPULATION:** The McLaughlin Transitional Services Unit serves males and females under the age of 19, who are being released from the McLaughlin Youth Center (MYC) in Anchorage.

**PROGRAM DESCRIPTION:** The McLaughlin Transitional Services Unit (TSU) provides programming and services designed to begin preparing each institutionalized youth for a gradual and successful re-entry into the community from the time he or she is institutionalized. It is based on the Intensive Aftercare Program (IAP) model developed by Dr. David Altschuler and Dr. Troy Armstrong. The Youth Level of Services/Case Management Inventory (YLS/CMI) assessment instrument is utilized to identify specific individual needs and areas of risk. The results of the assessment, which also includes information provided by the institutional treatment teams, probation officers, case files, families, and other pertinent sources, are used to build a plan to provide a continuum of services. The following service areas are emphasized:

1. Assessment (YLS/CMI & Juvenile Sex Offender Assessment Protocol [J-SOAP])
2. Overarching Case Management and Service Brokerage
3. Targeted Re-entry Initiative (eligibility requirements) and McLaughlin Boys & Girls Club
4. Job Ready Group (a Boys & Girls Clubs program with community case management)
5. Anchorage School District Transitional Services
6. GED Testing
7. Individualized Aftercare Plan
8. Pre-Release Review Hearing
9. Relapse Prevention Group
10. Functional Family Therapy (eligibility requirements)
11. Big Brother Big Sister Mentor Program (eligibility requirements)
12. Aftercare Substance Abuse Group (eligibility requirements)
13. Special Technology (electronic monitoring, substance abuse testing)
14. A Balance of Incentives and Graduated Sanctions
15. Intensive Community Supervision

**JURISDICTIONAL ENVIRONMENT:** Alaska's huge size, geographic isolation, and distinctive cultural heritage bring unique challenges for providing transitional, reentry, and aftercare services to juvenile offenders. The state's population of 626,900 is spread out over an area larger than Texas, California, and Montana combined. Over 30% of the residents of the state live in isolated villages and communities that are inaccessible except by boat or aircraft, requiring probation officers and aftercare staff to spend much of their time traveling from village to village to address delinquency and supervise juvenile offenders on a local level. Just five youth facilities provide long-term confinement and treatment over this large area; thus, many youths are confined far from their homes and communities. The Division of Juvenile Justice is relatively small with an average daily population under 300 and an annual budget over 34 million dollars.

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## **PROMISING PRACTICE: Minority Youth Transition Program, Oregon Youth Authority**

**MISSION:** To assist minority youth in transition from juvenile correctional facilities back into their communities, as well as to reduce recidivism and address the over-representation of minorities in the juvenile justice system.

**POPULATION:** The Minority Youth Transition Program serves both male and female minorities transitioning from Oregon Youth Authority's correctional facilities. The program serves youth who are African American, Hispanic, and Native American, and Asian/Pacific Islander.

**PROGRAM DESCRIPTION:** The Minority Youth Transition Program provides intensive aftercare monitoring and support/treatment services for five months after the youth is released from the juvenile correctional facility. Each youth is assigned a Transition Specialist who acts as an advocate to employers, educators, the parole officer, the family, and community support. The program provides 24 hour crisis response to the youth and his/her family. Each youth has an individualized treatment plan that is developed in collaboration with the Transition Specialist, Parole Officer, Treatment Manager, other facility staff, community providers, tribes, youth, and their families prior to release from the correctional facility. Program services include: mentorship, drug and alcohol treatment, mental health, family support, anger management, grief counseling, conflict resolution, gang intervention/mediation, prosocial development, bus passes, clothing vouchers, employment/job readiness, education assistance, and 24-hour crisis response. The Minority Youth Transition Program utilizes a continuum of incentives and graduated consequences to support and reinforce prosocial behavior(s). During the Transition Program, linkages are established with community resources and support networks to provide ongoing support for the youth following formal involvement. It has also implemented Altschuler and Armstrong's IAP model and incorporated reentry efforts under OJJDP Going Home Grant.

The efforts of the Transition Specialists, providers, and others who work with the program have contributed to a reduction in the African American male youth offender population in secure custody from 12% in 1996 to 8% as of February, 2004. The Minority Youth Transition Program has received both statewide and national recognition and was featured at the OJJDP conference in Washington, D.C. in 2000. The Juvenile Reintegration and Aftercare Center (Dr. Troy Armstrong and Dr. David Altschuler) in Sacramento, California has also recognized the Minority Youth Transition Program for its innovation in incorporating culturally specific services, diversity and competency in the Intensive Aftercare Program (IAP) Model.

**JURISDICTIONAL ENVIRONMENT:** Oregon is, geographically, a large state with a population around 3.5 million. The Oregon Youth Authority has an approximate average secure custody population of 850 and an annual operating budget of 270 million dollars.

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## **PROMISING PRACTICE: Woodside Transition Program, The Woodside Juvenile Rehabilitation Center , Vermont's Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services**

**MISSION:** To provide effective detention and treatment programs which stress responsible thinking and behavior within a safe and secure environment.

**POPULATION:** The Woodside Transition Program serves males between the ages of 16 to 18, who are residents of the Intensive Treatment Program for Aggressive Adolescents a program of treatment services designed for male adolescents who have engaged in serious aggressive and delinquent acts, have been adjudicated delinquent, and require secure treatment.. Youths who are beyond the age of 18 may be involved in the Transition Program on a voluntary basis. The Transition Program has served over 50 youths since 1996.

**PROGRAM DESCRIPTION:** The program has a capacity for 12 youth with an average daily population of four. **There are two components to the Woodside Transition Program: (1) the Transition House and (2) individual community mentors.** Youths may be involved in one or both of these components when transitioning from the treatment program to community-based services. The Transition House component and the individual community mentor component are managed under the direction of the clinical and educational director. The transition coordinator facilitates transition planning and implementation and provides case management services in conjunction with the transition treatment team (comprised of the youth's social services case worker, members of his Woodside case team, the clinical and educational director, community-based providers, and others as appropriate) and the youth's case team. No adolescent will move into the Transition Program unless (1) **a transition plan** has been completed which specifies the adolescent's expected placement, tasks to be accomplished and persons responsible and a proposed timeline (developed by the transition team with the adolescent's input) and (2) **a contract** has been negotiated with the adolescent which specifies all expectations and consequences as well as circumstances which would necessitate a treatment program readmission. Once the active transition phase is formally initiated, the transition treatment team, the case team, and the transition coordinator oversee the accomplishment of activities in the plan. Expectations, rules, and consequences for all residents living at the Transition House are clearly defined and reviewed with the adolescent prior to moving in. Although programs are individualized, the Transition House offers daily programming such as problem identification and solving, independent living skills, and time management. Each program in the individual community mentor component is based on the supervision and treatment needs of the adolescent. All programs, however, will include case management, formal and informal counseling, and daily guidance/supervision by supervised mentor(s). Usually case management will be performed by the transition coordinator. With assistance from the adolescent's case management team, the coordinator forms and facilitates the adolescent's wraparound network/team. Other components may include school, work, or community service. The length of stay in either component is expected to range from 6 to 12 months.

**JURISDICTIONAL ENVIRONMENT:** This program is conducted in a geographically small state with one of the smallest populations in the United States. Vermont has only one building secure juvenile justice facility, the Woodside Juvenile Rehabilitation Center. The cost for the Transition Program is approximately \$190,000 annually, based upon four youth.

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## Appendix D: Summary of Risk and Protective Factors by Domain

Domain	Early Onset (ages 6-11) Risk Factor	Late Onset (ages 12-14) Risk Factor	Protective Factor <sup>a</sup>
<b>Individual</b>	General offenses Substance use Being male Aggression <sup>b</sup> Hyperactivity Antisocial behavior Exposure to television violence Medical, physical problems Low IQ Antisocial attitudes, beliefs Dishonesty <sup>b</sup>	General offenses Restlessness Difficulty concentrating <sup>b</sup> Risk taking Aggression <sup>b</sup> Being male Physical violence Antisocial attitudes, beliefs Crimes against persons Antisocial behavior Low IQ Substance use	Intolerant attitude toward deviance High IQ Being female Positive social orientation Perceived sanctions for transgressions
<b>Family</b>	Low socioeconomic status Antisocial parents Poor parent-child relationship Harsh, lax, or inconsistent discipline Broken home Separation from parents Abusive parents Neglect	Poor parent-child relationship Harsh or lax discipline Poor monitoring, supervision Low parental involvement Antisocial parents Broken home Low socioeconomic status Abusive parents Family conflict <sup>b</sup>	Warm, supportive relationships with parents or other adults Parents' positive evaluation of peers Parental monitoring
<b>School</b>	Poor attitude, performance	Poor attitude, performance Academic failure	School commitment Recognition for involvement in conventional activities
<b>Peer Group</b>	Weak social ties Antisocial peers	Weak social ties Antisocial, delinquent peers Gang membership	Friends who engage in conventional behavior
<b>Community</b>		Neighborhood crime, drugs Neighborhood disorganization	

<sup>a</sup>Age of onset not known.

<sup>b</sup>Males only.

Note. From The Office of the Surgeon General. (2001). Youth Violence: A report of the Surgeon General. Washington, DC: U. S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of the Secretary, Office of Public Health and Science, Office of the Surgeon General.

# Appendix E: Texas Youth Commission, Community Service Department, Independent Living Subsidy Program Contract and Conditions of Placement

*Provided by Karen Chalkley*

This is an agreement between \_\_\_\_\_, hereafter called participant and \_\_\_\_\_, hereafter called PRIMARY SERVICE WORKER (PSW) representing the Texas Youth Commission.

This agreement is binding during the participant's stay in the Independent Living Subsidy Program (ILSP). The ILSP will commence on \_\_\_\_\_ and end on \_\_\_\_\_.

This agreement is a binding contract. Any change without PSW's written consent will invalidate the entire contract. Failure, by the participant, to meet any of the requirements may result in one or more of the following consequences:

- partial or total subsidy loss
- removal from apartment location
- level I/II/III hearings
- transfer to mental health or adult homeless program
- prosecution as an adult for law violations

The PSW will determine the appropriate consequences and notify the participant of action taken.

## **SECTION A: PARTICIPANT'S RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **THE PARTICIPANT AGREES TO THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS:**

#### **I. EMPLOYMENT REQUIREMENTS**

1. If the participant is not employed upon arrival into the subsidized apartment, he/she will secure employment no later than 30 days from entering the subsidy period.
2. Participant must provide copies of a minimum of ten (10) completed job applications per week to assigned PSW until verifiable employment is obtained.
3. If participant is employed he/she will maintain employment at the satisfactory performance level, and will not quit his/her employment without first discussing with the PSW.
4. The participant will report any difficulties or reprimands regarding his or her employment to his or her PSW within 48 hours.
5. The participant will provide the PSW with a weekly employment schedule as well as the name of the site supervisor and a telephone number of the work site at each of his or her scheduled appointments.
6. The participant will notify the PSW of any change in employment; i.e. promotion, dismissal or transfer within 48 hours.
7. The participant will provide a receipt or proof of earnings (paycheck stubs) each pay period to the PSW at each of his or her scheduled appointments.

## **II. FINANCIAL REQUIREMENTS**

1. Minimum of once every 30 days the participant will disclose the balance of his or her checking/savings account and provide a copy of the bank statement to the PSW.
2. Within one week of receiving the subsidy the participant will present a budget to PSW. The budget will be reviewed on a monthly basis.
3. The participant will provide the PSW with deposit slips when presenting paycheck stubs at each of his or her scheduled appointments.
4. The participant understands that failure to comply with the budget guidelines or use of funds for illegal activities will result in loss of subsidy.

## **III. APARTMENT LOCATION REQUIREMENTS**

If the participant lives in a subsidized apartment he/she agrees to follow all apartment management rules and policies including:

1. I will not allow anyone in my apartment after my curfew as noted in ICP.
2. I will not allow more than three (3) individuals in my apartment and/or outside my apartment at any one time. An infant or small child is considered an individual.
3. I will not damage my apartment or abandon the premises.
4. I will not allow other TYC youths to visit my apartment, unless they are accompanied by TYC staff.
5. I will comply with all curfew restrictions issued by the management.
6. I will allow PSW access to the apartment around the clock.
7. I will provide PSW with a duplicate key to the apartment.
8. I will not change my approved placement, without permission of my PSW.
9. I will not allow anyone other than myself to live or stay overnight in my apartment while receiving IL rent subsidy.

## **IV. SCHOOL REQUIREMENTS**

If the participant is enrolled in an educational program he/she will adhere to the following conditions:

1. Attend classes as scheduled
2. Provide professor's name and phone number within 48 hours of first scheduled class
3. Provide grade slips within two weeks after semester ending
4. Provide syllabus with dates of exams and quizzes within 48 hours of first scheduled class
5. Provide class schedule within one week of registering/enrolling

In addition:

1. The participant will inform the PSW within 48 hours of any change in the educational program, such as but not limited to, change in class schedule.
2. The participant will not drop out of the educational program prior to discussing with the PSW.

3. If the participant is living in a dorm structure he/she will comply with the same conditions as noted in Section III.
4. Other conditions required by PSW:

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## **V. COUNSELING/AFTERCARE REQUIREMENTS**

The participant will comply with the PSW recommendations regarding specialized treatment, as noted in his/her ICP.

## **VI. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS**

- The participant will meet with the PSW weekly while receiving any form of subsidy.
- After completion of the subsidy period, the PSW will recommend the frequency of visits needed.
- The participant understands that he/she must make every effort to meet with the PSW.
- Failure to meet reporting requirements may result in subsidy termination and placement to be changed.

## **VII. OTHER CONDITIONS/SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS**

I will be involved in 40 hours of constructive activity per week (work, school, community service, specialized aftercare, and/or reporting), and provide documentation of such to my assigned PSW at each of my scheduled appointments.

- I will not cause physical pain or bodily injury to self or to another person.
- I agree not to associate with gang members or participate in any gang activity.
- I will not contact or associate with any other youth under the supervision of TYC without the written consent of the PSW.
- I agree to obey all federal, state, county, city laws, and ordinances.
- I will not use fictitious names or aliases.
- I will report any arrests or law violations, including minor citations, to the PSW within twenty-four (24) hours of the incident.
- I will not change my approved placement, leave the county of placement for more than 24 hours, or leave the state of Texas, without permission from the PSW.
- I will not own, use, sell, or have in my control any deadly weapon, firearm, explosive devices, or ammunition.
- I will not inhale, ingest, or otherwise consume or import into my body any controlled substance, alcohol, or intoxicant; and will submit to a drug screen test as instructed by any TYC officer.

- I will not associate with anyone who is using or who is in possession of a controlled substance, alcohol, intoxicant, drug paraphernalia, or weapons.
- I will not associate or contact any convicted felony offender unless I have written authorization from my assigned PSW.
- I will not intentionally damage or destroy property.
- I will comply with all conditions noted in my ICP.
- I agree to follow all parole rules not already mentioned and report any problems not addressed to PSW.

Any other conditions for placement into Independent Living may be delineated in this section.

These conditions may include locations and/or associations to avoid.

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**SECTION B: PRIMARY SERVICE WORKER'S (PSW'S) RESPONSIBILITIES**

The PSW will provide supervision and monitoring of the participant's progress in all areas of section A.

- The PSW will make a minimum of 4 contacts per month with the apartment manager to discuss the participant's behavior and to insure that the account has been kept current.
- The PSW will disburse the food subsidy gift certificate to the participant and return the signed voucher, on a weekly basis.
- The PSW will help insure the timely payment of rent, utilities and other expenses for the participant, i.e., bus passes and school tuition.

This agreement will be reviewed three months from the date signed.

\_\_\_\_\_  
PARTICIPANT

\_\_\_\_\_  
DATE

\_\_\_\_\_  
PRIMARY SERVICE WORKER

\_\_\_\_\_  
DATE

\_\_\_\_\_  
PSW'S SUPERVISOR

\_\_\_\_\_  
DATE

# Appendix F: Defining Roles from Confinement to Community

*Courtesy of James Moeser*

Successful reentry really begins upon entry into the juvenile justice system and is then supported in various ways by a wide variety of individuals. The “traditional” role of the professional probation/aftercare “agent” must change to become one of facilitating the identification, involvement, and coordination of these many partners in the reentry process. Rather than simply “supervising” the youth by enforcing a set of rules and expectations, the agent must use his or her skills to moderate the different perspectives and values of those involved. Attention to the **process** of engaging others is as critical to the success of a reentry plan as are the specific plan components that are put in place.

Moving to a reintegration mission and culture within an organization will inherently impact the roles of the many participants and partners in the process. Some of those changes have been noted in other sections of this document, and ultimately as staff become engaged in a fully reintegrative and restorative process, their roles will evolve to fit the unique circumstances of the culture, resources, and challenges of their new setting. Some examples of how roles can be characterized are summarized below.

## **A Definition of Staff Roles in a Reentry Process<sup>13</sup>**

### ***Institution Staff***

- Provide the most direct supervision of youths, security for the facility, and interact with youths most directly in the residential setting
- Partners in reintegration case planning
- Recipients and conveyors of information related to progress toward meeting reintegration plan goals
- Primary reinforcers of behavior change
- Primary teachers of new attitudes, behaviors, and skills
- Participate, with other treatment personnel, in connecting with parent(s) and significant others involved in the youth’s life
- Promote safe behavioral choices and ensure a safe environment
- Provide opportunities for youths to practice new skills safely

### ***Treatment and Service Staff***

- Involved in the “rehabilitative” processes within the institution and community
- Provide specialized treatment services (mental health, AODA, sex offender services, etc.)
- Provide leadership to “internal” planning team and link internal processes with external “customers” and plans
- Develop and promote links with community resources that will be engaged in the reintegration effort
- Learn about and engage with the community to which the youth will return
- Provide facilitation for community “experts” to participate in overall institution program design
- Provide and convey information about the youth’s goals and progress to others involved in the reintegration plan
- Utilize expertise and experience to match sound treatment and intervention practices with community strengths, needs, and resources

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<sup>13</sup> The terms used to describe the various “partners” in the institution/reentry process may vary, and there may be other parties that are involved in developing and/or supporting the youth’s institution and reentry plan. However, these categories are illustrative of many of the roles that need to be fulfilled in order for the youth to be successful upon return to the community, and it is helpful to think through how each fits into an overall support plan.

### ***Aftercare Staff***

- Stay involved in the community-based reintegration plan and direct management of the youths in meeting plan goals
- Learn about the community in which the juvenile will be living and convey that knowledge to the planning team
- Build relationships with grassroots individuals and organizations in the community/neighborhood(s) that will provide support for the youth's reentry plan
- Engage the internal staff early on in the youth's institutional stay as part of the reintegration planning team
- Identify "external" community accountability and support team members (mentors, law enforcement, employers, faith-based community members, tutors, etc.)
- Begin assessment of potential living arrangements and integrate the strengths and needs of that arrangement into the case planning process
- Perform an "environmental scan" of the community that can be matched with offender interests, strengths, and needs
- Prepare the community for the return of the offender
- Monitor the youth's progress while inside the institution and begin to coordinate internal and external programs and processes in conjunction with facility staff
- Facilitate development of a reintegration plan that includes goals, benchmark behaviors, supports, reinforcement contingencies and consequences, and relationships that will help support achievement
- Monitor and document youth's performance related to reentry goals
- Facilitate and coordinate reinforcements (consequences and rewards; graduated sanctions) consistent with plan goals
- Facilitate accountability and support team reevaluation and modification of reintegration and supervision plans

### ***Victim and Victim Advocates***

- Are direct victims of youth crime and those that are involved in providing advocacy and support services for victims in the community
- Provide information relevant to the reentry team to help ensure that appropriate accountability and restorative goals are developed and met
- (Victim advocates) Collaborate with juvenile system staff to ensure proper notification and opportunities for involvement and/or input are available to victims
- Collaborate with facility and community staff, when possible, to support additional victim-impact services and opportunities for accountability for youths

### ***Family Members***

- Include parents/caretakers including siblings, grandparents, aunts and uncles, cousins, etc.; may include non-traditional family members as well
- Are important participants very early in the reintegration planning process
- Are sources of strengths and supports that need to be assessed and utilized in reentry planning
- Provide background/historical information that provides a context to begin reentry planning
- Identify resources in the family, neighborhood, and community that have been useful to them
- Identify fundamental goals that need to be met in the reentry plan
- Provide critical supervision and support to the youthful offender
- Provide opportunities for the youth to assume appropriate responsibilities for the functioning of the family
- Provide immediate reinforcement (positive and negative) as the youth progresses or fails to meet reentry benchmarks

### ***Community Based Providers and Organizations***

- Include services purchased specifically for the youth or other kinds of service and/or volunteer organizations that provide support to the community and/or individual youths or families
- Provide specific intervention, treatment, competency development, and/or rehabilitative programming for youths
- Provide opportunities for youths to participate in the community through restorative tasks
- Provide support programs that contribute to the stability and resources of neighborhoods and families

### ***Educators***

- May be secondary and post-secondary educational support professionals and programs
- Collaborate with institution and reentry staff in developing institutional programs that readily translate into community-based programs upon reentry
- Participate in reentry planning to develop support plans for youths upon reentry, and ensure that records and other documentation related to progress transfer properly
- Provide support and direction for youths upon return to community-based program(s)

# Appendix G: Planning for Transition: the Massachusetts Department of Youth Services' Model

*Courtesy of Richard J. Romboletti and Frederick White, Jr.*

An example of a statewide system change that focuses on reentry is illustrated in the Massachusetts Department of Youth Service's model for transition. The key components and process of this model are outlined below, including:

## **The Beginning**

At the point of confinement, the process begins with a meeting called the Reentry Transition Meeting that involves staff from classification, clinical or program services, education, and community services (formal aftercare and other community supports).

## **The Mission and Structure of the Reentry Transition Planning Meeting**

This management-level team meets and presents materials regarding the youths being considered for release to a community setting, and begins to formulate the plan that they feel provides the greatest chance for reentry success. The clinical or program services representative presents information relating to the youth's assessed risks and needs, progress the youth has made, the youth's protective factors, and special needs areas (e.g. alcohol and/or drug abuse, mental health, aggression or violence, sexual offending, etc.).

The representative from community services presents information on the social history of the youth focusing on the strengths – and potential reentry issues – that could occur if the youth returns to his or her family. The presentation and discussion of the family dynamic includes initial assessment of family needs and/or strengths, reassessment of those issues, the family's ability to enhance protective factors, substance abuse awareness, increasing positive adult-child communication, and discipline issues. In addition, the representative from educational services presents information regarding the youth's educational history (including specialized education services), recommendations for an educational program, and various vocational options that may be available.

## **Decisions Regarding Transition Planning**

After the presentation and discussion of information on the case, the team then focuses on three major decision areas: (1) the nature and intensity of (clinical) services and supervision of the youth, (2) the living arrangements (placement) of the youth, and (3) the educational placement of the youth.

The actual discussion leads to a determination of the level of caseworker support needed, levels of services needed, and needed supports for transition to family (e.g., counseling or other stabilization), or other placement.

## **Planning for Legal Requirements**

The transition team should also be attentive in reviewing any legal or administrative requirements governing the change of custody status for a youth as he or she moves from confinement to a community setting. These requirements will differ widely between jurisdictions but may include such parameters as victim notification requirements, sex offender notification requirements, and other considerations affecting the length of stay.

The team also considers the restorative and victim-focused aspects of the reentry transition planning including a restorative justice component that could include community service, restitution, and/or other restorative programming.

## **The Products and Timing of the Management Team**

The management team meets monthly, beginning three months prior to the planned release of the youth. A range of decisions are made early on and assignments are made, including many of the issues outlined previously (e.g. living arrangements, legal requirements, educational programming, support or treatment services, etc.). In ensuing monthly meetings, the team reviews progress toward implementing the plans made and finalizing tasks and responsibilities for a successful transition.

## **Documenting Decisions**

The team is advised to assemble a standard checklist to insure that all these various decisions are translated into systematized checklists that can be adapted for each youth but that insure that no critical elements of the transition planning process are overlooked. Those checklists might include a service delivery plan, special services needed, placement plans, educational needs and plans, a restorative justice plan, and notification to victims or other legal requirements.

## **Functions Performed by the Residential Caseworker**

The specific functions of the residential caseworker are to develop a working relationship, and gain knowledge about, the youth and his or her family, monitor progress related to targeted behaviors, respond to the youth's concerns, and in general help ensure that the plan is still "on track". Contact with the family continues on a parallel track, including updating the family on the youth's progress and/or potential issues, encouraging family involvement, and communicating with other team members.

The residential caseworker also monitors special cases and issues related to the transition planning, including sex offender registry issues, victim notification, passes or furloughs, medical and mental health needs and services, and other issues unique to the youth. The residential caseworker also initiates and facilitates the monthly meetings (beginning three months prior to release) and then "hands off" responsibility for on-going management to the community caseworker and team.

The community caseworker picks up the responsibility for engaging the youth in recommended services (e.g. education, treatment, employment, mental health, etc.), for coordinating monitoring functions (e.g., day reporting center) in collaboration with other resources or team members, and coordinates with community-based service providers and supports.

# Appendix H: The Tasks of Community Reentry: What Do Institutions Do?

*Courtesy of Timothy B. Walsh*

Some of the tasks that need to be completed are listed below. The institution and those responsible for facilitating successful reentry should:

- Adopt an overall philosophy and mission that is consistent with community reentry goals and commit the leadership team and staff to reentry as the central task of programming and service.
- Develop a common vision that articulates the ideal of a community reentry program at the facility and creates a strategic plan which prioritizes transitional planning and community reentry programming.
- Require unified/integrated/coordinated case planning processes.
- Clearly define services, deliverables, and reporting requirements for contracted providers; conduct training and quality assurances and measures with providers; insist upon reporting key outcomes related to successful community reentry.
- Implement the tools/resources needed to implement and monitor effective community reintegration.
- Provide specific job roles and job descriptions to delineate duties towards reentry and empowers staff to address reentry tasks throughout the continuum of services.
- Establish a program assessment process to conduct continuous quality improvement of program and service content to align with restorative justice and evidence-based reentry.
- Provide training to all staff on the model of community reentry services.
- Conduct a stakeholder assessment to network and nurture relationships with community agencies, resources, and providers. Develop relationships with key liaisons within each community who are supportive of reentry (e.g., faith communities, communities of promise, mentors, etc.).
- Develop a plan to increase the cultural competency of staff and the cultural responsiveness of programming, services, and providers.
- Assist efforts to maximize revenue, eligibility, access, and reimbursement to available funding.
- Maintain a public relations campaign to inform the community of the mission, programming, goals, and outcomes of the facility as well as enlist them as volunteers, mentors, and patrons.
- Conduct a comprehensive community reentry needs assessment and validated risk assessment tool to identify what community reentry tasks must be completed by the youths during all phases of reentry.
- Assess what strengths, developmental assets, and community supports that the youth has in place or could have with some effort.
- Encourage and support visiting which builds upon the youth's positive support system.
- Phase programming to allow for the youth to demonstrate new thinking and behavior and to allow for greater responsibility and privileges when the youth progresses. Base progress upon reduction in risk and increases in developmental assets and strengths.
- Create with parents and the youth observable, measurable, and achievable goals.
- Recruit volunteers and trained mentors to assist the youth and family to implement the reentry plan.

- Develop a restorative plan with the youth and the youth’s parent(s) or guardian(s), support people and victims (when appropriate), which details how the youth can take restorative actions in the institution, in transition, and in the community.
- Train the youth on how to develop a portfolio of reentry accomplishments including résumé, work experience, education, certificates, identification, and so on.
- Make necessary referrals when direct service follow-up is not possible. Ensure follow-up and connection by all parties.
- Help the youth identify with his or her parent(s) or support people the alternative (prosocial) activities, friends, and situations that he or she can be involved with upon return to the community.
- Assist the youth to develop a leisure/recreation plan: positive, low-cost, well-supervised fun.
- Assist the youth, family, and support system in defining the youth’s “risky” behaviors, situations, activities, and friends/associates and rehearsing with them how the youth will avoid these risks, escape from these risks if they are unavoidable, or stop the behavior when it is slipping.
- Help the youth and family identify the youth’s “triggers,” “cues,” or warning signs of lapsing into deviant behavior.
- Work with the family, support people, school counselor, and caseworker to identify a plan of increasing the youth’s success in school. Include developing an updated individualized education plan, transferring records and credits, and discussing effective educational and support strategies.
- Provide numerous opportunities for the youth to work with his or her community reintegration caseworker or MST therapist to learn and practice new skills such as communication, problem-solving, conflict-resolution, emotions-management, and stress-reduction.
- Motivate the youth to create a “crisis plan” with his or her next transitional placement to address behaviors that caused his or her return to correctional facilities, which includes ways of using support people and support plan before it is too late (i.e., ways of cooling off, calming down, getting some distance and support, and then a way of working things out that the youth and the adults involved can agree upon).
- Create a parallel process with the youth’s parents, transitional placement, and key support people to educate them on key strategies to prevent relapse and re-offense and increase supports, motivate the youth, and hold him or her accountable.
- Adopt restorative justice principles and provides opportunities for restorative activities.
- Allow the youth to “step down” from the facility back into the community during the transitional phase within a structured, supervised, and supported setting, but which allows him or her to practice new thinking and behavior and make “safe mistakes” (e.g. home visits, placement visits, outings, work release, or productive day).
- Institute a “half back” practice during the transition phase of the program to bring the youth back to a more structured setting early on when he or she lapses or displays early risk behaviors.
- Provide follow-up and assistance to the reentry plan within the community through phone calls and site visits (the reentry plan should identify reentry needs, strategies, and assign a lead support person and timeline).
- Provide flexible funding for basic needs of the youth upon reentry such as transportation, clothing, short term housing, food, etc.
- Celebrate the successes of the youth (e.g. graduation ceremony, certificates, awards, etc.).
- Hand-off the reentry plan to community support people when formal resources are scheduled to end.

# Appendix I: Santa Cruz County Juvenile Detention Screening Risk Assessment

*Provided by Scott MacDonald  
(formatted by CRPD)*

<b>AREA 1: MOST SERIOUS INSTANT OFFENSE (choose highest one) (Arrest warrant for a new offense is scored as the offense)</b>	<b>Possible Points</b>	<b>Juvenile's Points</b>
Any 707(b) offense (No Mitigation to apply)	10	+
Loaded firearm	10	+
Felony crimes of violence	8	+
Felony sexual offenses	7	+
Felony high speed chase (driver only)	7	+
Sale of drugs	7	+
Court identified gang member who commits misdemeanor crime of violence	5	+
Other felony offenses except drugs	5	+
Possession of drug for sale	5	+
Violent misdemeanor/possession of a weapon	4	+
Misdemeanors	3	+
Possession of drugs	2	+
<b>AREA 2: CURRENT ARREST ON WARRANT</b>	<b>Possible Points</b>	<b>Juvenile's Points</b>
Surrendered	0	+
Apprehended	1	+
Apprehended with resistance	2	+
<b>AREA 3: LEGAL STATUS</b>	<b>Possible Points</b>	<b>Juvenile's Points</b>
Pending court (petition has been filed or case is "off calendar for personal service")	6	+
Ward – last sustained offense within 3 months	4	+
Ward – last sustained offense 3 months/1 year	3	+
Ward – last sustained offense > 1 year	2	+
654/725 W&I (informal probation/6 months without wardship)	2	+
Transfer in-custody (score for sustained offense)	Score for sustained offense	+
Open deferred entry of judgment	3	+
None	0	+

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<b>AREA 4: RISK OF FTA AND REOFFENSE</b>	<b>Possible Points</b>	<b>Juvenile's Points</b>
Previous 871 W&I (escape from a Juvenile Hall or Ranch Camp)	2 pts ea. incident	+
Previous FTAs	1 pt ea, but not over 3 pts	+
Pending referrals/citations	0-3 pts ea, but not over 3 pts	+
<b>AREA 5: RISK OF NEW OFFENSE</b>	<b>Possible Points</b>	<b>Juvenile's Points</b>
Previously arrested or cited for new offense while pending court	10	+
<b>AREA 6: MITIGATING FACTORS</b>	<b>Possible Deduct</b>	<b>Juvenile's Points</b>
Family member or caretaker able to assume responsibility for minor	Minus 1 to 3 points total	-
Stability in school and/or employment		-
First arrest at 16 years or older		-
No arrests or citations within the last year		-
Other (please specify)		-
<b>AREA 7: AGGRAVATING FACTORS</b>	<b>Possible Points</b>	<b>Juvenile's Points</b>
Runaway behavior from home	Add 1 to 3 pts total	+
Poor or no attendance at school		+
Two or more sustained offenses involving violence in the last year		+
Multiple offenses		+
Other (please specify below)		+
<b>AREA 8: VICTIM/WITNESS FACTORS</b>	<b>Possible Points</b>	<b>Juvenile's Points</b>
Threats of violence against current victim subsequent to offense	3	+
Threats of violence to witness in current case subsequent to offense	3	+
Previously victimized same person/family member	2	+
Crime appears based on race, gender, sexual orientation, age, homelessness, disability, or religion (hate crime)	2	+
Minor has easy access to victim and crime was of a violent nature or residential burglary	2	+

**Appendix I** (page 3)

<b>AREA 9: SUBSTANCE ABUSE FACTORS</b>		<b>Juvenile's Points</b>
Minor currently in treatment for alcohol/drug issues	Minus 2	-
No known substance abuse in the past year	Minus 2	-
Knowledge of recent, active substance use and/or one or more positive urine test result in the past 30 days	1	+
Current I.V. drug use (within the past 72 hours)	10	+
Daily use of a narcotic for at least 30 days (marijuana)	3	+
Drug or alcohol use 3-6 times a week for at least 90 days (must have documentation of this)	2	+
Daily use of alcohol or marijuana and minor is 14 years or under	3	+
Daily use of alcohol or marijuana and minor is 15 years or older	2	+
<b>TOTAL POINTS</b>		

**DETENTION DECISION (check 1 box based upon total above)**

<b>Release without restriction</b>	0-5 points	
<b>Release without restriction or Home Supervision release</b>	6-9 points	
<b>Detain</b>	10 or more points	

**OVERRIDE: (STATE REASONS)**

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**MANDATORY DETENTION (Current Case)**

THESE CASES ARE TO BE AUTOMATICALLY DETAINED BUT STILL SCORED

- Escape from county institution
- Home supervision/E.M. arrest/Fresh arrest while on home supervision/E.M.
- Abscond from placement
- Placement failure
- Pickup and detain
- Warrant without judge previously agreeing to release by Probation Officer

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