

14th Annual Reducing Recidivism and Reentry Conference
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COMMUNITY-BASED REENTRY CENTERS

Is Your Community Ready to Create It's Own Reentry Center?

Presented by:
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OVERVIEW

1. Why should communities and community members care about reentrants coming back to your community?
2. The face of an ex-offender.
3. Community-based reentry requires a partnership between the Reentrant and the Community
4. Partners Reentry Center - Transitioning Back into the Community
5. The 3 Basic Components of Successful Reentry
6. Employment/Purpose
7. Conclusion

1. Why should communities have a reentry center or reentry program?

- 95% of all prisoners are released
- Ex-offenders are already in your community - Centers act as a bridge between the reentrant and the community

WHAT IS THE GOAL OF A REENTRY CENTER?

- Research shows a correlation between stable housing/employment/behavioral modification and recidivism. Homelessness, unstable employment, failure to treat underlying mental health and/or substance abuse issues, and reentrants not changing their "support" system, are among the major predictors of continued criminal conduct.
- As a community, a reentry center/program, welcomes reentrants (who are transparent and accountable to themselves and their community), gets the reentrant out of 'survival mode' and gives the reentrant hope that they can move forward and change themselves for the betterment of the community.

ALASKA CAN'T LOCK UP EVERYONE WHO MESSED UP

- 1 in 36 Alaskans are under Alaska Department of Corrections jurisdiction
- The annual cost is more than \$58,000 per year to incarcerate one adult
- Since 2013, the Prison population was expected to grow 3% per year. At that rate, by 2016 DOC was expected to be at 100% capacity. But it was not. Why? Community-based reentry.
- If prison population rates continued as forecasted, there would have been twice the number of Alaska prisoners by 2030, necessitating the construction of thousands more prison beds or shipping incarcerated Alaskans to the lower 48 to serve their sentences.
- If Alaska continues with community-based reentry, recidivism and cost will go down as well as costs of incarceration and community reintegration. Latest DOC recidivism study shows Alaska's recidivism rate has decreased from 67% to 61%.

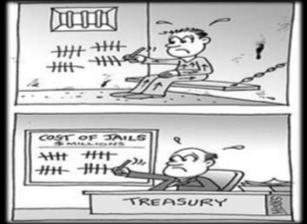
NATIONAL STATISTICS

- United States has the highest incarceration rate in the world.
- U.S. has 4% of the world's population and 25% of the world's incarcerated people
- There are over 2,200,000 individuals in custody in the United States
- 14,000,000 people move through the prison system every year
- States with highest recidivism rates - Southern belt states & Alaska
- U.S. Prison business - \$1 trillion per year
- Most social systems are based on punishing after the punishment has been already given through sentencing, community service and the shame of doing time
- 1 in 4 U.S. adults has a criminal record

INCARCERATION DOES NOT REDUCE RECIDIVISM

"Lengthy prison sentences are ineffective as a crime control measure... [and] an inefficient approach to preventing crime by incapacitation unless they are specifically targeted at very high-rate or extremely dangerous offenders."

National Research Council (2014)



PRESIDENT GEORGE W. BUSH'S WHEN SIGNING THE SECOND CHANCE ACT, APRIL 9, 2008

"The country was built on the belief that each human being has limitless potential and worth. Everybody matters. We believe that even those who have struggled with a dark past can find brighter days ahead. One way we act on that belief is by helping former prisoners who've paid for their crimes - we help them build new lives as productive members of our society. . . The work of redemption reflects our values. The bill I'm signing, . . . basically says: We're standing with you, not against you."
-George W. Bush

2. The face of an offender.

FACE OF A PRISONER

- Gender
 - Men 87.59%
 - Women 12.41%
- 65 – 70% are Non-violent offenders
- 37% are Native Alaskans (with an 85% recidivism rate)
- The majority of ex-offenders live below the poverty line
- 72% have children under the age of 18

RE-ENTRANTS WITH CHILDREN

- In 2010, 2,700,000 children in the U.S. under the age of 18 had a parent in prison.
- In 2010, 1 in 28 kids had a mother, father or both in prison.
- PRC serves or has served over 3800 clients with children (out of 7000)
- There are multi-generational family members in prison, sometimes at the same time.
- Most parents are low-risk, non-violent offenders
- From the reentrants perspective:
 - Fear
 - Shame
 - Uncertainty
 - Lack of good role models for themselves
 - **FEELING LIKE AN OUTCAST**

FACE OF THE ALASKA NATIVE PRISONER

- Annually, 35 – 40% of PRC's participants are Alaska Native
- The majority are re-entering society with:
 - Little to no urban skills
 - Requiring post-release treatment as a condition of probation or parole
 - Lack a support system because of the nature of their crime and the banishment from their village
 - Level of active participation by Alaska Native Corporations is limited (except for CITC, SCF, ANJC)

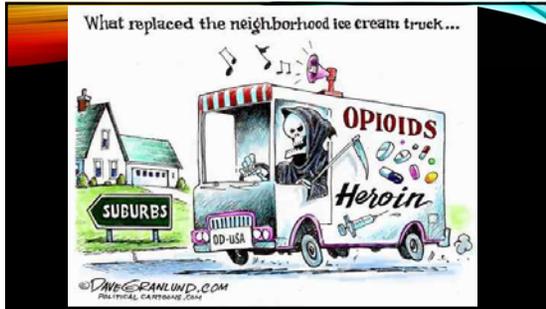


COMMUNITY-BASED REENTRY REQUIRES A PARTNERSHIP

<p>Reentrant's Part</p> <p>Reentrant's Capacity and Willingness to Change</p>	<p>Community's Part</p> <p>Community's Willingness to Accept the Reentrant and participate in the reentry and healing process</p>
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" LET'S BE HONEST – ALCOHOL, OPIOIDS, METH, AND OTHER ESCAPE TOOLS DISTRACT REENTRANTS FROM MOVING FORWARD IN A POSITIVE WAY "

What are your communities options?
 MAT Treatment Options
 Tele-mat
 S/O Issues for Rural Communities



CHALLENGES

- Lack of resources for Rural Re-Entrants
- Social Security Reinstatement
- Mental Health
- Housing (particularly for Alaska Natives in urban settings)
- Lack of Reentry Services Statewide
- Mandated treatment based primarily in Anchorage
- No felon-to-felon contact

4. Partners Reentry Center – Transitioning Back Into the Community



PRC – WHAT IS THE CULTURE

- Be welcoming
- Non-judgmental
- Expect accountability
- Expect positive attitudes
- No finger-wagging (it doesn't work)
- Work *with* a reentrant, not *for* a reentrant – the goal is to move reentrants toward self-sufficiency
- Be creative



GOALS OF RE-ENTRY

- Stable Housing
- Employment or finding Purpose
- Supportive Services
- Behavioral Modification
- Reunification with healthy family and friend support systems

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA – FOR HOUSING

- Be within 6 months of conviction or release from incarceration
- Free from current or pending criminal issues
- For housing, must be coming out of incarceration or a treatment facility with a Felony and Misdemeanors with an ASAP requirement
- Our transitional and permanent housing partners have discretion on whether to house individuals with certain offenses and to terminate housing if there is a violation of house rules.
- Willing to participate in all aspects of the program. PRC is NOT an entitlement program. It is VOLUNTARY, not MANDATORY.

PROGRAMS OFFERED THROUGH PRC

- Employment Readiness
 - Job Readiness Lab Orientation
 - 4 Weekly Employment Workshops
 - Individualized Computer Lab Assistance
 - Daily Updates on Immediate Job Openings
- Reentry Case Management and Support groups with ANJC
 - Orientation
 - Weekly Men's and Women's Support Groups
 - Individual meetings with Case Managers
 - Community Service Projects
 - MRT Classes
 - Individualized referrals to other programs, services and assistance
- Programs offered each week for Reentrants
 - Ready-To-Rent
- Financial management (*credit report and repair*) with Money Management, Inc.
- Peer-To-Peer Support groups
- On-line Parenting classes (*Zonta Grant*)
- DOL Job Search Presentation
- Assistance & Supportive Services for:
 - Housing:
 - Immediate/transitional housing
 - Permanent housing
 - Emergency rental assistance
 - State IDs
 - Food Handler Cards
 - Appropriate work clothes
 - Bus Passes for job search and employment
 - Food cards (for emergency food and toiletries)

ASSISTANCE OFFERED

- Support Groups
- Life Skills Training
- MRT
- Probation violation prevention
- Interview and employment skills
- Goal setting
- Controlling emotions
- Relationships/getting along
- Relapse Prevention
- Mentoring
- Job Readiness
- Budgeting and money management classes
- One-on-One support
- Short-term assistance with housing, bus passes, clothing, and food
- Referrals to other community services and resources
- On-line Parenting Classes

COMMUNITY OUTREACH & COLLABORATION

- Building relationships with private employers in order to refer qualified job applicants to employers;
- Pre-screening for employers;
- Collaboration with the Department of Labor for job search, specific certifications, and specialty work gear;
- Collaborating with New Life Development;
- Reentry Walks (providing educational opportunities for professionals and students to learn about reentry);
- Community presentations to businesses and community organizations;
- Coordinating Community Mentorships with women from "Success Inside and Out."

KEY PARTNERS

- Dept. of Health and Social Services
- Dept. of Corrections
- Dept. of Commerce, Community & Economic Development
- Alaska Housing Finance Corporation
- Dept. of Labor and Workforce Development
- Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority
- Ninestar Education & Employment Services
- Rural CAP
- Alaska Peer Consortium
- Anchorage Community Mental Health Services
- Zonta
- Choices
- Alaska Native Justice Center
- New Life Development
- Money Management International
- Alaska Correctional Ministries
- Case managers at Halfway Houses
- Anchorage Reentry Coalition
- Access Alaska
- Goodwill Industries
- Southcentral Foundation
- Cook Inlet Tribal Council
- Lions's Club
- Alaska Work Source

5. THE 3 BASIC COMPONENTS OF SUCCESSFUL REENTRY

WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO REENTER

<p>STABILIZE</p> <p>Address basic needs</p>	<p>INCENTIVIZE</p> <p>Help a reentrant create a new path by:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Finding purpose 2. Finding financial stability/sustainability 3. Being accountable to themselves and others. 	<p>RESTORE</p> <p>Returning Home</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Getting ready to return to the communities reentrants have harmed requires a restorative justice approach 2. The healing process of a community
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THE 3 LEGS OF THE STOOL

<p><u>Housing</u></p> <p>Transitional</p> <p>Permanent</p> <p>Probation or EM approved</p>	<p><u>Employment</u></p> <p>Willingness to get a survival job while looking for a permanent job</p> <p>Overcoming the shame to apply</p>	<p><u>Behavioral and Community Support</u></p> <p>Staying accountable</p> <p>Building healthy relationships</p> <p>Setting short and long term goals</p>
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ISSUES A REENTRANT FACES:

- **Housing** – Ever tried applying for jobs while homeless?
- **Transportation** – Most reentrants don't or can't have Drivers Licenses. The bus does not always run. How can I get to my job?
- **Employment** – Will my employer be flexible when I have to report to EM or probation or treatment?

REALITIES OF REENTRY

6. EMPLOYMENT, FINDING PURPOSE

WHAT RESOURCES DO YOU HAVE IN YOU COMMUNITY?

- List the parts of your community that are available
 - Employers
 - Access to services
 - Community groups
 - Training
 - Subsistence activities
 - Treatment (direct or tele-med)
 - Education and training (direct or via on-line classes)

ASSESSING THE RISK OF CERTAIN REENTRANTS IN YOUR COMMUNITY

- Communities have a voice in who is in their community if there is transparency and communication.
- Reentry Programs and Centers can be a bridge between the reentrant and the community. Centers also hold reentrants accountable.
- Reentry Programs should be voluntary, no mandatory. Monied services should never be considered as entitlements.

7. CONCLUSION

EX-OFFENDERS CAN MAKE GOOD EMPLOYEES

- Trained/pre-screened allows for:
 - Transitional employment
 - Work readiness "soft skills"
 - Specific job skills training
- Motivated to succeed can be measured
- Close monitoring of credibility, honesty and trustworthiness
- Assess eagerness to work

(Reality – Not all ex-offenders are willing or capable of committing to legitimate work but that is often the exception, not the rule.)

SUCCESS IN REENTRY

1. Individuals who have stabilized are those who have basic needs met, are not in 'survival mode'. This is done by providing:
 - a. Housing
 - b. Hygiene
 - c. Food
 - d. Basic medical needs met (mental health, substance disorders, physical health)
2. Individuals who have been incentivized by:
 - a. Getting employment
 - b. Connecting to social security/disability providers
 - c. Addressing mental health and substance abuse challenges
3. Restore
 - a. How does one reconnect with those that they have disappointed?
 - b. Is the community ready to accept the reentrant back?



CONTACT INFORMATION

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