

A National Overview of Offender Reentry

Reentry in the State of Connecticut:
Partners in Progress
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Gary Kempker

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A National Overview of Offender Reentry

Why Do Reentry?

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Why?

- Because..."If we always do what we've always done, we'll always get what we always got."
 - High Recidivism
 - Crime
 - Victims
 - Expense

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Reentry...

- Gives corrections an opportunity to be a proactive component of the criminal justice system.
 - Prevent crime
 - Prevent victimization
 - Improve community and public safety

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Our Mission...

The Department of Correction shall protect the public, protect staff, and provide safe, secure and humane supervision of offenders with opportunities that support successful community reintegration.

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Sir Robert Peel

“The test of police efficiency is the absence of crime and disorder, not the visible evidence of police action in dealing with it.”

-Peel's Nine Principles

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Effective Government

- The current focus in government is more efficient ways to do business
 - Multidisciplinary approaches
 - Limited resources available
 - Partnerships essential
 - **Collaboration** among agencies is expected

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Catalyst for Change in Corrections

- The job is too big for any one agency
- Scarcity of resources
- Public dissatisfaction with past efforts
- Lack of coordinated efforts among agencies
- Need for corrections to “learn to learn”
- Past strategies have been ineffective

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Nationally...

- The number of PV admissions has increased seven-fold over the past two decades.
 - In 1980, 17% of prison admissions were PVs. By 2000, 35% of prison admissions were PVs.
 - During this same time period, new court commitments declined from 81% of admissions in 1980 to 60% of admissions in 2000.
 - Despite the increasing proportion of PV admissions, “we do not know much about the underlying behavior of parole violators”. **

** Travis, Jeremy and Lawrence, Sarah. 2002. *Beyond The Prison Gates: The State of Parole in America*. Washington, D.C.: The Urban Institute, p.22.

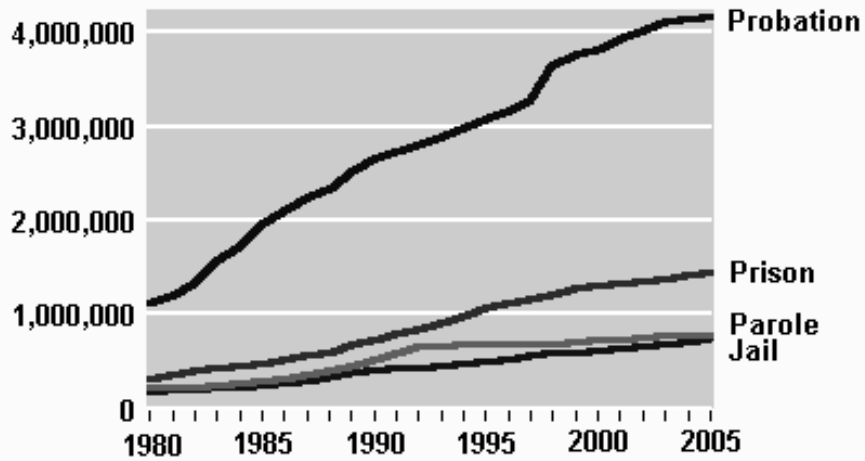
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Many Returning Offenders Fail

- More than two-thirds of released offenders are rearrested for a new crime within three years of release.
- A large percentage of arrests take place within six months of release.
- More than half of offenders released will fail either due to a technical violation or for a new crime.

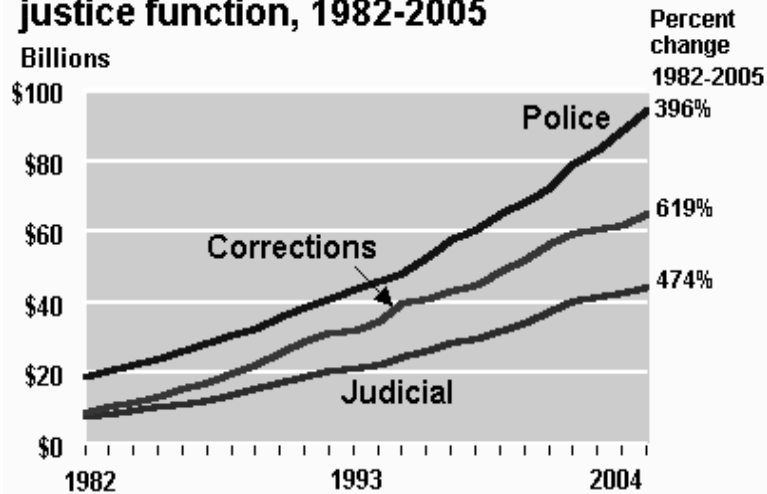
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Adult correctional populations, 1980-2005



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Direct expenditure by criminal justice function, 1982-2005



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Reentry is a Philosophy not a Program

- Philosophy – what you think and believe
- Strategy – how you put the philosophy into practice
- Tactic – one method that can be used to achieve a narrowly defined goal

Trojanowicz & Bucqueroux

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The Situation

- Offender population growth management is one of the greatest problem facing states
- There are 13 million ex-felons in this country:
 - 6.5% of the entire adult population
 - 11% of the adult male population
 - 37% of the African-American male population

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Nearly 65 Million People in the U.S. have a Criminal Record

- Approximately 30% of the nation's adult population has a criminal record –*U.S. Dept. of Justice – BJS*
- We are all someone, know someone, or are related to someone with a criminal record
- This is a population that we can no longer ignore

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Up to 1/3 of all adult
offenders within correctional
institutions have a
diagnosable mental
disorder...yet appropriate in-
prison services are lacking.
(Source: BJS, 1998)

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Roughly 3 out of 4 adult inmates have substance abuse problems... yet only about 10% receive formal treatment while incarcerated.
(Source: Hammett, 2000; BJS, 1999)

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Of the incarcerated adults and juveniles with mental health difficulties, between 60-75% have co-occurring substance abuse difficulties. *(Source: The National GAINS Center, 2001)*

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40% of adults released from correctional placement have not obtained a GED or high school diploma. *(Source: BJS, 2003)*

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Only 1 out of 3 inmates receives vocational training while incarcerated. *(Source: Steurer, Smith, & Tracy, 2001)*

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55% of inmates have children under 18 years of age. (Source: Travis et al., 2003)

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For children and adolescents, having an incarcerated parent is a significant risk factor for delinquency. (Source: Urban Institute, 2002)

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Re-Incarceration Trends

- 30% of adult offenders released from state prisons are rearrested within the first six months following their release. *(Source: BJS, 2002)*
 - Within 3 years of release, this number increases to 2 out of 3 rearrested.
- Between 50 – 70% of young offenders released from institutional custody are rearrested within 2 years. *(Source: Brown et al., 2002)*
- Revocations are the fastest growing category of prison admissions—parole violators account for 35% of new prison admissions today, as compared to 17% in 1980. *(Source: Travis & Lawrence, 2002)*

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Reentry Is about Public Safety!

- Fewer crimes
- Fewer victims
- Responsible parenting
- Law-abiding, productive citizens
- Holding offenders accountable
- Holding ourselves accountable

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Seeks to Move...

FROM

- Custody/monitoring
- Silos
- Agency isolation
- Unproven methods
- Measuring inputs

- Offender failure

TO

- Behavior change
- Coherent process
- Collaboration
- Using what works
- Measuring outcomes

- Offender success and public safety

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Preliminary Indications

- Disciplinary incidents lower in reentry units
- Bed day cost savings
- Increases in employment
- Decreases in drug use
- Decreases in technical and criminal violations after release

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Public Safety

- Those individuals with previous records are responsible for a significant amount of crime.
- Those who are unsuccessful will continue to offend and commit crimes.
- Those who successfully reintegrate as productive citizens improve our communities.

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What Does the Public Think?

- 74% are somewhat or very concerned about the problem of crime in their communities.
- 79% are fearful about the release of 700,000 prisoners annually.
- By an almost 8 to 1 margin (87% to 11%), the U.S. voting public favored rehabilitative services for prisoners as opposed to punishment only.

Zogby Poll

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What Does the Public Think?

- 70% favored services both during incarceration and after release.
- 82% felt that a lack of job training was a very significant barrier to released offenders avoiding subsequent crime.
- Voters thought medical care, availability of public housing and student loans were important (86%, 84% and 83% respectively).

Zogby Poll

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What Does the Public Think?

- Those polled believed that job training, drug treatment, mental health services, family support, mentoring, and housing were all very important services that should be offered to prisoners.
- Less than 2% of those polled (2% in the case of job training) thought that these services were unimportant.
- 44% thought planning for reentry should begin at sentencing.

Zogby Poll

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Current Trends

- Most states report cutbacks in vocational and educational training.
- No new prison construction is happening in most states.
- Inmate population growth continues.
- 97% of offenders will return home.
- Only 13% will participate in a formal reentry program.

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Public Health Issues

- One-third of people with Hepatitis C have been incarcerated. (Mo. Dept. of Health and Senior Services)
- At year end of 1999, three percent of incarcerated offenders were HIV positive.
 - 5 times the rate of the general public

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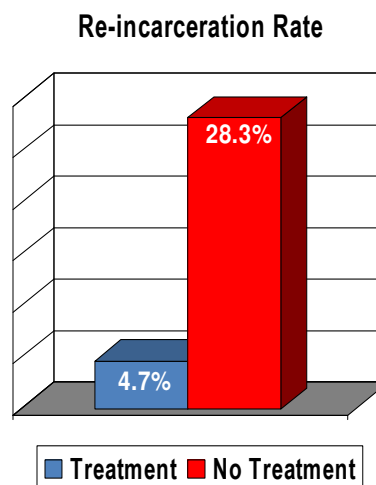
Mental Health Issues

- 46% of Missouri's violent offenders under supervision are also being served by the Department of Mental Health.
- Many offenders have substance abuse issues.
- Many offenders have psychological disorders.

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Substance Abuse

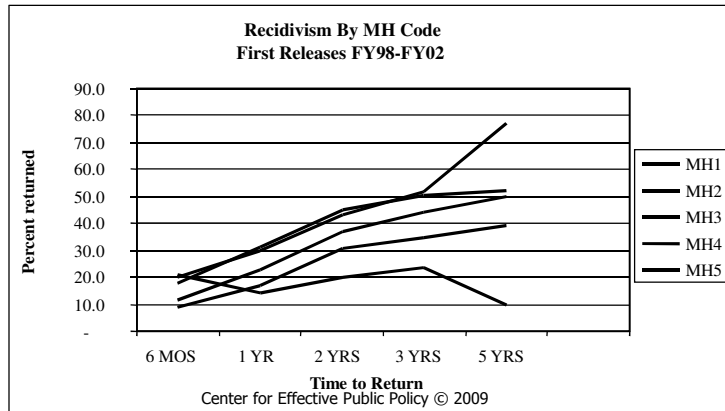
- 8,468 offenders with known (classified) substance abuse problems were released during the five-year period from FY 1998-2002:
 - Of those that received both institutional and community treatment, 4.7% returned to prison within the first year.
 - Of those that did not receive substance abuse treatment, 28.3% returned within the first year.



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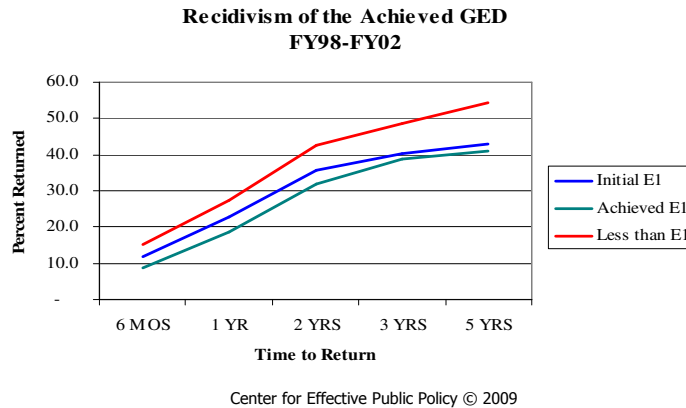
Mental Health

The re-incarceration rate is higher for offenders with mental health problems (MH Score 3 or higher).



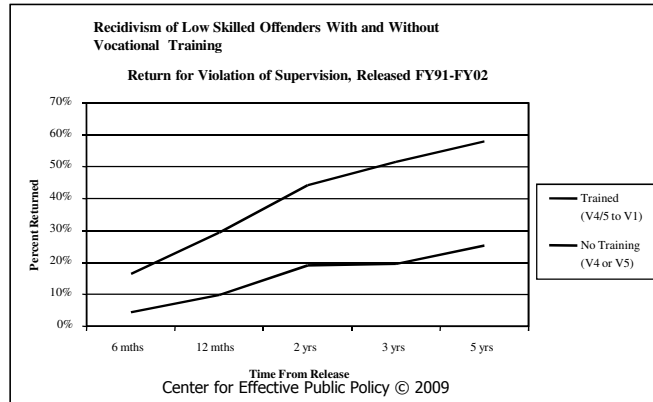
Education

Department of Corrections data clearly show that having a GED or High School Diploma (HSD) contribute to successful transition.

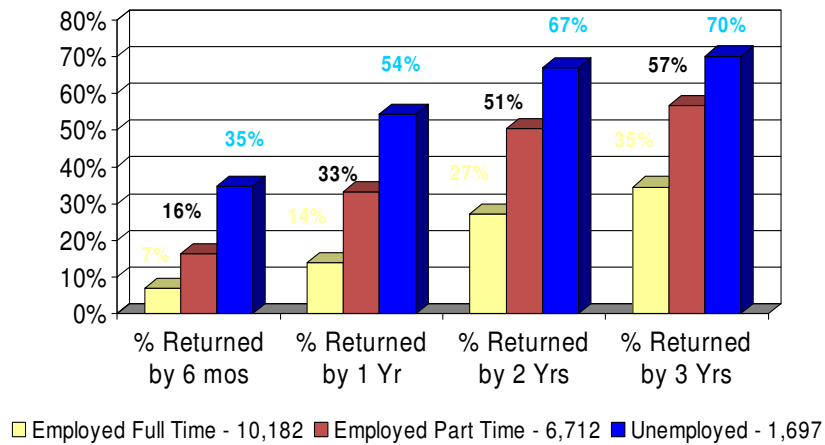


Employment/Vocational Training

Offenders who raise their vocational skill level while in prison through vocational training show a much lower return to prison rate (25%) than those with no vocational skills (58%).



Recidivism Rate by Maximized Employment Status



So...

- The tremendous and varied needs of offenders create a daunting challenge.
- Should we try to do everything for everyone?
- The answer is clear... we don't have the capacity to provide everything to everyone...nor should we.

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Focus...

- We can have significant impact on recidivism if we:
 - Focus resources on high risk offenders
 - Focus on evidence-based practices
 - Focus on criminogenic needs

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Measured Accomplishments

(reported in TPC Handbook, in press)

- GA: In 2006, they report 71% successful completion of parole, up from 66% in 2005.
- MI: In 2007, the overall MPRI recidivism improved by 23% compared to a 1998 baseline.
- MO: Reporting lower levels of technical and criminal violations (6.8% after 6 months, 4.1% after 12 months).
- OR: There are decreasing rates of revocation and absconding during the first 180 days after release.

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In Conclusion

- We are in a time when the nation is focused on reentry as a major public policy initiative.
- Empirical research and practical experiences are available to guide your course.
 - There is much to learn from others.
 - Others will learn much from you!

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