



Findings on Best Practices of Community Re-Entry Programs for Previously Incarcerated Persons

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I. Introduction

For the past few years, the Milton S. Eisenhower Foundation has been supporting several replications of the Delancey Street Foundation throughout the country. In an effort to insure the Eisenhower Foundation is up-to-date on the latest program models and best practices of programs that serve previously incarcerated persons, the Foundation engaged LaFrance Associates, LLC (LFA) to conduct research on various programs throughout the field. This report documents LFA's research of the barriers and challenges that previously incarcerated persons face, best practices of community re-entry programs, and provides program summaries for several programs selected that highlight the best practices.

This report contains the following sections:

- **Research Methods:** A discussion of the methods and research materials used to gather information for the report.
- **Challenges Faced by Previously incarcerated persons:** A description of the barriers and challenges that previously incarcerated persons face when exiting the prison system. This section also includes a discussion of what types of services inmates receive while in prison and at the moment of release.
- **Re-Entry Program Best Practices:** A survey of what the current literature and practitioners believe to be best practices for re-entry programs.
- **Program Summaries:** Key information and statistics about six programs that LFA found to stand out among the field.
 - Center for Employment Opportunities
 - The Fortune Society
 - Gemeinschaft Home
 - Opportunities for Success
 - Pioneer Human Services
 - Safer Foundation

II. Research Methods

This section describes LFA's criteria for including programs in this research and provides an overview of the sources for information on best practices among re-entry programs for previously incarcerated persons. A detailed list of sources is included in the final section of this report.

Criteria for Program Inclusion

LFA began the research process by casting a wide net and considering a variety of programs all over the country. In order to narrow down the pool of programs to profile, LFA adopted the following criteria:

- The program must have or be in the process of conducting an outcomes evaluation.
- The program must serve previously incarcerated persons as their primary population (as opposed to some programs which count previously incarcerated persons as one of many populations they serve).
- The program must take place primarily outside of the prison or jail setting.
- The program must meet multiple needs of previously incarcerated persons, such as housing, employment and counseling.

These criteria were chosen because they allowed LFA to focus on programs that have demonstrated success through outcomes, serve multiple needs of previously incarcerated persons (which the literature revealed to be an important best practice), and provide the possibility of a community-based program that the Eisenhower Foundation could use as a model for new program implementation.

Overview of Sources

LFA used several sources to find information on programs that met the above criteria. We conducted general internet searches on best practices in the field. We found several resources geared specifically towards highlighting current community re-entry practices and ex-offender programs. These include the Re-Entry Policy Council, several publications by the Urban Institute, the National Institute of Justice, and the Center for Law and Social Policy. All of these organizations have extensive websites with a wealth of online resources. These websites allowed LFA to learn about specific programs as well as overarching trends in the field of community re-entry.

Once LFA identified a program for inclusion in this report, we invited the Executive Director of the organization to participate in a telephone interview. All of the programs contacted agreed to participate. These interviews yielded important details about the specific programs and helped to give the researchers a more complete picture of the field's overall trends.

III. Challenges Faced By Previously Incarcerated Persons

As a group, previously incarcerated persons face a variety of challenges related to education and mental and physical health. Due to the wide variety of barriers this group faces, it is imperative that community re-entry programs be designed to address as many of these issues as possible. This section of the report details some the descriptive statistics available on previously incarcerated persons as a group, and discusses what typical services an ex-offender receives as he or she prepares to re-enter the community.

Educational and Vocational Barriers

As a group, previously incarcerated persons have low levels of education and face many barriers in regards to their employability. The Urban Institute reports the following information on soon-to-be-released inmates from state prisons:

- 70% are high school dropouts
- 50% are functionally illiterate
- 19% have less than eight years of education
- The pre-incarceration employment rates of offenders are lower than the employment rates of the general U.S. population

While prisoners have high levels of need in regards to education and job training, most prisoners do not participate in programs while they are incarcerated, and a small proportion of overall prison budgets are spent on in-prison programs. According to the Urban Institute, only 27% of soon-to-be-released inmates reported they participated in vocational programs and 35% reported they participated in educational programs. In 1996, only 6% of all money spent on prisons in the U.S. was spent on in-prison programs involving vocational and life skills training, educational activities, treatment and recreation.

Work-release programs, which allow soon-to-be-released prisoners to begin working, acquiring skills and saving money, are utilized by a very small number of inmates. In 2001, only one-third of prisons operated work-release programs and only 3% of prisoners participated in them.

Taken together, the barriers faced by previously incarcerated persons and the lack of educational and vocational training opportunities in the prison system indicate that previously incarcerated persons need additional supports in order to prepare them for work and life outside of prison.

Mental and Physical Health Issues

Previously incarcerated persons struggle with a wide range of mental and physical health problems. A 2003 Urban Institute paper reported the following statistics on male previously incarcerated persons:

- 75% have substance abuse problems
- 21% report having a disability that limits their ability to work
- 18% have Hepatitis C
- 16% report mental illness
- 12% report a vision or hearing problem
- 7% have a tuberculosis infection

- 4% show symptoms of post-traumatic stress syndrome related to incarceration
- 2-3% are HIV-positive or have AIDS

These rates of health and mental health problems are far higher than what is found in the general U.S. population. The rates of HIV, Hepatitis C and tuberculosis are five to ten times higher than what is found in the general population, and the rates of reported mental illness are eight times higher than the estimated incidence in the general population.

While struggling with all of these issues, the Urban Institute estimates that 81% of re-entering previously incarcerated persons do not have health care coverage. Additionally, the Urban Institute reports that less than 10% of inmates receive treatment for substance abuse and 13% of inmates receive mental health treatment while they are incarcerated. These numbers indicate that many inmates with substance abuse and/or mental health issues are going untreated while they are in prison.

Services Provided at the Moment of Release

As discussed above, prisoners face many educational and health challenges. Most do not receive adequate services for these challenges while they are incarcerated. What happens to these people when they are released from prison? What does the typical ex-offender receive the moment he or she re-enters a community?

Unfortunately, not a lot of comprehensive information is available about what types of support previously incarcerated persons across the country receive. LFA gleaned information for this report from interviews with Executive Directors of re-entry programs about what happens in their communities, and from a 2001 Urban Institute report, *From Prison to Home*.

Diane Williams, Executive Director of the Safer Foundation, reports that prisoners in Illinois participate in a 2-week pre-release program in which they are taught some basic job readiness and life skills. Prisoners being released from San Quentin in California are given a 4-week lecture course about how to find a job, parole rules, and training programs. While it appears that some programs and supports do exist for soon-to-be-released inmates, the utility and effectiveness of these programs are unclear.

The Urban Institute reports on types of financial supports that inmates receive as they are released. Again, policies vary widely depending on the local Department of Corrections. The most common support prisoners receive upon release is money for transportation or spending. Only about two-thirds of corrections departments report they provide any financial support for released prisoners. The amount ranges from about \$25 to \$200. Some states provide bus tickets for previously incarcerated persons to return to their county of sentencing, but only half help to make the transportation arrangements.

Prisoners are often released into communities in the very early morning hours (2:00 or 3:00 a.m.) and have a difficult time connecting with family members or service providers due to the timing of their release. As explained by JoAnne Page, Executive Director of the Fortune Society, prisoners are released at this time so as not to upset local businesses or residents who work and live in the area where prisoners are dropped off.

The majority of prisoners are released onto parole, or some other post-prison supervision. Typical conditions of parole include remaining drug free, maintaining a job, and observing curfews and travel restrictions. Ideally, the parole officer checks up on the ex-offender and helps them to adhere to the rules and re-enter the community. However, due to extremely high case loads, parole officers are often unable to provide each ex-offender with more than a brief meeting once a month.

IV. Best Practices for Re-Entry Programs

Overall, there is not consensus in the field over what constitutes a best practice for a prisoner re-entry program. Several researchers and institutions have tried to document what works, but a lack of experimental, well-designed outcome evaluations has led many researchers to rely on expert practitioners and less rigorous evaluations to make decisions about what works. However, there are a few research reports that put a very solid effort into compiling components of programs that are considered best practices. This section of the report details a few of the compilations found in the research and offers a brief summary of which best practices are called out most frequently.

Urban Institute's Recommendations

The Urban Institute's Justice Policy center published a list of best practices for "post-release intermediary agencies" that came out of a collaborative process between the National Institute of Justice, National Institute of Corrections, and the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Correctional Education. No details were given about what criteria were used to compile the best practices. The list created by the three government agencies is about overall program philosophy more than specific program components, and focuses on employment outcomes.

According to the Urban Institute, post-release intermediary agencies should focus on the following elements in order to most appropriately serve the ex-offender population after release from prison:

- Focus on motivation, envisioning new roles and self-concepts, and nurturing the commitment to change.
- Provide for a gradual transition from the institution structure of prison to an open schedule.
- Offer support and immediate access to income in the days following release.
- Look for compatibilities between individuals' temperaments and available jobs.
- Provide non-punitive, problem-solving assistance.
- Develop resources or provide access to concrete supports like transportation, interview and work clothes, child care, housing and food.
- Create a well-developed network of potential employers.
- Cultivate employer satisfaction through frequent contact and willingness to mediate conflicts.
- Coordinate employment and criminal justice commitments to provide as little disruption to job responsibilities as possible.
- Focus on job retention.

The Urban Institute identified 100 successful ex-offender programs that exemplify the strategies listed above in its report *Outside the Walls: A National Snapshot of Community-Based Prisoner Reentry Programs*. With the exception of Gemeinschaft Home and the OPTS program, all of the programs detailed later in this report are included on the Urban Institute's list of 100 programs.

Best Practices Based on Program Outcomes

In a 2004 paper published in *Federal Probation*, Joan Petersilia reviews the work of other researchers and culls best practices from several sources. She summarizes research based on meta-analysis, cost-benefit analysis, synthetic reviews, literature reviews, expert thinking and clinical trials. One of the sources that she includes in her review (Seiter and Kadela, 2003) examined programs that had been

formally evaluated. Using the threshold that an evaluation had to have control or comparison group, Seiter and Kadela only found nine re-entry programs over a 25-year period that fit this criteria, indicating a clear need for more rigorous outcomes evaluation in the field.

Petersilia considers both principles and specific program outcomes in her review and offers the following list of best practices:

- Programs should take place in community settings (as opposed to institutions).
- Programs should be intensive, and offer services for at least six months.
- Programs should use cognitive-behavioral treatment techniques, which involve defining problems that led to conflicts with the law/authorities, selecting goals, generating a plan to meet goals, and implementing solutions.
- The therapist and program should be matched to the learning styles and characteristics of individual offenders.
- Praise and rewards should outweigh punishments and other punitive measures.
- Previously incarcerated persons should be provided with vocational training and job-enhancing opportunities.
- Programs begun in jail should have an intensive and mandatory aftercare component.

Therapeutic Communities

Therapeutic communities (TCs) are often mentioned in the literature as being effective treatment programs for previously incarcerated persons who also struggle with substance abuse issues. They exist both inside and outside the realm of community re-entry programs. The Therapeutic Communities of America describes the primary of goals of TCs as “fostering individual change and positive growth. This is accomplished by changing an individual’s life style through a community of concerned people working together to help themselves and each other.”

In the context of adapting TCs as a model to treat and rehabilitate previously incarcerated persons, the Urban Institute describes TCs as programs that:

Focus on building self-esteem and a sense of community among the participants by examining issues of personal responsibility for past behaviors and how one can learn from the past to change future behavior. The ultimate goal of this treatment approach is to change participants’ lifestyle and identity (in this case, move them away from a life of crime and substance abuse). Programs are organized around a series of group meetings that take place in prison and then in the community upon release.

TCs have been acknowledged by many researchers and practitioners as effective models of community re-entry for the population of previously incarcerated persons who are substance abusers. Sherman et al. (1997) conducted a review of community re-entry programs and determined that TCs that begun in prison and contained a follow-up component in the community after release were among the most effective programs in reducing offender recidivism. Eliason (2006) summarizes a 1999 study which compared recidivism rates over a three year period among groups of male offenders who participated in TCs. The study found previously incarcerated persons with no treatment had a 42% recidivism rate; previously incarcerated persons who participated in an in-prison TC program with no community aftercare had a 64% recidivism rate; and previously incarcerated persons who participated in a TC program both in prison and immediately afterwards

had a 25% recidivism rate. Several other studies reviewed by Eliason also link TC programs to decreased recidivism.¹

Gemeinschaft Home, a program profiled later in this report, provides a community setting for previously incarcerated persons to continue their TC treatment in. As described in the previous section of this report, because up to 75% of previously incarcerated persons have substance abuse problems, a TC-based program should be seriously considered in developing a model.

Summary of Best Practices

In general, the ex-offender and community re-entry field seems to believe that programs that meet as many ex-offender's needs as possible are best. However, there is also agreement that **enabling previously incarcerated persons to find and retain employment** may be the most important factor in reducing recidivism. The importance of the employment component is reflected in both the Urban Institutes and Petersilia's list of best practices, described above. LFA also heard much about the necessity of finding jobs for previously incarcerated persons in several interviews with Executive Directors conducted for this report. As Mindy Tarlow, Executive Director the Center for Employment Opportunities (CEO) says, "People who have a job are less likely to commit crimes. So, finding an ex-offender employment becomes an immediate priority." Larry Fehr of Pioneer Human Services also agrees that "finding a job [for an ex-offender] is the first priority."

In addition to addressing employment issues, several other best practices are reflected in both sources discussed above. One is the need to **provide support that is positive and non-punitive**. In practice, this translates into programs where rewards are greater than punishments in every aspect and component of the program. The use of **motivational goal setting and role playing**, or cognitive-behavioral treatment techniques, is called out by both the Urban Institute and Petersilia. In a program setting, these techniques may be found in individual case management and group life skills classes where previously incarcerated persons discuss their goals and celebrate milestones reached along the way.

The program should also offer **support and therapy that is matched to the individual needs** and personality of the ex-offender. This attention to individual skills and temperaments is also important when helping previously incarcerated persons to locate jobs. An employment counselor should consider whether the ex-offender has interest and/or prior experience in a wide range of job possibilities, such as clerical work, food preparation, customer service, and construction. Each of these jobs requires different skills, and is suited to individuals with different types of personalities.

Finally, many of the programs highlighted for this report stress the **importance of partnerships and collaborations** in order to run successful programs for previously incarcerated persons. The partnerships the organizations are involved with range from close collaborations with the local Department of Corrections to relationships with employment agencies and other community organizations. As noted in the section of this report on TCs, the most successful outcomes occurred when inmates began treatment in prison and continued treatment in their communities. Many of the Executive Directors interviewed for this research noted that their program is only one part of a larger support network that previously incarcerated persons should have access to.

¹ Inciardi et al. (1997), Knight et al. (1999), Martin et al. (1999), Wexler et al. (1999).

V. Individual Program Summaries

This final section of the report provides a brief summary of six programs identified in our research as worthy of profiling. These programs have a variety of philosophies, provide a range of services and fall across the spectrum of program sizes. However, they are all serving previously incarcerated persons with the belief that with a little work and time this population can make a successful re-entry to their communities.

A brief summary of the components each program offers and the program's hallmark or unique attribute is given in the chart below.

Programs	Housing	Education	Job Training	Employment	Counseling and Case Management	Substance Abuse Treatment	Life Skills	Formal Follow-up Support	Social Enterprise	Brief Description of Program Hallmark or Unique Attribute
Center for Employment Opportunities			x	x	x		x	x	x	Transitional employment and job training skills provided exclusively for ex-offenders. The organization is largely supported by the clients' transitional work.
Fortune Society	x	x	x		x	x	x			Provides a very comprehensive range of services, including health and HIV case management, to ALL ex-offenders
Gemeinschaft Home	x	x			x		x	x		The fifth and final phase of a Therapeutic Community treatment program for ex-offenders who were in a TC program in prison.
Opportunities for Success			x		x	x	x			Services for substance abusers; evaluation yielded positive outcomes on recidivism rates.
Pioneer Human Services	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	Very large organization serving 13,000 ex-offenders per year with comprehensive programming; Social enterprises support 100% of operating costs.
Safer Foundation	x	x	x	x	x		x		x	Large organization offering programs in the community and in prison for offenders. The primary focus is on preparing for and finding employment.

CENTER FOR EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES (CEO)

Location	Primary Services Provided	Other Services Provided	Population Served	Annual Number Served	Social Purpose Enterprises
New York, NY	Employment training and transitional employment	Case management and referrals	Formerly incarcerated, with the exception of violent crimes	Over 3000	Provides indoor and outdoor maintenance services to organizations in NYC

Program Philosophy and Mission

The Center for Employment Opportunities (CEO) provides employment services exclusively for ex-incarcerated individuals. CEO's research tells them that having a job is the most important factor in reducing recidivism, so they focus exclusively on employment and the necessary skills and training to gain employment. CEO provides transitional employment to previously incarcerated persons while it works to find permanent employment for each participant. The organization's core program provides services to previously incarcerated persons returning from prison, but it has also recently started to serve individuals returning from jail.

Evaluation

- Executive Director Mindy Tarlow reports that CEO has just embarked on a random assignment outcomes evaluation study with Manpower Development Research Company. CEO is one of 4 sites across the country that agreed to participate.
- The organization has also tracked outcomes for internal purposes, but these findings are not available.

Links to In-Prison Programs

CEO recruits at parole bureaus, and the organization also sends a team to Riker's Island to talk to individuals at the jail orientation. CEO does not provide any services to individuals while they are in prison or jail.

Housing

CEO does not provide housing. However, its Job Coaches are tapped into community networks and will provide housing referrals.

Education

CEO does not provide any educational services such as GED preparation.

Job Training

CEO has a four-day classroom pre-employment training program. All clients who come to CEO participate in this before beginning a period of transitional employment with the organization. The classroom program contains a lot of role playing activities and other hands-on activities. During the period of transitional employment, clients are expected to learn a range of soft skills, such as how to cooperate with others, how to put in good effort to the work, personal presentation, and the importance of showing up every day on time.

Employment

CEO provides transitional employment for previously incarcerated persons while they look for permanent jobs. During the period of transitional employment clients are employees of CEO. The transitional employment work assignments are usually for government agencies and may include landscaping at public universities, heavy cleaning at court buildings, highway maintenance, or a range of indoor and outdoor work at hospitals. Previously incarcerated persons report to these jobs four days a week. Every fifth day, they return to CEO for meeting with their Job Coach and help in locating a full-time job.

Counseling and Case Management

CEO does not offer any clinical counseling. Job Coaches provide case management services for each individual and are responsible for helping the previously incarcerated persons connect to other services, such as counseling or housing support.

Substance-Abuse Treatment

CEO does not offer any substance-abuse treatment. Mindy Tarlow notes that previously incarcerated persons who were released onto parole in the state of NY are already required to report to substance abuse treatment programs as a condition of their parole. Due to this requirement, most previously incarcerated persons are already in treatment programs when they come to CEO.

Life Skills

CEO provides life skills that the organization believes are important to supporting individuals in their search for permanent employment. The organization offers a responsible fatherhood class to help previously incarcerated persons with their parenting skills and with the payment of child support. CEO also offers budgeting and nutrition classes.

Follow-Up Support

CEO provides follow-up support and services to its clients for up to one year. This follow-up support is provided by the Job Coach.

Other Services

CEO recently started a learning institute that is doing internal research and evaluation. The purpose of this institute is not only to help the organization understand what it is doing well and where it needs improvement, but to disseminate these results to other organizations and practitioners in the field.

Average Length of Client Involvement

On average, clients participate in CEO's transitional employment services for about three months. This is generally the amount of time it takes for an ex-offender to find a permanent job. However, clients may stay for as long as they need and may return at any time.

Annual Budget and Staffing

CEO has an annual budget of about \$15 million, 90% of which is supported by the revenues it generates from the work the previously incarcerated persons do during their transitional employment period. CEO has 150 FTEs. These FTEs do not include the number of clients who are working in CEO's transitional employment program and are technically employees of CEO.

THE FORTUNE SOCIETY

Location	Primary Services Provided	Other Services Provided	Population Served	Annual Number Served	Social Purpose Enterprises
New York, NY	Housing, life skills, counseling	Education, mental health, substance abuse, HIV services	All formerly incarcerated (including violent and sex offenders)	3000-4000	None

Program Philosophy and Mission

The Fortune Society has a dual mission: to educate the public and decision-makers on criminal justice issues and to provide previously incarcerated persons with the skills and services needed to break out of the cycle of crime and incarceration to build productive lives in the community. The organization provides comprehensive in-house services and a community that previously incarcerated persons can feel safe in and heal. The organization offers a very wide range of services, and clients can pick and choose at what level and how many services they receive. Executive Director JoAnne Page says, “We work to give [our clients] whatever they want. We deliberately craft light interventions as one of our strategies.” Unlike other organizations which may not take sex offenders or persons with violent histories, the Fortune Society will allow virtually any previously incarcerated persons to participate in their programming and services.

Evaluation

- The Fortune Society has just begun an outcomes evaluation of its counseling, education and career development services that will measure employment, housing stability and recidivism for both Fortune clients and a control group.
- The evaluation is being funded by the National Institute of Justice and is being conducted by Abt Associates.

Links to In-Prison Programs

The Fortune Society is not formally linked to any in-prison programs, but the organization does provide an Alternatives to Incarceration (ATI) program. It serves 300 people a year (mostly young adults) who would otherwise go to prison.

Housing

The Fortune Society has a range of housing options for clients. There is emergency housing for 18-20 people that is intended to be used for up to two months--about the amount of time it takes an ex-offender to find a job and be stable. The organization also offers 41 phased permanent housing slots, intended to allow individuals to anchor to sobriety, build skills and build an income. Clients in this type of housing pay 30% of their income as rent and are typically remain in the housing for 6-18 months. Finally, the Fortune Society helps link previously incarcerated persons to landlords.

Education

The Fortune Society provides literacy and education through its GED preparation classes. The organization teaches to a wide range of levels, including clients that are English Learners and those that are illiterate or learning disabled.

Job Training

The Fortune Society offers two weeks of classroom training in job readiness followed by individual resume building. The organization also follows clients for two years to help them retain their jobs. They also offer some specialized vocational training courses. In the past, these classes have included HIV Peer Education, Microsoft Technician Training, and Peer Counseling.

Employment

The Fortune Society does not offer jobs within the organization as part of the program. However, many former clients do come back to work for the organization.

Counseling and Case Management

Clients can receive a wide range of counseling services at The Fortune Society. The organization offers peer counseling, psychotherapy, individual counseling, group counseling, and cognitive counseling. To maintain a breadth of services, Fortune has MSW's and a consulting psychiatrist on staff.

Substance Abuse Treatment

The Fortune Society offers a licensed, medically supervised, outpatient substance abuse treatment program. Clients may be mandated to attend due to their parole conditions or they may enter voluntarily. Clients who live in one of Fortune's housing units undergo daily drug screening, and if they test positive, they are asked to join the substance abuse treatment program.

Life Skills

The Fortune Society considers most of what it does to be life skills training, and does not separate life skills into different classes or programs.

Follow-Up Support

The Fortune Society's doors are always open to all former clients, for whatever help and assistance they need. If there is a waiting list for a particular program, former clients usually receive preference. Clients who participate in the job readiness program receive two years of formal follow-up support.

Other Services

The Fortune Society provides an HIV case management program, basic health services, parenting classes, and an Alternatives to Incarceration program. Additionally, it provides advocacy in the area of criminal justice.

Average Length of Client Involvement

Clients are involved with the program for as long as they need to be. Many clients will come to Fortune for one service, and then return for additional services.

Annual Budget and Staffing

The Fortune Society's annual budget is approximately \$13 million, and the organization has about 200 staff.

GEMEINSCHAFT HOME

Location	Primary Services Provided	Other Services Provided	Population Served	Annual Number Served	Social Purpose Enterprises
Harrisonburg, Virginia	Housing and counseling/life-skills	Job training	Male, Substance Abusers	Approximately 100	None

Program Philosophy and Mission

Gemeinschaft Home (GH) is a therapeutic community program that helps previously incarcerated persons transition back into the community. It operates under the premise that the community is the agency of change and focuses on group counseling and individual empowerment. The program believes that reintegration is about being part of a community and a sense of belonging.

Gemeinschaft Home has been chosen by the Eisenhower Foundation as a Delancey Street replication and is currently in the process of adopting the Delancey Street model.

Links to In-Prison Programs

Gemeinschaft Home is the final phase of a five-phase therapeutic community program that inmates begin while they are incarcerated. The Virginia Department of Corrections and Gemeinschaft Home work together to coordinate the continuity of the program.

Housing

Gemeinschaft Home provides housing for 72 clients at a time—60 clients are in the regular length program and 12 are in the long-term program. Staff and clients live and work together in a family setting.

Education

Clients of Gemeinschaft Home receive their GED as part of the program. Tutors work individually with clients to ensure that educational needs of all levels are met. Some clients go on to take college level classes.

Job Training and Employment

When clients enter the program, they give their complete employment history. Gemeinschaft Home then works to find each client a job with a local area business. The money they earn from that job is their own and is saved in a special account to be used upon program completion. Currently, Gemeinschaft Home does not provide employment opportunities within its own organization for clients. However, as part of its Delancey Street replication plans are underway to launch a social purpose enterprise, which would provide employment opportunities for clients.

Evaluation Information

- Design: Quasi-experimental, the control group of 120 previously incarcerated persons was randomly selected from files of the VA DOC. The treatment group consisted of 30 GH clients.
- Findings: Rates of re-arrest, reconviction and recommitment 12 months after release from prison were lower for GH clients than for the control group. Results were only statistically significant for the re-arrest rate.
- A hard copy of the evaluation report is available and is on file at

Counseling and Case-Management

The therapeutic community model is at the core of Gemeinschaft Home’s counseling and case management services. Staff serve as role models and operate under the same rules and premises that the clients do. As Executive Director Jennie Amison describes, “It’s not just the therapists doing the work, it’s everyone.” Group counseling sessions are an integral part of the Gemeinschaft Home experience, and clients work on a range of issues with each other. Topics discussed include family rejection, sexual abuse, and substance abuse.

Substance Abuse Treatment

Clients must come to Gemeinschaft Home clean of drugs and alcohol, and are not permitted to use drugs or alcohol while they are in the program. If a client is caught using, they are kicked out of the program. Gemeinschaft Home sees this cardinal rule as an important standard that allows everyone to feel safe in the communal living environment.

Life Skills

Gemeinschaft Home characterizes almost all the work they do as life skills training. The counseling and job readiness classes are intended to enable the client to lead a successful, independent life upon program completion. The program also matches each client with a mentor from the community.

Follow-Up Support

After program completion, clients return to Gemeinschaft Home twice a week for a year. During this follow-up time, clients are drug tested and receive support with any issues they may be having. After one-year of follow up support, clients are invited to join the “Winner’s Circle,” a group of men that meet for Sunday breakfast to continue to support each other.

Other Services

Gemeinschaft Home has a nurse that is on duty 24 hours a day and clients also receive medical benefits. Additionally, the program offers many recreational activities: clients are taken out to nice restaurants and given a chance to feel comfortable in a new setting. There are also parenting classes with a psychologist and financial management classes.

Average Length of Client Involvement

Most clients stay at Gemeinschaft Home for six months. There is also an extended living program if six months is not long enough. Clients can ultimately stay for up to a year or more.

Annual Budget and Staffing

Gemeinschaft Home’s annual budget is \$1.2 mil. The organization has 21 FTEs.

- Executive Director
- Executive Assistant
- Maintenance Assistant
- Fiscal Manager
- Health Services Coordinator
- Program Manager
- Employment and Education Coordinator
- Manager of Resident Supervision
- Case Managers
- Shift Supervisors

National Recognition and Awards

Gemeinschaft Home has been recognized by prominent organizations in the re-entry initiative and substance abuse field. It is one of five Delancey Street Replication Projects. It has also received awards and been recognized by several state agencies and associations in Virginia. Most recently (October 2006), the Home was recognized by the Virginia Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services as an “outstanding program in the region.”

OPPORTUNITIES TO SUCCEED (OPTS)

Note: This program was discontinued due to funding constraints

Locations	Primary Services Provided	Other Services Provided	Population Served	Annual Number Served	Social Purpose Enterprises
Tampa, FL Kansas City, MO St. Louis, MO New York, NY, Oakland, CA	Substance Abuse Treatment	Assistance with locating housing and jobs, family services, health and mental health	Substance Abusers	Not available	None

Program Philosophy and Mission

The Opportunities to Succeed program (OPTS) was designed to reduce substance abuse relapse and recidivism by providing supportive services to previously incarcerated persons with drug and alcohol abuse histories. According to the National Institute of Justice, a key assumption “underlying the OPTS initiative is that alcohol and drug abuse—together with personal histories of crime, economic and family instability, social disorganization, and compromised health or mental health—are disorganizing factors in offenders’ lives that increase the likelihood of continued criminal activity.” Program participants received substance abuse treatment, employment services, assistance with locating housing, family services, and health and mental health services. With the exception of the mandatory substance-abuse treatment, participants in the program were free to choose which of the other services to utilize. The program ran in five locations from 1992 to 1997. It was originally funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and funding was discontinued due to cost considerations.

Links to In-Prison Programs

None.

Housing

OPTS provided referrals to a variety of supportive, drug-free housing situations. These included group homes, halfway houses and shared apartments. The program also provided crisis assistance in the instance an ex-offender required help such as immediate relocation or an emergency loan to help cover unanticipated housing costs.

Evaluation

- **Description:** The Urban Institute conducted a documentation analysis, a cost-benefit analysis, and an outcomes evaluation using an experimental design.
- **Design:** Outcomes for OPTS clients were compared with outcomes for a randomly chosen control group from the same pool of individuals. The control group did not receive any OPTS services.
- **Findings:** The treatment group showed reductions in alcohol use, increases in full-time employment and stronger family relationships than the control group. OPTS did not have a significant effect on hard drug use or criminal behavior, and the cost-benefit analysis did not show OPTS to be cost effective.
- A copy of the paper is available for purchase at www.jrsa.org. The abstract is available at <http://www.urban.org/publications/1000746.html>. Rossman, Shelli B. and Caterina Gouvis Roman. 2003. "Case-Managed Reentry and Employment: Lessons from the Opportunity to Succeed Program." *Justice Research and Policy*, 5(2).

Education & Job Training

OPTS provided education and vocational training on an as-needed basis, as it related to an individual's employability. For instance, if an ex-offender needed to complete their GED in order to qualify for their desired line of work, they were referred to an organization that could provide this service for them. Most frequently, previously incarcerated persons received basic job search training that encompassed how to develop a résumé, how to identify appropriate job openings, and how to interview for a job.

Employment

OPTS did not provide any employment opportunities to previously incarcerated persons within the OPTS program itself. Previously incarcerated persons did receive assistance identifying job openings. OPTS Case Managers helped cultivate potential employers directly and worked with local employment agencies to refer previously incarcerated persons to available jobs.

Counseling and Case Management

Mental health services were provided on an as-needed basis. Every participant received case management services including service referral and coordination, general counseling to help focus on strengths and develop relapse prevention skills, and crisis management.

Substance-Abuse Treatment

The central component of the OPTS program was mandatory substance abuse treatment. The level and intensity of treatment required was assessed on an individual basis, and participants received treatment ranging from involvement in 12-step programs to intensive residential placements. Participants were required to submit to random drug tests.

Life Skills

The available literature routinely mentions that OPTS taught life skills to participants, but no further information is available on which specific types of life skills were taught.

Follow-Up Support

There is no mention of follow-up services in the available literature.

Other Services

OPTS provided medical services ranging from regular checkups to specialized care. The program also provided a variety of family intervention services and parenting skills training, including parenting classes, anger management training, and domestic violence counseling.

Average Length of Client Involvement

Not available.

Annual Budget and Staffing

Not available.

PIONEER HUMAN SERVICES

Locations	Primary Services Provided	Other Services Provided	Population Served	Annual Number Served	Social Purpose Enterprises
48 locations throughout Washington state; multiple facilities in Seattle, Tacoma and Spokane	Integrated services, job training and employment	Housing, counseling, substance abuse treatment	Formerly incarcerated and substance abusers	Over 13,000	Retail cafes Catering Food buying Aerospace machining Construction Distribution Sheet metal fabrication

Program Philosophy and Mission

Pioneer Human Services’ mission is to improve the lives of people who live on the margins of society and are returning from prison or substance abuse treatment facilities. The organization helps people stay out of prison and off the street through comprehensive services, including job training and placement, youth and family counseling, housing, and substance abuse treatment. The organization’s hallmark is the large number of social enterprises that it runs using previously incarcerated persons as employees. These social enterprises provide Pioneer with 100% of its operating budget and provide the core job training skills and employment

opportunities that Pioneer is nationally recognized for. Larry Fehr, Senior Vice President, explains that Pioneer’s strength and reason for success is the organization’s ability to “integrate services—treatment, housing and jobs—and help our clients with all the basic needs.”

Evaluation

- Design: A study conducted by the University of Washington on Pioneer’s work release program compared recidivism rates after two years between Pioneer clients and offenders sent to other work release programs.
- Findings: Pioneer clients had a recidivism rate of 6.4% compared to comparison group’s recidivism rate of 15.4%
- The report is available at <http://depts.washington.edu/npc/npcpdfs/phsrep.pdf>

Links to In-Prison Programs

Pioneer operates a work release program that soon-to-be-released inmates participate in for the final three months of their sentence.

Housing

Pioneer provides low-income, alcohol- and drug-free housing for up to 535 clients in Seattle and Tacoma. Additionally, Pioneer runs several residential programs, including in-patient substance abuse treatment and youth programs. Some clients that participate in Pioneer’s residential programs transition into the non-program-based housing after they have completed their residential program.

Education

Within some of Pioneer’s programs, clients have the option to get their GED. Many of Pioneer’s clients have received their GED in prison already. For all clients who are hired into one of Pioneer’s social purpose enterprises, tuition reimbursement is provided. Most clients who use that benefit take classes at a community college.

Job Training

Pioneer provides each ex-offender with about two weeks of job searching skills. During this time, the ex-offender also looks for employment, so they will be ready to begin work once the two week course is complete.

Employment

Finding a job for an ex-offender is Pioneer's first priority, and Pioneer employs hundreds of previously incarcerated persons annually in its social purpose enterprises. Pioneer also facilitates hiring processes with outside employers that it has existing relationships with. Previously incarcerated persons that find a job within the internal Pioneer businesses are offered a variety of soft skills and hard skills training through on the job learning.

Counseling and Case-Management

Counseling is provided as a component of specific programs, such as the treatment program for previously incarcerated persons with co-occurring disorders (substance abuse and mental health counseling). There are also outpatient mental health counseling programs for at-risk youth and adults.

Substance Abuse Treatment

Pioneer operates both inpatient and outpatient substance abuse treatment programs. The organization also has a special program for previously incarcerated persons who are mentally ill and struggling with substance abuse, and residential programs host AA and NA meeting on site.

Life Skills

Pioneer integrates life skills, such as risk management and communication skills, into its programming.

Follow-Up Support

Pioneer offers follow-up support for participants of one of its juvenile offender programs. The aftercare component of this program involves following youth back to their communities and tracking the connections they make with families and counselors. Generally, however, most of Pioneer's programs do not have a formal system for follow-up support.

Other Services

Every client in the residential programs has access to health services.

Average Length of Client Involvement

The length of client involvement depends on which of Pioneer's many programs the ex-offender participates in. The work release program is three months and many of the chemical dependency treatment programs are 60 days. Previously incarcerated persons hired into one of Pioneer's social enterprises have a typical employee/employer relationship and are welcome to stay in the job as long as both parties are happy with the situation.

Annual Budget and Staffing

Pioneer Human Services' 2007 operating budget is \$66 million. The organization employs approximately 1,000 people at any one time. With seasonal variations, the number of employees can reach up to 2,000.

National Recognition and Awards

Pioneer Human Services has received a variety of accolades. The following awards and recognitions are listed on the organization's *Fast Facts about Pioneer Human Services*.

- Named one of the White House's Thousand Points of Light, 1990
- *Fast Company* Social Justice Award, 2000
- King County Organization of the Year, 2002
- Pioneer's "Chance for a Change" approach identified as one of the exemplary programs of Washington state in the *Report of the Re-Entry Policy Council*, 2004
- *Fast Company* Social Capitalist Award, 2006, 2007 (one of the county's top 25 social capitalists)

SAFER FOUNDATION

Locations	Primary Services Provided	Other Services Provided	Population Served	Annual Number Served	Social Purpose Enterprises
Multiple locations throughout Illinois	Job training, employment searches	Education, housing	Formerly incarcerated only	9300	Staffing agency that links clients to local temporary and permanent employment

Program Philosophy and Mission

Safer Foundation’s mission is to support people with a criminal record to find employment and resolve those issues that keep them from retaining employment. The organization works to reduce recidivism by helping previously incarcerated persons turn their lives around, and offers multiple programs and services to this population.

Links to In-Prison Programs

Safer runs adult transition programs in two prisons. Men who are within 6-24 months of their release date and have not committed a violent crime can apply for this. Safer works to teach job readiness skills with the goal that previously incarcerated persons will be prepared for interviews and ready to begin looking for work when they finish their sentences. Safer has also organized job fairs in the prison. Inmates that are close to release make connections that allow them to find employment faster when they are released, and inmates who are not close to their release date see what opportunities are available and become motivated to work on their job readiness skills while they are incarcerated. Many of the inmates who become involved with Safer while they are incarcerated continue to receive services from the organization after they are released from prison.

Housing

Safer is preparing to open a ten-unit, single occupancy housing building. While housing is not part of Safer’s core services, the organization is excited to be expanding its range of support services. The units will house previously incarcerated persons who are struggling with substance abuse issues and others who need additional support. Rent will be subsidized and the residents will have access to Safer services.

Education

Safer clients have access to onsite GED preparation classes. Safer integrates workplace soft skills into its GED classes, such as the importance of coming to class on time. Also, each student is put in charge of teaching to other students during the course. This allows each ex-offender to be both a teacher and a student and helps them understand what it is like to be a supervisor in a workplace.

Job Training

Evaluation

- Design: Comparison of recidivism rates over three years for Safer clients compared to the overall recidivism rate in the state of 54%.
- Findings: Clients who received any services from Safer had a recidivism rate of 28%; if they were employed for at least 30 days, the rate was 18%; and if they employed for at least a year, the rate was 8%.
- LFA does not have access to the full report, but a copy of the executive summary is available in hard copy.

When a client first comes to Safer, he or she goes through an assessment. The assessment will determine which of three stages an ex-offender falls into: 1) ready to work, 2) essentially stable, but needs to spend time developing job readiness skills, or 3) needs to work on mental health or substance abuse issues before working on job readiness skills. The vast majority of clients that Safer serves fall into the second group, and Safer's core program is designed to target this level of readiness. The core program provides vocational training and job readiness skills to previously incarcerated persons. Those clients that are immediately ready to begin working, Safer will help find a job. Safer will refer to an appropriate community agency those who need to work on other issues first.

Employment

Within Safer's 501(c)3, the organization runs a staffing agency. This allows Safer to offer temporary, temp-to-hire, and permanent staffing services to local organizations. Safer handles all the human resources and paperwork, and employers are given the opportunity to try out previously incarcerated persons in positions before formally hiring them. Safer has Job Managers who manage the relationships with these employers. Also, there is extensive communication between Job Managers (who want to make employers happy) and Retention Specialists (who want to make the clients happy), and issues between employers and previously incarcerated persons are often worked out due to the diligence of these two positions.

Counseling and Case-Management

Safer does not provide any clinical counseling skills. Each client does have a Retention Specialist who provides case management services. The Retention Specialists visit previously incarcerated persons at their workplaces and help with any employer issues. They also hold evening and weekend group sessions.

Substance Abuse Treatment

Safer Foundation offers substance abuse treatment only in its in-prison programs. Previously incarcerated persons who come to Safer and need treatment are referred to another agency.

Life Skills

Formal classroom session on life skills are offered in Safer's in-prison adult transition centers. Clients in the core program should receive help with any life skills from their Retention Specialist and case management services.

Follow-Up Support

Safer does not have a formal system for follow-up support, but the organization will open its door to any client who wants to return. It is up to the client to maintain the relationship with Safer.

Other Services

Safer Foundation has a public policy group on staff that works to bring people and organizations together in the Chicago area. The goal is to reduce barriers for previously incarcerated persons to find and retain employment. A recent issue the group worked on was getting the state government to implement a financial incentive for employers to hire previously incarcerated persons.

Average Length of Client Involvement

The length of client involvement depends upon how ready an individual is to start working. For clients that Safer only helps to find a job, the average length of involvement is two to four weeks. Clients that need vocational and job readiness training are involved with Safer for several months.

Annual Budget and Staffing

Safer Foundation's annual budget is \$27 million. The organization has about 300 FTEs to run the organization and provide services.

VI. Conclusion

This report provides a summary of research conducted on programs within the field of community re-entry and services for previously incarcerated persons. LFA's research reveals that previously incarcerated persons face many challenges and barriers in the areas of education, job experience, and mental and physical health. In order for previously incarcerated persons to make a successful re-entry to their communities, these challenges need to be addressed. Unfortunately, most inmates do not receive vocational training while they are incarcerated and there is no universal pre-release or financial support that offenders receive in order to prepare for their release. Therefore, it is very important that previously incarcerated persons have places in their communities that offer such services and support.

This report also reviewed what the existing literature and practitioners believe are best practices in the field. A lack of rigorously conducted, experimental or quasi-experimental studies does not allow for a definitive list of best practices, however several sources provide insight into broad terms of best practices and program components.

Some best practices recognized by multiple sources include:

- A focus on providing services that allow previously incarcerated persons to find and retain employment;
- Support that is positive and non-punitive;
- Use of motivational goal setting and role playing;
- Support, therapy and job search assistance that are matched to the individual's skills and temperament; and
- Use of partnerships and collaborations to provide previously incarcerated persons with a network of support and services.

Finally, this report highlights six programs that the researchers believe are worthy of note for their unique program models and/or promising results. The programs provide a wide range of services to previously incarcerated persons, some of which serve targeted populations of previously incarcerated persons. These programs were chosen to give the Eisenhower Foundation an idea of what programs around the country are currently doing and what best practices look like when implemented.

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