RETURNING HOME
The Challenge of Reuniting Returning Citizens with their Families and Communities

A project of the International Community Corrections Association (ICCA)

Funded by the Public Welfare Foundation
Every year, about 720,000 citizens are released from prison.

Their assignment:
- Return to their home communities.
- Reunite with their families.
- Restore their lives as productive citizens.
They’re coming home.
Let’s make sure they come home for good with appropriate structure, support, accountability and supervision.

720,000 prisoners come home each year.
They’re coming home.
Let’s give them the tools they need do it right.

480,000 will be re-arrested without re-entry services.
300,000 released prisoners get sent back to prison. THINK OF THE COST!

- Cost of imprisonment: $30,000 to $43,000
- Lost tax revenues: $5,000 to $10,000
- Lost economic activity: $25,000 to $100,000+

(Annual costs, per person)
300,000 released prisoners get sent back to prison. THINK OF THE COST!

• Insert local stats
• Insert local stats
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300,000 released prisoners get sent back to prison. THINK OF THE COST!

- Communities lose productive citizens
- Neighborhoods lose a sense of safety and trust
- Families are broken apart

Cost: Immeasurable
We Have a **RE-ENTRY Crisis**

- 7 to 9 million people circulate in and out of jails each year
- 2.9 million are in jails and prisons right now
- 97% of all inmates *are* eventually released, *but*...
- 67% will be re-arrested

**DO THE MATH!**
The Re-arrest Rate is 67%

Much of this is due to the fact that people leaving prison are released directly onto the streets and without needed re-entry services.
Some communities have found effective ways to address the crisis. We can all benefit from their success.
Community Corrections Programs

Gradual re-entry programs and neighborhood settings that emphasize:

- Drug Monitoring
- Supervision
- Structured Movement
- Public Safety
Community Corrections Programs

Gradual re-entry programs and neighborhood settings that emphasize:

- Treatment
- Skill development
- Employment
- Family reunification

have been shown to cut recidivism rates significantly.
Think of it: Of 720,000 citizens released from prison every year, only 240,000 remain arrest free.
Community corrections programs like these could help up to 300,000 more citizens return home for good.

Neighborhood-based programs that provide support, supervision, training and treatment:

- Residential Re-Entry Centers
- Half-Way Houses
- Day-Reporting Centers
- Residential Treatment Centers
- Work Release Programs
- Family Reunification Programs
Insert Local Stats
Who are these people?
Insert Data – Local info

- Property Crimes
- Violent Crimes
- Sexual Crimes
It’s Working in San Antonio

With community support, Crosspoint Halfway House expanded services to help more citizens achieve successful reentry.

PARTICIPANTS WIN: Chances of successful re-entry increased significantly.

COMMUNITY WINS: Crime reduced, safety increased, property values are unaffected or increased.
It’s Working in Bellingham, Washington

In this rural area of Washington State, community support made the difference in approving a 34-person capacity halfway house.

PARTICIPANTS WIN: Chances of successful re-entry increased significantly.

COMMUNITY WINS: Crime reduced, safety increased, property values are unaffected or increased.
It’s Working in Rural Colorado

Construction of a 70-bed halfway house in northeastern Colorado meant jobs for local residents as well as support for returning citizens.

PARTICIPANTS WIN: Chances of successful re-entry increased from significantly.

COMMUNITY WINS: Crime reduced, safety increased, property values are unaffected or increased.
It’s Working in New Hampshire

Successful halfway house program from Massachusetts expanded to Manchester with support of local police and probation departments

PARTICIPANTS WIN: Chances of successful re-entry increased significantly
COMMUNITY WINS: Crime reduced, safety increased, property values are unaffected or increased
It's Working in Harlem

Cleaning out trash and drug dealers, this abandoned “castle” was renovated to provide supervised housing for formerly homeless returnees.

PARTICIPANTS WIN: Chances of successful re-entry increased significantly
COMMUNITY WINS: Crime reduced, safety increased, property values are unaffected or increased
How it works: Half Way House

- A positive transitional living environment.
- Residents pay room and board.
- They also receive counseling and job training.
- A gradual, fully secured, supported re-connection.
How it works: Family Re-Unification

Re-entry Programs provide offenders with the opportunity to reunite with their spouses and children and work out legal custody and family visitation issues. Re-entry planning includes:

• Supervised family reunification
• Family therapy
• Parenting classes
• Child support payment plans
How it works: Day Reporting Center

Offenders who qualify live at home and work but must check in regularly at a Day Reporting Center where they receive intensive supervision and services, including:

• Educational services
• Vocational Services
• Treatment
• Drug Monitoring
How it worked for Michael

Like many offenders with mental health issues and co-occurring substance abuse, Michael was not an intentional criminal. Now a client at the Alvis House Reflections Program, Michael, his wife, Christina and their children all participate in the family support program that is enabling Michael to lead a productive life.

“Coming to this program is one of the best things I could have done. I have a path to a new way of living now and my family and I understand each other a little better, too.”
How it works for the Chief of Police in San Antonio, TX

“These residents have curfews and are checked regularly for drug use and work hard not to jeopardize their status. Though crime does occur in these neighborhoods, we have not associated any of the crimes with the halfway houses or their residents.”
“Our own experience demonstrates that Crosspoint’s around the clock staffing, constant attention to safety and security, and its ability to provide accountability for its residents, all combine to make Crosspoint transitional homes a safe addition to a neighborhood.”

--Michael Helle, President, San Antonio Police Officers Association
How it works for the Sex Offender Management (SOM) Team in King County

“SOM promotes public understanding that ‘not in my neighborhood’ is not a viable solution. Instead, communities that are aware and monitor convicted sex offenders are safer and more empowered. An offender who is invisible to the neighborhood is a threat in hiding. Increased visibility and ties to the community help make sex offenders more accountable for their actions and decrease the likelihood of re-offending.”

-- Mary Ellen Stone, King County Sexual Assault Resource Center Seattle, Washington
Leadership of Governors

• LA.: Gov. Jindal press release: “hammer away at dubious distinction of highest incarceration rate in the world” with day reporting, jail reentry & work release

-- Gov. Bobby Jindal
Leadership of Governors

- MI.: Granholm’s advisory: Reduce prisons 10% with nonviolent and geriatric release, invest in probation and parole staff and reentry. “Decide who we’re afraid of and who we’re mad at.”

-- Gov. Jennifer Granholm
How it works for neighborhoods like yours

Halfway house residents perform community services including:

- Graffiti Removal
- Lawn mowing
- Trash pickup
Addressing community fears and misconceptions

- Community opposition is the single largest barrier to increasing community capacity for transitioning people from prison back to their homes.
- The chief causes of this opposition are natural fears and concerns for safety, but also misconceptions and biases based on myths, stereotypes and unfounded assumptions.
Myth:
Re-entry Programs lead to increased crime in the neighborhood.

Reality:
Re-entry Programs provide supervision and support for people who might otherwise go astray. Crime actually is reduced in neighborhoods with Re-entry Programs.
Myth: Halfway Houses lower property values.

Reality: Most Halfway Houses are major renovations of existing properties, and are meticulously maintained. They almost always raise the value of the property they are in. They have no effect on, or increase the value of those around them.
Myth: Re-entry Program residents will bring drugs and dope-dealing into the neighborhood.

Reality: Clients are randomly and regularly searched and tested for drugs and alcohol, with severe consequences for any use -- almost always resulting in a resident’s temporary or permanent removal from the program.
We appreciate your concern and invite you to get involved:

• Talk to your local law enforcement officials
• Take a tour of your local reentry facility
• Visit the website: www.iccaweb.org
Second Chances Selected Bibliography


