ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR REENTRY MENTORSHIP PROGRAMS

The following resources have been collected for reentry mentorship programs as further reading in support of their programmatic goals.

THE RISK, NEED, AND RESPONSIVITY PRINCIPLES

Individuals returning to the community from incarceration may have a variety of immediate needs for which they may seek assistance, such as education, job search and job readiness, housing, and substance use treatment. They may also need support with family reunification and repairing relationships. It is important for a reentry program and its staff to understand the needs of the program's target population in order to provide the necessary services and to successfully incorporate mentoring into the reentry program.

Understanding the **risk, need, and responsivity (RNR) principles** can assist reentry programs with identifying and supporting the needs of their program participants and helping reduce recidivism (i.e., rearrest or reincarceration for new offenses or for violations of conditions of probation and parole). The needs of the correctional and reentry populations are usually categorized into two groups: criminogenic and non-criminogenic needs. Criminogenic needs are individual characteristics or circumstances that are associated with criminal behavior or the likelihood of committing a crime, while non-criminogenic needs are those that are not shown to be directly associated with criminal behavior.

The **risk principle** calls for prioritizing services for people who have a moderate or high risk of engaging or reengaging in criminal activity. "Risk"—or "criminogenic risk"—in this context refers to the likelihood that a person will engage in future criminal activity, not to the seriousness of a crime that person may commit in the future. For mentoring, consideration should be given to recruiting and selecting participants who have a moderate or high risk of reoffending. Since participation in the mentoring component of a reentry program is often voluntary, however, garnering interest in mentoring from people in the moderate- to high-risk category may be a challenge. The mentoring program's corrections partners play a supportive role in the recruitment and selection process to best match people with mentors.

The need principle states that there are eight core criminogenic needs (i.e., the "Central Eight"): (1) antisocial attitudes; (2) antisocial beliefs; (3) antisocial friends and peers; (4) antisocial personality patterns; (5) high-conflict family and intimate relationships; (6) substance use; (7) low levels of

achievement in school and/or work; and (8) unstructured and antisocial leisure time. Research indicates that the more criminogenic needs that are addressed through services, the greater the impact those services will have on reducing the risk of reoffending. Evidence also suggests that the greater number of hours of programming and services a person receives influences the effectiveness of the intervention.

The **responsivity principle** says that service and supervision strategies should be designed to conform to individual motivations, learning styles, and abilities. There are two types of responsivity: general and specific. General responsivity refers to interventions or services that help address a person's criminogenic needs like antisocial thinking or attitudes. Evidence suggests that cognitive behavioral therapy approaches that promote prosocial thinking, teach problem solving, and use more positive than negative reinforcement have been effective as general responsivity methods. Specific responsivity entails modifying services and interventions to address distinct individual needs, including personal strengths, personality, learning style, culture, ethnicity, race, gender, sexual orientation, and behavioral health needs. Applying the responsivity principle helps ensure that services and interventions are deliberate and tailored to participants in ways that can motivate them to remain engaged in a mentoring relationship.

Programs can take risk, need, and responsivity principles into consideration when recruiting individuals to participate in mentoring services and when developing program components to serve individuals returning to the community from incarceration.

For More Information

Bonta, J., & Andrews, D. A. (2007). Risk-need-responsivity model for offender assessment and rehabilitation. Rehabilitation, 6(1), 1-22.

https://www.researchgate.net/profile/James-Bonta-3/publication/310747116_Risk-Need-Responsivity_Model_for_Offender_Assessment_and_Rehabilitation/links/5b9415a64585153a530abd1c/Risk-Need-Responsivity-Model-for-Offender-Assessment-and-Rehabilitation.pdf

Peggy B. Burke, TPC Reentry Handbook: Implementing the NIC Transition from Incarceration to the Community Model (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Corrections, 2008).

https://s3.amazonaws.com/static.nicic.gov/Library/022669.pdf

D. A. Andrews, James Bonta, and S. J. Wormith, "The Recent Past and Near Future of Risk and/or Need Assessment," Crime & Delinquency 52 (2006): 7–27, doi: 10.1177/0011128705281756.

https://www.researchgate.net/profile/George_Connolly2/project/Risk-Assessment-Validation--COMP-PAPER/attachment/5eb837dec005cf0001898c4d/AS:889695017910272@1589131230398/download/Andrews%2C+D.+A.%2C+Bonta%2C+J.%2C+%26+Wormith%2C+J.+S.+2006.+The+recent+past+and+near+future+of+risk+and-or+need+assessment.pdf

MOTIVATION AND ENGAGEMENT

Mentors may approach their mentoring responsibilities with greater emphasis and awareness if they receive training on how and why a mentee might engage in risky or criminal behavior. For example, having a general understanding of substance use and recovery, trauma, and PTSD can help mentors better engage mentees in dialogue, as well as support mentees in achieving their goals.

Training on motivation can also help mentors better support a mentee's reentry goals and needs. Individuals returning to their communities from incarceration can often become overwhelmed by post-release demands. Securing shelter, employment, and basic needs like food, utilities, and health care—on top of the requirements of community supervision like regular check-ins, meetings, drug tests, and fees—can be confusing and stressful. Given that participating in a mentoring program is often voluntary for individuals, maintaining the engagement of mentees can be very challenging for mentors. However, because engaging participants and maintaining a mentoring relationship after the initial match is a key aspect of adult reentry mentoring, mentors should be aware of various methods of communication with participants.

For More Information

"Principles of Community-based Behavioral Health Services for Justice-involved Individuals: A Research-based Guide". U.S. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, accessed 23 July 2021.

https://store.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/d7/priv/sma19-5097.pdf

The National Mentoring Partnership, Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring (Boston, MA: MENTOR: The National Mentoring Partnership, 2019).

https://www.mentoring.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Final_Elements_Publication_Fourth.pdf

"Practices: Motivational Interviewing," Center for Evidence-Based Practices at Case Western Reserve University, accessed 23 July 2021.

https://case.edu/socialwork/centerforebp/practices/motivational-interviewing

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Communication is a crucial aspect of the reentry mentoring relationship. In addition to facilitating the mentoring relationship, some communication techniques can also have therapeutic value for participants. Using communication techniques that promote alternative thinking, such as motivational interviewing, can help participants build problem-solving skills.

There are numerous evidence-based and promising practices for adult communication. Programs may choose to offer full or partial training for mentors on one or more of the following programs and communication techniques:

- **Motivational interviewing:** Motivational interviewing is an evidence-based approach designed to "address ambivalence to change."

- **Cognitive behavioral programs:** These programs focus on interventions that "help to identify the thought processes that lead to negative feelings and maladaptive behaviors and replace them with processes that lead to positive feelings and behaviors. One example includes Thinking for a Change (T4C), which is a research-based curricula focused on supporting cognitive-behavioral change for people in the criminal justice system.

- **Adult learning styles:** Adult learning styles are the varying methods by which adults "perceive, interact with, and respond to learning environments." These are especially important as mentees are being asked to do and learn new skills, so a mentor can be more effective if they understand some of the principles.

For More Information

"What Works? General Principles, Characteristics, and Examples of Effective Programs," Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction, accessed 29 September 2016.

http://www.drc.state.oh.us/web/Reports/Effective%20programs.pdf

"Thinking for a Change"

https://nicic.gov/projects/thinking-for-a-change

Sims, R. R., & Sims, S. J. (1995). The importance of learning styles: understanding the implications for learning, course design, and education. ABC-CLIO.