

REENTRY SUCCESS



The Connecticut Reentry Success Plan: Recommended Strategies for 2024 – 2027

Per PA 23-188, Section 3

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Juvenile Justice Policy and Oversight Committee (JJPOC) identified the reentry system for youth in justice facilities as an area for system improvement. The JJPOC made several recommendations on how best to review the system, outlined in Public Act 23-188, Section 3, which requires the Executive Director of the Judicial Branch Court Support Services Division and the Commissioners of Children and Families, Education, and Correction, in consultation with the Incarceration, Community Expertise, and Education subcommittees of the JJPOC to develop a Reentry Success Plan no later than November 2023 and to present the plan to the JJPOC by January 2024.

The Incarceration Workgroup of the JJPOC established a Reentry Subgroup that includes designees from the four (4) state agencies charged with developing the Reentry Success Plan, the designated subcommittees, and representatives from the Departments of Housing, Labor, Mental Health and Addiction Services, and Social Services, to perform due diligence and research to understand the current array of reentry services in Connecticut. The Reentry Subgroup met for more than 12 months to conduct its review, including a gap analysis to determine what and where reentry services are available and areas needing critical attention. While various reentry services exist for young people in the state, the services are spread across multiple agencies, providers, and locations making it challenging for young people and their families to access the full breadth of services associated with successful community reentry.

Over the past year, the Reentry Subgroup explored the current state of reentry in Connecticut keeping the requirements for Public Act 23-188, Section 3 in mind:

- 1.) The provision of individualized academic support and the role of school districts;
- 2.) The connection of youth to vocational and workforce opportunities;
- 3.) The connection of youth to developmentally appropriate traditional housing in the community;
- 4.) The delivery of trauma-informed mental health and substance use treatments;
- 5.) The development of restorative justice reentry circles;
- 6.) The use and training of credible messengers as mentors or transition support providers;
- 7.) The role of reentry coordinators;
- 8.) The need for a quality assurance framework and data reporting;
- 9.) Sources of federal and state funding; and
- 10.) The identification of priorities and timelines for implementation of the Connecticut Reentry Success Plan.

The Reentry Subgroup reviewed reentry services provided by the Judicial Branch Court Support Services Division (JBCSSD), the Department of Correction (DOC), the Connecticut Department of Education (CSDE), the Department of Children and Families (DCF), the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS), the Department of Labor (DOL), the Department of Housing (DOH), and the Department of Social Services (DSS). The Subgroup also reviewed the types of reentry services provided to adults through the Reentry Roundtables and Welcome Centers. In addition, the Subgroup looked at programming in New Jersey, Maine, Washington, Chicago, Oklahoma, New York, and Michigan and subsequently received presentations from juvenile justice practitioners in New Jersey and Maine to learn about their reentry models.

The Reentry Subgroup heard directly from impacted youth to learn about their experiences and their needs for success. To that end, the Reentry Subgroup met with youth at the Manson Youth Institution operated by

the Department of Correction and received survey results from Juvenile Branch Court Support Services Division that youth completed with their clinician.¹ The clinicians guided a discussion with youth at:

- Bridgeport REGIONS Secure
- Hartford REGIONS Secure
- CPA Hamden REGIONS Secure
- Journey House Limited Secure
- CPA Hartford REGIONS Staff Secure
- CJR Waterbury REGIONS Staff Secure
- CJR AMIR (Adolescent Male Intermediate Residential)
- CJR TEAMS/TRAC (also known as the new Community Diversion & Respite Center or CDRC)

The extensive review of Connecticut's current services, models from other jurisdictions, and input from impacted youth led to substantive findings that inform the Reentry Success Plan. The Plan addresses the needs of youth and their families to support successful community reentry and positive youth development. A youth's reentry needs will be assessed upon admission to a facility to begin planning. Multi-agency collaboration will create a holistic approach addressing individual reentry needs; service coordination, mentorship, education, vocational/employment opportunities, healthcare services (medical, mental health, substance use), transition support, transportation, and housing-- the main barriers to successful reentry. The Reentry Success Plan integrates restorative justice as the foundation of an effective reentry system.

¹ Please see Appendix A. While 40 youth completed JBCSSD's Reentry Survey with a clinician, the statistics within this report represent the youth who responded to the question; not all youth responded to each question. Additionally, the quotes provided in this report are a clinician's note taking from their conversations with each young person.

CONNECTICUT REENTRY SUCCESS PLAN RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES

<p>Workgroup:</p> <p>Incarceration Workgroup Reentry Subgroup</p>	<p>Recommended Strategy #1: Coordinate and Expand Reentry Supports for Connecticut’s Youth</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A coordinating entity will convene a multi-agency team for each youth to meet at least monthly to review the implementation of the reentry plan. Agencies involved may include, as needed, JBCSSD and/or DOC, CSDE, DCF, DMHAS, DOL, DOH, and DSS. <p>Recommended Strategy #2: Expand Access to Mentorship</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mentorship programs (credible messengers, reintegration mentors, navigators, etc.) will be expanded as funding allows to serve interested youth reentering from DOC, JBCSSD, and contracted programs. This support will be available to youth for up to 24 months from the time of release. <p>Recommended Strategy #3: Improve Education Transition Planning and Monitoring</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The CSDE will partner and coordinate with the DCF JJEU to build relationships and improve communication between facility education providers, transition specialists, and school district reentry coordinators to support joint training, enhanced communication, and the timely transfer of records. 2. The DCF JJEU will convene a meeting with the facility education provider, the school district, and the JBCSSD, DOC, or contracted program within 30 days of an admission to review and develop the student’s educational and reentry plan. 3. As soon as the student, legal guardian, and school district have agreed upon to which school the student will return, the DCF JJEU will provide updates on the student to the school district every other week. 4. JBCSSD will provide students discharging from JBCSSD and DOC facilities and contracted programs with access to Educational Support Services (ESS) for legal representation and advocacy as needed. 5. The DCF JJEU will facilitate a reentry circle for a returning student prior to their first day back at school to provide wrap around support and inclusion for the student. Reentry circles at schools may include, but are not limited to, the school counselor, principal, teacher, family, probation officer, mentor, and school resource officer. 6. The DCF JJEU will provide ongoing reintegration support and check-ins for 90 days once a student is placed back in the receiving school.
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7. The DCF JJEU will work with facility education providers and school districts to assure that education credit earned in the facility is applied to the student's transcript at the school district.
8. The DCF JJEU will place greater attention on students released to alternative schools and large urban high schools. The DCF JJEU will provide weekly attention to absenteeism and any interventions put in place to address attendance issues.
9. The DCF JJEU will facilitate conversations with the school district regarding essential educational services for any student on house arrest following their stay in a facility, or who experiences environmental safety challenges that create barriers to them returning to school.
10. The DCF JJEU will assist a student's parent or legal guardian with connections to continuing their own education if so desired.

Recommended Strategy #4: Provide Access to Meaningful Vocational and Employment Opportunities

1. JBCSSD and DOC will ensure that each youth has access to their preferred immediate educational goal (high school diploma or GED), career exploration and development, and occupational training during facility stays.
2. JBCSSD and DOC will ensure that youth, prior to reentering from juvenile-serving facilities or contracted programs, will have started, and whenever possible, completed job readiness and/or career training programs with imbedded industry-recognized credentials, certifications, or licenses.
3. JBCSSD and DOC will work with DOL to understand how best to support youth to benefit from Asset Limited, Income Constrained Employment (ALICE), CT Hires, CT Career Paths, workforce partners, and technical schools.
4. The facility or contracted program will collaborate with the youth and coordinating entity to support the youth in seeking, and whenever possible finding, employment prior to release and sustaining employment after release.
5. The coordinating entity will connect interested parents or guardians to employment and/or vocational opportunities and trainings.

Recommended Strategy #5: Address Mental Health Service Gaps and Substance Use Treatment and Recovery Supports

1. The facility or contracted program will connect the youth to mental health and behavioral health community service providers as needed prior to the youth's release to begin the engagement process and ensure a warm hand-off. When deemed acceptable by the facility or contracted program, a young person may have the opportunity to see their provider in the community.

2. DOC, JBCSSD, and DSS will work together to expand transition and reentry care coordination services and supports through the 1115 Medicaid Waiver application and implementation process.
3. JBCSSD, DOC, and DSS will explore the possibility of developing a rate for treatment providers to meet current clients in pretrial detention or incarceration so that treatment may continue while the youth is awaiting trial or serving their sentence.
4. DCF will work with the Transforming Children’s Behavioral Health Committee to ensure there are no gaps in service delivery from facility to community for the juvenile population, including but not limited to psychiatric medication management services.
5. JBCSSD and DOC will work with DCF and DMHAS to identify and provide access to youth substance use treatment and recovery supports.

Recommended Strategy #6: Increase and Expand Transition Supports

1. Every youth will reenter with a Reentry Wallet and Portfolio. Documents to include are birth certificate (with seal), social security card, driver’s license or state ID, driver’s permit if applicable, school transcript, immunization records, program certificates, vocational achievements, resume, cover letter, letters of recommendation, job references with contact information, job application template, W9 template, email account and password, and resourceful phone numbers youth should maintain. All information will also be provided on a USB drive.
2. When a youth is admitted to a facility or contracted I program, the provider will connect with the youth’s identified family and provide, within available funding, up to two (2) people with access to bus passes and transportation assistance to visit the young person at the facility or contracted program at least twice a month.
3. JBCSSD and DOC will utilize flex funds, as available, to provide support for families in need for up to 6 months following a youth’s return home. Support may include but is not limited to housing assistance, basic needs, transportation, and vocational training.
4. JBCSSD and DOC will work together to develop community supports for reentering youth like the adult reentry welcome centers and reentry round tables, which may include peer support groups.

Recommended Strategy #7: Address Barriers to Transportation

1. The coordinating entity will provide released youth with assistance getting to school, interviews, work, and other appointments for up to a year.
2. The coordinating entity may utilize flex funds to cover Uber/Lyft costs; mileage reimbursement, if possible, for anyone providing transportation to the young person; bus passes; and any other approved method of transportation to support the youth.

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. JBCSSD and DOC will partner with the DMV to provide youth with the opportunity to take driving courses and obtain their permit and driver's license prior to reentry. 4. The coordinating entity will provide the youth and their family with information about how to obtain car insurance. 5. Services and supports may be co-located in one place to eliminate the need to go to multiple sites. <p>Recommended Strategy #8: Expand Access to Housing Options</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. JBCSSD and DOC will screen youth for housing needs upon admission to the facility and work with the family to determine their housing needs upon release of the youth. 2. DOH will continue to educate JBCSSD and DOC staff about DOH funded housing options and how to access them so that identified youth and/or their family may benefit. 3. JBCSSD and DOC will use flex funds, as funding allows, to provide youth and their family the ability to relocate if needed for safety reasons. Funds may cover moving, basic needs, and initial housing payments. 4. JBCSSD and DOC will enhance awareness of the existing triage systems with DCF, DMHAS, and DDS to determine eligibility and develop service plans to support youth who cannot return home because of abuse/neglect, significant behavioral health, or developmental needs. Services based on eligibility and appropriateness may include but are not limited to, DMHAS behavioral health supports; DCF educational and vocational supports (e.g., CHAP/CHEER); START program case management and housing assistance for non-DCF involved youth; and CSSD transitional housing and rapid rehousing opportunities. <p>Recommended Strategy #9: Improve the Use of Restorative Justice Practices</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. JBCSSD and DOC will continue to implement restorative justice practices in their juvenile facilities and contracted programs. 2. JBCSSD, DCF, and OVA will collaborate to improve the use of restorative justice principles and practices by community-based providers. <p>Recommended Strategy #10: Develop a Quality Assurance System and Identify Key Funding Sources for the Reentry Success Plan</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. JBCSSD, DOC, CSDE, and DCF, in conjunction with Reentry Subgroup by June 30, 2024, will develop a quality assurance system and identify federal, state, and private funding sources to support implementation of the Reentry Success Plan.
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BACKGROUND

Coordinated reentry services and supports reduce high rates of recidivism. Nationally, every year over 100,000 youths are released from detention facilities and out of home placements, too often returning to communities with high crime rates, poverty, unstable households, underfunded school systems, and unemployment². In Connecticut, seven (7) out of 10 youth in the juvenile justice system have a mental health condition³. Timely access to treatment and support services in their home communities are necessary for successful reentry and yet are hard to arrange, especially for pre-adjudicated youth until they are released. Even upon release, many services are hard to access leaving gaps that significantly undermine reentry success.

It is critical to provide reentering youth with an array of services and supports to reduce recidivism. The justice system, state agencies, providers, and communities must work together to meet the challenges of so many youth transitioning back to school, unstable housing, difficult family situations, and a lack of employment. Youth who reenter need structure, mentors, case managers, realistic opportunities for education and employment, and other positive activities (e.g., sports, hobbies, volunteering, church) to be successful. To improve the odds of youth successfully reentering the community, coordination and collaboration between agencies and providers and across services and supports is necessary.

With successful reentry planning and execution, youth develop resiliency and mature into successful adults. They develop the critical life skills needed for success in school, work, and the community. Reentry programs that are truly comprehensive focus on all developmental needs to set youth on a path to success.

NATIONAL AND CONNECTICUT LANDSCAPES

The Reentry Subgroup reviewed promising models and reentry strategies from other states and from within Connecticut. A summary of reviewed programs is provided in **Appendix B and Appendix C**, respectively.

IDENTIFIED CHALLENGES AND GAPS IN CONNECTICUT

There is great variability in access to services and supports for youth leaving juvenile residential and correctional facilities. Some of the variability depends on the youth's legal status, release from pretrial detention or end of sentence and a return to the community with or without supervision by a juvenile probation officer, a bail commissioner, an adult probation, or an adult parole officer. Access to services is also driven by the location to which the youth returns, availability of appropriate programs and services, and the youth's specific risks, needs, and family and community supports already in place.

² <https://jije.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Youth-Reentry.pdf>

³ <https://www.nami.org/NAMI/media/NAMI-Media/StateFactSheets/ConnecticutStateFactSheet.pdf>

No Reentry Centers for Juveniles and Youth Under Age 18

There is no one stop shop for reentry care coordination for youth, unlike in the adult system or in other states like New Jersey. The lack of a one stop shop leaves youth and families trying to navigate from one appointment to the next, sometimes great distances, to access the various resources and services they need for a successful reentry. Services are fragmented among many agencies and service providers. Navigating this fragmented system is incredibly challenging without knowledgeable supportive persons with appropriate skill sets and knowledge of organizations to provide the needed assistance. Unfortunately, the low volume of youth reentering their community in a year does not make the funding of a one stop shop or hub practical.

Limited Capacity of Credible Messengers

All the youth in the contracted REGIONS programs have reintegration mentors. Youth at the state REGIONS programs (Bridgeport and Hartford) do not yet have access to Reintegration Mentors. They may access a Credible Messenger or Mentor through another JBCSSD contract or community provider. JBCSSD will expand its capacity in 2024 to provide Reintegration Mentors to those youth as well. JBCSSD also will expand its credible messenger contract in 2024 to include all court locations statewide.

However, youth discharging from the Department of Correction have very limited access to credible messengers. While Our Piece of the Pie provides access to youth reentering to Hartford and Domus provides support to youth returning to Norwalk and Stamford, programs are needed in other cities and regions of the state.

Three gaps in access to credible messengers include:

- 1.) Not all youth returning to their communities have access to supportive persons, such as credible messengers.
- 2.) Credible messengers are currently only available to young people up to 6 months following their release and return to their community.
- 3.) Additional credible messengers, including reintegration mentors, are needed to meet the intense demands of this high need population.

Limited Education Coordination and Transition Support

The creation of the DCF Juvenile Justice Education Unit enacted by Public Act 21-174 is a major reform supported by the JJPOC to eliminate the fragmentation in educational services for students in juvenile justice facilities and incarceration. While meaningful progress is made to ensure justice involved students in facilities have access to the highest quality educational programming, communication challenges for the exchange of education records across education providers remains a central issue. Other identified obstacles include differences between each school district curricula and limited bus transportation offered in some of the urban school systems where students are expected to walk up to 2.5 miles to school. Consequently, transferring credit or even receiving partial credit for classes taken while in a facility only compound existing challenges. Broader implications not only hinder student progress but also cripple earnest achievements once students

transition back to their homes, schools, and communities, meaning system providers must work harder to make the transition successful.

Continued action is needed to reengage and help justice-involved students get back on track. Primarily driven by a ninety-nine percent increase in chronic school absenteeism from 2017–2022, one in three Connecticut high school students are at risk of dropping out of school. The risk is even higher for justice-involved students. Data from the adult correctional system indicates that most individuals in custody did not graduate high school. This reveals an optimal and promising opportunity to develop a prioritized and strategic response for reentering juveniles. A critical next step compels an integrated data approach to comprehensively understand not only predictors but how justice system involvement impacts education trajectories and intervention outcomes. Current approaches are limited by deficient data records; for example, the length of time a student enrolled in school after returning to the community.

While Connecticut provides some education-related reentry services and supports, many challenges remain.

- 1.) Schools in which students were enrolled prior to their placement in a facility do not receive regular updates on the student's educational performance and anticipated discharge date. A lack of notice of when the student is returning delays school reentrance, which results in a lack of engagement and attendance for many reentering students.
- 2.) A general lack of educational services for students on house arrest or who have expressed they cannot attend their community school safely due to peer conflicts and/or neighborhood violence.

Limited Connections to Vocational Opportunities and Employment

Prevention literature emphasizes the need to include comprehensive vocational opportunities to foster positive social interactions, communication, problem solving, critical thinking, and decision-making skills. Nationally, jurisdictions that have established strong partnerships between both juvenile justice and workforce development systems have continuously demonstrated prioritizing vocational reentry opportunities have not only improved community safety but also substantially reduced re-arrest and subsequent juvenile justice contact.⁴

Many youth lack the skills, confidence, wherewithal, and persistence to find or keep a job. A recent Dalio Foundation report explained Connecticut has an unspoken crisis — a statewide problem that has existed for many years but has now exploded into a full-blown crisis because this population has, for too long, been unrecognized and not supported in a way that truly responds to its needs of at-risk and disconnected youth. The report emphasized in 2021–2022, 119,000 young people were at-risk or otherwise disconnected, meaning a significant number of youths were either unemployed, have not attained a high school diploma or equivalent, sparsely connected to education and employment systems, and or not enrolled in postsecondary education programs. The report pointedly indicated the justice system plays a critical role in the lives of at-risk and disconnected young people given their disproportionate involvement and the many negative outcomes correlated with involvement with the justice system.⁵

⁴ <https://ccastates.org/system/files/CCAS-DOL-Funding-508.pdf>; See also, <https://www.fhi360.org/sites/default/files/media/documents/resource-crc-surviving-thriving.pdf>

⁵ [231011_Report_Final_vDigital_LowRes.pdf \(dalioeducation.org\)](#)

Connecticut has some programs to aid system-impacted youth gain work-readiness skills, vocational and other career-oriented opportunities, but they are not equitably accessible to all youth.⁶ Best practices, based on research and feedback from national experts, add soft employment skills such as interviewing, resume building, job searching, application supports, and guidance for completing financial aid and college applications are needed to guide systemwide improvement efforts.⁷ Additionally, integrating workforce consideration into intake procedures, probation, community service delivery, and reentry plans must be developed to increase system capacity to better prepare youth for seamless re-entry transitions. Improved coordination and cross-systems partnerships can build strong connections with youth prior to their release into the community and connect them with essential workforce support the day of their release. Research shows programs that involve seamless employment opportunities, paid volunteer incentives, and other employment related activity are key.

It is paramount that efforts to address occupational and the educational needs of youth are centered on youth driven goals, the development of soft skills, and tailored to labor market demands. Strong workforce development plans are needed to break the connection between post-education opportunity, academic failure, and justice involvement.

Three gaps in vocational supports were identified:

- 1.) Young people who are system impacted have limited access to vocational programming because they can't access the Connecticut Technical High School System.
- 2.) Vocational skills and certifications learned and earned in facilities do not translate necessarily to job placement when youth return to the community.
- 3.) Youth employment opportunities are often only available for a short time over the summer and are not extended throughout the entire school year.

Limited Access to Mental Health Services

Youth involved in the juvenile justice system have mental health disorders at a disproportionate rate when compared to the general public. During the 2022 calendar year, 63.2% of admissions to pretrial detention indicated mental health concerns. Over half of the admitted youth were placed on suicide watch. Ten percent of youth were placed on constant observation. Data from Manson Youth Institution shows similar findings; 69% of individuals in custody had a mental health score over two.⁸

A key priority for juvenile justice systems must be to maintain public safety and to support youth to achieve positive outcomes. To this end, systems must ensure that youth receive high quality treatment and services—a goal that cannot be achieved if youth fundamentally do not feel physically or emotionally safe.

Reentry interventions must consider each youth's unique life experiences and address the effects of past trauma, fear of stigma, and need to cultivate trusting relationships with adults. Individual and collective trauma can hinder a youth's ability to connect to an educational and career pathway that leads to economic security.

⁶ [CT-Voices-Justice-Report-2023-Final.pdf \(ctvoices.org\)](https://www.ctvoices.org/CT-Voices-Justice-Report-2023-Final.pdf)

⁷ https://csgjusticecenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/CSG_Juvenile-Workforce-Development-Brief.pdf

⁸ https://www.cga.ct.gov/app/tfs/20141215_Juvenile%20Justice%20Policy%20and%20Oversight%20Committee/20230420/JJPOC%20April%20Powerpoint%20FINAL.pdf

There are challenges with access to mental health services throughout the state and it is more severe for youth reentering the community. There is a shortage of the following:

- 1.) Substantial waitlists for community-based mental health services.
- 2.) Limited access to psychiatric medication management.
- 3.) Family support to get a young person to appointments or remain engaged in treatment programs.
- 4.) A warm hand off for youth when they leave facilities and connections to age-appropriate services.
- 5.) Care coordination for pretrial and sentenced youth.

Substance Use Disorder Prevention, Treatment, and Recovery Support

Most youth involved in the justice system use substances. Adolescent use may involve any number of substances and range from rare, occasional, frequent, to daily and from experimentation, recreational, to addiction. JBCSSD and DOC screen for substance use and provide interventions as indicated and as capacity allows. An effective screening strategy is SAMHSA's screening tool SBIRT to determine substance use concerns.⁹

For youth in need who are reentering the community, they may access evidence-based treatment through state funded providers. Interventions applicable to this population include, but are not limited to, multisystemic therapy (MST) and multidimensional family therapy (MDFT). However, extensive waiting lists due to staff shortages make it difficult to access these services in a timely manner.

Connecticut provides Smart Recovery in several facilities. Smart Recovery created the Inside Out: A SMART Recovery Correctional Program for use in correctional facilities utilizing alternative peer groups that will assist youth with their reentry. SMART also has opportunities for families to heal in recovery together through their CRAFT model. DCF funds these programs from SAMHSA in partnership with DMHAS.

DCF had a grant that created "RAFT" – a pilot re-entry and family treatment program using the MDFT model, an intensive in-home family therapy for youth with substance use and mental health diagnoses (integrated care) at the Connecticut Juvenile Training School (CJTS). Services started two (2) months prior to release and continued post-release in the community. JBCSSD funds MST-FIT which is similar in nature to RAFT.

For youth needing long-term support to stay substance free, peer recovery supports can be found through peer recovery networks, including Turning Point, SMART Recovery, and Pheonix to name a few.

Limited Family Engagement and Support

A youth's connection to their family is a critical and principal source of their primary emotional, social, cultural, and spiritual development. Youth and their families primarily connect through phone calls and video chats. Studies have shown family visits to youth in residential programs and facilities not only reduce recidivism rates for justice-involved youth, but also decrease the rate of sibling involvement in the justice system. Youth who receive frequent visits from family and other supportive adults have shown a more rapid reduction in

⁹ [Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment \(SBIRT\) | SAMHSA](#)

depression symptoms. Visits are also associated with improved grades and less violent incidents. Despite the clear benefits, and the many efforts made by justice program administrators to integrate family focused models, transportation barriers to and from facilities have prevented many families from maintaining a physical connection.

Family supports in Connecticut are lacking the following:

- 1.) Families struggle to visit youth in facilities and youth struggle to maintain positive relationships while in a facility due to their support system's inability to access transportation to and from the facility.
- 2.) There is insufficient availability and access to assistance with basic needs and other supports for young people and their families when a young person reenters the community.
- 3.) Youth need support to obtain adequate or proper identification documents, including but not limited to Birth Certificate, Personal Identification Card or Driver's License, and Social Security Card, which are needed to enroll in new schools, vocational programs, post-secondary education, and to gain employment.
- 4.) There is a lack of peer and family support groups in the community to support a successful reentry.
- 5.) Family reintegration initiatives do not incorporate restorative justice practices and principles.

Unstable Housing

Studies show a disproportionate number of youth experiencing homelessness have had contact with law enforcement when compared to stably housed youth.¹⁰ Correspondingly, a national study found that 46% of youth who experienced homelessness were also juvenile justice involved, compared to only 15% of the general population.

Homelessness and justice system involvement are both traumatic experiences that have long term impacts that can impede a young person's educational attainment, health, and economic stability later in life.¹¹ The impact of housing stability has not traditionally been a primary consideration in youth reentry planning or intervention frameworks for youth who remain in the community pretrial. Contact with the justice system denotes an acute inflection point for advancing prevention objectives for those in need and connecting youth as well as their families to housing support. It is essential for intake risk assessments to screen for housing stability. The delivery of reentry services must address housing stability for the youth, and in most cases their family. DCF has a motel hub that is a pilot in 4 jurisdictions, which may be a promising model.

Two of the biggest housing barriers young people experience is lack of income to support housing, and family conflict which prevents them from remaining with family as they work to gain enough income to move out on their own. Efforts to increase income and mediate family conflict can assist with preventing housing instability when youth exit residential programs and facilities.

Family reunification is ideal, however, when youth are placed in compromising situations or environments, family reunification may not provide practical solutions when youth will be placed at risk. Existing law

¹⁰ <https://healthandjusticejournal.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s40352-022-00177-7>

¹¹ <https://cceh.org/2020-youth-outreach-count-dashboard/>

recognizes unaccompanied homeless youth under age 18 have legal rights to access housing, shelter, and other basic services.

The Department of Housing (DOH) doesn't currently fund housing for unaccompanied minors. Federally funded runaway and homeless youth (RHY) providers in Connecticut have basic center programs that are licensed through DCF¹². These basic center programs provide short-term shelter for minors while they work to reunify with family or get referred to DCF. When it is unsafe (abuse/neglect suspected) for minors to return home, a report is submitted to DCF. Several regions in Connecticut are piloting case conferencing teams for unaccompanied minors experiencing homelessness to ensure they get connected to resources. The Statewide Minor Homelessness Taskforce is coordinating this work. DOH can work with JBCSSD and DOC to ensure they have the current contact information for those sites. Young adults or minors who are experiencing homelessness with their families can contact 2-1-1 to gain access to the statewide homeless response system and resources.

Some states have taken other approaches. Washington state, for example, requires the Office of Homeless Youth Prevention and Protection, in coordination with other state offices, to create a rapid response team that supports youth and young adults exiting a publicly funded system of care, including the juvenile court system.¹³ No one agency can address the needs of vulnerable young people independently. Justice involved youth returning to the community and their families have diverse and multifaceted needs. For example, families in crisis may need short-term or long-term housing support services; whereas youth who are transitioning into adulthood and cannot live with family may need transitional housing support. Solutions necessitate greater coordination and resources from multiple systems and programs at the local, state, and community levels.

A lack of funding is a common barrier to housing options. One state, Virginia, passed legislation in 2022 to require the state to support a child aging out of foster care, ages 18-21, including youth transitioning from the Department of Juvenile Justice.¹⁴ Another state example comes from Massachusetts, where the Department of Youth Services provides voluntarily transition services and supports for youth ages 18-21 to support successful community reentry.

Housing challenges for youth returning to the community include:

- 1.) Many families of reentering youth often do not have consistent, sustainable housing.
- 2.) There are almost no housing options for youth under the age of 18 who cannot, should not, or do not want to return to their community, either independently or with their self-identified family.
- 3.) Most families who wish to relocate for safety reasons are prohibited by moving expenses, security deposits, and other barriers.

¹² <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/fysb/grants/connecticut-rhy>

¹³ <https://www.ncsl.org/human-services/youth-homelessness-overview>

¹⁴ https://custom.statenet.com/public/resources.cgi?id=ID:bill:VA2022000H349&ciq=schererhousing&client_md=29e1e8cc50da50187395aaeb8a063ad1&mode=current_text

Transportation Barriers

Transportation is frequently cited as a primary impediment for youth involved with the justice system and their families. Reliable transportation is also paramount to addressing the safety needs of youth who can't move freely in their communities due to rivalries. Getting to and from treatment service appointments, meetings with probation officers, court appearances, school commitments, and employment responsibilities can be overwhelming for many. While public transportation exists in urban cities, it is not an option in rural communities. However, public transportation often involves lengthy transit commutes—sometimes more than double the required travel time and can become quite costly. The lack of reliable transportation prevents many youth from employment opportunities, especially from jobs that require transportation. Research from the Connecticut Voices of Children indicates twelve percent of occupations available for many people involved with the justice system are either directly or indirectly required to have reliable transportation and a valid driver's license.¹⁵

Transportation issues were identified:

- 1.) Very limited transportation options make it incredibly difficult to attend appointments, interviews and/or work, particularly when they are located at multiple sites.

Limited Use of Restorative Justice

Nationally, restorative justice practices have been championed as a model prevention practice for reintegrating youth back into the community.¹⁶ Restorative justice is a non-adversarial alternative approach to traditional justice proceedings that brings the person who caused harm, together with community stakeholders and the individual(s) harmed to discuss the incident and collectively develop a fair and appropriate resolution. Anchored on accountability and rehabilitation, this process allows those who were harmed an opportunity to explain how they were impacted, ask questions, and gain closure. The practice of restorative justice not only cultivates community-driven public safety but also builds improved community relationships activating both systems-level change and interpersonal and consensual resolutions.

The 2021 Department of Justice Model Programs Guide reported restorative justice programs as effective in producing positive results. Two meta-analyses found a substantial statistical decrease in delinquency for youth participants in a restorative justice program, when compared with youth who went through traditional justice system proceedings.¹⁷ A 2022 National Conference of State Legislators brief noted, six states adopted restorative justice legislation and funding support to program implementation, while fourteen states have

¹⁵ [Rolling Boulders Uphill: Rethinking Reentry Wage and Policy Barriers Will Benefit Connecticut's Communities and Economy - CT Voices](#)

¹⁶ [Development Services Group, Inc. 2021. "Restorative Justice for Juveniles." Literature review. Washington, D.C.: Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention. <https://ojjdp.ojp.gov/model-programs-guide/literature-reviews/restorative-justice-for-juveniles>.](#)

¹⁷ [\(Wong et al., 2016; Wilson et al., 2017\) <https://ojjdp.ojp.gov/model-programs-guide/literature-reviews/restorative-justice-for-juveniles#4>](#)

passed legislation guiding municipalities on restorative justice principles; and twenty-three states have enacted restorative justice programs legislation.¹⁸

Across the state the practice of restorative justice has been implemented by juvenile review boards, school systems, and within juvenile residential programs and facilities. Though the practice of restorative justice is rapidly expanding, it is paramount that all restorative justice residential and group home facilitators receive continuous training and program support to embed restorative circles and conferencing as a fundamental part of their programs.

Two gaps pertaining to restorative justice in the reentry process were identified.

- 1.) Contracted providers in the community are not trained to incorporate restorative justice principles in their programming.
- 2.) Youth would benefit from restorative justice training. Thus far, much of the training has focused on staff. Training of youth would help them develop positive leadership skills and give them a powerful role in alternative dispute resolution practices in their communities.

¹⁸ <https://www.ncsl.org/civil-and-criminal-justice/juvenile-justice-young-people-and-restorative-justice>

RECOMMENDED REENTRY STRATEGIES¹⁹

Youth returning home from pretrial detention, residential placement, and incarceration need multiple transition supports and services to reduce risk and promote success. Guidance and structured programming are especially important for youth exiting secure placement. Like non-justice-involved youth, justice involved youth have aspirations, strengths, assets, and can make positive contributions to our communities. It is critical that support and services are not discontinued just because a youth reaches 18 years of age. Some youth may need continued supports and services for a longer period.

Model practices show the best juvenile justice systems provide comprehensive programming that not only reduces risk but also works to bolster protective factors like supportive adults, education, vocational training, employment, and treatment. The recommended reentry strategies offer promising and practical solutions to meet the significant and developmentally appropriate needs of young people reentering to the community.

This framework primarily works to (1) foster positive youth outcomes, (2) improve public safety, and (3) reduce justice interaction by connecting youth to a comprehensive continuum of community-based interventions by strengthening and increasing reentry coordination and service capacity.

The following recommended strategies promote hope, empowerment, and resiliency for justice involved youth, and address the challenges and gaps identified by the Reentry Subgroup. Each recommended strategy includes input from justice-involved youth.

Recommended Strategy #1: Coordinate and Expand Reentry Supports for Connecticut's Youth

6 out of 10 youth said they want to have a designated entity to coordinate their services, while 3 didn't know and 1 said they did not.

What Connecticut's youth will benefit from is a communicated and coordinated effort among state agencies and subsequently community providers, to assess and address their needs, beginning immediately upon a youth's admission to a facility – a Coordinating Entity. Connecticut could expand several existing reentry strategies and services; specifically, reintegration mentors, credible messengers, school reentry coordinators, LYNC, and reentry welcome centers/ roundtables to facilitate access to services and supports. There are several options for establishing a Coordinating Entity; 1) a new welcome center for youth, patterned after the current adult welcome centers; 2) a new hub model like the one in New Jersey; or 3) an expansion and refocusing of an already existing infrastructure.

Central coordination of services is essential for pulling together a multi-system approach to connect youth efficiently and holistically to all their varying individually identified needs. Services to be centrally coordinated upon admission may include but are not limited to mental health services; substance use disorders treatment and recovery; education support; employment support; housing support; financial literacy and debt support services; life skills support services; social services support; family involvement, support, inclusion, and healing; transition supports; and preventative mentoring services. The coordinating entity, agencies, and

¹⁹ <https://nationalreentryresourcecenter.org/second-chance-act/program-tracks/youth-offender-reentry-program>

providers involved in reentry planning and implementation should incorporate a restorative recovery approach and engage in training about understanding stigma and implicit bias surrounding youth involved in the legal system and by identifying youth using person first language.

Adult reentry centers in Connecticut have proven to offer promising results. A 2023 report noted, the Bridgeport Reentry Welcome Center had an 98% success rate—only five of the 263 individuals seen by the center had been rearrested since over the last year. Equally, in Hartford, of 73 people discharged between September 2020 and September 2021, only two (2.7 percent) were re-incarcerated.²⁰ These same results may not be seen with youth, as youth offending typically desists as one matures into an adult, age 26 and beyond, the use of a coordinating entity will bolster a youth's chances for success.

1. A coordinating entity will convene a multi-agency team for each youth to meet at least monthly to review the implementation of the reentry plan. Agencies involved may include, as needed, JBCSSD and/or DOC, CSDE, DCF, DMHAS, DOL, DOH, and DSS.

Recommended Strategy #2: Expand Access to Mentorship

**12 out of 38 youth stated they needed a credible messenger/mentor to successfully return to their community.*

**24 out of 38 youth stated “friends”, “community”, “lifestyle”, and “the streets” were potential barriers to their reentry.*

**17 out of 38 youth identified a mentor or credible messenger to be the most helpful to them.*

Mentors are vital for young people returning to their communities and are given multiple names by systems and providers. Youth in the care of JBCSSD that risk at Tiers 3, 4, and 5 on the PrediCT can be referred to the credible messenger program. Credible messengers are a JBCSSD contracted program, and each community provider has their own in-house training for credible messengers. JBCSSD recommends that each provider cover the following topics in their training: Introduction to Juvenile Justice; Suicide Prevention; PrediCT Overview; CDCS Training as required; LGBTQI Training; Gender responsive training; Supporting Survivors of Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking; Cultural Responsiveness; DCF Mandated Reporter training; Trauma and vicarious trauma; and Crisis and De-Escalation Training.

Credible messenger services are geared toward high risk, high need pre- and post-adjudicated youth in Bridgeport, Hartford, New Haven, and Waterbury. JBCSSD will be issuing an RFP to expand Credible Messengers to the other courts in 2024. The average length of stay is six months which may vary depending on the client's needs. The primary role of Credible Messengers is to build trusting, positive relationships with youth and their families while facilitating sustainable community involvement, encouraging positive decision-making and behaviors, and enhancing motivation. Responsibilities include, but are not limited to the following:

- Individualized service planning.

²⁰ [CT-Voices-Justice-Report-2023-Final.pdf \(ctvoices.org\)](#)

- Mentoring and advocacy.
- Facilitating opportunities for youth to be engaged in developmentally appropriate, structured activities, including prosocial activities, experiential learning, education, leadership development, and career exploration.
- Safety planning.
- Accompanying youth into the community, as needed.
- Providing transportation.
- Planning and connecting clients with pro-social activities and motivating the youth.
- Fostering and building on youth/family strengths.
- Providing 24/7 availability including weekends and evenings to respond to crisis situations.

DOC has begun to utilize Behind the Wall Navigators and credible messenger programs as well. The connection between the credible messenger and the youth at the Manson Youth Institution is made and maintained if both want to continue to participate. DOC connects credible messengers to both pre-trial and post-adjudicated residents. DOC has MOUs or MOAs with community agencies/providers that employ credible messengers. Credible messengers must attend training as employees and complete orientation upon being approved or cleared to come into DOC and provide services.

1. Credible Messenger programs (credible messengers, reintegration mentors, navigators, etc.) need additional funding to expand services to serve all interested youth. Funding is needed to eliminate waitlists; to provide adequate wages to deter turnover; and to provide 24 months of support in the community.
2. JBCSSD will expand the capacity of credible messengers and reintegration mentors as funding allows so that all identified youth exiting pretrial detention or residential care may benefit.
3. DOC or JBCSSD will provide access to credible messengers to youth exiting DOC custody.

Recommended Strategy #3: Improve Education Transition Planning and Access to Education Support Services

**14 out of 38 youth had a goal for themselves one year from now to still be in school, closer to graduation, or in college.*

**22 out of 37 youth stated that successful reentry into the community looked like “attending school”; 4 additional youth stated, “participating in sports.”*

Education and school attendance are normal developmental tasks for youth and can serve as important protective factors against delinquency and involvement in the juvenile justice system.²¹ Education plays a critical role in the successful reentry of a young person into his or her community.²² Engagement in prosocial

²¹ Development Services Group, 2015c

²² Bilchik, 2014

institutions, like education, is critical in interrupting the cycle of offending for youth as they emerge from their adolescence to adulthood.

The following are the proposed solutions:

1. The CSDE will partner and coordinate with the DCF JJEU to build relationships and improve communication between facility education providers, transition specialists, and school district reentry coordinators to support joint training, enhanced communication, and the timely transfer of records.
2. The DCF JJEU will convene a meeting with the facility education provider, the school district, and the JBCSSD, DOC, or contracted program within 30 days of an admission to review and develop the student's educational and reentry plan.
3. As soon as the student, legal guardian, and school district have agreed upon to which school the student will return, the DCF JJEU will provide updates on the student to the school district every other week.
4. JBCSSD will provide students discharging from JBCSSD and DOC facilities and contracted programs access to Educational Support Services (ESS) for legal representation and advocacy as needed.
5. The DCF JJEU will facilitate a reentry circle for a returning student prior to their first day back at school to provide wrap around support and inclusion for the student. Reentry circles at schools may include, but are not limited to, the school counselor, principal, teacher, family, probation officer, mentor, and school resource officer.
6. The DCF JJEU will provide ongoing reintegration support and check-ins for 90 days once a student is placed back in the receiving school.
7. The DCF JJEU will work with facility education providers and school districts to assure that education credit earned in the facility is applied to the student's transcript at the school district.
8. The DCF JJEU will place greater attention on students released to alternative schools and large urban high schools. The DCF JJEU will provide weekly attention to absenteeism and any interventions put in place to address attendance issues.
9. The DCF JJEU will facilitate conversations with the school district regarding essential educational services for any student on house arrest following their stay in a facility, or who experiences environmental challenges that create barriers to them returning to school.
10. The DCF JJEU will assist a student's parent or legal guardian with connections to continuing their own education if so desired.

Recommendation Strategy #4: Provide Access to Meaningful Vocational and Employment Opportunities

**25 out of 38 youth stated they did not have a job before entering detention or REGIONS; 3 youth stated they did have a job but could not keep the job; 5 youth had a job and could keep the job.*

**In response to the question: What would you need at a job to be successful, most of the responses identify support, guidance, and positivity.*

**22 out of 38 youth stated that their goal for themselves one year from now was to have a job or pursue a career.*

Vocational support is another critical component of successful reentry. Connecticut must ensure workforce development opportunities are available to youth at all points of the youth justice system, as an alternative to system involvement, while on probation, pre-trial, in placement, under supervision, post-release, and even as an alternative to residential placement or confinement. The federally funded workforce-development system offers resourceful pathways to support youth to increase their chances of success and become economically self-sufficient.

Connecticut's American Job Centers are available to all jobseekers and businesses in the state and could be accessible or serve as affiliate "hubs" for justice involved youth, provided resources are available to fully serve justice involved youth.

1. JBCSSD and DOC will ensure that each youth has access to their preferred immediate educational goal (high school diploma or GED), career exploration and development, and occupational training during facility stays.
2. JBCSSD and DOC will ensure that youth, prior to reentering from juvenile-serving facilities or contracted programs, will have started, and whenever possible, completed job readiness and/or career training programs with imbedded industry-recognized credentials, certifications, or licenses.
3. JBCSSD and DOC will work with DOL to understand how best to support youth to benefit from Asset Limited, Income Constrained Employment (ALICE), CT Hires, CT Career Paths, workforce partners, and technical schools.
4. The facility or contracted program will collaborate with the youth and coordinating entity to support the youth in seeking, and whenever possible finding, employment prior to release and sustaining employment after release.
5. The coordinating entity will connect interested parents or guardians to employment and/or vocational opportunities and trainings.

Recommended Strategy #5: Address Mental Health Service Gaps and Substance Use Treatment and Recovery Supports

**16 out of 39 youth stated they want mental health counseling when they return to the community.*

Research has long shown that most of the youth referred to the juvenile justice system have witnessed traumatic events, experienced significant deprivation, have mental health treatment needs, or suffered individual victimization.

1. The facility or contracted program will connect the youth to mental health and behavioral health community service providers as needed prior to the youth's release to begin the engagement process and ensure a warm hand-off. When deemed acceptable by the facility or contracted program, a young person may have the opportunity to see their provider in the community.
2. DOC, JBCSSD, and DSS will work together to expand transition and reentry care coordination services and supports through the 1115 Medicaid Waiver application and implementation process.
3. JBCSSD, DOC, and DSS will explore the possibility of developing a rate for treatment providers to meet current clients in pretrial detention or incarceration so that treatment may continue while the youth is awaiting trial or serving their sentence.
4. DCF will work with the Transforming Children's Behavioral Health Committee to ensure there are no gaps in service delivery from facility to community for the juvenile population, including but not limited to psychiatric medication management services.
5. JBCSSD and DOC will work with DCF and DMHAS to identify and provide access to youth substance use treatment and recovery supports.

Recommended Strategy #6: Increase and Expand Transition Supports

**13 out of 38 youth identified their grandparents as the relationship that mattered most to them and most important to them when they get out.*

**3 youth identified that a relationship with their own children was the one that mattered most to them.*

**"I feel that my family has already stepped up to help me. I feel my mentor can be more active in my life and my PO can be more helpful. My family is most important to me, but we can use help communicating." – Youth Response*

**"I grew up with my mom; she is the most important to me. I need my mom to get her own therapy too, she lets things get to her and then it makes me upset." – Youth Response*

DCF currently has a Kinship Navigator Program for youth in need of foster care. The program works to find family supports and relatives and connect a young person to their extended family, ensure those relatives are connected to services and programs that they are eligible for through probate, and solidify housing stability for families and youth.

DOC currently provides transition supports through the Young Men's Group, Reentry Group, Behind the Wall Navigators, family engagement meetings, reentry counselor, reentry intake assessment, and family reentry/Community Resources for Justice. JBCSSD currently provides transition supports through reintegration mentors, MST-FIT, PBS family survey, family support specialist, LYNC, and Discharge Circles.

1. Every youth will reenter with a Reentry Wallet and Portfolio. Documents to include are birth certificate (with seal), social security card, driver's license or state ID, driver's permit if applicable, school transcript, immunization records, program certificates, vocational achievements, resume, cover letter, letters of recommendation, job references with contact information, job application template, W9 template, email account and password, and resourceful phone numbers youth should maintain. All information will also be provided on a USB drive.
2. When a youth is admitted to a facility or contracted program, the provider will connect with the youth's identified family and provide, within available funding, up to two (2) people with access to bus passes and transportation assistance to visit the young person at the facility or contracted program at least twice a month.
3. JBCSSD and DOC will utilize flex funds, as available, to provide support for families in need for up to 6 months following a youth's return home. Support may include but is not limited to housing assistance, basic needs, transportation, and vocational training.
4. JBCSSD and DOC will work together to develop community supports for reentering youth like the adult reentry welcome centers and reentry round tables, which may include peer support groups.

Recommended Strategy #7: Address Barriers to Transportation

Transportation is a key component of successful reentry as it poses one of the greatest barriers to accessing services upon release.

1. The coordinating entity will provide released youth with assistance getting to education, interviews, work, and appointments for up to a year.
2. The coordinating entity may utilize flex funds to cover Uber/Lyft costs; mileage reimbursement, if possible, for anyone providing transportation to the young person; bus passes, and any other approved method of transportation to support the youth.
3. JBCSSD and DOC will partner with DMV to provide youth with the opportunity to take driving courses and obtain their permit and driver's license prior to reentry.
4. The coordinating entity will provide information on car insurance to the youth and their family.
5. Services and supports may be co-located in one place to eliminate the need to go to multiple sites.

Recommended Strategy #8: Expand Access to Housing Options

**In response to a question about barriers to successful reentry one youth replied, "If my family isn't being taken care of, I feel like it's my job to do that for them and I forget about what bad things could happen to me as long as my family is okay."*

JBCSSD conducts a housing screen for youth upon admission to pretrial detention and by probation. DOC has recently piloted a housing screen. JBCSSD has contracted with CJR to open the first youth transitional living program in Wethersfield, CT. The facility serves as the next step for youth on their journey towards independence and self-sufficiency following their time spent in a REGIONS program.

The two Job Corps programs in Connecticut are alternate residential options for both minors and young adults. Young adults eligible for DCF extended care, DMHAS YAS, or DDS services are potentially eligible for specific housing/residential programs.

1. JBCSSD and DOC will screen youth for housing needs upon admission to the facility and work with the family to determine their housing needs upon release of the youth.
2. DOH will continue to educate JBCSSD and DOC staff about DOH funded housing options and how to access them so that identified youth and/or their family may benefit.
3. JBCSSD and DOC will use flex funds, as funding allows, to provide youth and their family the ability to relocate if needed for safety reasons. Funds may cover moving, basic needs, and initial housing payments.
4. JBCSSD and DOC will enhance awareness of the existing triage systems with DCF, DMHAS, and DDS to determine eligibility and develop service plans to support youth who cannot return home because of abuse/neglect, significant behavioral health, or developmental needs. Services based on eligibility and appropriateness may include but are not limited to:
 - a. DMHAS behavioral health supports;
 - b. DCF educational and vocational supports (e.g., CHAP/CHEER);
 - c. START program case management and housing assistance for non-DCF involved youth; and
 - d. CSSD transitional housing and rapid rehousing opportunities.

Recommended Strategy #9: Increase and Expand the use of Restorative Justice

**In response to what successful reentry in community looks like, one youth responded, "I think I'll be successful because it's quiet in the streets right now because a lot of people are locked up. I feel safer that they are locked up."*

**"Developing a better relationship with my mom and engaging in things to help me mentally and emotionally. Having different option to handle potential arguments."*

JBCSSD, DCF, and DOC conduct restorative justice circles in some of their facilities.

1. JBCSSD and DOC will continue to implement restorative justice practices in their juvenile facilities and contracted programs.
2. JBCSSD, DCF, and OVA will collaborate to improve the use of restorative justice principles and practices by community-based providers.

Recommended Strategy #10: Develop a Quality Assurance Framework and Identify Key Funding Sources for the Reentry Success Plan

Quality Assurance Framework

The quality assurance framework will identify key performance indicators in which goals are mapped out and a strategy is developed on how to achieve them. DOC and JBCSSD will monitor outcomes for current programs offered at youth facilities to determine effectiveness.

Funding

Congress passed the Second Chance Act in 2007 to provide federal grants for services that reduce recidivism and improve outcomes for persons previously convicted and sentenced. These programs receive funding for operations, research, and evaluations. The population benefiting from these supportive networks have completed their court ordered sentences and are integrating back into their communities. Programs supported by the Second Chance Act in accordance with OJJDP guidelines provide that effective reentry is established long before release from a facility. The planning process for reentry should begin the day that an individual is formally placed in a facility. Successful reentry programs stage reentry into two phases, a planning and release phase, and a monitoring and follow-up phase, each of which provide different challenges. The Second Chance Reauthorization Act of 2018 expanded the provision of federal grants for the operation of community-based substance abuse treatment, and assistance with employment, housing, family support, as well as other programming. Connecticut will have the ability to apply for these funds to support the implementation of the reentry recommendations outlined in this plan.

1. JBCSSD, DOC, CSDE, and DCF, in conjunction with the Reentry Subgroup by June 30, 2024, will develop a quality assurance system and identify federal, state, and private funding sources to support implementation of the Connecticut Reentry Success Plan.

CT REENTRY FLOW CHART



Reentry must assess and address, at a minimum, nine (9) identified components: Mentorship/Credible Messenger, Education, Vocation/Employment, Mental Health, Substance Use Treatment, Transition Support, Transportation, Housing, and Restorative Justice.

APPENDIX A

YOUTH SURVEY RESULTS

JB/CSSD Surveys

Preparedness for Reentry:

What steps have you taken in preparation to return to your community?

- He would need to change his mind set about being in stolen cars.
- Balancing my emotions, managing them in the moment, trying to stay in the moment when uncomfortable, trying to communicate myself in a proper way even when I don't feel like having a conversation, interacting with my peers without judgement and without emotions or thoughts that aren't towards them, accepting coaching and help and removing myself when I need to
- Working on myself, what I do when I get upset
- Walking away from situations that trigger me. Working on communication.
- Walking away from situations. Finding ways to deal with anxiety.
- Working on my anger, attitude, and how I approach people.
- Working on learning from my mistakes
- Working on behaviors, not getting mad.
- Working on impulsivity.
- Working on communication with others.
- Nothing
- Taking accountability and engaging in treatment
- Change my perspective on life to be positive which I didn't have before
- Learning new skills, taking program seriously, accepting help
- Looked at jobs. McDonalds. Took classes on food handling.
- I don't really know. I was just admitted on Monday and been on Predispo
- CPR; first aid and safe serve; playing piano with the music class; basketball team for regions; participating in groups learning how to handle stress
- CPR: First Aid and try it learn a new perspective on life to see what other people think.
- CPR; serve safe and first aid
- I've been committed to reflect on my behavior and realize that what I was doing was wrong. Also researched jobs and opportunities for myself
- Responsibility, gotta be responsible for my actions and emotions too
- STOP skills to use to think before I react

- I have learned to control my anger I have also learned that doing the right thing is a good thing
- I have been learning different skills to ready me to re-enter the community
- Thinking about what I need when I go home, I need to have goals...that's it
- I have been doing everything that I am supposed to do at the program to go home
- Home passes, setting up jobs for when I leave, relationships with family, practicing for my drivers permit exam
- I don't know
- I learned my lesson by getting arrested
- Got a job, finished resume
- Working on a job, getting my state ID and doing home visits
- Exposure to home, therapy sessions, treatment meetings, planning visits at home
- I'm going to bring my DBT skills and helping/mentoring people. Practicing going off-grounds because it made me open my mind to do other stuff than the negativity, I was doing
- Increase skill use, reducing impulsivity, choosing friends more wisely, controlling anger
- Using my DBT skills, staying out of trouble, learning new things from groups, and working on how I manage my emotions
- Taking my counseling seriously this time, and making sure I don't disappoint myself again
- I have learned new DBT to help regulate my emotions when in the community
- Stay out of the way, focus on self and not others, working on getting my permit and a job
- I have engaged in family sessions and scheduled to get my state ID

What steps has your family (parents and/or guardian) taken to assist in your return?

- His family's plan includes spending more time together to decrease his time spent in the community.
- Communication, developing more positive moments or enjoyable moments
- Participating in family therapy, looking at how they can support me
- Not sure yet
- Mom is helping me get community stuff set up. Participating in family sessions.
- Offers support in making decisions.
- Trying to keep myself on my right path. They are supporting and willing to engage in family therapy.

- Getting services set up, getting school set up. Meeting with providers.
- Starting to engage in family therapy.
- Grandmother participates in family therapy.
- Nothing
- Buy clothes/things I need, doing family therapy and virtual visits/visiting
- They have met with my clinician, and they have positive outlook and positive and not criticize me for being here which I did myself
- Join meetings and participating
- Not really a lot
- Yes, my mom has set up therapy for you in the past
- My mom has engaged in all sessions with clinician and probation
- My grandma is working with my clinician and my other side of family is supportive and helping my grandma
- Help me find schools so I could graduate and focus on myself also been a very good support helping me return home
- Wise mind, opening their minds to me changing
- My grandma is talking to DCF and my mom is coming to family sessions
- They have set up therapy and they're helping me separate myself from the problem
- They are looking to move into a different area
- My mom will help me whenever I need, enroll me in things
- Grandma and other family members come to see me
- Setting up jobs for me, being available for home passes, working with my REGIONS team and attending meetings and sessions
- I don't know
- My mom helps me not get in trouble when I don't listen
- She encouraged me to do better
- Getting my room right, talking to people here, and helping me look for jobs
- Cooperative in passes, attending family sessions, exposing me to the community
- Found a positive placement. Grandma is putting me into positive activities like school stuff and cosmetology
- My family is moving out of Bridgeport, getting me on the right track at home and with school
- Helping me get ready to find a job, attending family sessions, coming for scheduled visits, and having my mom learn the skills I am learning too
- Calling me, visiting me, taking the time to make sure I'm good regardless of what they have going on at home
- My mother moved my younger sisters out of my room
- Mom has been working with me and the program to get me home successfully. She doesn't want me to go back to where I was before. She got all of the documents so I could go for my permit
- Spending time with my mom when I am on home passes. We also have family sessions with my clinician

What steps have staff in the facility taken to help prepare and support you in your reentry?

- He intends to engage with his mentor more frequently. He stated that the facility referred him to a program in the community to help support him but was unsure of the name of the program.
- Given me the opportunity to remove myself or assisting me to remove myself when they know it's leading up to something negative. Interacting with me to get my energy up, board games cards or going to the gym
- Trying to take top me about making positive changes, staying away from negative stuff
- Coach me in the program
- Help me with whatever I need. Coaching me when upset.
- Help me approach people the right way, help me learn to express myself well.
- Giving advice, being supportive.
- Setting up meetings, keep me calm, motivated.
- Talking to me – encouraging me.
- Give good advice.
- Yes, talking to me and teaching me skills
- Doing treatment with me; discussing plans for home
- Regions has tried to prepare me and help with school and acceptance and my anger and following rules
- Show me different ways to do things. Reminding me that I have potential. Teaching me like skills/DBT skills
- Help me with my anger. Gave me skills.
- Just admitted less than a week
- They have tried to teach skills to handle anger and use skills and how to work with others, how to work and have a job
- Be open to learning different skills and different opportunities
- Importance of believing in myself; different skills and different opportunities
- Mostly given me advice on how to stay home and just support me in my treatment being here working on my behavior and attitude
- Tell me I gotta be accountable for everything I do, get up on time for work, I'm taking accountability for all the stuff I do
- Nah, they don't support me at all
- Groups, therapy, and family sessions
- They teach me different skills that I would need to know when re-entering the community
- They told me to go home, get a job, go to school, and stay away from other stuff
- They sit and talk to me to help my anger
- Mentoring me, transporting me to my jobs and home passes, teaching me skills
- I don't know
- They help me be on my best behavior. I don't listen to peers. I make the right choices.
- IDK, just try to help me from doing things I shouldn't be doing on the outs, like cursing and encourage things I should be doing being clean
- Gave me advice, more people to talk to, bringing me to job interviews, stuff like that

- Talking about things to do at home, noticing my urges, clinician comes to my home and puts out scenarios of what to expect
- Made me look at not being argumentative in life, to persevere, and to just keep going
- Group every day, conversations with staff about getting me in the right state of mind, good talks and advice
- Pointing out things I never noticed about myself
- Having a clinician that is eager to listen and help find solutions
- Taking us out into the community to show us how to conduct ourselves properly and show us how things work in the real world
- Staff in the facility has helped start the process of obtaining my state ID and reached out to my past employment, Solar Youth
- Practicing for permit, creating resume, learning new skills to help me look at things from a different angle
- The staff gives me advice. They help me decide what people I should and shouldn't hang out with

Needs and Services:

What programming (educational, vocational) are you currently receiving? Do you know if this type of programming will continue when you return to your community? Is this something you are interested in continuing?

- I need to go to school daily and plan to return to school after discharge. I need to continue to spend time with my mentor. I would maybe like to join a boxing program or after school program.
- Basic subjects for school that are offered outside in the community, serve safe, PSS for school. PSS will follow to community and is looking into schools and placements for after I leave
- I will continue to work with him (PSS)
- School. Waiting to join serve safe. Will return to school in the community.
- School, DBT – will go to community school
- School. Currently participating in serve safe. Will return to school in the community.
- School, serve safe now. Will return to school in the community.
- School, other program has not yet started.
- School, serve-safe, CPR, babysitting course. Will go to school in the community.
- School, completing serve-safe for culinary and mechanics with BGV.
- Attending school, complete serve-safe, security guard and CPR. Will return to school in the community.
- Do school here and yes will continue with school; no vocational
- Doing serve-safe, engaging in school daily/earning credits; will continue with school

- School and yes, I want to go to school
- I am going to school and know this will continue until I go into the Step Down. I will continue to work with DCF JJEOU staff (PSS). Looking to return to magnet high school.
- School and yes would like to continue to go to school.
- Yes, education will continue
- School and yes, I want to go to school
- School; yes I plan on returning to school when I go home
- Passport to manhood; school; yes, I plan on returning to school when I go home
- Were currently working on CDL licenses and forklift classes, yes, I would be interested to continue to do these classes whenever possible
- School, work...got work set up for me as a painter
- I'm going to school here...I will go to school in the community...Nah I'll do everything by myself and my grandmother will help me
- School and help with my anger. Yes, it will continue when I return
- I'm currently going to high school and also learning to drive 18 wheelers and forklift on the simulators. I will continue to go to high school with I get out.
- Right now, I'm going to school at program and I would want to go back to school when I get out. I was working with my RM on my CDL license, and I would want that when I go home
- Yes, because it will help me with a lot things
- Educational, DBT, jobs at the program. Yes, it will continue. Yes, I am interested in having a job and finishing high school
- Education – currently on school break, will continue school when I get out of [BLANK]
- Education
- I don't know... yeah probably
- High school, yes, I'll continue
- East Conn, Nails with Myra, Summer school, and group
- CAN and cosmetology. Focus on skill.
- Work internship at the program; I will get different work program when I go home called workplace
- On-site and additional educational programming and work internship within the program. When I go home, I will still have educational assistance form DCF, and I want to have a job when I go home
- Education right now, I will still be in school when I get out of here, depending how close I am to graduating
- I'm currently receiving vocational programming. When I return to my community it will be educational programming. No, I don't wish to

continue vocational programming.

- Right now none because school is off but when school starts again I get educational and vocational. My favorite class in school is math class and culinary/CNC class. I will go back to school for academics and one vocational class: auto mechanics and Spanish class. It could definitely be something I would like to do
- I am currently in the AMIR program. I will no longer be apart of the program once I am back in the community. My case manager will check up on me for a few weeks following my discharge

What services do you need to successfully return to your community?

- Five youth said nothing/none
- Two youth said they did not know
- More support and therapy sessions to help me with my emotions during the day, things to do with hobbies and culinary arts
- On-going anger management.
- Mentor, ongoing therapy.
- Anger management.
- Mentor
- Mentor, school, therapy
- Stay connected to therapist/REGIONS staff if possible; talk to mentors from step down
- The services that would help me return, GPS monitor
- Education services, probation services, mentor
- Therapy, relationship therapy
- The services that would help me return; job readiness; mentor; hobby/recreational activities
- Mentor; job readiness; we should be able to get a license in here
- Mentor; LYNC program, job readiness
- A great school system that will help and support me finishing school and a community job
- Someone that could be on top of me
- Employment
- I don't think that I will need any services to help me after I complete this program and re-enter the community
- The only thing I would need right now in going home is just going back to school
- Something like a mentor
- Secure REGIONS – residential facility
- Cross high school
- I don't need no services, just need a job

- Everything I said already, working and school
- Nail teach, Makeila (reintegration mentor), and Love146
- Therapy and a mentor. To help express feelings and stuff
- Job, school, car, school set up, permit, and reintegration to help me continue my goals
- Reintegration to help me find a job and stay on track in school and permit
- Affordable housing for my family
- Drivers Education services would help me successfully return to my community
- Definitely aftercare (MDFT) and definitely a job
- MTFIT

What will make your return to the community successful?

- I need to avoid my negative peers by staying busy with things that don't get me in trouble.
- Being able to interact with others in a positive way instead of an emotional way. Be able to engage in things that will be beneficial (school, therapy, hobbies, family events)
- Go to school, play baseball
- Spending more time with mom
- Having positive family and friends involved, staying busy.
- Myself – changing my behaviors for the better
- Changing peer groups, staying to myself, going to school. Return to prosocial community sports.
- Staying away from negative people. Staying in school.
- Cutting off friends.
- Get a job, go to school.
- I'm not sure
- Relaxing, staying inside more, going to school/working
- GPS monitor and being able to leave house when PO knows where I am
- I want an in home therapist or outpatient
- A job and a safe place to go.
- When I am ready and have the right mindset and therapy
- Me completing school and getting a job working with kids, possibly college with
- Me completing school and getting a job
- Me completing school and getting a job and accepting support
- Me mostly just continuing to focus on myself and just keep helping myself
- Being with my mom
- Me seeing my grandmother
- A job and finishing school
- I think me having a job will help me return successfully
- Go back to school, get a job
- My family support

- Just support
- Finish my probation on time
- Help finding a job, make the right decisions
- Leaving here with money
- Working, school, staying out of the way
- Keeping my schedule busy, continuing with nails, and school
- Grandma is going to help me success by making me go to these programs
- Having a plan set up with school, future goals, end of probation
- Having my mom's support and the reintegration mentors making sure they help me find a job and get to my appointments
- A more involved big brother mentor system for a few months after I get home
- Not getting arrested again
- Graduating high school and getting a job
- Doing what is expected of me in the program

Who needs to step up in your life to help you be successful?

- Eight youth said no/no one/nobody
- Three youth said no – they have the support they need (people of support/family)
- Thirteen youth said me/myself
- Six youth said their dad/father
- I feel that my family has already stepped up to help me.
- My mom, my dad, my aunts
- My brother and sister and my mom, no help needed
- My mother
- My father to teach me how to be a man in life
- My boy will help me stay out of trouble
- Myself, my mom, my dad
- Myself and the people in my life that tell me what I need to do to get better but won't better themselves. I need a role model

Which relationships matter most to you? Which ones will be most important when you get out? Do you need help to have these relationships be successful?

- I feel that my family has already stepped up to help me. I feel my mentor can be more active in my life and my PO can be more helpful. My family is most important to me but we can use help communicating.
- My mom and my aunts, my mom, yes – Therapy to help mentally and emotionally
- Uncle, parents, grandparents, cousins. All supportive and positive people
- Mom and dad. Need more with relationship with your dad
- Relationship with mom and grandmother. Mother is participating in family therapy.
- Stepmom, relationship is strong
- Family – they are supportive
- Family. Been having successful family session with grandma and mom.
- Mother

- Daughter, grandmother
- Grandma, brother, DCF, probation, do not need help
- Family, daughter/daughter's mother, close friends; all are important; no help needed
- My mom, my sisters, my aunt, my brothers, and my dad. My sisters and aunt and more will be most important when I get out. No, don't need help
- Mom and yes need help and my sisters. Help in here.
- My girlfriend, my mother. Need help with my girlfriend
- Mom and my brother
- Grandma and grandpa matter most to me and working with my clinician to get them even stronger
- Cousins will be helpful to me now
- Family and friends but my relationships I have in here with certain people
- Friends and mom...mom most important...no
- My grandmother, grandfather, mom, and father. My grandmother. No
- My mom, my brother. No.
- My relationships with my family really matter the most to me especially the relationships with my sisters, brother, mother, and my grandmother
- All my relationships are still good right now
- My grandmother
- Family I don't need help
- My mother and grandmother
- My mom
- My family, my mom, my brother, my baby momma...my kid and my mom...nah I don't think so
- Mom and my siblings
- My family – mom, siblings, aunts (2) and cousins. No help needed
- Grandma. Peace, respect, integrity.
- My mom, dad, close friends, sister, nephew, uncle, everybody who cares about me
- My mother and my sister. I am already very close to my mom; my sister is my best friend. My family is successful
- I grew up with my mom; she is the most important to me. I need my mom to get her own therapy too, she lets things get to her and then it makes me upset
- The relationship between my mothers and sisters is my most important relationship. No these relationships are great I don't need help.
- My mother and girlfriend are the relationships that matter most to me. They will be the most important when I get out. MDFT would definitely benefit me and my mother. My girlfriend and I are ok.
- My relationship with my mom is the most important and will be the most important once I am back in the community. I do not need help

Potential Barriers:

What do you see as a potential barrier to your reentry?

- Five youth said nothing, one said nothing, it is about their choices

- Five youth said friends (old friends, hanging out with the wrong people)
- Two youth said substances (usage or temptation)
- Wanting to spend more time with my peers can be a barrier to staying out of trouble.
- My communication
- Not seeing my dad
- Not having a routine
- Not being able to manage reactions to others
- Desire for quick money, negative peer group.
- People – negative community members.
- Temptation, changing my lifestyle
- My anger issues
- The crowd I keep. They've been the same friends for years. Anxiety and Anger
- People trying to bother me/in my business
- The streets and being judged off my past
- The streets
- Negative influence in the community that I previous lived in
- Hanging around the same crew, going back to the same stuff I was going, getting in trouble again
- The things that I do when I commit crimes
- AWOL
- Being bad
- Not being as busy as I thought I was going to be. When I get used to it, it would fit in my schedule (be more routines)
- Negative people by trying to influence me. Not around those people. Working on staying to myself, blocking them, making new friends
- Only barrier will be if I do the same thing when I get out, negative peers, my anger
- Getting off probation and trying to find a job
- Having urges to get back into old behaviors and make quick and easy money
- If my family isn't being taken care of I feel like it's my job to do that for them and I forget about what bad things could happen to me as long as my family is okay
- No means of income is a barrier for my reentry
- Not worrying about friends or what they're doing
- Doing what is expected of me instead of what I want to do

Are barriers to your reentry being addressed?

- Fourteen youth said yes
- Three youth said not applicable, or I don't have any
- Two youth said no/not really
- Two youth said yes, in treatment
- This is being addressed by trying to find things for me to do in the community.
- Working on myself in the program
- Yes- working in family treatment with dad
- Yes, mother already looking at activities in the community.

- Yes, prepare for return with therapist. Having a mentor will help.
- Yes, working on this with clinician.
- Yes, we have talking about them, absolutely
- Just got here, figuring out what work on
- Yes, talking through and learning skills like pro and cons
- Yes...I'm going to get distance
- I'm helping myself not be bad
- Yes these are things I'm working on in my treatment place
- Yes my team is making sure everything is all set for me to go home
- I just started my treatment but I think we will work on anything that comes up when it does
- Yes, I talk about it with my clinician. Looking to better things in my life and find a new path
- Yes, the staff help me

Successful Reentry:

What does successful reentry into the community look like for you?

- Three youth said graduate from high school, get a job
- I think I'll be successful because it's quiet in the streets right now because a lot of people are locked up. I feel safer that they are locked up.
- Developing a better relationship with my mom and engaging in things to help me mentally and emotionally. Having different option to handle potential arguments
- School, playing baseball
- Staying home with mom and siblings. Go to school.
- Going to school, joining sports teams, getting a job, keeping busy.
- Me walking away from negativity
- Going to school, playing basketball
- Going to school, working, programs.
- Staying out of trouble. Would like to go to job corps.
- Caring more about myself and family. Working a real job, finishing high school
- Going to school, working, staying out of trouble
- School and regularly; staying inside more; see my daughter; stay in community
- Graduate from high school, get a job, not getting involved in reckless activities
- Completed Step Down, a job, attending school, reconnecting with family
- Me going straight home
- Me having stuff set up, relationship therapy, stuff for my anger, having a job, attending to school. I love school
- Me moving out of state to a fresh school and new community
- Just going to work and school
- My DBT (STOP, wise mind)
- A job, helping my mom watch my little brother and finishing school
- It looks like me having a job
- Staying away from the bad, that's really it

- To be home for good
- Going to school, working, and staying level-headed and out of trouble
- The lights, living with my mom and going to high school
- This is a hard question
- Being with family, having money, and staying out of trouble
- No trouble, no probation, and good attendance in school
- Being mindful, having school set up (school meeting), having a job when I leave, playing a sport on a team, job, car, permit
- Not getting arrested again, getting my permit, getting a job
- No bracelet, monitoring system, a new environment to go to, to get away from old problems, being given some money from the program or probation to start my own bank account
- Making money and staying out of trouble
- Doing better as a person, not going back to my "old" ways
- Going to school and getting my driving permit

What are your goals for yourself one year from now?

- My goal is to stop getting in trouble.
- Developing healthy relationships and friendships and having positive people in my life
- Go home, live a normal live. Stay out of trouble.
- Playing football
- Having a job, being home.
- Working.
- Getting a job and making my own money.
- Go to college.
- Having my own clothing brand.
- Being financially stable
- Finishing up school, working/making money, have my own place to live
- Stay in school and doing well, working/making money, being a father
- Goals one year from now I would like to be home in the community and doing what I'm supposed to be doing
- Working, preparing to go to the army, saving money
- To have a job, to have a girlfriend, have a kid, money, weekly income, be attending school, good relationship with family, have phone
- To be there for my kid and have a good relationship with my baby mother
- Goals one year from now I would like to be home with my mom for birthday, working
- And my goals in a year would be to keep going to school; keep my job and stay out of here
- To have my divers license and to hopefully save enough money for me to have my own apartment
- Finish school
- I'm 16 and would like to get a job
- To successfully get a job and finish school
- To have a job and be starting my life

- Get my high school diploma and have my drivers/CDL license
- To have a job and a car
- Having a car, being there to help out my guardian
- I don't know
- Get a good job
- Save a lot of money
- My car, diploma, and good paying job
- Going home, doing the right things, not getting in trouble, and cooperating with everything
- Getting certified for CAN, going to school every day, be with my grandma.
- Making money legally, learning about how I can one my own business (life goal), staying out of detention, not back here
- To be done with juvenile justice system, having a job, having a car, working on getting my own place
- Have my own place, have my own money legally, be done with high school, maybe trade school to get a good job, and just be surrounded by my family
- To get my drivers license
- Being closer to graduation, having a car, and your license
- Graduate high school

Where would you like to live when released? What would be the best living option for you? Where will you actually go upon release?

- Eleven youth said with their mom
- Two youth said with their grandmother
- I plan to live home with my mom after discharge. This is the best option for me at this time but I will have to earn her trust back.
- Back home with family
- At home with mom and siblings
- Stepmom's house.
- With family
- Florida with family
- It doesn't matter; unsure of where I will be yet
- I want to go back to living with my sister, the best option would be with my sister, I will actually go with my girl I hope
- Going to step down. After I think my aunt's house or my dad's mom's house. I will likely return to my mom's house
- At my moms, no sure discharge plan yet
- I want to go back to living with my mother and go to new school (big school) so I can just be and not as much attention
- Going to step down, but after I would like to live with my grandmother in Hartford
- To out pf state where I can have a fresh start in a good community with my uncle
- My grandmother's. My grandmother. It depends on what DCF says
- I would like to live where I live now
- With my guardian. That is where I am going

- Miami...somewhere that's not where I'm at right now...home to [BLANK]
- I am going home with my mom in CT. Would like to live in another state
- I want to be with my grandma. Stay focused going to school, being positive, having new friends and a new environment (to get there)
- Live in the suburbs (mom wants to move)
- Living with mom and staying with grandma too
- I would like to live with my mom in CT
- I would like to live in a house with my family, this is the best living option for me. I going to be released in the project of city with my family
- I would like to live at home with my mother and I will be going home to my mother
- My house (with mom). This is the best living option for me, I will be released to her.

What about school? Do you want to go back to the same school you were in? You have been in a small school while at REGIONS. You may go back to a big high school. What support will you need to be able to pass your courses? Graduate?

- I want to go back to school but the teachers are weird and they need to stop being weird.
- Yes, I want to give another chance,
- Supportive teachers who will explain things for me. Extra credit. Teachers who will take the time to help me go other the work and understand it
- Will return to the same school, mother is looking for alternative school
- Want to go back to district school Hill House and play football
- No, want to return to my school district school. Want to be able to play sports there.
- Wasn't in community school was participating online. Wants to continue to engage in online education.
- Want to return to district school.
- Will be going to new school. Will need supportive teachers to help with course work.
- Will be 18 upon release, unsure about school at this time.
- Will return to school, uncertain at this time. Was accepted into AH School. Has not been in community school for several years.
- Doesn't matter about school, will attend any school; do not need extra help
- Yes, I like my previous school and will go back there do not need extra support, I do well there
- Yes, want to go back to the same school. It is not official, but I will be going back there yet. Okay with this too. Sometime of extra credit classes
- No do not want to return to the same school. Want to graduate. Don't need support. Need credit recovery.
- I really want to go back to public school, but I think I have to go back to highroads which I really don't mind. My mind. I want to go to college too.
- I want to go back to the same school; they were working with me
- I want to go to a new small school at [BLANK]
- Yes, I want to go back to a new school so I can get my social skills back up and build friendships with new people, but I am motivated to graduate
- Yes...none

- No, I don't want to go back to the same school. My intelligence will help me
- Yes, I would like to go back to the same school. None. Yes, I would like to graduate
- Yes, I would like to go to the same school I was going to and get my diploma
- I want to stay in a small school
- Just stay on track
- It does not matter where I go to school. I can do this on my own
- Capitol prep
- High school
- Yes...just gotta do it (GED prep)
- Yes...My counselors and social workers that I already know from school
- I call my mom when I have a problem. I need space from people or situations (identifies a previous staff member would go to with issues and is open to identifying someone similar again)
- No – alternative school. Playing lacrosse. Help with work when needed. Easy to ask for help when needed.
- I am going back an alternative school but there is a plan in place to get me to the mainstream school. I have a plan that I can follow with supports in place
- Yes, I like my school. My mother, reintegration mentors, and my family's support
- No my school wasn't good for me, but my clinician will help me find something better before I go home. I just need to make sure I don't get myself in trouble at school. I have the support I need; I just need to get out of my own way and graduate
- No I don't want to go back to the school I'm in currently. I think longer test time with some reading questions to me will help.
- I will be going back to the BLANK at my high school and I do want to go back. I will need support to get to school and maintain my grades in my program so that I can eventually do mainstream classes. I need to go to school in order to graduate and have the motivation to stay there
- Yes, I wat to go back to school. I will need support making sure I am attending school.

Do you want mental health counseling when you return to the community? If so, do you want it in your home or would you want to go someplace else and get it?

- Nineteen youth said no (a mix of just no, they would not attend, or they don't think it will help)
- Four youth said they would like to go to an office
- Three said that they would like in-home
- Two said they would do either in home or an office/somewhere else
- Therapy for relationship with girlfriend.
- Mentor please, outpatient; keep working with Regions clinician
- Mentor please, no clinician
- I would actually like to keep the counseling I have now when I return
- I have mental health counseling
- Yes to therapy – go to someone. I usually go to them. I want to do horse therapy.
- No, but I will have a clinician at school to talk to when I need to; Yes in home services will be best for me

- I don't want more counseling but I know it would be best for me when I go home, and I know there is still more I can learn. I prefer in home so I don't have to worry about how to get there
- No, but I know probation wants me to and it will make my mom happy so I will. In-home would be best because I don't want to stress my mom out with driving me everywhere, until I get my own car
- I believe MDFT will be great to help with any mental health concerns. I would prefer in the home so it's easier for me and mom

Did you have a job before you entered detention or REGIOINS? Were you able to keep the job?

- Thirteen youth said No
- Nine youth said No because they were too young to work
- Three youth said Yes, and they were able to keep the job
- Two youth said Yes, they did have a job, but they quit
- Three said yes, but could not keep it
- No and no. I did have a job in the past around summer of 2021
- No was not old enough. I did have a summer job at [BLANK] stalked shelves.
- Yes, I had a job but couldn't keep it
- Yes I had a job with my step-dad doing construction and will be able to go back
- Yes but it wasn't legal, and that's how I ended up here, so I did technically lose my job
- Yes Solar Youth in New Haven and I have reconnected with them
- Sort of, I was a dishwasher at a restaurant. I will not be returning there.
- No I did not have a job

What kind of job do you want when you return to the community? What would you need at a job to make it successful...job coach? Transportation? Do you know how to navigate the bus system?

- Two youth said they were too young for employment
- At a bakery. I would need supportive people and guidance at the job. Would take the bus to work
- Job at a barber shop, have transportation from family
- Any job would be fine. Need support in staying motivated to go.
- Any job is wanted. Transportation is important.
- Will take any job. Like to work with people. Transportation will be important.
- Fast food. My mom and grandma can help with transportation.
- Wanting my own business. Need support in getting starting.
- Landscaping.
- Foot locker, shoe store; possibly transportation; yes, know how to use bus system
- The same job I was doing before (See above); no transportation barriers and yes to bus system
- I'm not sure what kind of job but I will try landscaping

- Sneaker store, grocery store, hardware store, sales. Transportation needed but I could make it happen
- McDonalds or like I don't know somewhere like that. Fast food. Would not need any of that.
- I like to get my hands dirty, physical job, construction. Don't feel need job coach.
- Real estate
- Work at amazon and work at school being a teacher's assistant coach basketball to kids
- Probably a job in sales or food, I would have transportation
- I don't know
- My first job I'm going to try to work at Bob's. I want to start my career as a police officer but I can't because of my age. No nothing will help me, it's just waking up and doing good. I know how to take the bus.
- I want to work at a shoe store. I don't need a job coach I feel I could keep a job with a coach. My mom would bring me to work. No, I don't need to navigate the bus system
- I would want a hands on job like construction or painting
- Landscaping. Nah I got transportation. Yeah, knows how to navigate bus
- It doesn't really matter what job I just want to be busy
- Any job. I will find transportation
- I don't know – I haven't talked to [BLANK] in a few weeks
- Any job
- I don't know something that pays good, something I like, but don't know what that is yet
- Anything that's paying well...positive people
- Hospital. Need transportation and know how to use the bus
- Working in a hospital instead of a fast-food place. I was to make more money
- I want to go back to work with my step dad doing constructions and home improvement jobs. Landscaping is an option too
- I want to get a job fixing phones and learning about technology
- I want to do something hands on
- I want any job where I don't have to deal with people's attitudes but I can do my own thing and be my own boss one day
- The type of job I would want when I return to the community is construction and transportation would help me make it successful. No I don't know how to navigate through the bus system
- Walmart or YMCA. I would need transportation although I do know how to navigate the bus system
- I want to work with my stepdad in a warehouse. I need to make sure I have transportation (my stepdad will take me)

There are or will be a lot of people in your life: probation officer, reintegration mentor/credible messenger/mentor, therapist, reentry coordinator, education support...Are there too many people involved? Who honestly would be the most helpful to you?

- My family is most helpful to me.

- I don't think I would need a mentor because I would have a therapist
- Feel good with a lot of support. Probation officer will be helpful.
- Not too many people. Mom will be the most helpful person.
- Not too many people involved. Mentor is, will be very helpful.
- Okay with several support people. Would like a mentor.
- The more support the better.
- No – mentor, probation, siblings will be the most helpful.
- Yes, too many people, will need to just deal with it.
- Most helpful will be myself and family. Will be off of probation when I leave REGIONS.
- PO, DCF, mentor, family, current therapist are most important, not too many people
- Probation, mentor, family
- Mentor, probation, PSS for education. I don't think there are too many people
- Yes a mentor
- No I don't think too many people involved. Mentor and therapist most helpful.
- Mentors would be most helpful like they were and if we can keep the same clinician
- Mentor would be most helpful
- Reintegration mentor, therapist, education support
- Nobody, just my mom
- My re-integration mentor
- No there is not to many people involved. My therapist would be most helpful.
- No, I feel like my therapist would be the most helpful
- Probably just someone checking up on me to see how I'm doing and to see how it's going
- Therapist
- Hell yeah! My clinician would be most helpful
- My mom
- My mom and my godmother
- I don't know, I'm not home yet...my mom and my brother
- No...RM and PO
- Reintegration mentor
- Too many people – therapist and mentor.
- Therapist will be most helpful
- I will be off probation when I go home so I won't have a JPO
- Yes there are too many people involved
- Yes, I only need education and reintegration to help me
- Yes, I think to many people are involved most helpful for me would be Probation, credible messenger, and educational support
- MDFT, mother will be the most helpful. I don't have all those supports but I don't think I need them.
- The AMIR program does not have the above listed support systems. I would like to have educational support

Did you have any services in the community before you entered detention or REGIONS? Did the services end once you were admitted? Would you have wanted any of the services to continue while you were at REGIONS or detention?

- Eighteen youth said No
- I never went to MST.
- Yes IICAPS. Yes, it ended when I came to detention. Would have liked it IICAPS continued to meet with him while he was here
- Yes, had a mentor – would like to continue with the same person upon discharge.
- Was on the run AWOL from REGIONS. Prior to staff secure had a mentor. It was a good relationship.
- Yes, MST was involved and credible messenger.
- Mentoring services.
- I was on probation and clinician and other services
- Yes
- Services before I came to REGIONS where probation and I don't remember but I would like mentor/I don't want people in my business but helpful for a job
- Mentors would be most helpful like they were and if we can keep the same clinician
- Peacebuilders
- Yes, I had a therapist but I never spoke to her. Yes. No
- Yes I had a mentor before...nah he was still there but then I didn't want a mentor no more...no
- I had services before going into detention but they weren't helpful because I wasn't in the right state of mind
- Yes I did have services before, but I was too young to know what they were trying to do to help me so I didn't want any part of it
- Yes, I did, but I got in more trouble and went to detention. Maybe if I stuck it out I would have figured it out sooner
- No thank you I would like a credible messenger
- No, they closed my aftercare prior to detention. I had a therapist but only met one time. I tried to reach out from detention, but he never got back to me. Yes, I would've liked to stay connected to the therapist in detention but not at AMIR
- I previously attended therapy in the community. Yes, the services ended when I went to the AMIR program

Were you ever in the LYNC (LINK) program? Did you go there? Would you want a place like that to go to get all your services... i.e., just one place?

- Twenty youth said No
- Didn't really like it. I don't want to talk about my emotions. Would like to go to a place where I could get everything in one place
- No-was referred right before coming to detention. Interested in going upon return to the community.
- Yes, it was so helpful, was a waste of time.
- Never in the LYNC program and am interested in this and take into consideration and if optional

- Yes, went there in Willimantic. I think so.
- I never had LYNC but would like a place like this
- Yes, I was...yeah I completed it...I don't know
- Yes, I was but I did not go
- No not interested in returning
- YAP
- Yes, never completed...maybe
- No, no I like that it's multiple people/different faces
- Prefer for everything to be in one place. It's way better because I don't have to keep traveling from place to place
- Yes the motor vehicle class and I went in person. Yes I would enjoy attending just one place.
- Yes I went there and completed it. No I don't think so – I went for a drug program I don't need that anymore
- Yes I was previously in the LYNC program. I would not like to re-enter the program

What documents do you need before you get released? ID card? Do you have all the documents you need?

Many youths responded with ID card/State ID/Permit, many stated that family members have the documents they need.

- Two youth said ID card
- Three youth said they have ID
- Don't have ID but parents have the documents
- ID card would be helpful. Mother has birth certificate and SS card
- Have everything
- ID would be helpful. Mother has birth certificate and SS card
- Need state ID, drivers permit.
- State ID, work towards a permit.
- ID card. Grandmother has birth certificate and social security card.
- Already have state ID. Need a drivers permit.
- ID permit; grandmother has SS card and birth certificate
- ID, permit; yes Mom has SS card and birth certificate
- I think I have all documents. Would like to work on getting my permit.
- I would like to have an ID card
- State ID
- State ID/License
- I will need my state ID; birth certificate from my grandma; SS card
- I have an ID card I would probably only need my permit and license
- I need to build up my resume and get an ID card
- Yea I have my ID card. Yes I have all the documents
- I think I need a photo ID, but I already had my license before coming here
- Nah I got all those things
- I need an identification card and I want to get my permit and working papers

- I need an ID, bank account, and drivers permit
- Need my ID and my license
- Have everything – ID, birth certificate, SS card
- Getting ID
- State ID (I got here), practicing for my permit test here
- I need my mom to find my birth certificate in order to request a new SS card
- I need my permit test. I already got my state ID here, but I want to try and go for my license too before I get discharged
- I need my state ID before I get released
- Need my permit and a gym membership
- I need my state ID

If you could be Governor for the day and design any kind of reentry plan for yourself and your peers, what would you put in the plan?

- Six youth said they did not know
- Community programing, mentor, leave regions with a job
- Therapy, mentor, family, therapy, job
- More guidance, support people. Good school plan.
- A lot of support is needed. Mentors. Getting set up with activities and a job prior to leaving a program. No waiting time upon getting home.
- Setting kids up with job prior to leaving, help get kids involved in fun activities in the community to not hang out with the wrong people.
- More support, better living conditions, getting out of their current environment
- Safe places to live and work
- Being set with money (would stop some of the crimes peers are committing)
- Having what they need already (clothes, shoes, etc.)
- If they are not a threat to society I would let them out sooner, have people listen to us and take it one day at a time and trying should be taken seriously
- Re-entry plan: mentors for all youth, some type of recreational activities to keep busy and paying jobs to keep money in your pocket
- Job set people up with a job
- I'm not sure cause everyone is different
- Starter jobs, vehicles, higher pay, peacebuilders to not be involved with the police
- I would open a teen program center open from 2pm-2am with chefs, basketball, game room, couches, mentor program
- For them to tap into their feelings and how they really feel and have them tap into what type of community they're going to and be honest about that to themselves
- Build a big house, built me something that my friends would work on like a job, build a big shelter
- I'd probably say an afterschool program to keep them off the streets and youth mentors. And more people who can relate and speak to them
- Get everybody a job and help finishing school
- I think I would make a program for kids like me and my peers to find jobs and activities to do to stay away from the streets

- Housing, mentor and jobs for youth
- If I was governor, I would not be locked up.
- Drop all my charges
- Have them do a job, factory or something, I don't know
- I don't know...give somebody a give somebody a home on their last week, stable job, permit test, help for families
- Plan for providing my mom a house in another in less than 30 days. No therapy.
- Do my CAN, some volunteering, go to school, and just chill. I would sleep a lot and then go with my grandma.
- More work programs, different vocational options
- More paid recreation activities
- More video games (offline games)
- More work opportunities
- Free Wi-Fi
- Another stimulus check or financial assistant for my family and other kid's families to get things back to normal or just some help
- More housing options for family like mine since my place wants to kick my family out for my past and my record
- My reentry plan would be clients leave with a stipend, probation would be over once you complete the program, and clients would be brought shopping for new school attire
- Hmmm, I would set up ways to help my peers and myself get a job. I want to be a good role model. I think everyone should have someone to talk to whether it's a therapist, mentor, big brother, etc. For School, provide credit recovery classes and someone to sit there and actually help kids to do it in the school
- I would ask that the case managers continue to check up on discharged clients for a longer period of time. I would also allow access to their previous therapists so they have someone to talk to about what is going on in the community

JB/CSSD Survey Data - CONDENSED

40 surveys were conducted.

What steps have you taken in preparation to return to your community?
<p><u>39 responses</u></p> <p>Educational</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Basketball team <p>Vocational</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Looking at jobs - 6 - Food handling class/Serve safe - 3 - CPR - 3 - First Aid - 3 - Resume <p>Credible messenger/mentor</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mentoring <p>Mental Health</p>

- Working on balancing emotions - 2
- Walking away from triggering situations - 3
- Working on anxiety
- Anger management - 4
- Working on impulsivity - 2
- Engaging in treatment
- Learning to handle stress
- Reflecting/working on behavior - 2
- STOP skills
- DBT – 3
- Counseling
- Treatment meetings
- Therapy

Restorative justice

- Working on peer interactions
- Working on communication - 2
- Accountability - 2
- Family relationships
- Friends
- Family sessions

Transition

- Home passes/visits – 4
- Thinking about what I need at home

Other

- Changing behavior - 2
- Learning from mistakes - 2
- Nothing
- Having a positive perspective on life - 2
- Learning new skills - 2
- Taking program seriously
- Accepting help – 2
- I don't know - 2
- Playing piano
- Having goals
- Permit - 2
- State ID - 2
- Staying out of trouble
- Focus on self
- Stay out of the way

What steps has your family (parents and/or guardian) taken to assist in your return?

38 responses

Educational

- Setting up school - 4

Vocational

- Cosmetology
- Finding a job – 3

Credible messenger/mentor

Mental Health

- Engaging with clinician - 3
- Wise Mind
- Set up therapy - 2

Restorative justice

- Communication
- Family therapy/sessions - 11
- Visiting - 3
- Calling

Transition

- Plan on spending more time together
- Setting things up
- Setting services up
- Buying basic necessities
- Engaging with DCF
- Moving to a different area - 2
- Setting up room – 2
- Exposing me to community
- Positive placement
- Positive activities
- Working with the program
- Spending time with family on home passes

Other

- Developing positive moments
- Not sure - 2
- Support in decision making
- Nothing
- Not a lot
- Engaging with probation
- Support - 3
- Helping me not get in trouble
- Encouraging
- Learning skills
- Not criticizing
- Work with REGIONS team
- Getting documents needed for permit

What steps have staff in the facility taken to help prepare and support you in your reentry?

40 responses

Educational

- School help -2

Vocational

- Job skills - 2
- Transporting to jobs
- Transportation to interviews
- Contacting past employer
- Resume

Credible messenger/mentor

- Mentor

Mental Health

- Learning how to express themselves
- Believe in self
- Doing treatment
- Anger management - 4
- DBT skills
- Supporting treatment
- Therapy

Restorative justice

- Accountability
- Family sessions
- Group - 2

Transition

- Plans for home/Re-entry – 4
- Home passes
- Talking about things to do at home
- Taking youth to the community

Other

- Removing them from negative situations
- Engaging them in activities
- Positive changes
- Coaching youth – 2
- Give advice – 6
- Support – 2
- Encouraging – 2
- Teach skills – 9
- Showing different opportunities – 2
- No support
- I don't know
- Making good choices
- Someone to talk to – 5
- How to persevere
- Allowing youth to realize things about themselves
- Listen
- Find solutions
- Obtaining State ID
- Permit
- Help decide who positive peers are

What programming (educational, vocational) are you currently receiving? Do you know if this type of programming will continue when you return to your community? Is this something you are interested in continuing?

40 Responses

Educational

- School - 33
- PSS for school
- East Conn
- Educational Programming

Vocational

- Serve safe – 8
- CPR – 2
- Babysitting course
- Security guard
- Mechanics
- CDL - 3
- Forklift - 3
- Painter
- Jobs at the program
- Nails with Myra
- Cosmetology
- CAN
- Internship at program - 2
- Workplace (work program)
- Culinary/CNC
- Auto mechanics

Credible messenger/mentor

- Mentor
- Reintegration mentor

Mental health

- DBT – 2
- Passport to manhood

Restorative justice

Transition

- Step down
- Case manager

Other

- PSS - 2

What services do you need to successfully return to your community?

38 Responses

Educational

- School - 8

Vocational

- Culinary arts
- Job readiness - 3
- Employment/job - 5
- Nail tech
- Job

Credible messenger/mentor

- Mentor - 10
- Reintegration mentor

Mental health

- Therapy - 5
- Anger management - 2
- Relationship therapy

Restorative justice

Transition

- Reintegration
- Affordable housing

Other

- GPS monitor
- Probation services
- Hobby - 2
- Recreational activities
- License
- LYNC
- Someone to be on top of them
- Secure regions
- Car
- Permit - 2
- REGIONS staff
- Drivers education
- Aftercare (MDFT)
- MTFIT

What will make your return to the community successful?

39 Responses

Educational

- School - 15
- Sports - 2
- College

Vocational

- Job - 13
- Nail tech

Credible messenger/mentor

- Reintegration mentor
- Big brother mentor

Mental health

- Changing behavior
 - Therapy
 - Mindset
- Restorative justice
- Avoiding negative peers - 4
- Transition
- Family - 6
 - Support - 4
- Other
- GPS monitoring
 - Safe place to go
 - Finishing probation on time - 2
 - Leaving with money
 - Hobbies
 - Not getting arrested again
 - Doing what is expected

- Who needs to step up in your life to help you be successful?**
- 38 Responses
- Myself
- 15 youth
- Family
- 12 youth
- Other
- 1 youth
- No one
- 12 youth

- Which relationships matter most to you? Which ones will be most important when you get out? Do you need help to have these relationships be successful?**
- 38 Responses
- Family
- Family – 10
 - Mom – 23
 - Aunt – 3
 - Uncle – 2
 - Parents
 - Grandparents
 - Cousins – 3
 - Dad – 4
 - Stepmom
 - Daughter – 2
 - Brother – 6
 - Child’s mother - 2
 - Sister - 6

- Grandpa - 2
- Kid
- Nephew
- Grandmother - 10

Other

- Mentor
- Probation officer - 2
- Friends – 4
- Girlfriend - 2
- People inside center

Do you need help to have these relationships be successful?

- Yes – 10
- No - 12

What do you see as a potential barrier to your reentry?

39 Responses

Educational

Vocational

- Finding a job

Credible messenger/mentor

Mental Health

- Communication
- Anger issues - 3
- Anxiety

Restorative Justice

- Friends - 12
- Negative community - 2
- The streets - 2

Transition

- Dad
- Lack of Routine - 2

Substance use

- Substances - 2

Other

- Nothing - 5
- Making Quick Money – 2
- Reactions
- Lifestyle
- Being bothered
- Judgement
- Negative behavior - 4
- AWOL
- Getting off probation
- Family safety
- No income
- Doing what is expected of me

Are barriers to your reentry being addressed?

37 responses

Yes

- 31 youth

No

- 2 youth

Unsure

- 1 youth

N/A

- 3 youth

What does successful reentry into the community look like for you?

37 Responses

Educational

- School - 22
- Sports - 4

Vocational

- Job - 16
- Job corps

Credible messenger/mentor

Mental health

- Engaging in things to help mentally and emotionally
- Relationship therapy
- Anger management
- DBT

Restorative justice

- Relationship with family - 7

Transition

- Staying out of negative situations – 7
- Being home - 3
- Programs
- Step down
- New environment - 2

Other

- The streets are quiet
- Moving out of state
- Having money - 3
- No probation
- Permit - 3
- No Monitoring system
- Not getting in trouble
- Doing better as a person
- Not going back to “old ways”

What are your goals for yourself one year from now?

38 responses

Educational

- Sports
- College
- School – 11
- Closer to graduation
- Graduate

Vocational

- Job - 17
- Own business – 2
- Preparing for army
- CDL License
- Certified for CAN
- Trade school

Credible messenger/mentor

Mental health

Restorative justice

- Healthy relationships – 3
- Positive people
- Being there for child – 2
- Have a girlfriend
- Have a kid
- Help family/guardian
- Being with family - 3

Transition

- Being/going home – 4
- Own place to live – 4

Other

- Avoid trouble - 3
- Making money - 5
- Saving money – 4
- Have a phone
- Home for birthday
- Staying out of detention/system - 3
- Driver's license - 4
- Have a car - 5
- Don't know

Where would you like to live when released? What would be the best living option for you? Where will you actually go upon release?

38 Responses

Family

- Family – 4
 - Mom – 20
 - Grandmother - 5
 - Stepmom
 - Uncle
- Other
- Guardian
 - Unsure – 4
 - Where I live now
 - Miami

What about school? Do you want to go back to the same school you were in? You have been in a small school while at REGIONS. You may go back to a big high school. What support will you need to be able to pass your courses? Graduate?

39 Responses

Same school

- Yes - 19
- No - 12
- Uncertain – 6

Support

- Supportive teachers – 2
- Do not need support – 3
- Extra credit – 2
- Credit recovery
- Counselors and social workers from same school
- Mother
- Reintegration mentor
- Family
- Longer test time
- Help maintaining grade
- Getting to school
- Making sure attending school

Do you want mental health counseling when you return to the community? If so, do you want it in your home or would you want to go someplace else and get it?

39 Responses

Yes

- 16

No

- 19

Other

- No but will since others want them to
- 2 youth said they would prefer a mentor

In home

- 7
- Out of home
- 5
- Either
- 2

Did you have a job before you entered detention or REGIOINS? Were you able to keep the job?

38 Responses

Yes

- 5 youth and could keep the job
- 3 youth and they could not keep the job
- 2 youth and quit the job
- 1 youth had a job and will not be returning

No

- 25 youth

What kind of job do you want when you return to the community? What would you need at a job to make it successful...job coach? Transportation? Do you know how to navigate the bus system?

39 Responses

Job type

- Food service - 6
- Maintenance – 8
- Health care - 2
- No preference – 12
- Sales – 7
- Technology
- Other - 4
- Too young for employment – 2

Transportation

- Yes – 10
- Maybe
- No - 5

Navigating bus system

- Yes – 8
- No

What would you need at a job to be successful

- Supportive people
- Guidance
- Motivation support
- Support to get started
- Nothing will help, just need to wake up
- No job coach

- Positive people
- Transportation

There are or will be a lot of people in your life: probation officer, reintegration mentor/credible messenger/mentor, therapist, reentry coordinator, education support...Are there too many people involved? Who honestly would be the most helpful to you?

38 Responses

Most helpful

- Family – 4
- Therapist – 9
- Probation officer - 7
- Mentor – 12
- Myself
- DCF
- PSS for education
- Education support – 4
- Reintegration mentor – 4
- Clinician – 2
- Brother
- Godmother
- Mom – 6
- Credible messenger
- MDFT

Too many people

- Yes – 7
- No – 11

Did you have any services in the community before you entered detention or REGIONS? Did the services end once you were admitted? Would you have wanted any of the services to continue while you were at REGIONS or detention?

37 Responses

Did you have any service in the community before you entered detention or REGIONS?

- Yes – 18
- No – 19

Services

- IICAPS
- Mentor – 6
- MST – 2
- Credible mentor
- Probation
- Clinician – 2
- Peacebuilders
- Credible messenger

- Therapist - 2
- Did they end once you were admitted?
- Yes - 4
 - No - 1
- Would you have wanted any services to continue while you were at REGIONS or detention?
- IICAPS
 - Mentor - 2
 - Clinician
 - No would not like them to continue
 - Same therapist

Were you ever in the LYNC (LINK) program? Did you go there? Would you want a place like that to go to get all your services... i.e., just one place?

- 36 Responses
- Were you ever in the LYNC program?
- Yes – 10
 - No – 25
- Did you go there?
- Yes – 7
 - No – 1
- Would you want a place like that to go to get all your services?
- Yes – 6
 - No – 1
 - Don't know/unsure – 3

What documents do you need before you get released? ID card? Do you have all the documents you need?

- 35 Responses
- State ID
- 7
- ID Card
- 13
- Permit
- 12
- License
- 4
- SSN Card
- 1
- Birth Certificate
- 1
- Other
- 1
- Have all documents
- 3

If you could be Governor for the day and design any kind of reentry plan for yourself and your peers, what would you put in the plan?

44 Responses

Educational

- Plan for school - 3
- After school program
- Finish school
- Credit recovery

Vocational

- Job - 13
- Program to find jobs
- CAN

Credible messenger/Mentor

- Mentor – 8
- People youth can talk to and relate to

Mental health

- Therapy - 2
- Tap into feelings
- No therapy
- Previous therapist

Restorative justice

- Community programming/activities - 6
- Family
- Support people
- Teen program/center
- Volunteering

Transition

- Better living conditions
- Changing environment
- Providing basic necessities
- Big house/shelter for youth
- Housing – 4
- Help families
- Free wi-fi
- Financial assistance for families
- Case manager checking in for longer

Other

- Guidance
- Support - 2
- Money -2
- Release sooner
- Taking youth seriously
- Vehicles
- Peacebuilders not involved with police

- Youth being honest with themselves
- Permit test
- Paid activities
- Video games
- Did not know – 6
- Not sure
- Probation ends when program complete
- Brought shopping for clothes

APPENDIX B

NATIONAL LANDSCAPE

Skill-Building Interventions for Delinquent Behaviors of Youth

These types of programs for 12–21-year-olds focus on providing instruction and activities that help youth develop and enhance skills to control their behavior and increase participation. Skill-building interventions can involve a variety of different approaches including cognitive–behavioral, social skills, academic skills, and vocational skills.

Arches Transformative Mentoring Program (NYC)

Youth who participated in the Arches Transformative Mentoring Program while on probation in New York City recidivated 69% less within 12 months and 57% less within 24 months than probation-involved youth who did not participate.²³ A key to the Arches Program success is its focus on positive youth development and its use of mentors who have similar life experiences, known as “credible messengers”. The credible messengers provide intensive support, advice, and guidance. They also run cognitive behavioral therapy groups using an evidence-based curriculum to address thinking patterns and behaviors that led the youth to justice involvement.

Equipping Youth to Help One Another Program (EQUIP)

Washington State uses EQUIP with youth in facilities to improve moral judgement and social skills. EQUIP includes components of Positive Peer Culture (PPC) training and Aggression Replacement Training (ART)

²³ [69% Less Recidivism in NY Community Mentoring Program, Report Finds Juvenile Justice Information Exchange \(jjje.org\)](http://www.jjje.org)

to address conduct disorders. The purpose of the peer training environment is to teach the youth social skills and developmentally appropriate moral-reasoning skills. These sessions are focused on providing positive role-models, feedback, and practice situations to further develop these skills.

Project BUILD (Chicago)

The BUILD Violence Intervention Curriculum teaches youth a variety of new life skills, provides additional academic tutoring and assistance, participation in sports and recreational activities, field trips, and opportunities in leadership development and civic engagement. The BUILD Violence Intervention Curriculum includes components such as socio-emotional learning, positive youth development, and restorative justice. Youth may receive anything from one workshop to the full 10-week session of the curriculum.

Youth Build Offender Program

This program originated in Harlem, New York but moved to Massachusetts and has 30 locations located both nationally and internationally. It targets low-income youth by providing them with an amenable environment and opportunity for building education and life skills and lasts anywhere from 9 to 24 months in which participants alternate weekly between education courses and vocational skills courses and opportunities for housing supports, transportation, and childcare.

Wayne County Second Chance Reentry Program (MI)

This program in Michigan focuses on young men between the ages of 13 - 18 and utilizes the six best practices of risk reduction and reentry: 1) objectively assessing youth's criminogenic needs, 2) enhancing youths' intrinsic motivation, 3) targeting youths at high risk for offending, 4) addressing criminogenic needs of youths at high risk for offending, 5) using cognitive-behavioral interventions, and 6) determining appropriate treatment dosage and intensity of services for youth. Each youth is assigned a reentry specialist that meets monthly with the youth, their residential team, and their caregivers.

The Subgroup also received presentations from the New Jersey Juvenile Justice Commission and Maine Department of Corrections to learn about their approaches to reentry.

New Jersey Reentry Hub Model

Through [Senate Bill 2924](#) New Jersey's Juvenile Justice Commission established the *Restorative and Transformative Justice for Youth and Communities Pilot Program* focused on the development of reentry hubs in communities with large numbers of justice involved youth. This request and model for offering reentry services lessens the burden of lengthy travel that may have otherwise prevented a young person and their family from accessing reentry services. In addition to reducing the transportation burden, the hub brings support and service providers together in a coordinated effort to provide reentry supports and services in the youth's community.

The New Jersey Reentry Hubs utilize Restorative Justice Practices and Principles and provides community-based enhanced reentry wraparound services that include:

- Mental health services;
- Substance use disorders treatment and recovery;
- Education support;
- Employment services;
- Housing support;
- Financial literacy and debt support services;
- Life skills support services;
- Social support services;
- Preventative mentoring services;
- Community conferencing and peace circles; and
- Case management and care coordination.

Practitioners from New Jersey note that additional resources can be brought into the hub or youth can be referred out for additional resources, but the 10 aforementioned supports and services must be provided by the reentry hub in each of the four pilot communities. Furthermore, the 10 identified supports and services are offered on site at the reentry hub with an option to offer supports and services in the home of the youth and their family.

Pilots are in four large urban New Jersey cities with some of the highest rates of justice involved youth; Trenton, Paterson, Newark, and Camden. The reentry pilot program is designed to last two years (2022-2024), with a budget of 4.8 million dollars, with the potential of program expansion after the pilot and success of the program is evaluated by Rutgers University.

Maine Reentry Housing Model

Long Creek Youth Development Center in Maine is a small facility housing approximately 30 pre-adjudicated and adjudicated male youth., Reentry planning begins at admission and connects the youth to their returning school placement, job opportunities, case management agencies, and aid in finding housing.

The Center also provides a step-down transition program for youth needing additional support before returning home or launching on their own. All treatment through the transition home is outpatient and accessed in the surrounding community. The youth also develop practical life skills including responsibility for cleaning, grocery shopping, personal money management, and contributing to the household as needed.

APPENDIX C

CONNECTICUT LANDSCAPE

Behind the Wall Navigators

Our Piece of the Pie offers a *Behind the Walls Navigator Program* to adjudicated youth ages 16-25 who are returning to Hartford from Department of Correction facilities; Carl Robinson, Cheshire, McDougal-Walker, Manson Youth Institute, Corrigan, Cybulski, York, and Osborn. The Behind the Walls Navigator connects with sentenced youth up to 120 days prior to release and provides:

- Individual success plan (ISP) development;
- Life domain needs assessment;
- Benefit screening and application assistance;
- Advocacy and legal support;
- Family engagement;
- Transition planning; and
- 90-day follow-up services.

Upon release, the program provides:

- Case management;
- Referrals to community service partners;
- Credential attainment;
- Legal advocacy; and
- Follow-up services for one (1) year.

DOMUS Invictus Program

Individuals returning to Stamford and Norwalk from the custody of the Department of Correction can be referred to Invictus; a re-entry program for young men ages 18-25. The goal of Invictus is to support individuals in their successful transition back into their community by obtaining and maintaining employment and avoiding recidivism. During Phase I, Invictus works with young men for six (6) months prior to release. Upon release the young men begin Phase II, which consists of daily case management services and employment development skills. In Phases III and IV, the young men participate in internships, receive mentoring, and are supported as they obtain and maintain full time employment. Invictus also assists them obtain all the necessary documents needed for employment, housing, education, and other critical life domains.

Adult Reentry Collaborative, Roundtables, and Reentry Centers

The Connecticut Reentry Collaborative is a statewide initiative to serve the needs of formerly incarcerated adults and reduce recidivism by identifying and reducing barriers to reentry through the sharing of information and resources, educating the community, and influencing public policy. The Collaborative includes 10 Reentry Roundtables, which consist of state agencies, local organizations, service providers, and individuals with lived experience to address needs and gaps in services. Members meet regularly to share and provide resources, information, support, and advocacy for reentering individuals and their families.

The major cities, including Bridgeport, Hartford, New Britain, New Haven, and Waterbury, each established a Reentry Welcome Center to serve as a centralized hub of services for reentering adults. The Reentry Welcome Centers are funded through a combination of federal, state, and municipal funds, private grants, and donations. A Reentry Welcome Center ensures that individuals returning home have access to support, information, resources, and referrals to vital services in one location. The Center coordinates a wide range of supports, programs, and services to improve the likelihood of successful community reintegration. The Center assesses the individual's needs and connects them to services to gain:

- Identification;
- Housing;
- Benefits;
- Transportation;
- Medical care;
- Substance use treatment and recovery supports;
- Mental health care;
- Vocational training;
- Employment;
- Peer and group support;
- Clothing;
- Access to computers; and
- Computer training.

Reintegration Mentors

A Reintegration Mentor is a key component of the Connecticut residential treatment model for adjudicated juveniles known as REGIONS (**Re**Entry, **Goal**-oriented, **I**ndividualized **O**pportunity to **N**urture **S**uccess). Reintegration mentors are credible messengers, persons with lived experience, who provide case management services and support, advice, and guidance to the youth. The Reintegration Mentor begins working with the youth upon admission to REGIONS and for 12 months post-release. Reintegration mentors work as part of a multidisciplinary team that comes together monthly to discuss with the youth their progress, challenges, and needs for support. The Reintegration Mentor assists the young person in getting connected to and coordinating services and support during their REGIONS stay and upon release.

The Reintegration Mentor assists the youth in accessing:

- Vocational opportunities,

- Employment, and
- Systems navigation (i.e. obtaining birth certificate, social security card, state identification, Learner's Permit, Driver's License).

The Reintegration Mentor also supports and supervises the youth during community passes and upon their permanent return home. They provide transportation and support for:

- School attendance,
- Job interviews,
- School tours,
- Recreational activities,
- Additional vocational opportunities and training,
- Exploration of prosocial interests/program, and
- Employment.

Further, the Reintegration Mentors teach life skills, provide advice and guidance, and reinforce the continued use and generalization of prosocial and dialectical behavior therapy (DBT) skills learned at REGIONS.

Family Support Specialists

A Family Support Specialist is another critical component of the REGIONS model. The Family Support Specialist serves as the "family partnership advocate" (or expert) for REGIONS program staff and administrators to ensure that the REGIONS program is operating in partnership with families. The Family Support Specialist assists in the development of policies, practices, and operations that are "family friendly" and work to support true partnership between the REGIONS staff and the family.

The Family Support Specialist also provides direct support to the family, such as:

- Transportation for family visits;
- Assessment of family/home needs and helps to meet any needs;
- Brings the youth home for visits;
- Weekly DBT Family Skills train; and
- Practice with the family the DBT skills their child is learning.

Additionally, the Family Support Specialist provides the family transition support for up to ninety (90) days after the youth permanently returns home.

Credible Messengers

A positive adult or mentor is a critical component of any effective youth re-entry system. The most effective type of mentor for youth reentering the community is a credible messenger. While credible messenger programs are relatively new to Connecticut (e.g., Reintegration Mentors, CJR Credible Messengers, Youth Advocate Programs (YAP), ROCA, Inc.), they shown promising effects in other states.

The OJJDP National Mentoring Resource Center (NMRC) recognizes credible messengers as individuals who share lived experience—traditionally individuals impacted by the juvenile-justice system—with the youth they are mentoring.²⁴ The shared experience between youth and credible messenger mentors uniquely positions mentors to provide youth with a living example of hope and opportunity.²⁵ Both prevention literature and the voices of young people have confirmed credible messenger mentorship has a sustainable impact on youth recidivism rates.

A multiyear Urban Institute evaluation on a New York based facility, showed credible messengers program participants were less likely to be reconvicted of a crime when compared to youth in a matched propensity group who were not afforded credible messenger supports. Reconviction rates for youth paired with a credible messenger were 69 percent lower 12 months after beginning probation and 57 percent lower 24 months after beginning probation.²⁶ While research has noted Credible Messengers improve education and program engagement for youth, credible messenger mentorships are not a substitute for education, employment, housing, or substance abuse treatment supports.

Another example, The Advocate, Intervene, Mentor (AIM) program in New York City, found only 3 percent of participants had any felony reconviction within 12 months of completing the program.²⁷ Over the course of six to nine months, AIM matches youth with adult advocate-mentors to provide one-on-one mentoring activities and work with youth to achieve an array of prosocial goals. AIM mentors meet with youth one on one for 7 to 30 hours a week for six to nine months. “Program staff indicated that the program duration—six to nine months—was often not enough time for participants to fully engage in the program and make progress regarding their goals. This led staff to engage program alumni through formal and informal means after the six- to nine-month period.”

CSDE JJ System Liaisons/Reentry Coordinators

Background and Statutory Requirements

In accordance with Connecticut Public Act 18-31, each public school district with a student enrollment of at least 6,000 is required to designate a Juvenile Justice Liaison/Reentry Coordinator to facilitate student transitions between public schools and the Connecticut juvenile justice system, including the timely transfer of records of justice-involved students to and from juvenile justice agencies and facilities. In each school district, the role of the Juvenile Justice Liaison/Reentry Coordinator is to assist schools, the Department of Correction (DOC), Department of Children and Families (DCF), Court Support Services Division of the Judicial Branch (CSSD), and any other relevant schools or educational service providers in ensuring that:

1. Students Returning to the Public School District from Juvenile Justice System Custody:

²⁴ <https://nationalmentoringresourcecenter.org/resource/group-mentoring-model/#what-factors-condition-or-influence-the-effectiveness-of-group-mentoring->

²⁵ https://www.nyc.gov/assets/probation/pdf/press/arches_transformative_mentoring_program_0.pdf

²⁶ https://cmjcenter.org/documents/arches_findings_at_a_glance.pdf

²⁷ <https://www.urban.org/research/publication/evaluation-report-nycs-advocate-intervene-mentor-program>

- a) Students are immediately enrolled in public school upon their return from justice system custody, pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes C.G.S. Section 10-186(e);
- b) Not later than ten (10) days after the date of enrollment, the school district provides written notification of such enrollment to the appropriate juvenile justice system facility, pursuant to C.G.S. Section 10-220h;
- c) Not later than ten (10) days after the receipt of the notification of enrollment in the school district, the justice system facility transfers all relevant education records to the appropriate public school, pursuant to C.G.S. Section 10-220h;
- d) Not later than thirty (30) days after receiving the students' educational records from the justice system facility, students receive appropriate credit for schoolwork completed while in justice system custody, pursuant to C.G.S. Section 10-220h.

2. Students Leaving the Public School District and Entering Juvenile Justice System Custody:

Not later than ten (10) days after receiving notification, the school district transfers all relevant education records for students entering justice system custody to the appropriate juvenile justice system facility, pursuant to C.G.S. Section 10-220h.

3. Publication of the Juvenile Justice System Liaisons/Reentry Coordinators List:

In accordance with Connecticut Public Act 21-174, the list of Juvenile Justice Liaisons/Reentry Coordinators in each public school district with a student enrollment of at least 6,000 is updated annually by August 1st, posted to the CSDE website, and provided to Department of Correction (DOC), Department of Children and Families (DCF), Court Support Services Division of the Judicial Branch (CSSD), and any parent or other person interested in receiving such list.

DCF Juvenile Justice Education Unit (JJEU)

The DCF JJEU provides coordination, oversight, and direction of academic services and programs for school aged youth who reside in juvenile justice facilities or are incarcerated. The unit analyzes educational records, performs need assessments, and tracks educational progress of students. The Pupil Service Specialists provide reentry support that connects the receiving school districts, schools and/ or outplacement programs, with the student and family. This ongoing support includes reentry meetings, which are restorative in nature and ensure that the student has a positive reintroduction to their receiving school; identifies the student's support and "village" within the learning community; as well as manages any logistical issues that need attention.