



"Solving Reentry by Advancing the Reentry Reformation"

July 14, 2017

Mr. Mike Doyle
Chief Executive Officer
Cornerstone Assistance Network
3500 Noble Avenue
Fort Worth, TX 76111

RE: Annual Tarrant County Reentry Update Report

It is with great pleasure that I present to you the first annual **Tarrant County Reentry Update** report. As you know, the 2016-2017 contract year for our local reentry work has been a banner year with many accomplishments. This report provides both summary and detailed results, to highlight our achievements as well as satisfy the reporting requirements of our funders and stakeholders.

Feel free to contact me at (405) 615-6648 with any questions.

Sincerely,
Strategic Reentry Group

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Steve Gordon', is written over a light gray circular watermark.

Steve Gordon
President

THE ANNUAL
UPDATE ON COMMUNITY-BASED
PRISONER REENTRY
ACTIVITIES IN THE TARRANT
COUNTY COMMUNITY

2017

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TARRANT COUNTY REENTRY UPDATE

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Tarrant County, Texas is one of the fastest-growing areas of the nation at this time and also one of the most politically conservative large cities (#16 largest city in the U.S.). Yet, at the same time, it is one of, if not the most, progressive counties on creating pro-active solutions to the problem of felon reintegration. Some of the highlights include:

- One of the largest reentry coalitions in the nation (over 35 agencies & partners).
- A comprehensive strategy for long-term felon reintegration driven by leaders of local government, the faith community, and the private sector.
- The first “reentry welcome center” in the nation staffed exclusively by formerly-incarcerated individuals.
- A sophisticated online reentry resource directory hosted on the nationally-recognized *Network of Care* social services web platform.
- A network of 13 specialized case management service providers, serving the higher-need clients in reentry (veterans, mothers of minor children, geriatric, disabled, etc.).
- The pioneering “intensive resource management” approach to reentry that has created a solution that is sustainable, scalable, and replicable.

KEY STATISTICS

Highlights from the first two years of operating the Reentry First-Stop Center for Tarrant County (www.tcreentry.org):

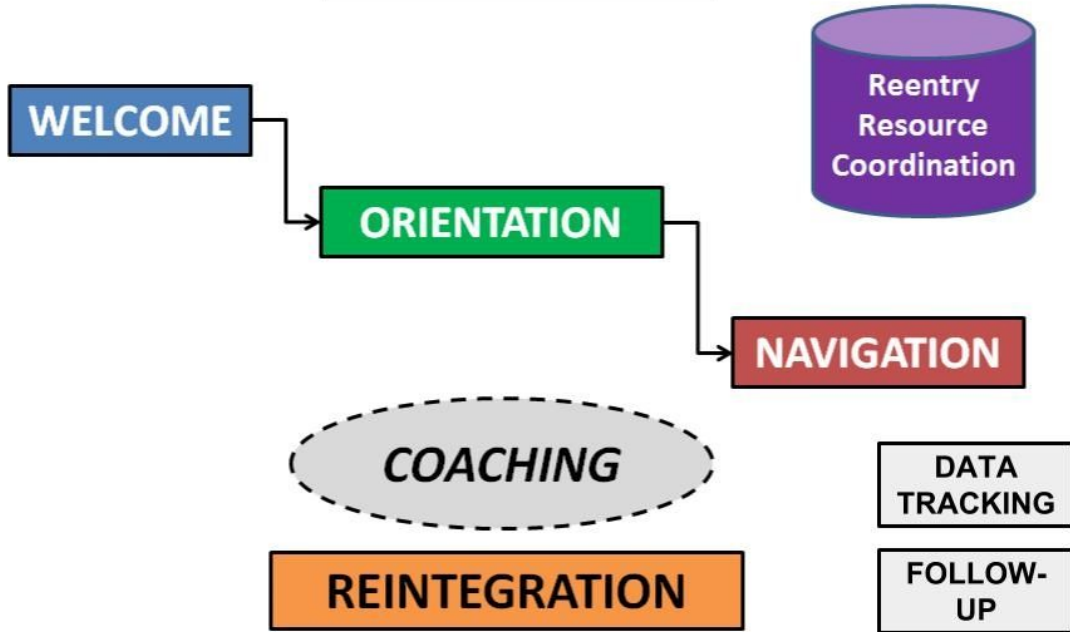
- Months in Operation: **24**
- No. Enrolled in Orientation Class: **3,100**
- No. Completed Orientation Class: **1,700**
- No. Served with Navigation (personal planning & employment) Services: **900**
- No. of Local Organizations Who Provided “In-Bound” Referrals: **56**
- No. of “Outbound” Referrals (to Case Management & Other Resources) : **400**

OTHER HIGHLIGHTS

- The new “Prison-to-Tarrant County Truck Driver Pipeline” initiative
- Winner of the 2017 Texas Governor’s Award for criminal justice programs
- Unique housing voucher program from Tarrant County Human Services
- Great new transportation options, including bus passes and Tarrant MyRide
- Over 20 vocational certifications, all paid for by the Federal “CAP” grant or Workforce

THE REENTRY FIRST-STOP CENTER MODEL

What We Do

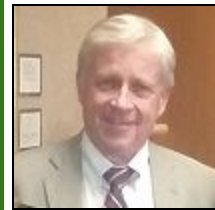


OUR BENEFACTORS - THE THREE MEN WHO HAVE SPONSORED OUR SUCCESS

Roy C. Brooks, Tarrant County Commissioner, Precinct 1



Les Smith, Criminal Justice Coordinator, Tarrant County



Mike Doyle, Executive Director, Cornerstone Assistance Network



OUR TEAM



L-R: Billie Morgan, *Lead Navigator*; Steve Gordon, *Project Manager*; Monty Sharp, *Resource Coordinator*; Johnnie Anderson, *Receptionist*

PROJECT STATISTICS, 2016-2017 CONTRACT YEAR - Part 1

The following statistics represent the second year of the project's operations. They comply with the data reporting requirements from the Tarrant County reentry contracts for resource coordination and navigation services.

1. Number of personnel employed at the project: 4

NOTE: The project is still not fully funded nor fully staffed. The Center is only open four days a week and needs to be open six. The current staffing plan is as follows:

- Project Manager, 30 hours per week
- Lead Navigator, 30 hours per week
- Resource Coordinator, 20 hours per week
- Receptionist, 30 hours per week (funded from separate employment program)

The staffing that the project needs is five people (one additional navigator) with every-one being paid full-time with benefits. The current funding level would need to at least double to achieve the proper staffing.

2. Number of formerly-incarcerated people increasing their awareness regarding available services through project outreach efforts (presentations made in the community): 4,000

NOTE: This is a combination of presentations made at monthly *Project Safe Neighborhood* meetings and bi-weekly Parole New Arrival Orientation meetings.

3. Number of clients attending Orientation Class: 900

4. Number of clients receiving Navigation Services: 450

OUR LOGO AND OFFICE



PROJECT STATISTICS, 2016-2017 CONTRACT YEAR - Part 2

5. Number of outreach services in corrections organizations: 100

NOTE: We present the project's services every Tuesday and Thursday morning at Parole New Arrival Orientation, or one hundred times per year. There is a range of 10-15 new parolees at each meeting or about 20-30 per week. We keep precise records of how many are at each meeting.

6. Number of outreach services at or to community organizations: 50

NOTE: This number is the result of participating in a variety of monthly meetings in the local community, including the Inter-Agency Working Group, the Fatherhood Coalition, the Tarrant County Reentry Coalition, the Tarrant County Homeless Coalition, and various resource fairs and job fairs put on by our partner organizations.

7. Number of outreach services to Tarrant County government agencies, including the Resource Connection tenants and the CRCG participants: 1

NOTE: We send out one mailing per year to all of the agencies at The Resource Connection. The CRCG has stopped meeting.

8. Number of customer surveys sent out to identify gaps in services: N/A

NOTE: We have designed a "customer satisfaction survey" that we can send out via email to our clients as part of our follow-up process. But, due to the fact that we are short-staffed, the follow-up process is currently being staffed by volunteers and the data collection process has taken priority over the customer survey. We plan to implement it in the third quarter of 2017. We think it will create excellent data for our project.

9. Number of counseling sessions to formerly-incarcerated persons to establish career development and family success type programs: N/A

NOTE: This measurement is left over from 2015, when we were going to be the recipient of funding from the *Working Families Success* program. That funding was never awarded and we did not include those measures in our project. This measure should be removed from the contract in the next contract year.

WE HOST THE *REENTRY ORIENTATION CLASS* EVERY MONDAY MORNING



PROJECT STATISTICS, 2016-2017 CONTRACT YEAR - Part 3

10. Number of clients reporting opening a new bank account: N/A

NOTE: This measurement is left over from 2015, when we were going to be the recipient of funding from the *Working Families Success* program. That funding was never awarded and we did not include those measures in our project. This measure should be removed from the contract in the next contract year.

11. Number of clients reporting finding employment: N/A

NOTE: This measurement is left over from 2015, when we were going to be the recipient of funding from the *Working Families Success* program. That funding was never awarded and we did not include those measures in our project. This measure should be removed from the contract in the next contract year.

That being said, the original plan was to partner with Workforce Solutions of Tarrant County's Special Projects Office, which had two grant-funded programs to find jobs (and provide career development) for recently-released adults in Tarrant County. Unfortunately, they lost both grants in 2015 (about the time we opened) and we had nowhere to refer clients for employment. So we created the "Next-Level Worker" system, and began to ask our clients to let us know of any background-friendly employers who were hiring. Even without a Job Developer on our staff, we now have over 115 local employers who will hire someone straight out of prison!

While this has been amazing -- and created many, many employment outcomes for our clients -- we are not funded to run a formal employment program. We have met with a lot of success, but have been limited to an informal approach that depends on anecdotal testimonies, rather than formal follow-up that would yield quantified data about employment results, success, retention, etc. Of the 450 adults who completed their Navigation session with us this last year, we estimate that, of those who were seeking full-time employment (about 80%), ALL of them found a job. Those that are not employable (retired or disabled, primarily) are still give support, and even part-time jobs in some cases.

We have a volunteer following up with clients, but it has not yielded much data yet.

IN AUGUST OF 2016, CHANNEL 8 NEWS VISITED OUR PROJECT!



PROJECT STATISTICS, 2016-2017 CONTRACT YEAR - Part 4

12. Number of clients reporting an increase in their income: N/A

NOTE: This measurement is left over from 2015, when we were going to be the recipient of funding from the *Working Families Success* program. That funding was never awarded and we did not include those measures in our project. This measure should be removed from the contract in the next contract year.

13. Number of referrals made to partnering organizations on behalf of clients: 400

NOTE: The vast majority of our referrals are to Cornerstone Assistance Network, where our indigent clients (which is most of them) can receive free clothing, food, and hygiene items. This has been a great help to our clients!

Also, a few of our clients (approximately 5%) present us with a complex set of needs that are beyond our ability to serve them here at the Center. These we refer to a network of local partners for intensive case management services. These referrals are a paper-based system for now, and we have received very little feedback from the partner agencies as to the outcomes of the referrals. If we had a networked computer system, such as MPOWR, CHARITY TRACKER, ETO, or some other similar product, we could be linked to our partners and have real data to show for our referrals and the resulting outcomes.

The summary of our case management referral network is as follows:

VETERANS: FAMILY ENDEAVORS

HOMELESS: NVOP

ADDICTION RECOVERY: RECOVERY RESOURCE COUNCIL

WOMEN'S ISSUES: THE WOMEN'S CENTER

MOTHERHOOD ISSUES: UNT-HSC HEALTHY START

FATHERHOOD ISSUES: NEW DAY SERVICES' FATHERHOOD EFFECT PROGRAM

JUVENILE: BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS' COMIN' UP PROGRAM

SENIORS: SIXTY & BETTER (Formerly Tarrant Co. Senior Citizen Services)

MHMR: RAPP PROGRAM

IDD: MHMR CLASS Case Management

NOT WORK READY: CORNERSTONE REENTRY DEPT.

EXTREME FINANCIAL HARDSHIP: CITY OF FORT WORTH: NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES

ADULT MENTORING SERVICES: GOODWILL, PATHFINDERS, etc.

WE PROVIDE THE TARRANT COUNTY REENTRY RESOURCE DIRECTORY



TARRANT CARES
one resource, countless solutions
Ex-Offender Reentry Resources

RESOURCE COORDINATION PROJECT UPDATE

In collaboration with the Reentry First-Stop Center for Tarrant County and the *Tarrant Cares* organization, we maintain the “Ex-Offender Reentry Resources” website as part of their family of social service directories for Tarrant County area. You can access the website at www.tarrantcares.org or through a link on our website, www.tcreentry.org

82 Categories of Services Tracked, Indexed, and Published

We maintain the electronic or digital version of our database, which we call the ***Tarrant County Reentry Resource Directory*** (and which *Tarrant Cares* calls the Ex-Offender Reentry Resources page - both refer to the same thing). By tracking 82 categories of social services and other vital resources, we provide details about the entire continuum of care for prisoner reentry in our community. From what we have observed, this is by far the most robust and comprehensive tool of its kind in the nation. (By comparison, the next best county we know of has 38 categories that they track.)

Easy to Access

Returning citizens, their family members, social workers, case managers, parole officers, probation officers, chaplains -- everyone in the reentry community has free access to this data. It can be accessed online from any browser. It can be accessed from any smart-phone via a Web connection. It can be printed out from the Web and given to clients. The Tarrant County Reentry Resource Directory is easy to access!

It is also current at all times. We have a dedicated Resource Coordinator whose primary responsibility is to keep the database, the website, and the hard-copy version in sync and up-to-date. This removes one of the major traditional barriers to successful reentry: outdated resource lists. Previously, these lists used to do more harm than good. Now, we have a vital resource that we manage pro-actively and make it a core part of our approach.

The Hotline

We recently implemented an expansion of services to support those who might be best served via telephone rather than online. Clients in reentry can now call (682) 703-1600 and speak directly to a reentry resources expert. Since implementing this new function, we have not seen many additional calls in that category, but as we increase our advertising in the community, we are confident that feature will build up as well.

FOR FURTHER IN-DEPTH INFORMATION

For further in-depth information, see the companion report, *On Becoming a Reentry-Ready Community 2017*. It applies the template developed by Strategic Reentry Group (for the U.S. Department of Justice in 2016), on how to make America reentry ready in five years, to the local community, using Tarrant County as the model. Issues related to gaps in services, gaps in technology, the need for a unified strategic plan, and more are covered in this report.

GETTING ACADEMICS INVOLVED

Now that the *Reentry First-Stop Center* project has become an established part of the local reentry community (and the larger social services community as well), we need to begin to mature our methods and processes. We have had numerous conversations with TCU, UTA, Tarleton State, and others, but no real results have emerged to date. We are very hopeful that in the next year, we can form an academic advisory group and begin to implement research-based methods to what we do. This “should” produce measurable outcomes that confirm what we already believe to be true.

THE LOGIC MODEL

A logic model has been developed for the *Reentry First-Stop Center* project. To save space in this report, it is not included here. You can view it online at the project’s website, www.tcreentry.org.

INTENSIVE DATA MANAGEMENT: DATA DESIGN, COLLECTION & ANALYSIS

As the project enters its third year, the focus will shift to an approach we call intensive data management. Working with Kelli Martin, the data analyst at Tarrant County Adult Probation/CSCD, we are re-designing the data dictionary and data model for the project. Then we will adjust the database layout accordingly. We will implement procedures (using volunteers for now), to gather short-term data, long-term data, and customer satisfaction surveys. The goal is that by the end of this coming year, we will have a broad, robust set of data that will position us for evaluation by national-level organizations (e.g., CSG).

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the team at the First-Stop Center is very grateful for the opportunity and looks forward to many years of innovation and success to come!