

Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction



Ohio Institute on Correctional Best Practices

Best Practices Tool-Kit: Employing Ex-Offenders after Release from Prison



Ted Strickland
Governor

Terry J. Collins
Director

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BEST PRACTICES TOOLKIT

Prepared by: Coretta Pettway

Employing Ex-Offenders after Release from Prison



This Best Practices Tool-Kit aims to systematically identify empirical evidence regarding information and interventions on the employment of ex-offenders following release from prison. It highlights 4 practices/programs in the area of employment training and retention for ex-offenders that are proven, promising, or an exemplary best practice and then, provides citations/references for more extensive reading. For definition purposes, best practices fall on a continuum ranging from those practices that are well established and have clearly demonstrated their effectiveness to those that show promise or may be exemplary practices, but have yet to be fully evaluated and their results documented (Wilkinson 2003)¹. The objective of the tool kit is to provide a sound evidence base that will better inform policy makers, practitioners and researchers. In addition to this tool kit, see Hurry et al. (2006) for a systematic review of research conducted on interventions that promote employment for offenders.

Research has shown that ex-offenders have a high risk of unemployment and that an association exists between adult offender unemployment and recidivism (Finn 1998; Andrews 1995; Bouffard et al. 2000; Sherman et al. 1997; Gendreau et al. 1998; Gillis et al. 1998; Uggen 2000; Petersilia, 2005; Raphael and Weiman, 2007).² Additionally, offenders themselves consider that securing employment is important to maintaining a crime free existence upon release (Visher et al. 2006).³ Reviews as far back as 1994 have been optimistic that effective employment-focused interventions can reduce recidivism, though policymakers need to be cautious as not all interventions will be as effective when placed in settings different from those in which they were originally implemented and tested (Gaes et al. 1999; Hull et al. 2000; Adams 1994; Bushway 2003; Steurer et al. 2001; Wilson et al. 2001).⁴

¹ Wilkinson, R. 2003. "Best Practices: What Does It Mean In Times of Perpetual Transition?" International Corrections and Prison Association 2003 Meetings. Viewed July 25, 2006 at <http://www.drc.state.oh.us/web/articles/article91.htm>.

² Finn, Peter. 1998. "Job Placement for Offenders in Relation to Recidivism." *Journal of Offender Rehabilitation*. 28(1/2): 89-106; Andrews, D. 1995. "The Psychology of Criminal Conduct and Effective Treatment" in *What Works: Reducing Re-offending* by J. McGuire (ed). Chichester: John Wiley and Sons: pps 35-62; Bouffard, J., MacKenzie, D., & Hickman, L. 2000. "Effectiveness of Vocational Education and Employment Programs for Adult Offenders: A Methodology-Based Analysis of the Evidence." *Journal of Offender Rehabilitation*, 31(1); Sherman, S., Gottfredson D., Mackenzie D., Eck, J., Reuter, P., & Bushway, S. 1997. *Preventing Crime: What Works, What Doesn't and What's Promising*. Report to the United States Congress, National Institute of Justice: Washington; Gendreau, P., Coggin, C., & Gray, G.. 1998. "Case Needs Domain Employment" in *Forum on Corrections Research*. 10(3); Gillis, C., Motiuk, L., & Belcourt, R. 1998. *Post Release Employment and Recidivism*. Research Branch Correctional Service of Canada; Uggen, C. 2000. "Work as a Turning Point in the Life Course of Criminals: A Duration Model of Age, Employment, and Recidivism." *American Sociological Review* 65:529-46; Petersilia, J. 2005. "Hard Time: Ex-Offenders Returning Home After Prison." *Corrections Today*. 67(2): 66; Raphael, S. and D. Weiman. 2007. "The Impact of Local Labor Market Conditions on the Likelihood that Parolees are Returned to Custody" in *Barriers to Reentry: the Labor Market for Released Prisoners in Post-Industrial America*, S. Bushway, M. Stoll and D. Weiman (eds). Russell Sage Foundation: New York.

³ Visher, C., Baer D., & Naser, R. 2006. "Ohio Prisoners' Reflections on Returning Home." Justice Policy Center: Urban Institute. Viewed July 20, 2006 at <http://www.urban.org/publications/311272.html>.

⁴ Gaes, G., Flanagan, T., Motiuk, L., Stewart, L. 1999. "Adult Correctional Treatment," in *Prisons: Crime and Justice, Vol 26*, M. Tonry and J. Petersilia (eds.). Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press. Pp 361-426; Hull, K., Forrester, S., Brown, J., Jobe, D., McCullen, C. 2000. "Analysis of Recidivism Rates for Participants of the Academic/Vocational/Transition Programs Offered by the Virginia Department of Correctional Education." *Journal of Correctional Education*, 51(2); Adams, K., Bennett, K., Flanagan, T., Cuvelier, S., Fritsch, E., Gerber, J., Longmire, D., Burton, V. 1994., "A Large-Scale Multidimensional Test of the Effect of Prison Education on Prisoners' Behavior," *The Prison Journal*. 74(4):433-449; Bushway, S. 2003. "Reentry and Prison Work Programs." Paper presented at the Urban Institute's Reentry Roundtable, May 2003; Steurer, S., L. Smith, and A. Tracy. 2001. *Three-State Recidivism Study*. Lanham, MD: Correctional Educational Association. Viewed July 31, 2006 at <http://www.ecs.org/html/Document.asp?chouseid=6425>; Wilson, D., C. Gallagher, and D. MacKenzie. 2001. "A Meta-Analysis of Corrections-Based Education, Vocation, and Work Programs for Adult Offenders," *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency* 37:347-368.

Implementing Programs and Services

According to a survey of practitioners conducted by the National Institute of Correction's Office of Correctional Job Training and Placement, the most significant job retention factors consist of: matching jobs with offenders' skills and interests; the offender's level of social and problem solving skills; and, the offender having realistic work expectations (2001).⁵

In relation to various policy statements regarding job training, employment and retention, the Reentry Policy Council (2005) recommends the following best practices in the specified areas:⁶

- Creation of Employment Opportunities
 - Educate employers about financial incentives, including the Federal Bonding Program, Work Opportunity Tax Credit, Welfare-to-Work, and other programs which make an ex-offender a more appealing prospective employee. Beginning in August 1998, the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction received authorization from the Federal Bonding Program to manage a bonding program for Ohio, which involves providing a non-deductible fidelity bond to employers of ex-offenders. In this situation, the employer is protected from any loss by theft or deception by the ex-offender for six months following the first day of employment.⁷
 - Determine which industries and employers are willing to hire people with criminal records and encourage job development and placement in those sectors.
 - If possible, eliminate employment laws that affect the employment of people based upon criminal history, but are not directly linked to improving public safety.
 - Promote individualized decisions about hiring ex-offenders instead of implementing blanket bans.
- Workforce Development and the Transition Plan
 - Initiate job searches before offenders are released from prison.
 - Encourage employers to meet with prospective employees through visits or multi-media conferencing before the offender is released from prison.
 - Engage volunteers from the community and community-based services to act as intermediaries between employers and job-seeking individuals.
 - Promote the use of work-release programs as a transition between work inside prison and work in the community.
 - Encourage community networks to support ex-offenders who participate in work release programs (e.g., provide a liaison between the program and the public to address questions or concerns).
 - Upon release from prison, provide offenders with written information about prospective employers or community employment service providers (e.g., One-Stop Career centers) and documentation of their skills and experience (e.g., portfolio containing program certificates and competencies learned).

⁵ Houston, M. 2001. *Offender Job Retention: A Report from the Office of Correctional Job Training and Placement*. National Institute of Corrections. Viewed July 24, 2006 at <http://www.nicic.org/pubs/2001/016971.pdf>.

⁶ Council of State Governments. 2005. *Workforce Development and Re-Entry: Highlights from the Report of the Re-Entry Policy Council*. New York: NY. Viewed May 15, 2007 at http://www.reentrypolicy.org/reentry/THE_REPORT.aspx.

⁷ Communication received March 12, 2007 from Gwendolyn Woods, Acting Chief Bureau of Quality and Community Partnerships, Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction.

- Job Development and Supportive Employment
 - Update community corrections policies to encourage the employment of ex-offenders (e.g., address any practices which may discourage employing ex-offenders, such as frequency of workplace visits or the visibility of firearms and search procedures when supervising officers' visit parolees in the workplace).
 - If possible, assist people seeking to overcome legal and logistical obstacles to employment (e.g., connect ex-offenders with legal aid offices).
 - Promote supportive transitional employment programs through community corrections (e.g., provide wage subsidies or encourage weekly paying of wages so offenders can provide for themselves immediately following release from custody).
- Work Experience
 - Provide prison work assignments that correspond to the needs of the employment market (e.g., partner with community-based workforce and employment services providers to identify gaps in the employment pool and create work programs to fill those gaps).
 - Develop pre-apprenticeship work assignments which can transition into a community-based apprenticeship program (e.g., certification boards).
 - Establish work programs that involve non-profit, volunteer and community service organizations so that participants can gain work experience without competing with other potential employees in the community (e.g., work-release program).
- Workforce Development Systems
 - Increase system collaboration through local One-Stop Centers and Workforce Investments Boards.
 - Ensure that workforce development providers address the full spectrum of employment services (e.g., matching needs of jobseekers with available community resources and services, including transportation, childcare, appropriate clothing and supplies or equipment).
 - Locate employment services in neighborhoods where the need for them is highest (e.g., consolidate federal, state, and local workforce programs in one physical location).
 - Develop measures to monitor and evaluate the performance of workforce development programs (e.g., job placement rates, retention rates and increases in earnings).

Exemplary Programs

Following an electronic search of programs and evaluations of adult offender job training and retention programs, the programs discussed below show promising practices:

SAFER FOUNDATION

The Safer Foundation provides employment services for ex-offenders (and others) in the United States. Operating since 1972, their mission is to help offenders transition from prison to mainstream society. In addition to providing a personal assessment of client specific employment skills, education and support service needs, vocational counseling and job placement services, the Safer Foundation assists with issues related to substance abuse, mental health, and housing. The organization serves 6,000-7,000 hard-to-employee individuals each year, including ex-offenders. Of that number, approximately 3,200 receive employment services and 1,800 are given a referral to social services. Using Safer's definition of placement, about 60 percent of those placed in jobs retain their jobs for at least 30 days (Heinrich, 2000).

The program and services provided are similar to other programs and consists of outreach, intake, assessment, educational training, and job placement and follow up. Over the years the organization has

learned many lessons and as reported by Finn (1998), the keys to the success of the Safer Foundation include the following:

- Devising and implementing programs based on understanding the lives of ex-offenders
- Effective fundraising efforts
- Hiring talented staff and volunteers
- Gaining support from influential political figures at all levels of local government
- Balancing serving multiple clients
- Starting each new program component as a pilot demonstration
- Making clients responsible for doing their part
- Focusing on continuous improvement

Additional readings on the Safer Foundation:

- Finn, Peter. 1998. *Chicago's Safer Foundation: A Road Back for Ex-Offenders*. Program Focus. Washington, DC: US Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, National Institute of Justice. NCJ 168102. Viewed July 31, 2006 at <http://nicic.org/Library/serial644>.
- Heinrich, S. 2000. *Reducing Recidivism Through Work: Barriers and Opportunities for Employment for Ex-Offenders*. Great Cities Institute: University of Illinois at Chicago. Viewed July 31, 2006 at <http://www.uic.edu/cuppa/gci/pdf/Ex-offender%20Paper.pdf>.

READY4WORK

Ready4work was a 3-year national demonstration project that provided reentry services to approximately 5,000 returning prisoners in 17 sites within the United States. Drawing on partnerships between local faith, justice, business and social service organizations, the program: prepares and places formerly incarcerated individuals in jobs; provides comprehensive case management services (including, referrals for housing, health care, drug treatment and other programs); and uses volunteers from faith and community groups to serve as mentors. In a recent review of the program, Farley and McClanahan (2007) report that 56 percent of all Ready4Work participants held a job for at least one month while they were in the program; more than 60 percent of those who found a job remained employed for three consecutive months and a third of them for six months more.⁸

The early, promising practices reported by Linda Jucovy (2006) are as follows:

- Job Training, Placement and Follow-up
 - Develop partnerships to provide a range of educational and job training opportunities.
 - Hire a staff member to recruit employers.
 - Use a strategy to match the right offender with the right job.
 - Follow up with offenders and their employers after job placement.
- Recruiting Participants
 - Recruit participants during and following release from prison.
 - Establish formal partnerships between the community and the corrections department.
 - Begin services immediately.
- Providing Case Management

⁸ Farley, C. and W. McClanahan. 2007. *Ready4Work in Brief: Update on Outcomes; Reentry May Be Critical for States, Cities*. P/PV In Brief, issue 7, May 2007. Viewed May 29, 2007 at http://www.ppv.org/ppv/publications/assets/216_publication.pdf.

- Clearly define the case manager's role and responsibilities.
- Keep caseloads a manageable size.
- Identify personal qualities and credentials for the case manager.
- Provide training and supervision for less experienced case managers.
- Mentoring
 - Hire a mentor coordinator.
 - Address practical and psychological barriers to mentoring.
 - Provide training in building relationships and other relevant skills to help prepare mentors for their roles.
 - Ensure that the case manager provides a supporting role in the mentoring relationship.
 - Always comply with federal guidelines when using faith-based organizations which prohibit the use of federal money for proselytizing or requiring participation in religious activities.

For more information on the program's initiative, implementation and funding, please visit the Public/Private Ventures website at http://www.ppv.org/ppv/community_faith/community_faith_publications.asp?section_id=3#pub212.

Additional readings on the READY4WORK program:

- McClanahan, W. 2007. *Mentoring Ex-Prisoners in the Ready4Work Reentry Initiative*. P/PV Preview. Viewed May 29, 2007 at http://www.ppv.org/ppv/publications/assets/212_publication.pdf.
- Farley, C. and S. Hackman. 2006. *Ready4Work in Brief: Interim Outcomes Are In: Recidivism at Half the National Average*. P/PV In Brief, issue 4, September 2006. Viewed May 29, 2006 at http://www.ppv.org/ppv/publications/assets/205_publication.pdf.
- Good, J. and P. Sherrid. 2006. *When the Gates Open: Ready4 Work, A National Response to the Prisoner Reentry Crises*. Field Report Series: Public/Private Ventures. Internet version viewed July 21, 2006 at <http://www.nicic.org/Library/021010>.
- Jucovy, Linda. 2006. *Just Out: Early Lessons from the Ready4Work Prisoner Reentry Initiative*. Field Series Report: Public/Private Ventures. Internet version viewed July 21, 2006 at <http://www.nicic.org/Library/021435>.
- *Ready4Work Summary: December 2005*. Viewed July 21, 2006 at http://www.ppv.org/ppv/pdf_uploads/217_publication.pdf.

Center for Employment Opportunities' Comprehensive Prisoner Reentry Program

The Center for Employment Opportunities (CEO) was created as a demonstration project by the Vera Institute of Justice in the late 1970s, but has been an independent nonprofit corporation since 1996. CEO offers a highly structured, job-focused training program and employment services to offenders immediately after release from prison. The program and employment services consist of:

- Job Readiness Training/Pre-employment workshops.
- Job Coaching/Support Services.
- Paid Transitional Employment.
- A vocational Development Program.
- Job Placement services.
- Post-Placement Services.

CEO places 70 percent of its "graduates" in full-time jobs within 2-3 months, and approximately 75 percent of those placed are still employed in the same job after one month and about half are still employed in the

same job after six months (Finn 1998). The lessons learned and promising practices reported by Finn (1998) are as follows:

- Develop a strong partnership between the program and the criminal justice agency in order to ensure an adequate supply of program participants.
- Engage program participants in day labor to keep them motivated and out of trouble.
- Hire competent operations staff.
- Incorporate structure and discipline into program.
- Incorporate an evaluation plan that tracks how long participants remain employed and whether they are less likely to commit new offenses than ex-offenders who do not participate in the program.

A federally funded evaluation of CEO is underway by MDRC⁹ with assistance from the Urban Institute; results are expected by 2007. The evaluation will include a random assignment design that compares outcomes for CEO participants with a control group of non-CEO participants.

Additional readings on the CEO Program:

- Center for Employment Opportunities and MDRC. 2006. *The Power of Work: The Center for Employment Opportunities Comprehensive Prisoner Reentry Program*. Viewed July 26, 2006 at <http://www.mdrc.org/publications/426/summary.html>.
- Dion, M.R., Derr, M., Anderson, J., Pavetti, L. 1999. *Reaching All Job-Seekers: Employment Programs for Hard-To-Employ Populations*. Peps 27-37. Viewed July 31, 2006 at <http://www.mathematica-mpr.com/PDFs/hdemploy.pdf>.
- Finn, P. 1998. *Successful Job Placement for Ex-Offenders: The Center for Employment Opportunities*. Program Focus. Washington, DC: US Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, National Institute of Justice. NCJ 168102. Viewed July 31, 2006 at <http://www.nicic.org/Library/serial636>.
- Tarlow, M. 2001. *Applying Lessons Learned from Relapse Prevention to Job Retention Strategies for Hard-to-Employ Ex-Offenders*. Offender Employment Report, Vol. 2, No. 2. Viewed July 28, 2006 at http://www.ceoworks.org/CEO_MTArticle010802.pdf.

Project Re-Integration of ex-Offenders (RIO)

Project RIO was initiated in 1985 in Dallas and Tarrant counties in the state of Texas as a pilot program and became a state run program in 1993. Project RIO serves juvenile and adult offenders. In addition to providing supportive service and employment referrals, labor market information, job search seminars, and job development services, program participants are provided with an individual employment plan. In Menon et al.'s 1992 evaluation of the program, 23 percent of the Project RIO participants categorized as high risk returned to prison versus 38 percent of non-participants. Additionally, during Fiscal Year 2005, 85 percent of the new Project RIO registered job seekers obtained employment.¹⁰ Project RIO's success is partly attributed to the following:

- Job preparation services begin during incarceration.
- There is a strong collaboration between the state's employment agency and the Texas Department of Criminal Justice.
- Relationships have been developed with over 12,000 employers who hire parolees referred by the program.

⁹ MDRC was founded in 1974 as the Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation, but as of 2003, "MDRC" is the registered corporate identity of the organization. MDRC is a nonprofit, nonpartisan social policy research organization.

¹⁰ Texas Department of Criminal Justice, Texas Workforce Commission, Texas Youth Commission. 2006. *Project RIO Strategic Plan: Fiscal Years 2006-2007*. Report prepared for the Legislative Budget Board and Governor's Office of Budget and Planning. Viewed August 2, 2006 at http://www.twc.state.tx.us/svcs/rio_plan_06.pdf.

Additional readings on Project RIO program:

- Finn, P. 1998. *Texas' Project Rio (Re-Integration of Offenders)*. Program Focus. Washington, DC: US Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, National Institute of Justice. NCJ 168102. Viewed July 31, 2006 at <http://nicic.org/Library/serial643>.
- Hurry, J., Brazier, L., Parker, M., & Wilson, A. 2006. *Rapid Evidence Assessment of Intervention that Promote Employment for Offenders*. National Research and Development Center for Adult Literacy and Numeracy (NRDC): Department for Education and Skills. Research Report RR747. (see pages 35-36). Viewed July 31, 2006 at <http://www.nicic.org/Library/021446>.
- Menon, R., Blakely, C., Carmichael, D., & Silver, L. 1992. *An Evaluation of Project RIO Outcomes: An Evaluative Report*. College Station, Texas: Texas A & M University, Public Policy Resources Laboratory.

Additional Suggested Readings on the Employment of Ex-Offenders:

Albright, S. and F. Denq. 1996. "Employer Attitudes toward Hiring Ex-Offenders." *The Prison Journal*. 76(2):118-137.

Description: Eighty-three employers from the Houston and Dallas area were surveyed on their attitudes toward hiring ex-offenders to determine if the attitudes discovered are affected by the level of training the ex-offender receives while incarcerated, government incentives to hire, type of offense committed, and/or the relationship of the crime to the job to be filled.

Bloom, D. 2006. *Employment-Focused Programs for Ex-Prisoners: What Have We Learning, and Where Should We Go From Here?* Paper prepared as background for the meeting "Research on Prisoner Reentry: What Do We Know and What Do We Want to Know?" sponsored by the National Poverty Center, Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy, University of Michigan. Viewed August 1 at <http://www.mdrc.org/publications/435/overview.html>.

Description: After a review of research conducted on employment-focused prisoner reentry programs, the author describes some planned or ongoing evaluations and proposes ideas for future research.

Brooks, L., Visher, C., Naser, R. 2006. *Community Residents' Perceptions of Prisoner Reentry in Selected Cleveland Neighborhoods*. Urban Institute: Justice Policy Center. Viewed July 31, 2006 at <http://www.urban.org/publications/411296.html>.

Description: Presents findings from focus group discussions conducted in three Cleveland neighborhoods regarding offenders returning home from prison. Discussions focused on perceptions of challenges facing offenders, family and community support, prisoners' preparedness for coming home, changes in neighborhood, impact on the community and ideas for improving reentry.

Buck, M. 2000. *Getting Back to Work: Employment Programs for Ex-Offenders*. Field Series Report: Public / Private Ventures. Viewed July 31, 2006 at <http://www.nicic.org/Library/016727>.

Description: Explores issues surrounding ex-offender employment programs, including their history, research, recent federal and state initiatives, program characteristics and challenges. Recommends stronger support for effective practices, combining employment and skills development, improving continuity of services and expanding research efforts.

Clem, Constance (ed.). 1999. *Annotated Bibliography on Offender Job Training and Placement, 2nd edition*. U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Corrections. Viewed July 31, 2006 at <http://www.nicic.org/Library/015538>.

Description: Provides the citation and brief description of NIC materials and includes a section on offender/ex-offender employment.

Council of State Governments. 2005. "Report of the Reentry Policy Council: Charting the Safe and Successful Return of Prisoners to the Community." New York: NY. Internet version viewed May 1, 2006 at <http://www.reentrypolicy.org/rp/Main.aspx>.

Description: Includes policy statements, research highlights, recommendations and examples in various areas affecting prisoner reentry, including prison and jail intake, treatment and services during confinement, transitioning back to the community, and community service systems.

Finn, P. 1999. *Washington State's Corrections Clearinghouse: A Comprehensive Approach to Offender Employment*. Program Focus. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, National Institute of Justice. NCJ 168102. Viewed July 31, 2006 at <http://www.nicic.org/Library/serial698>.

Description: Provides information and characteristics on The Corrections Clearinghouse unit of the Washington State Employment Security Department, which is aimed at preparing offenders for the workplace and finding employment for ex-offenders.

Finn, P. 1999. "Job Placement of Offenders: A Promising Approach to Reducing Recidivism and Correctional Costs." *National Institute of Justice Journal*. U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, National Institute of Justice, No. 240: pp 2-11. Viewed August 1, 2006 at <http://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/jr000240.pdf>.

Description: Describes four programs aimed at the employment and retention of ex-offenders, including Chicago's Safer Foundation, New York City's Center for Employment Opportunities, Texas' Project RIO, and Washington State's Corrections Clearinghouse. The report provides a description of each program, evidence of effectiveness and cost implications as well as commonalities in terms of replicating the programs in other jurisdictions.

Gould, E., Weinberg, B., D. Mustard. 2002. "Crime Rates and Local Labor Market Opportunities in the United States: 1979-1997." *The Review of Economics and Statistics*. 84:45-61. Viewed April 17, 2007 at <http://www.terry.uga.edu/~dmustard/labor.pdf>.

Description: The authors examine the degree to which changes in the U.S. crime rates from 1979-1997 can be explained by changes in the labor market opportunities for those most likely to commit crimes.

Graffam, J., Shinkfield, A., Lavelle, B., Hardcastle, L. 2004. *Attitudes of Employers, Corrective Services Workers, Employment Support Workers, and Prisoners and Offenders Towards Employing Ex-prisoners and Ex-Offenders*. Report to the Criminology Research Council. Grant 26/02-03. Viewed July 31, 2006 at <http://www.aic.gov.au/crc/reports/200203-26.html>.

Description: Reports the findings of a survey conducted in Queensland and Victoria to assess the attitudes of employers, employment service workers, corrective services workers and prisoners and ex-offenders toward the employability of ex-prisoners and ex-offenders. The authors conclude that actions targeting the employment of ex-prisoners and ex-offenders should focus on three areas: providing employment assistance in obtaining and maintaining employment; skills training for offenders and people serving community corrections that focus on the specific development of employment-related skills and characteristics; and, broadly promoting the reintegration of ex-offenders.

Heinrich, S. 2000. *Reducing Recidivism Through Work: Barriers and Opportunities for Employment for Ex-Offenders*. Great Cities Institute: University of Illinois at Chicago. Viewed July 31, 2006 at <http://www.uic.edu/cuppa/gci/pdf/Ex-offender%20Paper.pdf>.

Description: Reviews the barriers and opportunities to employment for ex-offenders as well as highlights some programs and lessons learned. Key elements of successful programs include: offering a holistic array of services, providing services before offenders are released, developing long-term relationships with employers, highlighting advantages and services to employers who hire ex-offenders and providing long-term follow-up. Highlights the following programs: Chicago's Safer Foundation; New York's South Forty Corporation and Texas' Project RIO.

Holzer, H., Raphael, S., Stoll, M. 2002. "Can Employers Play a More Positive Role in Prisoner Reentry?" *Reentry Roundtable: Prisoner Reentry and the Institutions of Civil Society: Bridges and Barriers to*

Successful Reintegration. Working discussion paper. Viewed July 31, 2006 at <http://www.urban.org/publications/410803.html>.

Description: Based upon the results of a survey administered to employers and ex-offenders, the authors contend that with the right interventions, an employers' reservation about hiring an ex-offender can be addressed through programs which contain certain activities, including, case management services, education or training in soft and hard skills, pre-release support and training, transitional work experience, job placement assistance and post-employment supports.

Houston, M. 2001. *Offender Job Retention: A Report from the Office of Correctional Job Training and Placement.* National Institute of Corrections. Viewed July 24, 2006 at <http://www.nicic.org/pubs/2001/016971.pdf>.

Description: Reports the findings of a survey containing questions on employment and retention administered to 512 practitioners who participated in a distance learning broadcast of NIC's Offender Employment Specialist Training. Some areas identified as important to offender job retention include developing a vocational self-concept, providing holistic case management services, tailoring services to meet individual needs, and providing consistent long term support and intervention.

Hurry, J., B. Brazier, M. Parker and A. Wilson. 2006. "Rapid Evidence Assessment of Interventions that Promote Employment for Offenders." National Research and Development Center for Adult Literacy and Numeracy (NRDC): Department for Education and Skills. Research Report RR747. Viewed July 31, 2006 at <http://www.nicic.org/Library/021446>.

Description: Through a systematic literature search of various programs and research, the authors seek to answer the question, "What evidence is there about the types and levels of intervention that work best to promote employment for offenders?" Lists several promising policies and practices.

Kachnowski, V. 2005. *Returning Home Illinois Policy Brief: Employment and Prisoner Reentry.* The Urban Institute: Justice Policy Center. Viewed July 31, 2006 at <http://www.urban.org/publications/311215.html>.

Description: Using employment data gathered from interviews with 400 male Illinois prisoners before and after release from prison, the author presents findings on pre and in-prison employment training and experiences as well as post-release employment outcomes.

Kass, D. 2004. *Financing Transitional Jobs Programs: A Strategic Guide to Federal Funding Programs.* Viewed July 31, 2006 at <http://www.financeproject.org/Publications/transitionaljobs.pdf>.

Description: Description of federal funding sources and financing strategies for developing, sustaining or expanding transitional jobs programs geared towards ex-offenders, the homeless and juveniles.

Kirby, G.; Hill, H.; Pavetti, L.; Jacobson, J.; Derr, M.; Winston, P. 2002. *Transitional Jobs: Stepping Stones to Unsubsidized Employment.* Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. Viewed July 31, 2006 at <http://www.rockfound.org/Employment/Announcement/65>.

Description: Reviews 6 transitional jobs programs in relation to serving hard-to-employ Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) recipients.

Kotloff, L. 2005. *Leaving the Street: Young Fathers Move from Hustling to Legitimate Work.* Public/Private Ventures, Philadelphia, PA. Viewed May 11, 2007 at http://www.ppv.org/ppv/publications/assets/181_publication.pdf.

Description: Ethnographic study of the experiences of 37 men participating in the *Fathers at Work* program. This report is part of a larger evaluation of the *Fathers at Work* program conducted by Public/Private Ventures. Although not specifically targeting ex-offenders, 27 of those interviewed and 76 percent of those in the total sample had been convicted of crime.

Krisberg, K. & S. Marchionna. 2006. "Attitudes of US Voters Toward Prisoner Rehabilitation and Reentry Policies." *Focus: Views from the National Council on Crime and Delinquency.* Viewed August 4, 2006 at <http://www.nicic.org/Library/serial924>.

Description: Reports the results of a telephone survey of 1,039 likely voters regarding their attitudes toward rehabilitation and reentry of prisoners into their home communities. The close-ended questions pertained to crime, punishment, rehabilitation and reentry.

Latendresse, M. and F. Cortoni. 2005. *Increasing Employability Related Skills Among Federal Male Offenders: A Preliminary Analysis of the National Employability Skills Program*. Correctional Service Canada: Research Branch. Report 2005 N R-162. Viewed July 31, 2006 at <http://www.nicic.org/Library/021355>.

Description: Evaluation of Canada's National Employability Skills Program. The program is designed to target employability skills, attitudes and behaviors of offenders. The study population is small, 29 male adult offenders, but it offers promising results in terms of prison programming.

Niven, S. and H. Barnard. 2005. *The Feasibility of Using Electronic Job Search Facilities in Prison*. Great Britain. Home Office: Research, Development and Statistics Directorate (London, England). Viewed July 31, 2006 at <http://www.nicic.org/Library/020720>.

Description: Reports the findings of a comparative study on using job kiosks or "locked down" computers in prisons for inmates to conduct job searches while incarcerated in England and Wales. Reports technical issues experienced and results of the outcome of offenders who used the equipment.

Overtom, C. 2000. *Employability Skills: An Update*. ERIC Digest No. 220. Viewed April 17, 2007 at <http://www.cete.org/acve/docs/dig220.pdf>.

Description: The author argues that job-specific technical training is no longer sufficient and employment skills programs should focus also on "transferable core skills" such as problem solving and interpersonal skills. Reviews employability skills groups developed by the American Society for Training and Development and the U.S. Department of Labor's Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills.

Pager, D. 2003. "The Mark of a Criminal Record." *American Journal of Sociology*. 108(5):937-975. Viewed April 17, 2007 at <http://www.northwestern.edu/ipr/publications/papers/2003/pagerajs.pdf>.

Description: Using an experimental audit approach, the author examines the relationship between incarceration and employment outcomes for black and white job seekers.

Pager, D. and L. Quillian. 2005. "Walking the Talk? What Employers Say Versus What They Do." *American Sociological Review*. 70:355-380. Viewed April 17, 2007 at http://www.princeton.edu/~pager/asr_pager&quillian.pdf

Description: Using data from an experimental audit study of entry-level jobs matched with a telephone survey of the same employers, the authors compare employers' willingness to hire black and white ex-offenders, as represented both by their self-reports and by their decision in actual hiring situations.

Petersilia, J. 2003. *When Prisoners Come Home: Parole and Prisoner Reentry*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Description: Using interviews with prisoners, ex-prisoners and prison officials, the author reports the barriers and obstacles to prisoner reentry and offers solutions for preparing inmates for release and recidivism reduction.

Solomon, A.; C. Visher; N. La Vigne; J. Osborne. 2006. "Understanding the Challenges of Reentry: Research Findings from the Urban Institute's Prisoner Reentry Portfolio." Justice Policy Center: Urban Institute. Viewed July 21, 2006 at <http://www.urban.org/publications/411289.html>.

Description: Provides an overview of the key dimensions of prisoner reentry, including employment, health, housing, substance use, family, community, community supervision and public safety, and highlights the findings of research conducted by the Urban Institute in those areas.

Travis, J. 2005. *But They All Come Back: Facing the Challenges of Prisoner Reentry*. Washington, DC: The Urban Institute Press.

Description: Following a review of sentencing policies and an examination of the nexus between prisoner reentry and seven policy domains, including public safety, families and children, work, housing, public health, civic identity and community, the author proposes five principles for successful reentry and five building blocks for a new jurisprudence of prisoner reintegration.

Uggen, C. 1999. "Ex-Offenders and the Conformist Alternative: A Job Quality Model of Work and Crime." *Social Problems*. 46(1): 127-151.

Description: Based on data from the National Supported Work Demonstration and the 1977 Quality of Employment Survey, the author finds that job quality reduces the likelihood of economic and non-economic criminal behavior among a sample of high-risk offenders.

Visher, C.; D. Baer; R. Naser. 2006. "Ohio Prisoners' Reflections on Returning Home." Justice Policy Center: Urban Institute. Viewed July 20, 2006 at <http://www.urban.org/publications/311272.html>.

Description: Presents the findings from surveys completed by 424 males shortly before their release from Ohio's prisons. The report provides descriptive statistics on various subjects, including substance use, employment background and expectations for release.

Visher, C. and S. Courtney. 2007. "One Year Out: Experiences of Prisoners Returning to Cleveland." Justice Policy Center: Urban Institute. Viewed April 21, 2007 at http://www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/311445_One_Year.pdf.

Description: Describe the lives of former Ohio prisoners who returned to the Cleveland area 12 months following release from prison. Areas discussed include the ability to find stable housing, reuniting with family, factors associated with employment and avoiding substance abuse and recidivism. This report contains the findings from the final results of the *Returning Home* study in Ohio.

The Best Practices Tool-Kit is published up to six times a year by the Institute for Excellence in Justice, a collaborative partnership between the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction's Institute on Correctional Best Practices and the Ohio State University's Criminal Justice Research Center. Please direct all questions to Coretta Pettway at Coretta.Pettway@odrc.state.oh.us