

# The Front Line: Building Programs that Recognize Families' Role in Reentry

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**M**ORE THAN 600,000 men and women will leave prison in 2004. In making the transition back to the community, many will turn to their families—spouses, parents, siblings, grandparents, and others—for some kind of assistance. These family members become the “front line” of reentry, providing former inmates with critical material and emotional support including shelter, food, clothing, leads for jobs, and guidance in staying sober or avoiding criminal behavior. This is no mystery: families typically are more personally invested in and affected by positive outcomes for men and women coming home than are criminal justice practitioners or those in the helping professions. Some 30 years of research from other fields suggests that family support can help make or break a successful transition from prison to community. But in practice, criminal justice systems have only recently tried to harness the family’s investment by engaging them in the transition. Such engagement has been encouraged by the fatherhood movement of the 1990s, which increased both parental programming for men in prison and child support orders when they leave.<sup>1</sup> Even more recently, a national focus on the issue of reentry, the term used to describe the transition from prison back to the community, has put the role of families in the spotlight.

Spurred by federal funding directed at reentry, more and more jurisdictions are experimenting with family-focused programming for adults leaving prison. While we know from the research that some families succeed in providing the necessary support on their own, we are still learning both how they do it and how to design programs to coach and support families who cannot do it all on their own.

In this paper, we examine the trend towards providing family-focused reentry programming in prison and in the community, highlight ways that jurisdictions can structure such efforts, and address the challenges involved.

This paper, part of Vera's *Issues in Brief* series, looks at Project Greenlight and other innovations across the nation to explore how family involvement in reentry may lead to more successful transitions from prison and better recidivism results. Greenlight is just one way that Vera has engaged with reentry issues. Two earlier publications have examined different facets of the reentry challenge. *Why Planning for Release Matters* and *Preventing Homelessness Among People Leaving Prison* are available at [www.vera.org/ssc](http://www.vera.org/ssc). The Safe Return Initiative, a federally created partnership between Vera and the Institute on Domestic Violence in the African American Community, helps recipients of federal Serious and Violent Offender Reentry Initiative grants prevent and intervene in domestic violence as African-American men leave prison. For more information contact SRI's director, Lori Crowder, at 212-376-3044, [lcrowder@vera.org](mailto:lcrowder@vera.org), or visit [www.safereturn.info](http://www.safereturn.info). In addition, Vera's State Sentencing and Corrections Program continues to provide nonpartisan assistance to state officials on a range of sentencing and incarceration policy issues that often encompass reentry, such as community corrections and drug policy reforms.

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### The Positive Impact of Family Involvement

The hypothesis that family engagement can produce better outcomes at reentry is rooted not in blind hope, but in lessons from other fields. For decades, researchers studying alcoholism and substance abuse noted the link between successful treatment and positive family support. A recent journal article summarized this research, which shows that social support from family and friends during drug treatment correlates to such positive outcomes as increased commitment to treatment, decreased arrest rates and drug usage, and fewer relapses after treatment.<sup>2</sup> These findings sparked such experimental programs as La Bodega de la Familia, developed by the Vera Institute of Justice in 1996.

La Bodega de la Familia focused on the family's role at the overlap of drug treatment and criminal justice. La Bodega, which has since become an independent nonprofit under Family

Justice, Inc., is a service on New York City's Lower East Side for families in which one member is both on parole or probation and a substance abuser. In addition to providing advocacy and 24-hour crisis intervention services, La Bodega provides weekly family and individual counseling sessions under the guidance of a family case manager, who also works closely with the drug user's parole or probation officer.

An evaluation of La Bodega showed that although Bodega participants did not stay in drug treatment any longer than a comparison group, the proportion of participants who used illegal substances declined significantly—from 80 percent upon entry into the program to 42 percent six months later. In in-depth interviews, participants gave concrete examples of how their families helped them through difficult periods, minimizing relapse. They also reported striving to retain the good opinion of their families and feared losing that

support if they resumed using drugs.<sup>3</sup>

In the juvenile justice field, research going back a century has recognized the family's role in influencing delinquency. This research suggested that strengthening family functioning and encouraging familial involvement and monitoring of a delinquent youth's behavior should reduce delinquency and associated behaviors such as substance abuse.<sup>4</sup> A generation of programming along these lines has proven that hypothesis; programs such as Family Functional Therapy and Multisystemic Therapy, among others, show marked reductions in recidivism compared to traditional treatment that focuses on the child alone.<sup>5</sup>

In an area analogous to adult reentry from prison, research shows that the positive adjustment of military servicemen and women returning from active duty (as measured by lower levels of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder) is associated with perceiving that their families gave them a positive reception when they returned home.<sup>6</sup> Because many factors can get in the way of such familial support—the different experiences of the service member and his family during deployment, the family's independence during this time, and fears about infidelity—the military has offered formal and informal programs for service members and their families (usually separately). These programs give both groups an opportunity to acknowledge and think through the adjustments that will be made upon a service member's return. They also provide assistance when the service members and/or their family members experience distress after the return.<sup>7</sup>

There is, too, some evidence of the positive impact of families for adults returning from prison. Research conducted in the 1970s and 80s found modest differences in recidivism rates between inmates who had

significant contact with people from outside prison during their incarceration and those who had less or no contact. In one study, the greater number of visits inmates had, the lower their recidivism rate. In another study, inmates' participation in a private family visiting program during incarceration was associated with low recidivism rates. None of the studies identified why family ties during imprisonment seemed to make a difference in recidivism.<sup>8</sup>

More recently, Vera staff conducted a study that tracked 49 men and women for one month after release from New York State prisons and New York City jails. Within two days after release, 40 of the 49 people were living with a relative, spouse, or partner. People whose families scored high on standardized measures of family strength had greater success—defined as having a job, avoiding illegal activity and drug use, making new friends, and securing stable housing—than people whose families did not score as well. But the strongest predictor of individual success was the perception by the person released that his family supported him.<sup>9</sup>

While this evidence pointed to positive family support as a factor in lowering recidivism for adults leaving prison, research has revealed little about why that support worked and even less about how to help foster it. The findings, together with a national focus on how to reintegrate people leaving prison and jail back into their home communities, have sparked the creation of family-focused reentry programs in order to discover, through experimentation, what works. Vera's Project Greenlight is one such effort.

### Project Greenlight

In 2002, Vera, in partnership with the the New York State Department of Correctional Services (DOCS) and the

Division of Parole, included family-focused services in a prison-based reentry pilot program called Project Greenlight. Greenlight participants were adult males, incarcerated for a variety of offenses (some for serious and violent crimes), who were transferred to a prison in New York City, the Queensboro Correctional Facility, two months before their release. Vera staff trained Parole's institutional officers and DOCS' counselors to be reentry case managers who helped the men prepare individual plans to use as a guide on parole after release. Participants also attended mandatory workshops on job readiness, practical skills, and cognitive-behavioral tools. Participants could elect to receive services from an on-site job developer, a family counselor, and a community coordinator whose responsibilities included housing assistance.

**The Greenlight Family Reintegration Program.** Project Greenlight planners included programming for participants with their families because of the immense role family was likely to play in the experience of reentry—a role that could be very supportive, but could also be a source of stress. The program focused both on exploring ways that family members could support the person coming home and on helping them anticipate and, if possible, resolve problems that might otherwise surface after they were together in the community.

At orientation, a family counselor described the program and invited the men to meet with him if they thought they would like to participate with their families. Of the 349 Greenlight participants, 105 met at least once with the family counselor. Most agreed to invite their family members or asked the family counselor to invite family members, which he did either by telephone or home visit. Fifty prison-

ers and their families attended family reintegration sessions. Although Greenlight participants ranged in age from late teens to early 60s, those in family sessions tended to be in their 20s and 30s. Most were African-American and Latino; most family members were women.

Greenlight offered three types of sessions: a couples group focused on the prisoner's relationship with his significant other; a co-parents group focused on the prisoner's relationship with his children; and a group called "family of origin" focused on the prisoner's relationship with his parents, siblings, and any extended and informal family. The latter could include anyone close to the inmate who he anticipated would play a supportive role in his reintegration.<sup>10</sup> Each type of session was held once a week for four successive weeks.

Sessions were held during the evening in the first-floor cafeteria at Queensboro. One full-time and one part-time staff person, who had received training in family systems and family counseling, led the sessions for up to five prisoners and their families.<sup>11</sup>

After the pilot period, DOCS and Parole institutionalized most of the elements of Greenlight at Queensboro, but because they did not have staff trained in family counseling and willing to work in the evenings, the family reintegration sessions within the facility ended. Instead, the facility has engaged a nonprofit to invite returning prisoners and their families to participate in sessions in the community after release.<sup>12</sup>

We describe the Greenlight family program simply to illustrate one way of doing such work; every jurisdiction is unique. But during Greenlight's planning and pilot period, we experienced many of the choices and challenges involved in designing and implementing a reentry program that

consciously involves families. We have seen these experiences echoed in programs that came before Greenlight and in programs that are just now getting started. Here, then, for jurisdictions looking to tap into families' investment in the success of their returning family members is a list of choices to make and challenges to face in designing a program and some examples of how different programs have addressed them.

### Choices And Challenges in Involving Family in Reentry

Greenlight is only one of a number of initiatives by correctional and parole agencies around the country to engage families in reentry programming. Some use funding from the U.S. Department of Justice's Serious and Violent Offender Reentry Initiative.<sup>13</sup> Others have carved out funds from their own budget or have sought foundation or other private funding. Levels of investment, types of staffing, and programmatic sophistication vary widely from jurisdiction to jurisdiction. The accompanying box contains a list of some of the current family-focused reentry programs with contact information.

**Timing and Location.** The first choices to make are timing and location. Will the intervention be pre-release, post-release, or both, and where will it take place? Research suggests that reentry programming in general is most effective when it begins in the institution and continues in the community. When possible, jurisdictions should try to follow that model.<sup>14</sup> Minnesota and Washington State start in the two- to six-month period before release and then continue programming in the community. The Osborne Association provides parenting sessions in New York State prisons for men and their children

and continuing support groups for families in New York City before and after their family member's release.

Offering programming before and after release is not always an option. Many prisons and jails are located a long distance from the incarcerated person's home community, are in locations that are difficult for family members to reach, or are not easily accessible by public transportation. Some correctional agencies designate a local facility as a pre-release center, moving incarcerated men or women to these facilities within a few months or weeks of release. Examples include Montgomery County, Maryland's Pre-Release Center, the Illinois Department of Corrections' Adult Transitional Centers, and Queensboro where Greenlight was located.

Even when the facility is nearby, it can still be a challenge to invite families. Traditional visitation hours are often not family-friendly and are offered only for short periods of time that often conflict with work or school. Corrections staff can see visitors as an inconvenience and a threat: visitation disrupts the prison routine and presents an opportunity to introduce contraband. Consequently, prisons tend not to be welcoming places to visit, requiring arduous and sometimes humiliating routines (physical searches, clothing restrictions) that discourage family members. Finally, if a correctional officer must be present during the session, as was the case with Greenlight, family members can be hesitant to speak freely. Holding family sessions in a prison setting, then, requires a high level of commitment by senior corrections staff who must tackle these institutional barriers, perhaps adjusting parts of the prison routine and staffing.

Because of these difficulties, some programs, like Oregon's family support groups, start their work with families in the community while the

returning member remains incarcerated, or begin after release. Maryland's Re-entry Partnership Initiative requires attendance by the returning family member and family at a community conference within 72 hours of release. Utah's probation and parole officers conduct mandatory orientation sessions for men and women under supervision shortly after release, but the officers strongly encourage family and friends to attend.

Aside from location issues, it may be difficult for programs that start inside to move into the community. It could be a structural issue: the program may be sponsored by a corrections department but now needs a governmental or nonprofit partner on the outside. Or it could be a resource issue: funds exist in the corrections budget but have to be found in different agency budgets on the outside. These reasons, among others, explain why Montgomery County, Maryland, and Greenlight provide services while the participant is incarcerated, but not after release. In designing a program, it is wise to look for agency partners in the community from the outset.

**Together or Separate?** Some programs keep families and the member leaving prison in separate program sessions; some bring them together. The Oregon programs are for family members only and take place in community sites such as local libraries. The Kansas "Going Home Initiative" has both a separate community meeting for families and workshops at the facility for the family and returning member. Minnesota, Washington, Maryland's Re-entry Initiative, and Utah's programs bring both together in the facility, as did Greenlight. These decisions may be based on logistics as much as philosophy, but jurisdictions should consider what is to be gained by keeping the parties apart or bringing them together. If the purpose of a

program is to encourage discussion and problem-solving about life together after release, that is best accomplished with all family members present. On the other hand, if the point is to allow families to express their true, perhaps negative, feelings about how the person's incarceration has affected them, and to decide to what extent they are willing take back or support him, then having a session without the returning family member present could be very helpful.

**Getting People in Prison to Engage in a Family Reentry Program.** Project Greenlight found it difficult to attract the majority of its population to the family program; only 30 percent volunteered. Barriers to participation ranged from having no family able to participate—being childless; family members residing in another state, deceased, or unreachable—to having no family willing to participate. Some refused because they believed the sessions were for people with “family problems.”

One strategy to increase participation might be to require prisoners to invite family members. Families might be more willing to play a role on the reentry team if they know that the offer is part of the institution's commitment to helping families reunite successfully. The prospect of mandating family interactions, however, raises concerns. Family members may feel coerced into participating, perhaps out of fear of negative repercussions for the incarcerated family member if they refuse. Or they may feel torn if the state requires their attendance but their family member opposes it.

The possibility that a prisoner has a history of elder, child, or intimate partner abuse should be examined before encouraging interactions with family. One study showed that nearly 25 percent of convicted violent offend-

ers in local jails and more than five percent of violent offenders in state prisons nationwide committed their crimes against an intimate.<sup>15</sup> Domestic violence among those convicted of other crimes should be considered as well: one study found that one in three federal inmates acknowledged recent physical violence against women partners; one in 10 reported severe violence against women.<sup>16</sup> Those developing reentry programs may want to include screening for orders of protection, use assessment tools that disclose violent attitudes towards family, and hold more extensive conversations with family members during community preparation prior to approving a prisoner's residence.<sup>17</sup>

### **Defining, Identifying, and Engaging Family Members.**

In defining family, jurisdictions need to think about what they are attempting to accomplish in a family program. If the purpose is to cultivate a network of support for the individual coming home, then it can define family broadly and include extended family, partners, close friends, or mentors, as programs in Minnesota and Washington have done. If the purpose is to strategize about how a returning family member can meet his or her legal obligations to children and spouse, then the program can define family narrowly.

Once family is defined, and the person in prison wants to participate, the family needs to be engaged. Some Greenlight participants insisted on reaching out to family members themselves, while others asked the counselor to call or visit. Responses varied. Some families expressed interest immediately and attended sessions, while others expressed interest but never came. Others told the counselor that they were too angry or too busy or had no one to watch their children. Still others felt they'd rather wait until

## **RESOURCES**

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## Issues in Brief

release than listen to “jail promises.” In one case, a home visit resulted in the family being referred to a domestic violence advocacy organization to engage in counseling and safety planning.

Among the programs we reviewed, we found some that let the person in prison engage the family. Others use staff to do the outreach by telephone from the facility. Others send staff into the community or work with community-based organizations. For example, the Illinois Department of Corrections partners with a nonprofit, the Institute for Clinical Social Work, which sends volunteer social workers into the prison to recruit men returning home and into the community to recruit their families for a pre- and post-release series of individual family counseling sessions. Programs that want to attract the maximum number of families probably will have to use all three engagement strategies.

**Staffing.** Jurisdictions have engaged in several different staffing arrangements to deliver family services. Some programs, like the Montgomery County Pre-Release Center, use government staff with a background in social work and counseling. Others hire new staff, such as the case managers in the Kansas program, the community resource coordinators in Minnesota, and Greenlight’s family counselors. And others, like Oregon where the Multnomah Department of Community Justice works together with the Oregon Chapter of CURE (Citizens United for Rehabilitation of Errants), have formed partnerships between government staff and local advocacy or social service groups. And several programs use volunteers as part of a team. Examples include Minnesota’s “circle of support”; Washington’s “neighborhood readiness teams,” which consist of neighbors and mentors along with parole officers, victims of crime, family service

providers, and family members; and Kansas’ “family transition classes,” which recruit members of the community who, after a 12-hour training session, help facilitate classes for people leaving prison and workshops for prisoners and their family members.

Re-training existing staff can work when the service delivery is relatively simple or compatible with existing tasks. But most programs find they need to hire trained staff, provide intensive training and support, or partner with a local social service provider in order to deliver what are often challenging services requiring skilled counseling. Volunteers can be a tremendous resource, bringing a diversity of life experience and contacts, but their value can be limited unless they are trained and supervised by paid staff. In sum, staffing the program through any of these avenues will require some commitment of resources and an attention to finding people with the set of skills—understanding of family systems, facilitation skills, and the flexibility to work within a correctional or community corrections setting—to do this work.

**Duration.** Some programs are one-shot interventions while others require multiple sessions. Oregon’s program consists of one 90-minute session, although families are welcome to contact the program for additional information. Greenlight required four one-hour sessions over four weeks. Montgomery County’s Pre-Release Center is perhaps the most time-intensive. For the incarcerated member to be eligible for pre-release furlough visits home, families must attend a 60-minute orientation at the center. Orientation is followed by six weekly “sponsor group” sessions held with other families in groups of 15-20. Simultaneously, the incarcerated member participates in group counseling sessions.

Because these programs are so new, there are no findings yet about what duration is most effective. People taking part in family case management through La Bodega de la Familia, where significant reductions in substance use took place, had at least six months of such services. The youth program Family Functional Therapy ranges from eight to 30 hours of sessions.

**Program Content.** Implicit in creating a family component to reentry programming is the decision that some topics benefit from family input. Choosing the topics to cover can emerge from family discussion or be decided beforehand; in either event these are likely to emerge:

***The Stress of Reentry.*** Virtually every intervention addresses the stresses associated with reentry, for both parties. Some projects, like the ones in Oregon, talk to families about the details of prison life so they will understand how different that experience is from life in the community. Most provide discussion groups. At Greenlight, we found that such discussion surfaced residual anger on both sides—for the family, anger at the behavior that led to the incarceration or anger at what feels like desertion, and for the returning family member, anger that life has moved on and family relationships may have changed, including a girlfriend or co-parent finding a new partner. When the group is properly facilitated, however, this anger can be addressed by empathic listening, followed by leading families into a discussion of how to solve the problem that is causing the anger.

But most of the discussion centered around expectations. Greenlight staff observed that prisoners and their families often had differing expectations of life after release. Airing out those expectations helped to define

realistic compromises and deflate myths. Occasionally, the mismatched expectations were profound or discussions surfaced differences or family weaknesses that led staff to advise against going home.

**Planning.** Either before a person leaves prison—as in Minnesota, Washington, and Greenlight—or at a family conference or orientation held shortly after release, as in Maryland and Utah, the family participates in putting together a plan for the reentering member. The best plans are concrete and enlist family support in deciding where it would be best for the returning member to live, how family members can help him or her get a job, how to get substance abuse treatment, and what local resources can assist. Such plans also include specific timelines and identify resources for employment, recreation, child support or visitation, treatment, etc. Family members agree to help the returnee implement the plan—both in concrete ways (providing housing or references for a job) and emotionally, by agreeing to hold the person accountable for following through.<sup>18</sup>

**Legal Requirements.** Several programs, such as those in Oregon and Utah, review parole or after-care requirements, some of which affect families directly. Staff explain the conditions of parole—home visits and searches, curfews and curfew checks, and the need to maintain regular contact with the assigned officer—so the family can help the returning member comply.

### Illustrations of the Advantages of Involving Family in Reentry

Describing the components of family reentry programming is important, but the advantages are best presented

through stories. Here are some stories from Greenlight.

#### Providing Emotional Support.

While their loved one has been in prison, families have been working, raising families, and contributing to their communities. They have life lessons, practical tips, and moral support to offer their returning members. At Queensboro, program staff observed this emotional support, understanding, insight, and perspective during counseling sessions.

- Twenty-one-year old Bernard's brother and sister-in-law own their own home and have two children. The brother is an electrical technician; his wife is an administrative assistant. They were very interested in Bernard's participation in cognitive behavioral groups, which include such learning and role playing social skills as expressing and addressing complaints, asking for help, dealing with failure, and responding to the feelings of others. They told him how they used those same skills in their work and advised him that those social skills would be a daily requirement for success outside of prison.
- Twenty-five-year-old Dorian's aunt, who is acknowledged as a family leader, came to a session and advised Dorian that "it's okay to be an adult and still say 'I need someone to help.'" She worried that, knowing of her expectations of Dorian, he might stay away. They used the session to reach a new understanding: Dorian agreed to use his aunt as a sounding board for his plans, and she agreed to help his mother in supporting him to carry out his plan.

Interest and encouragement from a family leader has power, but advice

from family members who have also been incarcerated and who now are doing well carries a special resonance.

- Philip's older brother, who had been incarcerated, counseled Philip that having patience was very important, whether in looking for work, putting his life back together, or reconnecting with their mother, who had witnessed Philip committing a violent crime and was struggling with what kind of relationship she wanted to have with him. Philip worried about his relationship with her, but with his brother's guidance he decided not to rush it.

#### Providing Material Support.

Greenlight staff saw families offer to help prisoners readjust by providing and arranging help with employment, housing, and finances.

- During a session together, Ozzie's stepfather and Keon's father realized they both had worked for the mass transit system and decided they would get together to help their sons find jobs within the system.
- During a session with his sister, 24-year-old Justice decided to move to his sister's apartment rather than go back to live with his mother in the neighborhood where he had conducted his criminal activities. He hoped changing locations would facilitate his transition to a different sort of lifestyle. Justice and his sister also agreed that she would go to the old neighborhood to pick up and drop off his daughter so he could visit with her without having to go back to that area.
- Thirty-seven-year-old Lester and his wife, a school bus driver, argued

often during couples sessions. Lester, once a drug dealer bringing in “good money,” finally acknowledged that his wife was now the main breadwinner and declared that he was going to respect her in that position while he focused on making the adjustment from seven years in prison to getting on his feet with a legitimate job.

### Conclusion

Recently, researchers in the fields of social work, sociology, and criminal justice have recognized the need to examine the intersection of criminal justice and family issues. Practitioners’ anecdotal experiences suggest that families can be a powerful force for positive change for members making the difficult transition from institu-

tional life back to the community. Fulfilling that role is not always easy, but with assistance, some families can provide critical material and emotional support during reentry. And they can be powerful partners to government—especially to probation and parole officers responsible for supervising the returning family member in the community.

### Endnotes

- 1 For an in-depth examination of fatherhood programming for men in or leaving prison, see John M. Jeffries, Suzanne Menghraj, and Creasie Finney Hairston, *Serving Incarcerated and Ex-Offender Fathers and their Families: A Review of the Field* (New York: Vera Institute of Justice, February 2001).
- 2 Danica Knight and Dwayne Simpson, “Influences of Family and Friends on Client Progress During Drug Abuse Treatment,” *Journal of Substance Abuse* 8, no. 4 (1996): 417.
- 3 Eileen Sullivan et al., *Families as a Resource in Recovery from Drug Abuse: An Evaluation of La Bodega de la Familia* (New York: Vera Institute of Justice, 2002).
- 4 Karol L. Kumpfer, *Strengthening America’s Families: Exemplary Parenting and Family Strategies for Delinquency Prevention* (Washington, DC: Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, 1999): 9.
- 5 Ibid., 45, 48; Sharon Mihalic et al., *Blueprints for Violence Prevention* (Washington, DC: Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, 2004): 26-28, [www.ncjrs.org/pdffiles/ojjdp/204274.pdf](http://www.ncjrs.org/pdffiles/ojjdp/204274.pdf).
- 6 Elisa Bolton et al., “The Impact of Homecoming Reception on the Adaptation of Peacekeepers Following Deployment,” *Military Psychology* 14, no. 3 (2002): 241-251.
- 7 For a discussion of such programs, see John Mateczun and Elizabeth Holmes, “Return, Readjustment and Reintegration: The Three R’s of Family Reunion,” in *Emotional Aftermath of the Persian Gulf War*, edited by Robert Ursano and Ann Norwood (Washington, DC: American Psychiatric Press, Inc., 1996); Julian Ford et al., “Family Systems Therapy after Operation Desert Storm and European-Theater Veterans,” *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy* 24, no. 2 (1998): 243-250.
- 8 Creasie Finney Hairston, “Family Ties During Imprisonment: Do They Influence Future Criminal Activity?” *Federal Probation* 52, no. 1 (March 1988): 48-52.
- 9 Marta Nelson, Perry Deess, and Charlotte Allen, *The First Month Out: Post-Incarceration Experiences in New York City* (New York: Vera Institute of Justice, 1999).
- 10 At Vera’s March 15, 2003, Safe Return Initiative Conference in New York, Dr. Creasie Hairston of the University of Illinois at Chicago, noted that establishing a working definition of “family” for many prisoners required recognition that in communities of color, “family” can include any person with whom one has an emotional bond, responsibility for, or obligation to, and is not necessarily limited to relations through blood or marriage.
- 11 Greenlight employed a family reintegration counselor with a master’s degree in social work part-time to facilitate the reintegration sessions. A bachelor’s-degree-level family counselor worked full time to co-facilitate all sessions, run individual sessions with interested participants, and recruit family members.
- 12 The Division of Parole engaged the Osborne Association.
- 13 The Serious and Violent Offender Reentry Initiative is a collaboration that, in addition to Justice, includes the U.S. Departments of Agriculture, Commerce, Education, Health and Human Services, Housing and Urban Development, Labor, and Veterans Affairs. It funds states to design, implement, and evaluate reentry programs for juvenile and adult high-risk offenders.
- 14 James Inciardi, Steven Martin, and Clifford Butzin, “Five-Year Outcomes of Therapeutic Community Treatment of Drug-Involved Offenders After Release From Prison,” *Crime and Delinquency* 50, no. 1 (2004): 94,102-104; Dale Parent and Liz Barnett, *Transition from Prison to Community Initiative* (Washington, DC: National Institute of Corrections, 2002) [www.nicic.org/pubs/2002/107520.pdf](http://www.nicic.org/pubs/2002/107520.pdf).
- 15 *Violence by Intimates* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics Factbook, March 1998; NCJ-167237): 23.
- 16 Robert White et al., “Extent and Characteristics of Woman Batterers Among Federal Inmates,” *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology* 46, no. 4 (2002): 412-426.
- 17 In Greenlight’s one-on-one interviews, prisoners, as well as their significant others and co-parents were asked about current orders of protection before any sessions were scheduled. The National Crime Information Center Protection Order File has data across several states and can forward copies of orders of protection filed within five years.
- 18 For an example of a release plan, contact Greenlight’s director, Marta Nelson at [mnelson@vera.org](mailto:mnelson@vera.org).

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