

VRP REENTRY EFFORTS AND COMMUNITY RESOURCES

IN-REACH REENTRY PROGRAMS AT FDC AND FCI

Nearly all incarcerated individuals will return to their communities. Programming designed to prepare inmates for their reintegration is invaluable. Returning citizens (ex-offenders) all too frequently have limited education and employment history and/or suffer from mental health issues and substance abuse. These are risk factors for recidivism. Our goal is to provide inmates with assistance during incarceration and continued services throughout their release, in order to combat this cycle.

The USAO, in collaboration with the Bureau of Prisons, has created a **reentry program** that initiates treatment and provides access to community programs, while individuals are incarcerated at the Federal Detention Center (FDC) and Federal Correctional Institution (FCI) in Miami. The goal of the “**in-reach**” program is to manage the transition from detention to the community.

While incarcerated, inmates complete an assessment survey and identify services needed (ie: identification cards, government benefits, housing, legal assistance, employment, life skills, education, health care, substance abuse and/or mental health treatment, family support and civil rights restoration). At least 30 days prior to release, all inmates housed at FDC and FCI are mandated to attend **Reentry and Resource Meetings**, in order to establish direct contact with non-profit and community service providers, educators, faith-based organizations, local businesses and representatives from various governmental agencies. The inmates are also provided with a resource guide that contains contact information for available community service providers.

Wrap-around services are vital for the successful reintegration of returning citizens. The following are additional VRP programs that offer reentry services:

RE-ENTRY SIMULATION

The Re-Entry Simulation allows community members and leaders from educational, government, law enforcement, non-profit and faith-based organizations to experience some of the real-life issues encountered by returning citizens. Each attendee is faced with the common hurdles to re-entry such as trying to re-enter the work force, complying with supervision obligations, finding affordable housing, etc. Attendees simulate the experience of 4 weeks in the life of a returning citizen in approximately 3 hours.

SOUTH FLORIDA REENTRY CENTER HUB

The South Florida Reentry Center Hub is a traveling one-stop service center for returning citizens and their families. The Hub provides returning citizens with easy, centralized access to a variety of reentry services within their local communities.

CARE COURT (Court Assisted Re-Entry)

The CARE Court (Re-Entry) Initiative, of Florida’s federal Southern District Court, assists a small number of moderate to high-risk returning citizens (10-15) who are on federal post-conviction supervision. A presiding Judge, with the aid of the United States Attorney’s Office, and Federal Public Defender’s Office will assist the United States Probation Office with the supervision of CARE Initiative returning citizens by conducting bi-weekly court sessions and providing wrap-around services, as well as a mentor, to address the reintegration needs of each returning citizen. Successful participants may earn up to a two-year reduction of their supervision.

If you are interested in volunteering for a VRP prevention initiative or providing resources to returning citizens through an “in-reach” or community based program, please contact:

**Chief of the Law Enforcement Coordination and
Community Outreach Section, J.D. Smith or one
of his team members at (305) 961-9134 or
usafls.vrp@usdoj.gov.**

United States Attorney's Office Southern District of Florida



United States Attorney's Office
Southern District of Florida

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Violence Reduction
Partnership (VRP)

In late 2011 the U.S. Attorney's Office (USAO) for the Southern District of Florida (SDFL) established the Violence Reduction Partnership (VRP) to address violent crime, gang activity and firearms offenses that plague high crime areas ("hot spots") within our communities. The VRP began in Miami-Dade County and has since expanded throughout the SDFL. As part of the VRP, federal, state and local law enforcement agencies, non-profit and private entities, faith-based organizations, community leaders, and educational institutions have joined forces with the USAO to target the criminal networks using a three prong approach. First, in order to advance our enforcement efforts, Assistant United States Attorneys (AUSAs) are specially assigned to handle matters within designated "hot spot" areas. Working with their law enforcement partners, the AUSAs facilitate community relations, gather intelligence, and identify the most prolific, violent offenders for prosecution. The collective mission is to ensure the safety of the community. Second, we support community based programs and initiatives designed to educate the public and prevent participation in criminal activity. Third, we provide services to inmates scheduled to return to the community (returning citizens), so that they have the resources and skillset needed for a successful reintegration.

For additional information regarding the VRP law enforcement initiative, please contact:

Assistant U.S. Attorney Maria Medetis at (305) 961-9100 or Maria.Medetis@usdoj.gov



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Simultaneously, and equally as important as the VRP law enforcement efforts are the USAO's community outreach and crime prevention initiatives. We encourage you to volunteer for one of the following programs:

PROJECT SENTRY and PROJECT SAFE CHILDHOOD

During the hour and a half long interactive Project Sentry and Project Safe Childhood programs, volunteers teach students to recognize dangers in the community, report problems and resolve issues. Project Sentry focuses on guns, gangs, and violence deterrence, while Project Safe Childhood educates the youth regarding bullying, cyberbullying, and internet safety. The programs are approved in Miami-Dade, Broward and Palm Beach Counties.

MAKING SMARTER CHOICES FIELDTRIPS

Volunteers speak to middle school students who visit the U.S. Attorney's Office and Miami federal courthouses regarding their academic and professional careers and the importance of "Making Smarter Choices". During the program, students participate in mock trial exercises.

YOUTH SUMMER CAMP

The Drug Education For Youth (DEFY)/VRP Leadership Summer Camp is a six day, overnight camp for at-risk youth, ages 9-12 years that provides kids with the self-esteem, leadership and teamwork skills needed to resist drugs, gangs, violent behavior, bullying, and cyberbullying.

PRE-K READING PROGRAM

The Pre-K Reading Program invites government, law enforcement, and private sector individuals to monthly reading sessions with 3 to 5 year old Pre-K students in disadvantaged communities. Students are provided a free book after each reading session to take home and start their own home library.



PEACE AMBASSADORS LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

The Peace Ambassadors Leadership Program empowers high school juniors to be "change agents" in their family, school, and community. High school juniors are trained to be "Peace Ambassadors". The training topics include: academic excellence, courage, character, compassion, self-esteem, and responsibility.

TEEN LIFE MAZE

The Teen Life Maze is a life-size board game that allows middle school students to experience the consequences of their decisions. Scenarios highlighted during the event includes: Domestic Violence/Human Trafficking, Illegal Substance Use, Bullying/Social Media Awareness, Gangs/Guns Violence, and Do's/Don'ts When Stopped by a Police Officer. The Teen Life Maze acts as a reality check for students. In addition, the Teen Life Maze equips teens with the tools to make better decisions, by exploring the snowballing effects of each decision.

POWER OF WORDS PRESENTATION

The Power of Words is a presentation/conversation that focuses on how hurtful words can lead to threats and assaultive behavior. The presentation identifies common warning signs and proactive measures that can be used to identify potentially harmful and/or unhealthy interactions between students.

COMMUNITY RESOURCE FAIRS and FOOD DISTRIBUTION PROGRAMS

Monthly Community Resource Fairs and Food Distribution Programs provide members of the community with essential services. Community members are able to obtain information from governmental and non-profit agencies regarding available programs and services. In addition, through a collaboration with the Miami-Dade Police Department, Fort Lauderdale Police Department, Feeding South Florida and Farm Share, Inc., VRP volunteers distribute free food to local residents.