Office of Justice Programs
Reentry Initiatives
The Problem

• **612,185** state prisoners released in 2003.

• **26%** of released prisoners in 2002 were violent offenders.

• Of **272,100** prisoners released in 15 states in 1994, **67%** were rearrested within 3 years. **22%** were rearrested for a violent offense.

• The 272,100 released prisoners accounted for **744,000** charges within 3 years of release, including 100,000 for charges for a violent crime (All statistics from the Bureau of Justice Statistics).

• An estimated 100,000 youth are released from secure and residential facilities every year (2004 Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention estimate).

• Communities are not prepared to provide adequate supervision and support.

• Resistance among law enforcement, community corrections and social service agencies that see reentry as a corrections/parole issue.

• Lack of pre- and post-release assessment of education, job readiness, and other characteristics.
Fort Wayne Reentry Initiative

- Prototype reentry initiative in Fort Wayne, Indiana that uses redeployed supervision and support resources.


- One year voluntary program with 6-month early release incentive.

- Focuses on southeast quadrant of the city, an area with a population of approximately 50,000.
Fort Wayne Reentry Initiative

State prisoners eligible for early release in 2000 and 2001:

- 590 Citywide
- 377 in Quadrant 4
  - 63% of Total

Quadrant 4’s share of Fort Wayne crime in 1999:

- Part 1 crimes: 42%
- Aggravated assaults: 42%
- Homicides: 53%

Sources: Indiana Department of Correction and the Fort Wayne Police Department
Fort Wayne Reentry Initiative

Control Components

• Individual offender assessment addressing risk to the community, education, employment, housing, mental health, substance abuse, and community/familial support networks.
• Reentry plan for each released offender developed by the community corrections center and formalized by the reentry court.
• Electronic monitoring (first 4 to 6 months).
• Intensive offender management and oversight by community corrections, parole, and local law enforcement personnel.
• Regular judicial review by the reentry court judge to insure compliance with a released offender’s reentry plan.
Fort Wayne Reentry Initiative

Support Components

• Housing.
• Remedial education.
• Employment readiness.
• Mental health/health services.
• Substance abuse treatment.
• Support systems and networks involving family as well as faith-based and neighborhood organizations.
• Basic social skills programs (hygiene, dress, interpersonal relationships, etc.).
Fort Wayne Reentry Initiative

Program graduates have much lower recidivism rates than the national recidivism rates estimated by the Bureau of Justice Statistics*:

• 23% 1 year after graduation compared to a national rate of 45% one year post-release.
• 31% 2 years after graduation compared to 59% 2 years post-release.
• 34% 3 years after graduation compared to 67% 3 years post-release (based on a small number of graduates).

In its first two years, the initiative saved an estimated $1.9 million in victim services and criminal justice costs.

All statistics on program graduates are preliminary and awaiting confirmation by the Institute for Public Sector Transformation

Serious and Violent Offender Reentry Initiative (SVORI)

- A collaborative Federal effort to develop prototype reentry programs for serious and violent adult and juvenile offenders returning to communities from post-adjudication correctional facilities.

- The Fort Wayne Reentry Initiative informed the SVORI design.

- Supported by the U.S. Departments of Justice, Education, Labor, Housing and Urban Development, and Health and Human Services

- Three year grants of approximately $2 million were awarded in 2003 to 69 sites.
Serious and Violent Offender Reentry Initiative

SVORI Design

Phase 1 - Behind the Walls: Full assessment before incarceration and pre-release to inform a reentry plan. Institution-based education, substance abuse treatment, mental health and vocational programs.

Phase 2 – Community Supervision: Community-based transition programs in accordance with a formal reentry plan – monitoring, remedial education, life skills training, continuing assessment, and other services.

Phase 3 – Post Supervision: Community-based long-term programs for individuals who have left justice system supervision (including assessment).
Weed and Seed Reentry Initiatives

- Office of Justice Programs initiative to prevent and control violent crime, drug abuse, and gang activity in designated high crime neighborhoods by providing funds and leveraging existing resources.

- Weed and Seed sites are high-crime areas, so have a disproportionate number of returning offenders.

- In 2007, all new Weed and Seed sites will be strongly advised to focus on reentry.
Weed and Seed/VISTA Initiative

- At 12 Weed and Seed sites, VISTA members recruit volunteers and secure community resources to assist in the successful reintegration of serious and violent offenders.

- Weed and Seed/VISTA Sites:
  - Chicago
  - Columbus
  - Cleveland
  - Dallas
  - Indianapolis
  - Miami
  - Oakland
  - Philadelphia
  - Portland
  - Providence
  - Washington, DC.
Reentry Best Practices

➢ **Define your reentry problem:** Number and location of released offenders over the next 5-10 years, plus current recidivism rates.

➢ **Involve key control components:** Courts, community corrections, parole, and local law enforcement.

➢ **Use support components:** Housing, remedial education, employment readiness, mental health and substance abuse treatment, faith-based services, and other social services.

➢ Redeploy and coordinate existing Federal, State, and local funding and resources.

➢ Limit reliance on external funding and resources.