



Virginia Community Reentry Initiative

2011 Northeast Family Strengthening Conference
September 26, 2011
Richmond, Virginia

Reentry in Virginia

- A cornerstone of Governor McDonnell's public safety initiative is to reduce victimization, improve outcomes for offenders returning to their communities, and favorably impact recidivism by strengthening the Commonwealth's prisoner re-entry program.

Reentry in Virginia

- "Effective re-entry policies can improve public safety, reduce victimization, improve outcomes for offenders returning to their communities, and favorably impact recidivism. A by-product of effective re-entry will be a reduction in cost to state and local governments."
Governor Robert F. McDonnell

Reentry in Virginia

- "Preparing prisoners for successful re-entry into communities is not soft on crime; it is sound public safety policy. It creates an opportunity to reduce recidivism, and reflects the idea that America is a nation which believes in second chances."
Bob McDonnell
The Ripon Forum, Spring 2011

Reentry in Virginia

- Executive Order 11
Established the Virginia Prisoner and Juvenile Reentry Council
- Virginia Adult Reentry Initiative
Virginia Department of Corrections
- Virginia Juvenile Reentry Initiative
Virginia Department of Juvenile Justice
- Virginia Community Reentry Initiative
Virginia Department of Social Services

Virginia Community Reentry Initiative

- The Virginia Community Reentry Initiative is an approach to reentry that grew out of the Commonwealth's participation in the Reentry Policy Academy of the National Governors Association
- The Virginia Community Reentry Initiative (VCRI) is a community-based reentry approach unique in its integration of human services and public safety
- It is being voluntarily implemented by a number of Virginia localities

Virginia Community Reentry Initiative

- Addresses Both System Change & Service Needs
- Developed Around Four Primary Principles:
 - Pre-release planning
 - Interagency/governmental level coordination
 - Integrated service delivery
 - Positive links to community with system of family and community support

Virginia Community Reentry Initiative

- Communities establish reentry councils
- Local human services directors, probation & parole chiefs and/or community partner agencies serve as conveners
- Brings together local human services, Community Service Boards, Workforce Investment Boards, non-profits and faith-based organizations, business community, public safety agencies and others to coordinate pre and post-release services with the incarcerated person returning to the community

Virginia Community Reentry Initiative

■ **Core Reentry Activities Include:**

- Linkage to Employment /Workforce Development Services
- Assistance With Locating Housing Resources
- Help With Connecting to Transportation
- Connection to Health/Mental Health/Substance Abuse Services
- Family Reintegration Services

Virginia Community Reentry Initiative

- Uses a Risk Assessment (COMPAS) and Outcome Focused Service Delivery System
- Integrates Use of Evidence Based Practices into Community Service Delivery (Thinking for a Change/Motivational Interviewing)
- Builds on Community, Individual and Family Assets
- Supports Family Reintegration through Links to Effective Parenting, Conflict Resolution and Healthy Relationships

Virginia Community Reentry Initiative

- Individual and Family Mentoring During the Pre-release Phase and for 9 Months Following Return to the Community
- Mentors Serve as Coaches for Those Returning to Help Them With Life Skills or Specific Skills Development Such as Job Interviewing or Completion of a G.E.D.
- Mentors Support Family Reintegration Activities and Model Healthy Relationships

Virginia Community Reentry Initiative

- Prisoner Reentry into the Community is a Certainty:
 - More than 90% of those who enter state prison will be released
 - Over 12,000 to 13,000 offenders are released each year from Virginia correctional centers

Virginia Community Reentry Initiative

- Local Community Engagement is Key to Successful Reentry
- VCRI Offers a Community Based Reentry Approach that Maximizes Existing Resources

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Virginia Community Reentry Initiative
Councils Established, Under Development, or In Planning Stage



Prepared by Virginia Department of Social Services, Office of Research and Planning, Mike Thiel
12/10/10 as of December 10, 2010

Virginia Community Reentry Initiative

- VCRI Implementation Continues
- Four University Evaluation of VCRI Being Led by Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU)
- Field of implementation science shows that several years of work is needed to develop and stabilize new initiatives before fidelity is established

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