

The Goal

To decrease the rate of recidivism and increase the esteem of both the individual and the community by assisting previously incarcerated people in overcoming the multi-faceted barriers they face when reentering the community.

Advisory Committee

Candy Craig, County Mental Health

Cindy Harmon, REST Ministries

Jack Healy, Chester County Prison

Michelle Manthey, REST Ministries

James Lindsay, Adult Probation & Parole

Peter Roomet, CC Prison Chaplain

Nathan Schenker, Public Defender's Office

Bill Shaw, Life Transforming Ministries

Lila Singleton, Career Link

Cynthia Vickers Wilson, CC DA's Office

Thank you To Our Contributors

Beacon Financial

The Brook J. Lenfest Foundation

*The Chester County Department
of Community Development*

The Patricia Kind Family Foundation

Individuals

Located at:

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Director/ Mentor Coordinator

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An Initiative of



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A collaborative faith-based initiative
with the City of Coatesville and
the Chester County Judicial System

Breaking the unseen

chains that bind

no I.D. addiction lack of education unemployment broken families

Facts to Ponder

- ◆ The Chester County Prison population rose to **900+** at the beginning of 2006.
- ◆ The average cost per inmate is **\$64.00 per day**.
- ◆ The total daily cost to house the inmate population is \$50,000-60,000+ with an **annual cost of 20,000,000+**.
- ◆ A majority of the 6,042 inmates released from Chester County Prison during 2003 returned to the Coatesville Community.
- ◆ **60% of offenders will be re-arrested within 3 years of their release.**
- ◆ Recidivism is **both a generational and community problem.**

History

- ◆ In 2003 a prison aftercare taskforce was formed to address the high recidivism rate in Coatesville. Local officials from the Chester County District Attorney's office, probation and parole, prison and other local agencies continue to work together to determine the best way to combat recidivism in the city.
- ◆ As the result of their collaborative effort this faith-based initiative began in 2005.

The Home Plan

The caseworker goes into Chester County Prison to interview inmates returning to the Coatesville area. At the initial interview a **needs assessment** is done and a **home plan** is put into place.

The caseworker obtains birth certificates for those still incarcerated so they have **personal identification upon their release**. This is key in finding housing and applying for employment.

The caseworker coordinates with other agencies to present various workshops in the prison, giving the inmates an opportunity to **get a head start on job-readiness**.

In networking with various area service providers, the **caseworker acts as an advocate and liaison** for those to-be, and/or are, newly released persons.

Fresh Start Classes

These classes are attended while incarcerated. The attendees learn that **they do have a choice** when they re-enter the community—that they don't have to answer the "voice" that calls them back to the old ways. They also learn how to change their thinking about self, others, God and life with the goal of learning to deal with life events in a healthier productive way.

Volunteer Mentoring

The mentor serves as an **encouraging friend who lovingly holds the mentoree accountable** to follow through with the goals set out for him/her. The mentor also serves as a **guide through difficult times**.

A commitment is made by both the mentor and mentoree to the mentoring relationship for a **period of one year** and the mentoring match is made during the mentorees' incarceration.

The mentor and mentoree both have added support as the mentor invites the mentoree to attend and become a part of their place of worship.

Volunteers receive mentor training through an **at-home study** and receive on-going support and information throughout the year by attending scheduled peer group mentor meetings.

Your Connection

- **To learn more about mentoring** or how your place of worship can join in this endeavor contact Chris McNamara (Ext. 1).
- **To let us know about a service you provide** that may benefit the previously incarcerated contact Janis McElwee (Ext. 2).