Reducing Recidivism in Arizona

Summary

• Purpose was to determine what works to reduce recidivism in Arizona as told by prisoners to prisoners
• Participatory action research that incorporated people who are incarcerated at all stages of the research process
• Employment, housing, substance abuse discussed as barriers to reentry

Data and Methods

• Sample included 409 men incarcerated in a medium security prison
• 5 incarcerated men conducted semi-structured interviews on challenges and solutions to effective reentry

Findings

• Job training offered in prison not useful upon release
• 1/3 of the men did not know where they would live upon release
• Identified needs upon release: employment (72%), assistance with healthcare (71%), proper ID (71%), mentorship (62%), family or friend support (60%), and transportation (54%)

Implications

• Meaningful employment, job training, and trade opportunities while in prison would reduce recidivism and make for a more positive and supportive prison environment
• Job placement prior to or at release viewed as main solution to recidivism
• Mentorship critical at all stages of imprisonment and reentry

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