## Gauging the Needs and Desires of those Reentering the Community: The Safer Monroe Area Reentry Team (SMART) Reentry Survey Report

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## Gauging the Needs and Desires of those Reentering the Community: The Safer Monroe Area Reentry Team (SMART) Reentry Survey Report

One of the most important and misunderstood sub-populations in Rochester is that of those returning to the community from prisons and jails. In his 2005 book But they All Come Back', Jeremy Travis argues that about half of all those released will convicted of a new crime within three years of their release. In light of this, the need for tools and information to help better understand and work with this sub-population is paramount to any criminal justice approach.

The Safer Monroe Area Reentry Team, which will be referred to by the acronym SMART for the remainder of the report, works closely with this sub-population in Rochester. In an attempt to further understand the needs and desires of those reentering, SMART developed a six page survey for those whom they provide services.

### Methodology

The survey used in this study (Appendix A) asked respondents 30 questions ranging from simple descriptive information, such as age or type of conviction, to broader open-ended questions, such as which services they felt were more important than others.

The surveys were given to various services providers in Monroe County who then distributed those surveys to their reentry clients. These providers were Catholic Family Center, Volunteers of America, The Salvation Army, Evelyn Brandon Wellness Center, Rochester Rehabilitation, Altamont House, Grace House of Rochester, Recovery Houses of Rochester, YWCA, Sojourner House, and East House. The number of surveys returned differed by provider.

This method resulted in a convenience sample of **222** surveys representing a multitude of demographics, some of which may be represented at rates that differ from those within the general population. Most notably there is a disproportionately high number of sex offenders within the sample. The combination of only sampling those receiving services and using a convenience sampling method limits the ability of this study to generalize its findings to all people reentering the community from prison and jails. However, this unique sample should provide valuable insight into how a group of people reentering the community think about particular issues. This study is also valuable in that it is one of the first of its kind in the Rochester area. Overall, this research is intended to generate discussion about reentry as a practice within Monroe County, as well as drive further research and policy implementation on the topic of reentry and reentry services in the future. The data in the report will be referenced in aggregate. However, general demographic information for the sample will be listed in this report so that disproportionately represented sub-groups can be easily identified by the reader.

#### Data

The following section will list the sample's responses to the SMART reentry survey. This includes the demographic information of the sample as well as the sample's responses to which services are most important. Following this will be a breakdown of the information by the various sub-groups within the sample. For example this report

will examine the differences in most important services by gender and race. Not every question was answered by all 222 respondents in the sample.

### Demographic Information

Table 1 lists the various demographic breakdowns for the SMART Reentry Sample. Overall the sample was predominantly male, African American, and English speaking. As noted above, there was a large proportion of sex offenders within the sample. Only a small part of the sample was veterans. Not every respondent listed an answer to all demographic questions.

Table 1
Descriptive Statistics

	Sample	
Demographics	%	N
Gender		
Male	77.6	170
Female	20.7	46
Race		
Black Non-Hispanic	48.2	107
White-Non-Hispanic	22.8	64
Hispanic	11.3	25
Bi-Racial	5.9	13
Other or Unreported	5.9	13
Primary language Spoken		
English	88.7	197
Spanish	5.9	13
Other or Unreported	5.4	12
Sex Offender Status		
Is a Registered Sex Offender	24.8	55
Is not a Registered Sex	70.7	157
Offender		
Veteran Status	4.1	9
Is a Veteran	95.0	211
Is Not a Veteran		

The survey also asked those within the sample about their age, educational attainment, source of income, and their current living situation. Figure 1 shows the age distribution of the sample. The mean age of the sample was 38 years old. Figure 2 depicts the educational attainment distribution for the sample. The figure combines 36 respondents who reported that they had received a GED with the 12 years of educational attainment group. However, there is no way to distinguish in the survey if those who received a GED received it before or after they were incarcerated. The category of 'some college' includes those who reported that they had taken one year of college up to those who reported finishing a four year degree.

Figure 1

Age Distribution of SMART Reentry

Sample N = 219

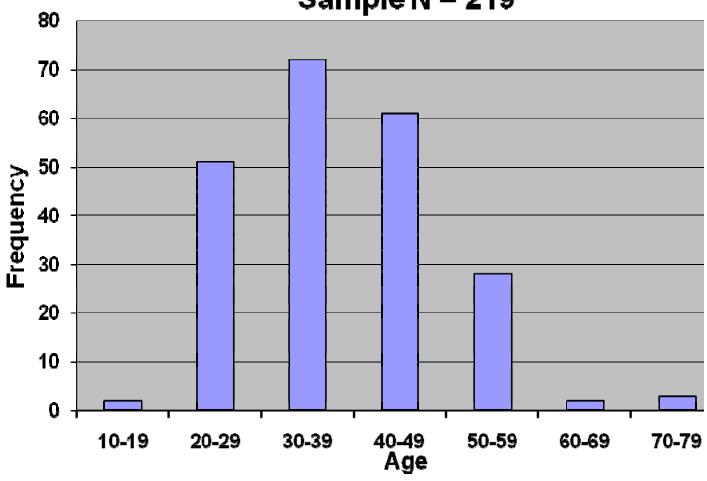
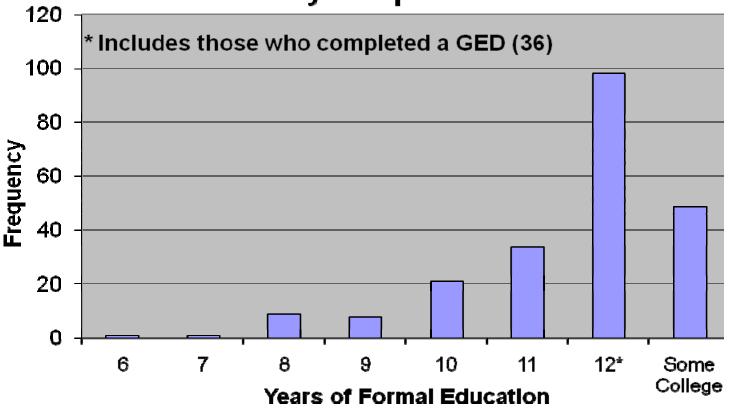


Figure 2

Educational Attainment of SMART

Reentry Sample N = 211



### Release Information

Table 2 & Table 3 list pre-release and general release information for the sample. Consistent with sampling only those people returning from prison who are now receiving services, the majority of the sample stated that they had both worked with a person to understand what was required for successful reentry, and knew that they had a specific service waiting for them after their release.

In regards to the respondents' release information, the majority of the sample was sent to prison for the commission of a crime, as opposed to a violation of probation or parole. Also, those in the sample were more likely to have been released from a state or federal facility, have been released within the past 12 months, and to have been released under parole supervision.

Table 2
Descriptive Statistics

		Sample
Pre Release	<b>%</b>	N
Worked with a Person and talked about		
Successful Reentry Prior to Release		
Reported Doing so	59.0	131
Did not Report Doing so	41.0	79
Services upon Release		
Listed that they would have a service upon release	50.5	112
Did not list that they would have a service upon release	49.5	110
Information Wanted before Release		
Reported wanting more information prior to release	73.1	140
Did not report wanting more information prior to release	36.9	82

Table 3
Descriptive Statistics

	Sa	mple
Release Information	%	N
Last Court Sentence		
Commission of a Crime	58.1	129
Violation of probation or Parole	23.4	52
Other	7.7	17
Unreported	10.8	24
Where Released		
State or Federal	63.1	140
Monroe County Jail	14.9	33
Monroe County Correctional Facility	13.5	30
Other	8.6	19
Release Conditions		
Parole	50.5	112
Probation	27.0	60
Maxed out	13.4	30
Unreported	9.0	20
Time since Release		
0-12 Months	68.0	151
12-24 Months	11.3	25
24+ Months	14.4	32
Unreported	6.3	14
Support Person		
Reported having a Support Person	74.3	167
Did not Report having a Support Person	25.7	57

In addition to this information, the survey also asked the sample about their past experience with the criminal justice system, their involvement with incarceration services, their current income and living situations, and their support networks.

Figure 3 and Figure 4 show the sample's number of felony convictions, and the number of incarcerations, respectively. No specification was made in the survey for whether 'incarceration' meant sentencing to prison or jail. Most respondents within the sample were convicted of one felony with one individual having been convicted twelve times. The mean number of felony convictions was 1.67. Similar trends can be seen in regards to the number of incarcerations for the respondents within the sample. Again, most individuals had been incarcerated one time, with the most frequently incarcerated individual in the sample having reported being sentenced to prison or jail 31 times. The mean number of incarcerations was 2.84.

Figure 3

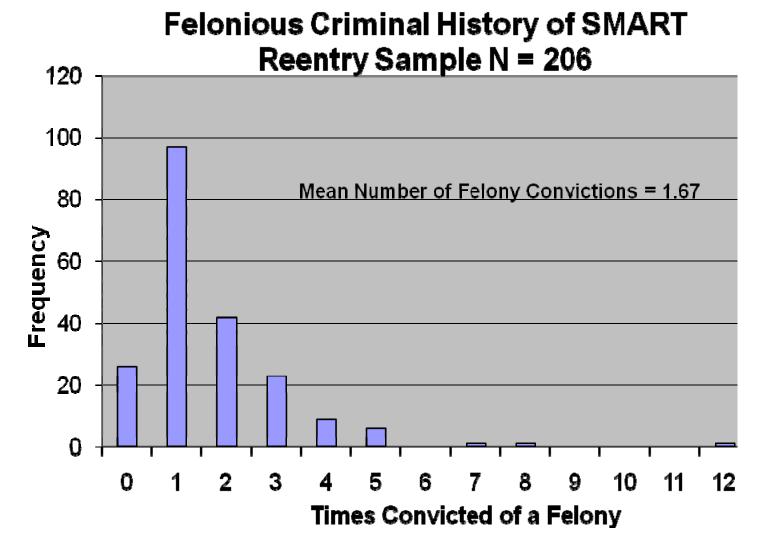
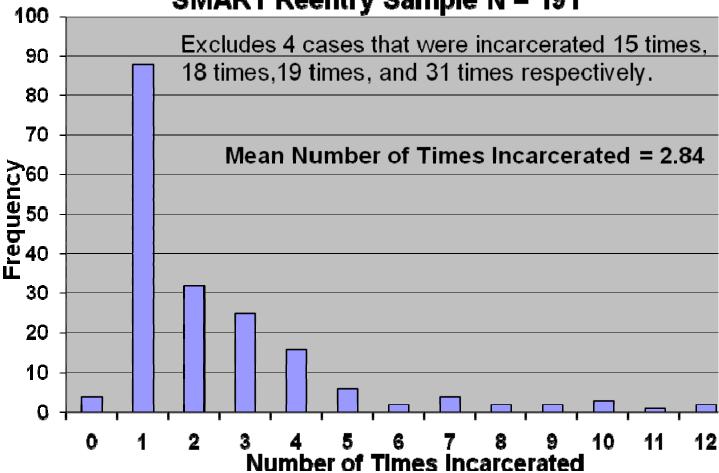


Figure 4

## Number of Times Incarcerated for SMART Reentry Sample N = 191



The survey asked respondents whether or not they had partaken in services while incarcerated. This question listed six possible services that respondents could report haven taken, and then left a place for respondents to report any additional services they might have received. The listed services are shown in Figure 6. Figure 5 and Figure 6 show the number of services each respondent reported participating in, and the number within the sample that participated in a program compared to the number that did not report participating in those programs, respectively. In regards to the additional services listed, 31 respondents listed 18 additional services including anger management, autodidactic development, a correspondence course, church, custodial maintenance, food service, job training, legal programs, parenting, transitional services, and sex offender programs.

Figure 5

Number of Services Participated in While Incarcerated N = 221

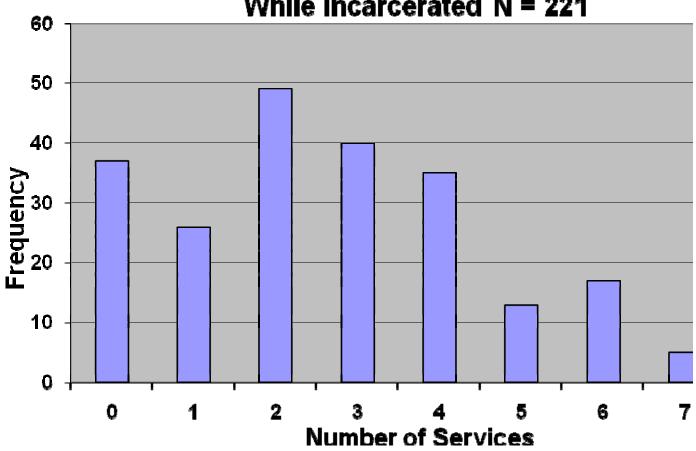


Figure 6



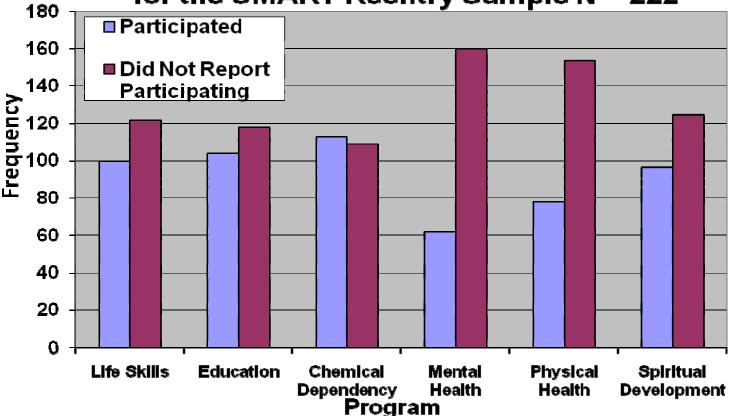
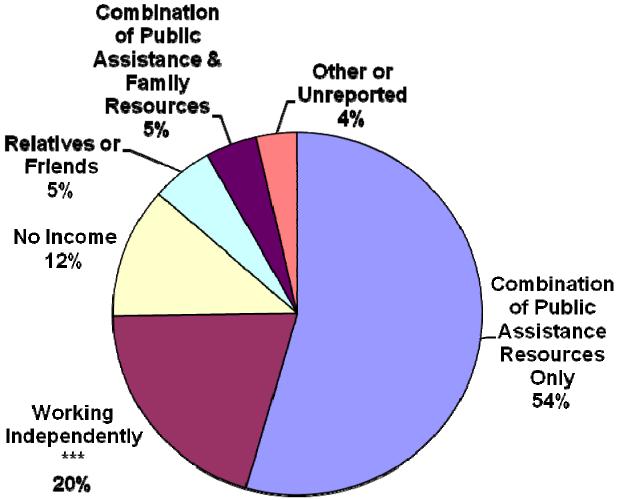


Figure 7 and Figure 8 show the income and living situations for the sample, respectively. In regards to sources of income, the sample was asked to select from a list of nine sources from which they received income. Respondents could list all that applied. Similar sources were then collapsed into the categories shown in Figure 7. The category 'combination of public assistance resources only' includes the sources unemployment benefits, SSI/SSD, social services, social security, and food stamps. The category of 'working independently' includes both full-time (10.5%) and part-time (9.5%) work. Of the sample, 18% were working independently without assistance at the time of the survey, and 2% were working independently while receiving public assistance.

Figure 8 shows the living situations for the sample. Most people live either independently (31%), with a family member (21%), or in transitional housing (22%). The category of 'combination' refers to those listing multiple locations and includes people who typically reported living in and emergency shelter and either transitional housing or housing for a special program, such as chemical dependency or sex offender programs.

Figure 7

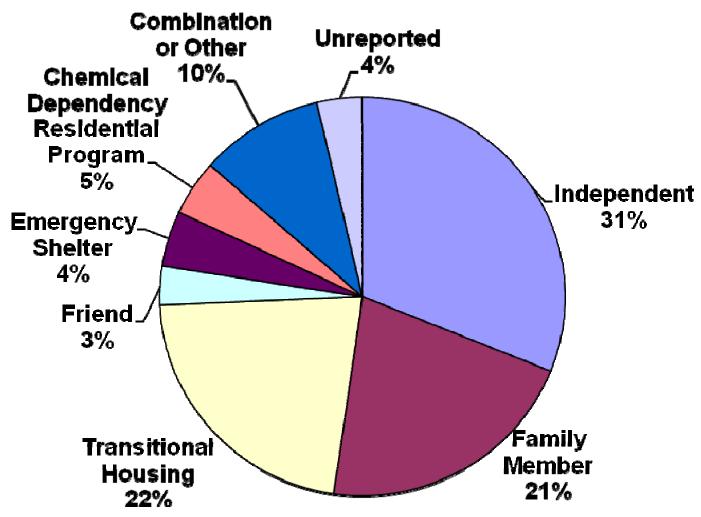
# Sources of Income for the SMART Reentry Sample N = 222



\*\*\*Denotes the inclusion of 4 respondents (2%) who work independently and receive government aid

Figure 8 ving Situations for the SMAR

# Living Situations for the SMART Reentry Sample N = 222

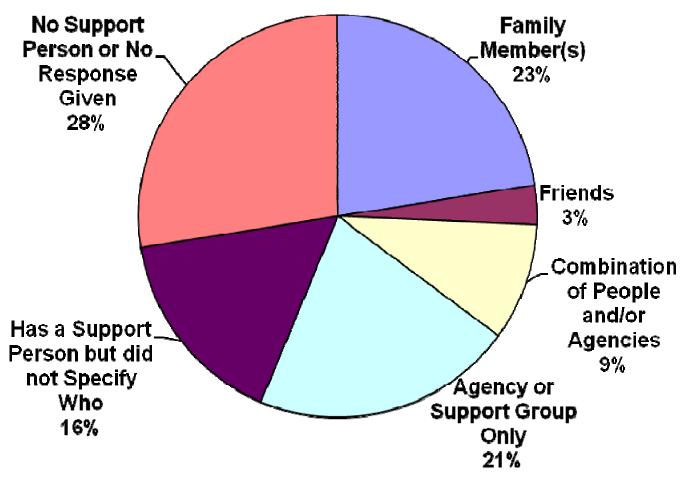


In addition to asking whether or not respondents had a support person, the survey also allowed for respondents to list who that support person was. Figure 9 is a trend analysis for those listed responses. The term 'agency' includes service providers for the sample, often including the same groups that provided the surveys for the sample. The term support group was typically an Alcohols or Narcotics Anonymous group or religious organization. The Category of 'combination of people or agencies' denotes those with multiple support people, agencies, family members, friends, or all. Because the analysis

used in Figure 9 is a trend analysis, there may exist some degree of inter-coder reliability error, meaning that others who look at the raw data may see trends dissimilar to those that are identified within this analysis.

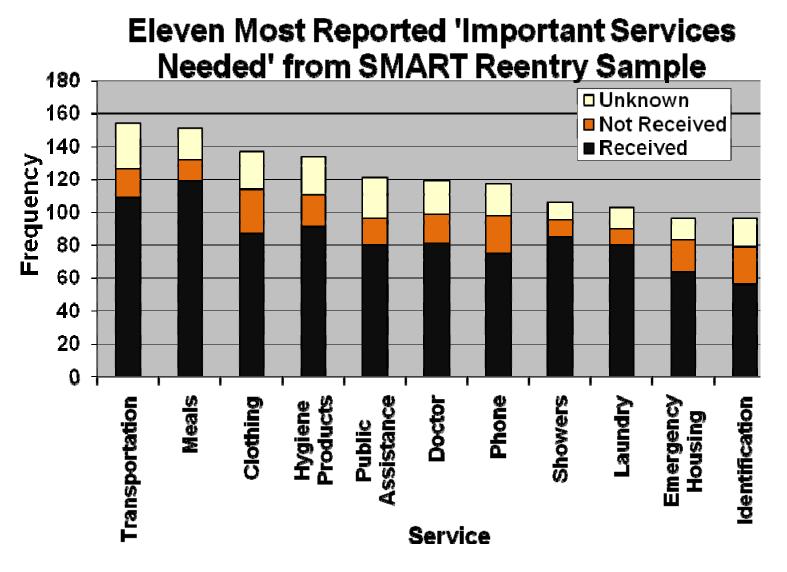
Figure 9

## Listed Support Person(s) for SMART Reentry Sample N = 222



The survey also asked respondents to look over a list of post-release services, found in appendix 1. Respondents were asked to indicate which 10 services they felt were most important for themselves and others in reentry and then state whether or not they had received the service. Figure 10 shows the eleven most reported services, there was a tie for tenth, for the sample as a whole. The category of 'unknown' depicts those that reported a service as important but did not report if they had received it.

Figure 10



### **Cross-Tabulation Analysis**

Cross-tabulation analysis is a way to break down data, in this situation survey information, into groups so that the groups can be compared across the questions with the survey. One example of this would be dividing the surveys into two groups, males and females, and then comparing those two groups against each other by age, race, number of services received while incarcerated, or any other variable in the survey.

In this analysis, various groups within the survey will be compared to each other in regards to the top post-release services which they felt were important. For example, this analysis will examine whether more males or more females report the service of 'meals' as important. Only those differences that passed a 90% confidence interval are shown in this report. This was done not for the purpose of generalization, as the sample is not random, but to identify those larger differences that might be examined further in the future.

This analysis will examine differences by gender, race, time since release, what the respondents' last convictions were for, what type of facility the respondents were released from, the conditions of the respondents' release, the number of services respondents received in Prison, respondents' attitudes about themselves, if respondents have a support person post-release, the number of years of education received, and age. This analysis will also discuss the relationship between the time since a respondent has been released from prison or jail and where they are likely to be living.

All information captured was directly self reported save for respondents' attitudes about themselves. This measure was taken as an average of the respondents' responses to 9 five-point likert scale questions. Those questions were; relationship with self, relationship with family, relationship with friends, ability to deal with problems, education level, ability to earn a living, physical health, mental health, and spiritual health.

It is important to reiterate the limitations of the data in this analysis. Because the sample used is not a random sample of those reentering the community from prisons and jails, the information from this analysis generally should not be used as an accurate representation of that population's thoughts. However, this analysis can be used to show general trends within the data while providing a reference point for future research into the topic of reentry.

Secondly, it is important to note that the relationships below may be spurious. All relationships are shown to stimulate thought and to drive further research. It is the hopes of this analysis to conduct focus group interviews with a sample of those returning from prisons or jails in an attempt to better understand the relationships depicted in the crosstabulation tables below.

To begin, differences in reported important services between those who must register as sex offenders and those who do not will be examined. The number of services that differed between these groups was the greatest. Because of this and the large proportion of sex offenders that constitute the sample, sex offenders will be removed from the analysis in tables 5 through 13, as indicated in those tables.

Table 4
Differences in Most Important Services

Percent that	Percent that Reported Service as Importan		
Must the Respondent Register as a Sex Offender?	No (N=157)	Yes (N=55)	
Emergency Housing	36.9	61.8	
Help Finding Housing	32.5	63.6	
Transportation	66.8	80.0	
Sanctions Reduction	7.6	16.4	
Doctor	47.8	74.5	
Dental	37.6	50.9	
Medication	35.7	49.1	
Mental Health	36.9	61.8	
Public Assistance	49.7	74.5	
Health Insurance	24.8	38.2	
Rent Subsidies	23.6	38.2	
Food Stamps	33.8	61.8	
Legal Services	13.4	27.3	

Table 5
Differences in Most Important Services (Sex offenders Removed)

	Percent that Reported S	Percent that Reported Service as Important		
Gender	Males (N=116)	Females (N=37)		
Meals	70.7	54.1		
Showers	50.9	35.1		
Medication	31.0	48.6		
Mental Health Treatment	26.7	48.6		

Table 6
Differences in Most Important Services (Sex offenders Removed)

	Percent that Reported Service as Importa	
Race	Whites (N=41)	Non-Whites (N=112)
Transitional Housing	51.2	34.8
Sanctions Reduction	14.6	5.4
Medication	53.7	27.7
Alcohol or Drug Treatment	58.5	37.5
Mental Health Treatment	46.3	25.9
Health Insurance	43.9	17.9
Help with Rent Subsidies	34.1	20.5
Food Stamps	46.3	30.4
Case management Link to Services	36.6	20.5

Table 7
Differences in Most Important Services (Sex offenders Removed)

	Percent that Reported Service as Important		
Time since Release	Less than 1 year (N=113)	More than 1 year (N=35)	
Clothing	66.7	42.9	
Hygiene Products	64.9	48.6	
Showers	51.8	28.6	
Laundry	50.9	22.9	
Mail	38.6	20.0	
Phone	54.4	37.1	
Transportation	71.1	51.4	
Dental	34.2	51.5	
Mental health Treatment	27.2	48.6	

Table 8
Differences in Most Important Services (Sex offenders Removed)

	Percent that Reported Service as Importa		
<b>Number of Services While Incarcerated</b>	3 or less (N=111)	4 or more (N=45)	
Transitional Housing	35.1	51.1	
Permanent Supportive Housing	22.5	35.6	
Help Finding Housing	27.0	44.4	
Eye Care	25.2	42.2	
Spiritual	19.8	42.2	
Mentor	13.5	24.4	

Table 9
Differences in Most Important Services (Sex offenders Removed)

	Percent that Reported Service as Important		
<b>Attitudes about Self</b>	Below Sample Avg. (N=59)	Above Sample Avg. (N=72)	
Transportation	62.7	79.2	
Dental	49.2	34.7	
Alcohol or Drug Treatment	33.9	56.9	
Mental Health	20.3	44.4	
Public Housing	39.0	58.3	
Disability Benefits	15.3	27.8	
Food Stamps	25.4	44.4	

Table 10
Differences in Most Important Services (Sex offenders Removed)

	Percent that Reported Service as Important		
Years of Education	12 years or less (N=131)	More than 12 Years (N=23)	
Medication	32.8	52.2	
Mental Health Treatment	19.1	52.2	

Educational Service 29.0 34.8

Table 11
Differences in Most Important Services (Sex offenders Removed)

	Percent that Reported Service as Important		
<b>What Last Conviction was for</b>	Commission of a Crime (N=96)	Revocation (N=48)	
Laundry	37.5	56.3	
Mail	24.0	54.2	
Phone	43.8	62.5	
ID	37.5	54.2	

Note in table 10 that 'revocation' indicates that a person either violated terms of probation or parole, or indicated 'other'. Few listed what 'other' meant save for two individuals stating that they had failed out of residential treatment programs that were presumably conditions of early release from prison.

Table 12
Differences in Most Important Services (Sex offenders Removed)

	Percent that Reported Service as Important		
	State or Federal Facility	County Jail	County Corrections
Where Released	(N=100)	(N=24)	(N=24)
Medication	27.0	63.5	41.7
Alcohol or Drug Treatment	35.0	58.3	58.3
Mental health Treatment	24.0	62.5	37.5
Case Management- Assessment of Needs	26.0	50.0	33.3

Table 13
Differences in Most Important Services (Sex offenders Removed)

	Percent that Reporte	Percent that Reported Service as Important			
Age	40 or Younger (N=105)	Older than 40 (N=50)			
Doctor	42.9	58.0			
Eye Care	24.8	40.0			
Medication	30.5	46.0			
Disability Benefits	18.1	32.0			
Food Stamps	29.5	44.0			
Spiritual	21.0	38.0			

Table 13 shows the relationship between the time since a person returning from prison or jail has been released and where that person is likely to be living. Those having been released for less than a year were more likely to be living with a family member or in transitional housing compared to those having been released for more than a year, but about half as likely to be living independently compared to the same.

Table 14
Differences in Living Situations by Time since Release (Sex offenders Included)

	Percent Reporting Living Situation			
	Released less than 1 year ago	Released more than 1 year ago		
Where Respondent Is Living	(N=147)	(N=54)		
Independent	23.1	53.7		
Family Member Temporarily	17.7	11.1		
Transitional Housing	27.2	9.3		

Table 14 shows the relationship between the services respondents participated in while incarcerated in and where respondents were released. State and Federal facilities denotes any state or federal facility, and Monroe County denotes either the Monroe County Jail or Monroe County Correctional Facility.

Generally those leaving a state or federal facility were more likely to have received the services listed in the survey. The one exception to this was that those returning from Monroe County Facilities were more likely to have participated in a mental health program.

Table 15
Differences in Services participated in While Incarcerated by Where Respondent
Was Released (Sex offenders Included)

Percent that Reported Participating in Service While Incarcerated in Facility				
Services	State or Federal (N=93)	Monroe County (N=45)		
Life Skills Training	64.5	22.2		
Educational Program	62.4	31.1		
Chemical Dependency Program	60.2	51.1		
Mental Health Program	18.3	35.6		
Physical Health Program	39.8	28.9		
Spiritual Development Program	50.5	40.0		

### Conclusion

Further research on the topic of prisoner reentry in the Rochester community needs to be done to better understand the questions raised by this report. Firstly, why are there differences between sub-groups in regards to important post release services? Focus group interviews and discussions should help answer this question. Focus groups should also tease out which differences in those post release services offered earlier are spurious and which have meaning. Furthermore, what effect do these services have on those reentering the community from prisons or jails? Further research into the contribution of these services, or lack thereof, to recidivism rates should be considered. Should the effect of providing these services be great, it might prove to be grounds for a policy intervention aimed at providing these services to those returning from prisons or jails.

## (Appendix A) 2009 REENTRY SURVEY

Your input and the input of many other people will increase successful reentry in the Greater Rochester community. The community has both a wide range of services available to people in reentry. AND too many people face multiple barriers, both personal and organizational, to achieve their reentry objectives.

Your input is fundamental to make significant progress. We need you to tell us what is working and what most needs to be improved. Your own experiences and your thoughts about the experiences of other people you know are both important.

At the end of this survey, we ask whether you want to receive the results of this survey and whether you want to provide on-going input. Please let us know.

<b>DATE:</b>					
LOCATION WHERE	E SURVEY A	ADMINISTER	ED:		
INTERVIEWER (If a	ıny):				
How long ago were yo	ou released fr	om a local, sta	te, or federal	facility?	
0-12 months					
<b>13-24 months</b>					
25+ months					
Unique Identifier:					
1 <sup>st</sup> letter of First Nam of Birth	e Last 3 let	ters of Last Na	me last 4 di	gits of SS#	Year

Thanks in advance for completing this survey.

### **2009 REENTRY SURVEY**

1. Gender: Male Female	Transgender
2. Which ethnicity / race do you consider your  American Indian/Alaskan Native Hawaiian/Other Pac Asian Black or African American White – Non-Hispanic Hispanic / Latino Bi-racial Other	Native cific Islander
3. Are you a Veteran? Yes No	
4. How old are you?	
5. Primary Language spoken: English language):	Spanish Other (specify
6. While I was incarcerated I participated in tas apply)	the following services: (check as many
Life Skills Development	Yes No
F.J., 4	<b>V N</b> -
Chemical Dependency	Yes No Yes No
Mental Health	YesNo
Physical Health – doctor / medicine	
Spiritual Development	YesNo
Other	
<ul><li>7. Prior to release I worked with someone to usuccessfully reenter into the community?</li><li>8. I had a specific service(s), for example, hou</li></ul>	Yes No

₽.	would obtain?	
10.	What would you have most wanted to know prior to release to help you make a successful transition to the community?	

11. What is your current source of income? (Check all that apply)

 	· · · · · · · · · ·
Full Time Employment	Part Time Employment
Daily Work as Available	Public Assistance – Social Service
Unemployment Benefits	Social Security
SSI/SSD	Food Stamps
Relatives/Friends	Other:
No Source of Income	

12. Current living situation?

 ent nymg situation.	
Independent Living (in own apt., house, etc.)	Home of Family Member - Temporarily
Emergency Shelter	Home of Friend-Temporarily
Transitional Housing	Home of Family Member - Permanent
Hotel/Motel Placement	Home of Friend- Permanent
Chemical Dependency Residential Program	Uninhabitable Place (ie. – car, abandoned
	house, etc.)
Mental Health Residential Program	Other:
-	

**13. Status of your personal strengths / skills?** For each strength/skill, please check your current level. Please put an "X" in the appropriate box.

STRENGTH / SKILL	Excellent	Very Good	Okay	Not Good	Poor	Comment, If Any
Relationship with yourself						
Relationship with Family Members						
Relationship with friends						
Ability to deal with problems						
Education level – GED, etc. degree						
Ability to earn a living – self-supporting						
Physical health						
Mental health						
Spiritual health						
Other - Please describe:						

### 14. PLEASE CIRCLE THE TEN MOST IMPORTANT SERVICES needed by you

**and other people in reentry?** For each service you CIRCLED, please indicate whether you have:

Received that service and from whom you received the service.

Not Received that service and why you have not received that service.

SERVICES	I Received Service – From Whom?	I Did Not Receive Service - Why Not?
<u>HOUSING</u>		
1. Emergency Housing		
2. Transitional Housing		
3. Permanent Supportive Housing		
4. Help to find safe, affordable housing		
BASIC NEEDS:		
5. Food/Hot Meals		
6. Clothing		
7. Personal Hygiene Products		
8. Showers		
9. Laundry Services		
10. Mail Services		
11. Phone Services		
12. Personal Identification		
13. Transportation / Bus Pass		
14. Sanctions Reduction / Elimination		
HEALTH CARE		
15. Doctor / Nurse		
16. Special Medical Care, for example HIV / AIDS		
17. Dental Care		
18. Eye Care / Glasses		
19. Medications		
20. Alcohol / Drug Treatment		

21. Mental Health Treatment		
INCOME SUPPORT		
22. Public Assistance (i.e DHS, Social Services)		
23. Disability Benefits/SSI/SSDI		
24. Health Insurance		
25. Help with paying Child Care		
26. Help with securing rent subsidy (ie. – Sec. 8, Shelter Plus Care)		
27. Food Stamps		
<u>SELF-DEVELOPMENT</u>	-	
28. Case Management – Assess Needs		
29. Case Management – Link to Provider of Service(s)		
30. Job Readiness / Job Training		
31. Job Placement		
32. Educational Services		
33. Developmental Disability		
34. Learning Disability		
35. Legal Services		
36. Money Management		
37. Time Management		
38. Domestic Violence Services		
39. Parenting		
40. Family Reunification		
41. Child Care Services		
42. Spiritual		
43. Mentor		

15.	What Service(s) that is NOT LISTED above, did you Most Need?
16.	. What service would be MOST HELPFUL before or after release into the community?
17.	Is there a person(s) or place you go to when you need support?
	What is the highest grade level you have completed?
	How many times have you been convicted of a felony?  How many times have you been sentenced and incarcerated?
	Based on most recent release - Incarceration was due to what type of conviction:  Commission of a Crime: Violation of Probation/Parole:
	Other: Other:  Released from: State/Federal Correctional Facility Monroe County Jail (Downtown)
	Monroe Correctional Facility Youth Facility
23.	Release Conditions: Parole Supervision? Probation?  Maxed out? None?

24.	Are you required to register as a sex offender?YN If you answered Yes, at what level sex offender are you registered?
25.	How well do you think the service providers, corrections, and others support your reentry needs and the needs of other people in reentry?
26.	Is there anything else you would like to share with us?
27.	Would you be willing to provide input regarding reentry every three months so that we can better understand what is working and what needs to improve? YN
28.	Would you like a copy of the results of this survey? N
	you answered YES to either question #27 or 28, please provide contact ormation like telephone number or address.

Thanks very much for completing this survey.