



Reentry from Incarceration FAQ

Presentation to the
CAN Resource Council
April 17, 2009

WHAT IS RE-ENTRY?

Reentry is the process by which incarcerated persons return to the community. The reentry process should begin at arrest and continue through community reintegration.



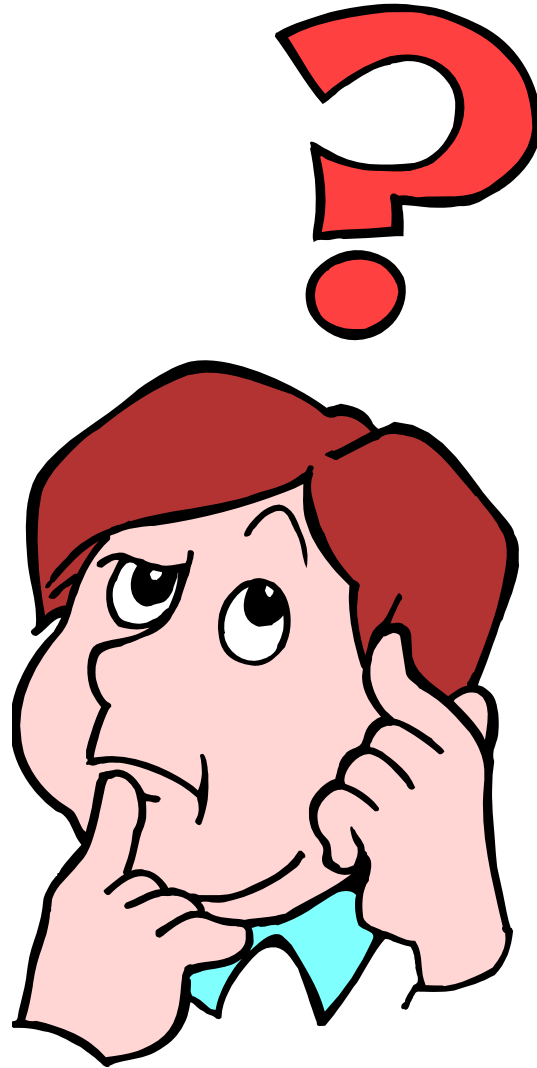
Ninety-five percent of offenders will eventually return to the community!

Disclaimer

For the purposes of this document, reentry from incarceration refers only to ex-offenders who served time in a state prison.

The best reentry is no entry!

WHY DOES SUCCESSFUL RE-ENTRY MATTER?



HERE ARE JUST SOME OF THE REASONS!

PUBLIC SAFETY: Reduced recidivism means reduced victimization!

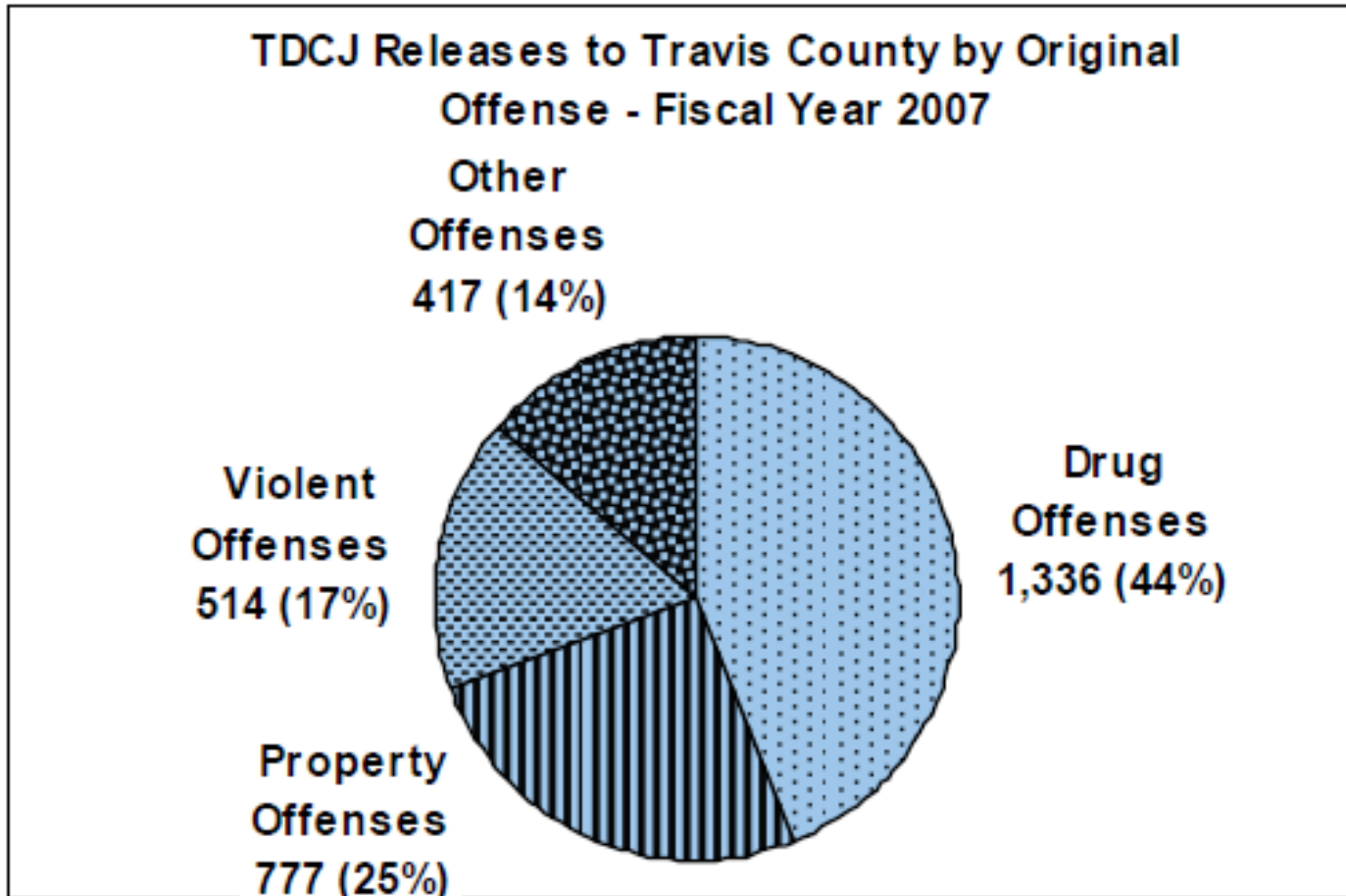
SAVES TAXPAYER DOLLARS: While TDCJ averages \$40.06 per day per offender for incarceration, community supervision only costs \$2.27 per day.

STABILITY FOR CHILDREN OF EX-OFFENDERS: An estimated 2,000 AISD students have a parent in prison.

WHO IS COMING BACK?

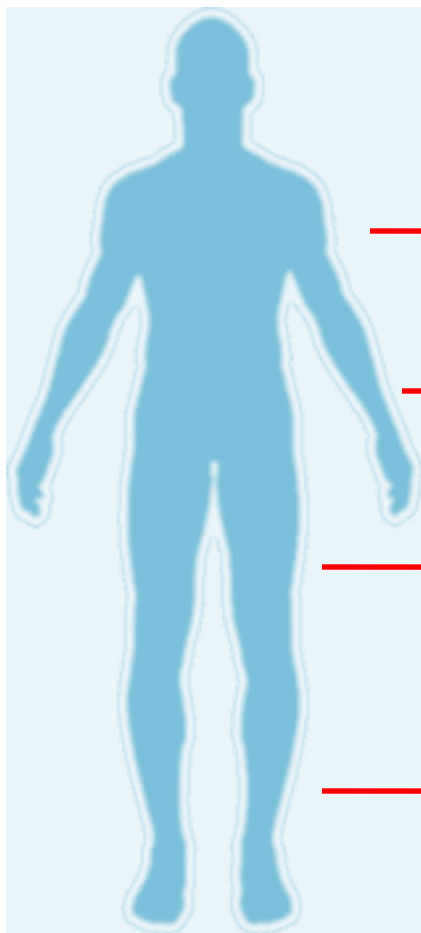
- ▶ In fiscal year 2008 – 3,084 inmates who were originally convicted in Travis County were released from prison.
- ▶ 5,375 inmates from Travis County are still housed within the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ), *most of which will be coming “home”!*

ARE THOSE COMING BACK REAL DANGEROUS?



The "Other Offense" category includes non-violent offenses that do not fit within the other categories.

AVERAGE PROFILE OF A TEXAS OFFENDER



Male

35 years old

10th grade education

Not on parole or supervision

A Note About Gender

- In 2007 TDCJ received 2,918 males and 150 females from Travis County.
- While the number of female inmates in Texas increased by 528% from 1990-2006, the number of female inmates from Travis County has not been increasing.

Our Local Reentry Population

Based on conservative estimates, our reentry population is approximately 19,700 individuals.

- 4,635 in the state prison
- 647 in the state jail
- 1,850 in the Travis County Correctional Complex
- 6,428 misdemeanor offenders on direct supervision
- 6,139 felony offenders on direct supervision

WHAT BARRIERS & CHALLENGES DO EX-OFFENDERS FACE?

HOUSING

- ▶ Travis State Jail and Travis County Jail: Over 1/3 of the inmates did not know where they would live upon release.
- ▶ Sixty-one percent of our local homeless population reported having been in jail or prison.
- ▶ With each move after release from prison, a person's likelihood of re-arrest increases by 25%.



WHAT BARRIERS & CHALLENGES DO EX-OFFENDERS FACE?

EMPLOYMENT



- ▶ Only 15% of inmates report having a job lined up after they are released from prison.
- ▶ Most inmates felt that they would need some or a lot of help finding a job.
- ▶ Only 13% of those employed after release return to prison within a year.

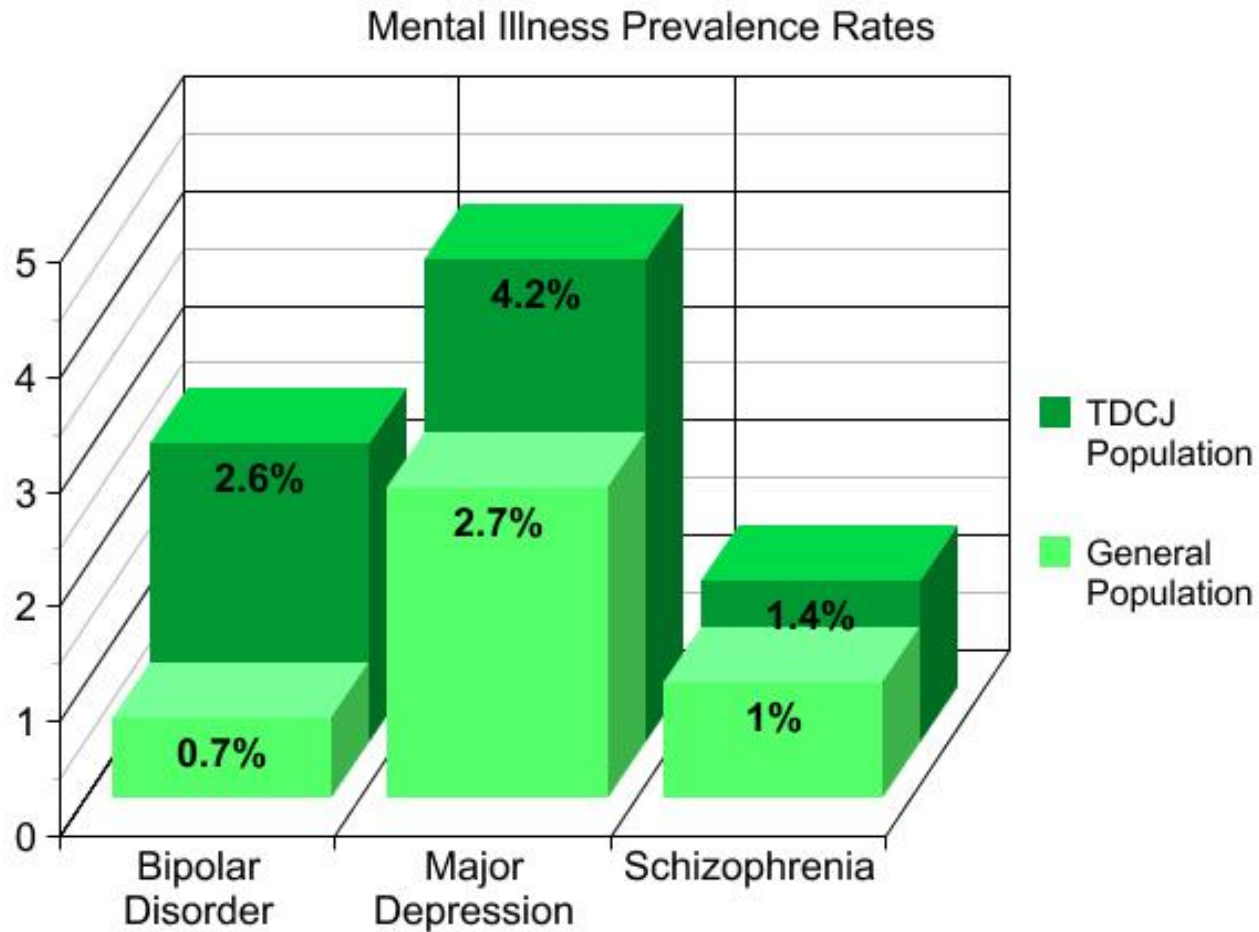
WHAT BARRIERS & CHALLENGES DO EX-OFFENDERS FACE?

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

Mental Illness & Developmental Disabilities

- Prisons have become default mental health facilities.
- Travis County – 931 prisoners released to Travis County with either major depression, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, or DD

MENTAL ILLNESS COMPARISONS



University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston, 2008

OTHER BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CHALLENGES

Substance Abuse

- More than 80% of state prison inmates have indications of serious drug or alcohol involvement.
- In Travis County, 35% of felony offenders and 26% of misdemeanor offenders presented with alcohol/drug usage as their primary need at the time of offender intake.
- Drug treatment significantly decreases criminal activity and improves employment prospects.

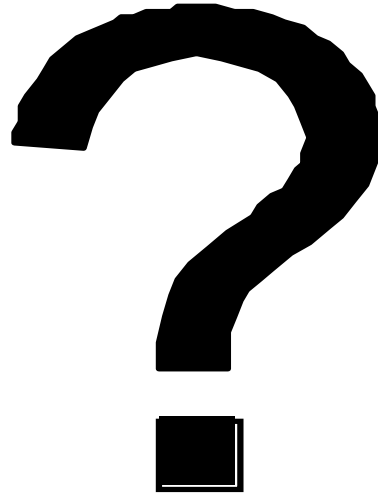
WHAT CAN THE COMMUNITY DO TO HELP?

- **Encourage** public investment at both the state and local levels for programs to prepare people for reentry while they are in prison and for post-release services.
- If you are an employer or housing provider, **review** your agency's practices to make them more inclusive.
- If you are a landlord, **explore** partnerships with parole or probation agencies to provide supervised housing.

WHAT CAN THE COMMUNITY DO TO HELP?

- **Share** this FAQ with people you know.
- **Explore** reentry volunteer opportunities such as mentoring the child of an inmate, working with outreach ministries, or volunteering at a prison.
- **Donate** to a reentry agency or a social service agency that serves this population.
- **Join** the Austin/Travis County Reentry Roundtable or other local efforts to address these priority issues.

QUESTIONS



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