The Journey Home Initiative is adding a new education strategy to its work of helping returning citizens reintegrate back into the community.

Returning citizens from our prison systems will have an opportunity to RESET their lives.

Studies with returning citizens have found that those with close ties to family members, including spouses or intimate partners, report higher levels of optimism, confidence, financial and emotional support, and intent to desist from future criminal activity (Burnett, 2004; Nelson, Dees, & Allen, 2011; Naser & Visher, 2006). Since 2006, the Journey Home program has helped returning citizens reintegrate successfully back into our community.

Why this matters:
In Dane County, between 300 to 700 individuals return from prison to Dane County every year. Within two years of release, 19% of those individuals return to prison. This rate is greatly reduced from the 66% return to prison rate we saw in 2003 when we began looking at this data. In addition to reducing the re-incarceration rate, helping returning citizens is important for the following reasons.

• Returning citizens who fail to successfully reintegrate with the community are likely to violate rules or commit new crimes. This threatens the peace and safety of our community.
• Without employment, returning citizens cannot make it — find housing, reunify with their family, or become productive members of the community.
• Families suffer when the primary wage earner is not able to find employment.
• Children of returning citizens are likely to become incarcerated, too.
• When returning citizens re-offend, taxpayers pay not only the cost of re-incarceration (the average cost to the state is around $30,000 annually per person), but also increased supports needed for families.
• Children of incarcerated parents experience higher infant mortality, childhood health problems, cognitive and academic problems, externalizing behavior problems (especially aggression), internalizing behavior problems, additional adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) and poor mental and physical health in adulthood.

For more details, please see the full Journey Home Mobilization Plan and Appendices available at www.unitedwaydanecounty.org/mobilization-plans

For more information, please contact:
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NEW FOR 2019: In the Journey Home Initiative, returning citizens have an opportunity to RESET their lives

**Our Strategies**

**Residency** – Resource Specialists work with individuals to find housing that meets their needs.

**Employment** – Provide screening, employment training, placement and act as a liaison between the returning citizen and their employer.

**Support** – Circle of Support is one of the programs available for returning citizens to access for support.

**Education** – Increase educational attainment and parenting skills through evidence-informed programming.

**Treatment** – Resource Specialists work closely with community agencies to identify mental health and AODA resources for ex-offenders.

**Education is Critical**

**Community Awareness and Education**

Build awareness and educate the public about individuals who are returning to the community.

**Achieve Educational Goals**

Assist Journey Home clients in determining an educational goal and provide a clear pathway for individuals to achieve HSED, GED or other credentials.

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**The Journey Home Initiative** is part of the community network designed to help individuals prepare for reentry, navigate resources, and find stability. All of these elements support retention and advancement in education and employment which contributes to a stronger, more vibrant local economy and community.

— Deb Lenz, Associate Director, Workforce Development Board of South Central Wisconsin

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**We know that reinsuniting parents with their children is a positive indicator of success post release from prison, adding Parenting Inside Out to the education services array in the Journey Home Initiative will help facilitate a smoother reunification process for the entire family.**

— Linda Ketcham, Executive Director, Madison-area Urban Ministry