

A large, high-contrast black and white photograph of a woman's face in profile, looking down. Her hand is near her face, and her expression is somber. The lighting is dramatic, with strong highlights and deep shadows.

# **SAFE RETURN:**

## **Working Toward Preventing Domestic Violence When Men Return from Prison**

Mike Bobbitt  
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## From the Co-Directors

Strong family connections have been found to improve reentry outcomes, but they can be difficult to achieve. People returning from prison often face shifts in power dynamics with partners, changes in family structure, or unrealistic or unfulfilled expectations. In many cases, conflicting expectations and high levels of mistrust and frustration can contribute to tension and violence with intimate partners.

The Safe Return Initiative focuses on strengthening domestic violence services for African American women and their children when they are facing the return of an intimate partner from prison. It does this by building culturally specific technical capacity within and cooperation among justice institutions and community-based and faith-based organizations. Its goals are to keep women and their children safe and improve the odds of successful reentry by offering peer-based learning, training, information sharing, and on-site assistance designed to help criminal justice and community-based organizations better serve African Americans dealing with prisoner reentry.

Safe Return's web site ([www.safereturn.info](http://www.safereturn.info)) provides links to other helpful resources, recommended readings, and research on the related topics of reentry, domestic violence, and African American communities.

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In two different cities—Nashville, Tennessee, and Portland, Oregon—domestic violence advocates and administrators and staff in corrections and parole met in a pair of roundtable discussions to talk about a shared concern: how to better address intimate partner violence involving men returning from prison, particularly those returning to predominantly African American communities.

It is now widely recognized that prisoner reentry is an important national issue. More than 600,000 people leave prison each year—but many for only short periods before they return to the system.<sup>1</sup> These high rates of reentry and re-incarceration have spurred new approaches to helping soon-to-be- and recently released individuals reintegrate back into the community and lead productive lives. These strategies typically include education, job preparation, and case management designed to link individuals with services for food, housing, work, and other basic needs. Some also involve programming to address histories of substance abuse, inability to manage anger, and “criminal thinking.”<sup>2</sup>

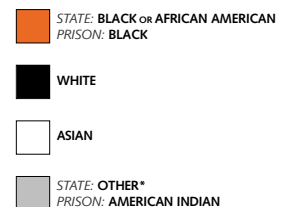
For many innovators concerned about prisoner reentry, the role of the returning person’s family has become a topic of increasing interest. Researchers have found modest reductions in recidivism among incarcerated persons who had contact with people from outside prison, leading some to reconsider the criminal justice system’s attitude toward incarcerated persons’ families.<sup>3</sup> Rather than ignoring families or even seeing them as an intrusion, some criminal justice administrators are now recognizing families as potential resources to those reentering.<sup>4</sup> Yet, while there may be promise in the emotional and practical support some families can offer returning prisoners, they also know vigilance and care are essential to avoid re-victimization by returning prisoners, whether or not there is a documented history of intimate partner violence.<sup>5</sup> Moreover, the separation caused by imprisonment can heighten the stress that often contributes to family and

#### KANSAS



#### SOURCES

1. 2004 American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau
2. 2006 Corrections Briefing Report, Kansas Department of Corrections



\* Includes American Indian and Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander, some other race, and two or more races.



## Domestic violence among African Americans experiencing poverty

Studies show that black women are more than twice as likely to be murdered by an intimate partner than white women.<sup>13</sup> Similarly, they indicate that risk of experiencing non-lethal domestic violence increases for black women between the ages of 16 and 24.<sup>14</sup> However, studies also show that such racial disparities shrink when controlled for poverty—and African Americans tend to have higher levels of economic distress and are more often located in disadvantaged neighborhoods.<sup>15</sup> So, aside from the consequences arising from economic differences, what are the relevant factors that describe African Americans' distinct experiences of domestic violence?

While there is still relatively little research on African American women's experiences of domestic violence, some suggest that race affects the context of battered women's lives. Factors relevant to African American women's involvement with abusive partners should not be assumed to be identical to those impacting white women.<sup>16</sup> One small study compared a small sample of African American women to a larger sample of white women who used domestic violence shelters and found that African American women had longer shelter stays as well as a greater need for health services, material goods and services, and financial assistance.<sup>17</sup>

Regarding African American men, some researchers point to what one investigator described as “effects of racial oppression, which are independent of income and may cause marital stress and tensions that may erupt in violence.”<sup>18</sup> It has been suggested, for example, that the economic underdevelopment of African American men since slavery has resulted in anger, hatred, and frustration that is often displaced onto intimate partners.<sup>19</sup> Researchers coined the term “frustrated masculinity syndrome” to describe how some African American men respond to racial prejudice and other institutional barriers that impede them from achieving manhood through conventional ways.<sup>20</sup> This syndrome may be reinforced by African Americans' disproportionate exposure to community and societal violence.<sup>21</sup> Some men adopt alternative definitions of manhood that emphasize displaying toughness around other males and exploiting women (e.g., the “player,” the “gangsta,” the “hustler”) to compensate for their inability to achieve more conventional male roles.<sup>22</sup> Males adopting these roles may also condone the use of violence to resolve disputes generally, which can also place their intimate partners' safety at risk as a result of importing pro-violence norms into intimate relationships.

intimate partner violence. Thus, failure to address domestic violence during prisoner reentry can place victims of domestic violence in continued danger and increase the reentering individual's risk of returning to prison.

All of these concerns are particularly salient for the African American community. African Americans represent a disproportionately large portion of the incarcerated population: while only 12 percent of the national population, they account for 41 percent of all those sentenced for more than one year in U.S. prisons<sup>6</sup> and 38.6 percent of those in local jails.<sup>7</sup> Black females, meanwhile, report intimate partner violence at a rate 35 percent higher than white females.<sup>8</sup> African American women also seek help differently and more ambivalently than white women. For example, while generally thought to be more likely than white women to report abuse to the police, one study found black women far less likely to go to a shelter, nearly half as likely to have gone to court or used the services of a family counselor, and half as likely to seek an order of protection.<sup>9</sup> It has been suggested that African American women may be reluctant to contribute to helping send another black man into the system.<sup>10</sup> Alternatively, they simply may be protecting their own liberty: like African American men, African American women face comparatively higher rates of arrest, prosecution, and imprisonment for domestic violence.<sup>11</sup>

To date, little research or practice has focused exclusively on domestic violence among returning prisoners. Even less has targeted the issue as it pertains to African Americans. The roundtables in Nashville and Portland, which were initiated by the Safe Return Initiative (Safe Return), a project of the U.S. Department of Justice's Office on Violence Against Women in partnership with the Vera Institute of Justice and the Institute on Domestic Violence in the African American Community, were designed to highlight these issues and help develop appropriate responses when prisoners attempt to return to their intimate partners and family members.<sup>12</sup>

This report on those discussions was written for domestic violence victim advocates, corrections and community supervision staff and administrators, and others who work with victims of domestic violence or men coming out of prison with the goal of stimulating new ideas and practices aimed at keeping these especially high-risk families safe and improving prisoner reentry outcomes. It is organized into five themes that emerged across both conversations:

- the challenge of institutional resistance to addressing these issues;
- programmatic and operational concerns arising from adding domestic violence prevention and intervention to current reentry efforts;
- ways to involve and integrate intimate partners, including women who may have been victims of domestic violence;
- the value of cultural competence and programming that integrates considerations of race; and
- thoughts on enhancing collaboration.



## Domestic violence and prisoner reentry: What do we know?

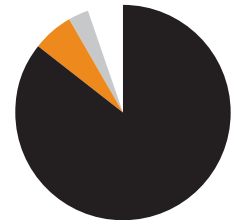
Domestic violence is a pattern of coercive behavior—often including physical violence; economic, emotional, sexual, and psychological abuse; as well as isolation, threats, and intimidation—that adults and adolescents perpetrate against their intimate partners and loved ones.<sup>23</sup> While there currently is no data confirming the full extent of domestic violence among those returning from prison, what is known is sufficient cause for concern. A woman's first incident of intimate partner violence is more likely to be severe or life threatening if her partner is violent outside the home, uses drugs, and is unemployed and not looking for work—all characteristics also common among post-incarcerated males.<sup>24</sup> As one research finding shows, "[Domestic violence] offenders tend to have robust criminal histories including a wide range of both domestic violence and non-domestic violence offenses."<sup>25</sup>

A segment of the incarcerated population has been convicted of offenses explicitly identified as domestic violence, but a range of offenses where intimate partners may be the victims—such as sexual assault, menacing, or stalking—suggests that the prevalence of domestic violence may be greater. Nearly 1 in 15 convicted violent felons incarcerated in state and federal prisons and about 1 in 4 of those in jails committed their crimes against an intimate partner.<sup>26</sup> A broad array of programs and strategies has been developed for those accused and found guilty of domestic violence offenses—most of which are misdemeanors that result in probation or little jail time—and for their victims. However, comparatively little has been done to address the issue among those emerging from prisons. At the time of the roundtables, Safe Return found that only a handful of state departments of correction had begun to engage men in domestic violence intervention programming prior to their release and still fewer directed any services specifically to intimate partners of those being released or victims of domestic violence.

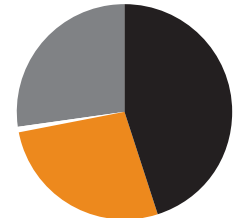
## Convening the roundtable discussions

The roundtable in Nashville focused on addressing domestic violence within the corrections setting; the Portland roundtable examined the possibilities for intervention once

### MASSACHUSETTS



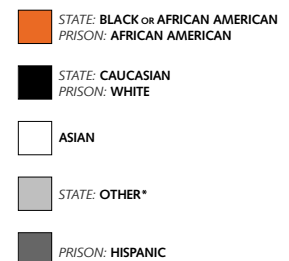
2004 STATE POPULATION<sup>1</sup>



2005 CRIMINALLY SENTENCED POPULATION<sup>2</sup>

#### SOURCES

1. 2004 American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau
2. 2005 Annual Report, Massachusetts Department of Correction



\* Includes American Indian and Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander, some other race, and two or more races.

## Acknowledgements

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The content of the roundtable discussions was enhanced through the participation and support of the staff and administrators of the Davidson County Sheriff's Office in Tennessee and, in Oregon, the Columbia River Correctional Institution and the Multnomah County Department of Community Justice, which co-hosted portions of the events. We gratefully acknowledge the support of the numerous agencies and institutions in the eight states that allowed their staff to take time to participate in the discussions.

Lastly, the authors would like to recognize the contributions of the

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prisoners have been released back into communities under supervision. Both events included substantial input from African American women and men with firsthand experience of domestic violence and/or reentry.<sup>27</sup> Some of this was provided through focus groups convened by Safe Return.<sup>28</sup> The male perspective was also represented through site visits to two prison-based programs that are described later in this report: the Sheriff's Anti-Violence Effort (SAVE) in Nashville and the African American Program (AAP) in Portland. The Oregon meeting also included a panel of African American women who had been in abusive relationships with currently or previously incarcerated black men.<sup>29</sup> In addition, the roundtables included members of local interest groups, including representatives of faith-based and community-based organizations.

The state delegations began the meetings by discussing their current reentry programs and the challenges they faced. After receiving information on the unique characteristics of domestic violence within the African American community, participating in role plays intended to flesh out different aspects of reentry and intimate partner violence, and engaging in dialogue with individuals directly impacted by the issues, they resumed their discussion. The roundtables concluded with each state delegation developing and sharing ideas about what they intended to do better, more often, or differently as a result of their participation.

## Selecting roundtable participants

The delegations invited to each event comprised practitioners and administrators selected according to three criteria: their states had been awarded grants under the Serious and Violent Offender Reentry Initiative to deal with adult men returning from prison, they were geographically diverse (and therefore more broadly representative), and they had specific interest or experience in culturally competent programming and/or addressing domestic violence in reentry. Each delegation included a variety of stakeholders, from parole board officials and corrections or parole administrators (depending upon the meeting) to institutional line staff and program practitioners, as well as representatives from victim services and domestic violence advocacy networks. Below are highlights from each state delegation's initiatives.

See <http://www.reentry.gov/sar/welcome.html> to review what each of the eight states is doing for its Serious and Violent Offender Reentry Initiatives.

### Post-prison supervision roundtable

**KANSAS**—Had recently adopted a department-wide policy on domestic violence expected to push domestic violence and victim services to the forefront of the Kansas Department of Corrections' agenda.

**OREGON**—Created a special domestic violence unit of the parole and probation division of the Department of Adult Community Justice for community-supervised felons with domestic violence related offenses; also created the African American Program that offers pre-release family reintegration and domestic violence programming to a race-specific caseload in collaboration with the Columbia River Correctional Institution.

**TEXAS**—Created the Family Violence Law Enforcement Line to help law enforcement notify parole officers of cases of domestic or family violence involving people under supervised release.

**WISCONSIN**—Parole officers in Milwaukee County established supervision of domestic violence cases with help from the Regional Domestic Violence Workgroup, which developed a post-release protocol and provides training and support to promote domestic violence victim safety.

### Corrections roundtable

**MASSACHUSETTS**—Piloted both a general "Violence Reduction Program" and a specific "Family Violence Reduction Program" at four medium- and maximum-security correctional facilities across the state.

**OHIO**—Expanded the role of victims' services within the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction (ODRC), including assisting victims with concerns related to prisoners and parolees under state supervision and providing both community education and education to ODRC staff.

**PENNSYLVANIA**—Offered batterer intervention programming at all 26 adult male state facilities and in seven facilities was piloting a 12-week family violence prevention program.

**TENNESSEE**—Since 1994 the Sheriff's Anti-Violence Effort (SAVE) has provided group domestic violence programming to men detained at the Davidson County Correctional Development Center.



# Key themes from the roundtable discussions

## Institutional resistance to addressing domestic violence and reentry

The participating corrections, parole, and domestic violence victim advocacy professionals recognized that they can all play a role in addressing domestic violence during reentry. However, doing so was rarely a priority for their respective agencies. For example, citing limited resources and scarce research demonstrating the effectiveness of existing interventions, participants from the criminal justice sector said they focused most of their reentry work on traditional predictors of recidivism, such as unemployment, substance abuse, and inability to find housing. Many of the specific concerns of each group are explored below.

### *Corrections: Preserving security*

Participants working in corrections pointed to their primary objective—maintaining security within facilities—as the main barrier to undertaking a greater commitment to addressing domestic violence in prison. An Ohio official illustrated these concerns by describing how a prisoner’s killing of a female guest inside a visiting room prompted a substantial drop in institutional support for family visits. The official allowed, however, that the facility continued to allow visitation, taking steps to ensure the safety of all visitors.

Several participants also described resistance to making prisons more accessible to the wider community. Specifically, they said, fears that non-family visitors might be manipulated into acting as proxies in criminal enterprises prompt many security personnel to scrutinize volunteer-run programs almost to the point of inhibiting them. Some prisons allow volunteers access to a prison only on the condition that they have no contact with incarcerated people after their release. “We’re shooting [volunteers] in the foot for actually being involved,” an Ohio official noted.

These restrictive policies are being reconsidered, however. This is largely due to a growing interest in helping people leave prison with positive community-based networks and recognition that volunteer mentors, faith-based providers who hope to bring people into their ministries, and others from the community can model appropriate behavior and help address abusive behaviors and relationships prior to release. According to a Pennsylvania official, a program in that state is seeking to facilitate such contact by training volunteer mentors to “understand what criminal thinking is [so] there isn’t [inappropriate influence] enabling the mentee [sic] to re-offend and to involve the mentor.”

Finally, it was noted that most work within prisons focuses exclusively on prisoners themselves; many participants viewed the prospect of also working with these men’s intimate partners in the community as a stretch that was beyond their practical institutional capacities.

### *Parole: Balancing supervision and rehabilitation*

Representatives of post-release supervision agencies—who are charged with balancing community safety and efforts to rehabilitate clients—pointed to heavy caseloads and inadequate training about intimate partner violence as their primary obstacles to having a greater focus on domestic violence. It was noted, for example, that while many families resent decisions to return men to prison for technical violations of parole, others—

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particularly those in danger—would welcome more intervention from officials sensitive to issues of domestic violence.

Several participants also cited uncertainty about public expectations regarding their overall role. In recent decades political pressure to be "tough on crime" steered the profession away from time-consuming rehabilitative work and toward strict monitoring and a return to prison for even modest technical offenses.<sup>30</sup> More recently, however, the costs associated with this strategy have begun shifting the pendulum back toward helping released individuals succeed in the community.<sup>31</sup> "I think we suffer from schizophrenia," complained a Wisconsin parole official responding to the mixed messages. "I'm not sure we know what the public expects us to do." The comment prompted a parole official from Oregon to respond that rehabilitative support of paroled individuals is not only compatible with protecting public and family safety, but it may even help advance them. "What is so beautiful and unique about parole and probation," she said, "is that we truly are both [supervisors and change agents]."

#### **Domestic violence victim advocates: Maintaining focus on victims**

Domestic violence victim advocates at both roundtables were understandably wary about the risk of contact between families and potentially abusive persons. They acknowledged that there was a need for rehabilitative work with men coming out of prison but expressed concern that such work could jeopardize the safety of others. They also rejected the notion that reunification represents an ideal. As a victim safety advocate from Oregon put it, "It seems to me that there's a conflict between what's good for the person coming out of prison—in terms of having a family unit, getting support, etc.—and what might be good for the members of that family unit."



While many of the advocates also recognized that race, class, and poverty impact victims as well as perpetrators, they said that limited resources and the need to secure basic survival requirements for victims and their children can place working with returning offenders beyond the practical scope of their capabilities.

## When and how to add domestic violence work to current reentry efforts

Several participants voiced concerns about conducting batterer's intervention programming with men while they are incarcerated. When a Pennsylvania prison official read from a federal report indicating that the batterer intervention program (BIP) model used in her jurisdiction did "not lead to lasting changes in behavior," she triggered an outburst of similar concerns from several others in the room.<sup>32</sup> "We teach them really well about identifying problematic behaviors," complained another participant, "but we fall short on teaching them how to correct [those behaviors], and I think that's the direction we really need to focus on." As of the publication of this report, there is still debate over whether or not and to what extent community-based BIPs positively impact men's behavior and attitudes, and evaluations of such programming within a correctional setting have yet to be conducted.<sup>33</sup>

Despite such apprehensions about "unproven" interventions, there remained a persistent belief that strategies to improve community and family safety could include preventative work with batterers in prison. Pennsylvania offers a standardized BIP curriculum in all 26 of its adult male institutions. Development of a similar curriculum was slated to begin in Ohio. In Massachusetts a violence reduction program addresses domestic violence as part of its efforts to decrease all kinds of violent behavior among offenders with histories of violence. Massachusetts' more widely available Correctional Recovery Academy also includes a Family Violence Reduction Program option that targets abuse and violence in intimate relationships. Participants of these states expected to continue undertaking such work, seeing it as additive to efforts focused on victim safety.

During the Nashville roundtable, participants were invited to visit the Davidson County Correctional Development Center (CDC) and observe a session of the Sheriff's Anti-Violence Effort (SAVE). Afterwards, some participants saw promise in the way SAVE engaged incarcerated men in exploring domestic violence. SAVE is an intensive six-week batterer intervention program (followed by 52 weeks of aftercare) designed for a community of participants who live separately from the larger facility population. Rather than adhere to a single BIP model, SAVE draws on a range of approaches and tools, including role playing, guest speakers, videos, and daily journaling to explore issues of power and control.<sup>34</sup> SAVE participants' high level of engagement during the site visit inspired several roundtable members to consider that the right combination of techniques, facilities, and referrals might still be able deliver positive results.

## Recognizing who needs domestic violence programming

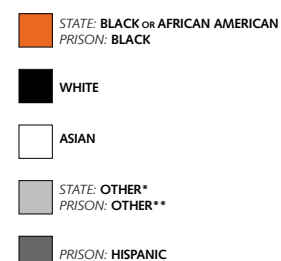
While there was agreement that targeted domestic violence intervention should take place during reentry, many participants indicated that it is hard to determine precisely who should participate in this programming. "It's very easy for us to identify inmates who are in on domestic violence charges," observed a victim services representative from Ohio, "but how are we going to identify those inmates who are in on related charges...but who weren't necessarily going to get flagged for domestic violence?" A corrections official from Pennsylvania noted, moreover, that poor intake decisions could yield worse outcomes than doing nothing at all: "Low-risk inmates who are involved in programming

### OHIO



### SOURCES

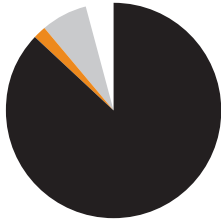
1. 2004 American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau
2. Fiscal Year 2004 Annual Report, Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction



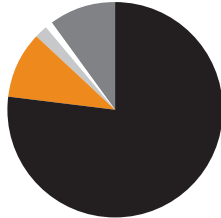
\* Includes American Indian and Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander, some other race, and two or more races.  
 \*\* Includes Native American, Asian, and Other (including Hispanics of unspecified racial origin).



## OREGON



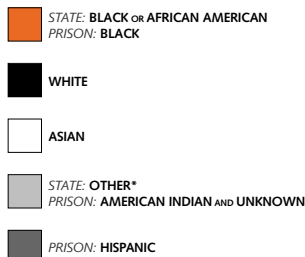
2004 STATE POPULATION<sup>1</sup>



2006 PRISON POPULATION<sup>2</sup>

### SOURCES

1. 2004 *American Community Survey*, U.S. Census Bureau
2. *Population Demographics*, January 1, 2006, Oregon Department of Corrections



\* Includes American Indian and Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander, some other race, and two or more races.

with high-risk inmates can become higher-risk inmates as a result of participating in the program,” the official said. “And low-risk inmates may not necessarily need the [same] degree of programming or even need the programming as much as high-risk inmates.”<sup>35</sup>

Determining an appropriate level of programming for prisoners who are not serving time for an explicit domestic violence offense does present special challenges. Some corrections participants suggested beginning this process by consulting criminal and court records. In doing so, they noted the already overburdened capacity of their administrative offices. However, even once such documents are obtained they may prove insufficient. Besides being slow to reach correctional institutions—sometimes appearing after intake assessments have been completed—they can lack important information. “Some people are charged with felonious assault or child endangerment, and you can see that original crime,” explained one participant. “But if you don’t have the details of that offense, you may not know it was a domestic violence situation.”

Several people also noted that assessment tools that identify predictive behaviors and attitudes would be of great help. While several such tools exist, determining the most effective one in a particular circumstance can be difficult.<sup>36</sup> Moreover, some tools require special training or high levels of prior education to administer properly.

It was also noted that victims, families, and incarcerated people themselves can also be a resource for intake decisions. Talking with family members prior to release can uncover a desire for protection, signaling that the incarcerated person may require domestic violence-related intervention. In rare cases, an incarcerated individual may request help. More often, however, such self-assessments tend to underestimate risks.

### *Challenges in working with perpetrators of domestic violence*

Roundtable participants acknowledged that programming elicits different levels of commitment from different people. Some may freely elect to participate, for example, while most need to be obligated to attend. “Most of the time, motivating an individual to come into a program is the first problem,” said Paul Mulloy, director of SAVE. “Keeping them motivated while they’re there is the second.” It was also noted that poorly motivated participants may not only leave an intervention unchanged, but they can also sabotage the progress of others.

Several participants spoke about the incentives they generally use to keep program participants involved. These include the promise of lower levels of security conditions, better housing or work assignments, and earlier release through “good time” or positive

## Sheriff's Anti-Violence Effort

About 20 men in green jumpsuits at the Correctional Development Center in Nashville, Tennessee, are seated facing a chalkboard inside a classroom while Paul Mulloy, director of the Sheriff's Anti-Violence Initiative (SAVE), and his co-facilitator, Bruce Helms, complete the last-minute arrangements for class. Suddenly, the two men's preparatory banter becomes tense, drawing the incarcerated men's attention. By quick degrees, the conversation gets even more heated. By the time Helms yells at his colleague to “Act like a man!” the observers are riveted. Only when the instructors turn to their audience with broad smiles on their faces does it become clear that they were role playing. “I know you all have heard that before,” Mulloy says to his auditors. “So, what does it mean to you, to act like a man?”

The answers start slowly. “Be tough.” “Don't cry.” “Not act like a girl.” “Don't make mistakes...” As the responses start coming faster, Mulloy records them inside a large square drawn on the board until the men run out of ideas and the box is full. After pausing to review the list, he turns back to the audience. “How many of you have children?” he asks. Fifteen hands go up. “So how come no one said ‘Be a responsible father,’ ‘Pay the bills,’ or ‘Be decent to my family?’ ”



reviews that influence parole decisions. These options are not universally available, however, and in some cases officials may feel as if they have no leverage at all. The elimination of indeterminate sentencing in many states left an Ohio corrections administrator wondering, “What do you do with a guy that’s doing four years flat...and he doesn’t care if he ever makes minimum security?”

It was also observed that effective leverage in a pre-release setting doesn’t guarantee that participants will embrace the program’s tenets after they have left prison. Part of the rationale for offering these programs is that batterers—even when they have been incarcerated for domestic violence offenses—generally do not believe that they have a problem. Some may not see anything wrong with their behavior, which may be tolerated or even condoned by some within their social group. In other cases, it may be a matter of willful denial. Addressing these attitudes, as well as behavior, is the work of programs once participants are admitted.

When all else fails, one participant said, “We put [the decision] on them and say, ‘Okay, do you want to have a healthy relationship ever? Do you want your children to grow up and be like you? If someone were doing what you did to your daughter, your mother, or your sister, what would you say about that guy? What would you think he needs?’...Some of our guys [at first] come in and say, ‘I’m maxing out, I don’t care.’ [But] if we take that approach, then they turn around and come into group.”

## Supporting women and their children in the reentry process

The roundtable participants agreed that successful reentry planning must include the families of those returning from prison—particularly when there is a risk of domestic violence. Their consensus invited questions about how criminal justice agencies could become actively engaged with families. One idea was to improve contact between incarcerated people and their families prior to release. Representatives from Pennsylvania, for example, described a video conferencing pilot program that allows families in Philadelphia to communicate with loved ones incarcerated far from home.<sup>37</sup> Participants also considered how criminal justice practitioners could better educate prisoners’ families about incarceration and reentry. In Ohio, families of incarcerated persons are encouraged to visit prisons in order to learn about the criminal justice system and how they can prepare for their loved one’s release. Participants from Kansas and Oregon said their jurisdictions periodically conduct similar meetings within the community. Officials in Ohio were also considering creating a nonprofit agency that would bring family perspectives into planning reentry policy.

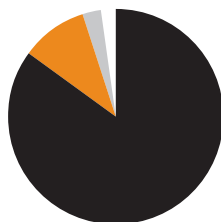
Participants recognized, however, that trying to increase contact between incarcerated people and their families is not always appropriate, especially in domestic violence cases. While protocols that enhance communication (such as those that encourage phone calls or visits) can smooth reentry for some (by helping to maintain ties, etc.), for others they may also allow for coercive and dangerous interactions, as acts of domestic violence may be perpetrated even while an abuser is incarcerated. This threat was illustrated at one of the roundtable discussions by a television news report screened for participants that showed how some prosecutors use recordings of jailhouse phone calls to bring charges of witness tampering against prisoners who make threatening calls to their alleged domestic violence victims.<sup>38</sup>

Since families have a wide range of strengths and challenges and face a variety of circumstances, any protocols for increasing their contact with prisoners have to be flexible enough to make case-by-case determinations and not expose victims to additional

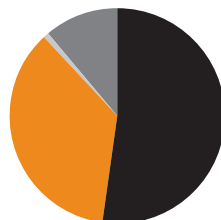
*“One of the biggest issues I deal with is when I have a mother of three kids under the age of 12 and the husband—legally married—is serving time for a domestic violence offense. The women keep knocking on my door saying, ‘You don’t understand. I’m married, he’s coming home, I’ve got three kids, let me visit.’”*



## PENNSYLVANIA



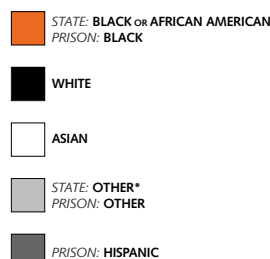
2004 STATE POPULATION<sup>1</sup>



2003 PRISON POPULATION<sup>2</sup>

### SOURCES

1. 2004 American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau
2. 2003 Annual Statistical Report, Pennsylvania Department of Corrections



\* Includes American Indian and Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander, some other race, and two or more races.

harm. Efforts to engage women and their children to verify that they desire contact from prisoners were presented as one way to promote public safety. For example, to protect those who don't want contact, Massachusetts's victim services unit keeps an automated record of restraining orders to help notify victims of offenders' release and whereabouts. While such notions can seem straightforward, under certain circumstances they can be complicated. For example, women may want to visit an incarcerated person even when a standing no-contact order or order of protection forbids it. An Ohio official shared this experience: "One of the biggest issues I deal with is when I have a mother of three kids under the age of 12 and the husband—legally married—is serving time for a domestic violence offense. The women keep knocking on my door saying, 'You don't understand. I'm married, he's coming home, I've got three kids, let me visit.'" Roundtable participants agreed that even fairly flexible protocols at correctional facilities would not enable them to satisfy a request such as this.

Participants wondered what options could be made available when a family's wishes seem unsafe and their requests for contact cannot be reasonably fulfilled. Some, asserting that correctional systems cannot hope to meet every family's service and information demands, said it was essential to have a deft system of referrals, including to victim advocacy agencies. When exceptional situations arise in Ohio, for example, the Department of Rehabilitation and Correction channels the family's concerns to its Office of Victim Services.

A corrections worker from Massachusetts noted that although it was considered beneficial for family members to get progress reports or assessments of a prisoner's participation in reentry programs, sharing such information in her state requires the prisoner's approval. Until this requirement changes, corrections counselors there must seek out this permission. Even when permission is granted, officials must advise families that a prisoner's participation in pre-release domestic violence programs is no guarantee that the behavior will change. Officials must also continue making referrals and encourage intimate partners and other family members to consider their own safety planning.

### Building on current work

Participants noted that broad initiatives for crime victims may be useful for families dealing with domestic violence. In Texas, for example, a statewide policy offers no-contact orders to anyone who has been injured by a person who is about to leave prison. However, like many other states, Texas also has initiatives specially focused on domestic violence. It provides an online directory of services and shelters, and its Family Violence Law Enforcement Line helps notify parole officers whenever police encounter domestic violence incidents involving individuals who are under supervision. Similarly, in Kansas some parole agencies already provide victims of domestic violence with safety planning—including wrap-around services designed to meet a range of reentry-related needs. According to one participant from the state, such planning can even include "victims who are requesting that the offender come home and [who] want to have a safe family environment."

All of the roundtable participants' jurisdictions had partnered with their state's coalition against domestic violence, a specialized resource that provides analysis, advocacy, training, and services regarding domestic violence (and in some cases, sexual assault).<sup>39</sup> Kansas's domestic violence coalition had helped strengthen parole agents' knowledge of domestic violence and the resources available to address it. In Wisconsin, the coalition helped to develop a written domestic violence protocol for parole and probation officers and to organize public education and special events.<sup>40</sup> In addition to being an excellent training resource on domestic violence issues, these coalitions of experts and victim service providers can also help assess and set standards for community-based batterer



intervention programming and related services. Participants noted that they themselves could further strengthen these partnerships by providing education on the dynamics of reentry to the state coalitions and advocates (many of whom already serve domestic violence victims with incarcerated partners).

## Building cultural competence and dealing with distrust of authorities

The roundtables focused considerable attention on how domestic violence and prisoner reentry intersect within African American communities. In particular, the participants discussed the influence of race and racism, given the disproportionate representation of African Americans in the criminal justice system and the distrust of authorities that many feel as a result. Believing that interventions and reentry outcomes are more likely to be positive where trust has been established between released individuals and those charged with supervising or helping them and their families, they considered how to bridge this gap.

Panel testimony in Portland from African American women connected to abusive men involved in the criminal justice system illustrated just how profound the influence of race and racism can be. One abused woman described how race-related distrust negatively affected her safety at home. “My husband’s parole officer was a white woman, and he would tell me, ‘Oh, she’s prejudiced. She hates black men.’ I felt that if she asked me how he was doing with the violence and I told her, she’d just go ahead and see him as a monster and take him back to jail.”

The Portland site visit to the African American Program (AAP), a culturally specific parole initiative for black men in Multnomah County, Oregon, demonstrated, however, that a carefully considered and appropriately staffed program can overcome race-based obstacles to trust. Roundtable participants who visited the Columbia River Correctional Institution observed a session of a weekly in-prison discussion group, part of a year-long process beginning prior to the men’s release in which they get to know each other and the agents who will supervise them after release. The men in AAP described deep appreciation for the program and its leaders. Several portrayed it as one of the few truly supportive experiences in their lives.

“Whether they admit it or not, these guys learn to trust us,” says AAP Probation/Parole Agent Nathaniel Roberts, who credits the program’s acute sensitivity to its participants’ needs and concerns. Because the program was created specifically for African American men, he says its participants candidly confront issues they might avoid in mixed company, such as the influence of African American popular culture, dynamics within African American families, and perceptions of and experiences with racism.<sup>41</sup> Being sympathetic while also stressing accountability lets the men know that AAP has their best interests at heart, Roberts says.

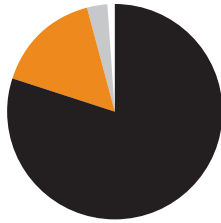
Roberts believes that being African American himself is helpful to the men on his caseload (all but one of the parole agents are black; one agent is Asian). “I understand that some of the men can’t comprehend some of the stresses they’re exposed to,” he explains. “So we start off speaking the same language with them in the beginning. But we’re trying to help them change their language, change the way they think, and change their outlook on society. We’re not trying to teach them separatism or get with your own; we’re working toward teaching them to integrate back into society with a positive outlook and attitude.”

## African American Program

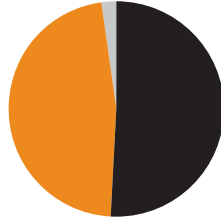
African American men represent about 6 percent of the general public in Multnomah County (Portland), Oregon, yet they account for roughly 22 percent of the incarcerated population and nearly a quarter of all parole violators. Because this population was also absconding from parole at higher rates, the county’s Department of Community Justice, Adult Parole and Probation Division created the African American Program (AAP) in hopes that a race-specific program would yield better outcomes by addressing the particular conditions and needs of African American men in reentry. AAP is a “reach-in” parole program, which means that staff begin meeting with participants (who must apply to be in the program) during the final six to nine months of their prison sentences. During this time, they prepare the participants for reintegration using cognitive behavior adjustment and other tools and facilitate weekly supervised group meetings where the participants talk about issues relevant to their approaching release: concerns about finding work, staying clean, reunifying with family, etc. These discussions, which continue in a community-based meeting after release, allow the men to build relationships with the facilitators, who will then be their parole officers when they return to the community, and each other, creating a network of support. AAP Parole/Probation Agent Nathaniel Roberts describes domestic violence as “a really big issue” in the program. “We try to incorporate some domestic violence training in the curriculum so guys can keep it in the forefront of their minds when they reintegrate back with their families,” he says. The goal is to help them overcome their desire to re-assert dominance over the household. “We want them to go into the home in a graceful manner and kind of go along with what their significant other or wife has already set up.”



## TENNESSEE



2004 STATE POPULATION<sup>1</sup>



2005 FELONY INMATE POPULATION<sup>2</sup>

### SOURCES

1. 2004 American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau
2. 2005 Annual Report, Tennessee Department of Correction

STATE: BLACK or AFRICAN AMERICAN  
PRISON: BLACK

WHITE

STATE: ASIAN

STATE: OTHER\*  
PRISON: OTHER

\* Includes American Indian and Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander, some other race, and two or more races.

Although domestic violence is not AAP's primary focus, the program makes referrals to appropriate community service providers and has helped some participants better navigate their intimate relations. A roundtable participant—a formerly incarcerated person and now a counselor for incarcerated women—provided powerful testimony about the project's influence. She had married a now-former AAP participant who had served time for a domestic violence offense. "AAP was a part of my support system in this relationship," she told the others. "[My husband] knew I didn't have a problem with calling people in AAP and saying, 'You know, this boy is over here talking crazy. He's not communicating like I know he can.' So there was still a sense of accountability in that group, and [it provided] a support for me to help our relationship remain intact and to stay healthy."

### Additional thoughts on building trust

Other testimony from the women's panel in Portland revealed that along with race, there were additional issues of distrust to overcome. One woman spoke of a general reluctance to reveal family violence. "Where I grew up, we didn't tell nobody," she said. "I seen my mother take a beating, and she kept it to herself. So as I grew up and got into that situation, I just didn't believe in calling parole officers and police." Another expressed doubts about the criminal justice system's commitment to protecting her. "There's a lot of times where a parole officer came to our place and my husband wasn't there and I wanted to say, 'Hey, he's abusing me, he's not doing what he's supposed to do'—just so he could go to jail and I could quit getting beat up. But I knew from experience that domestic violence isn't taken very seriously," she said.

Several roundtable participants saw efforts to build trust as part of a larger necessary shift in the relationship between those coming out of prison and their families and their supervisors. A representative from Kansas's coalition on domestic violence noted that officials need to be reminded to be sensitive to victims' needs. "One of the highlights of our activities is hearing victims of violence talk about their experience with the criminal justice system," she explained. "That's an area that we really have to keep in front of us because it's easy to get involved in locking up the perpetrator or responding to the coroner or responding to parole boards [and neglect the victim]." Others spoke of becoming more sensitive to the needs of those leaving prison. "In this system we never look at the inmates as our customers, and we certainly don't treat them as our customers," said a parole official from Kansas. To achieve this goal, his department is "raising the level of

## What is cultural competence?

Cultural competence involves an array of strategies that ensure that services are perceived by the recipients as practical, in their own best interests, and well-intentioned. Thus, for example, an agency that serves clients who don't speak English might hire staff who are bilingual in English and clients' own languages.

Language represents one obvious difference. Others may be harder to recognize, although they can pose as wide a gulf—differences in communication styles, for example. Still others may be quite subtle—things like expectations, or values and belief systems that over time have become deeply embedded within cultures and, therefore, are usually taken for granted. Failure to remain mindful of these factors or to address

them in the delivery approach can undermine a service provider's effectiveness.

There are various levels of cultural competence, from considering how historical and contemporary experiences inform clients' (and practitioners') thoughts, behavior, and cultural identity, to incorporating rituals into the programs that reflect clients' cultures.<sup>42</sup> Some providers, believing their objective will be achieved as long as they do not discriminate against a client's culture, offer a single "colorblind" approach. However, the following story told by an African American woman during the Portland roundtable illustrates the importance of possessing greater degrees of cultural competence in providing direct services.



awareness among officers [so that they understand] that there are differences between different groups of people and that you need to look at the individual as an individual and address those specific needs.” In the same spirit, a parole executive from Texas emphasized customizing parole responses to each individual’s situation. “[Too often] we end up managing these cases,” he said, “letting the conditions drive the case rather than the [individual’s and family’s] needs.”

For Paul Mulloy, honesty about social issues—including race—is a critical part of building trust. Mulloy draws from participants’ experiences of being incarcerated (feeling controlled by security, being forced to abide by routines, etc.) as an analogue to facilitate their broader understanding of the impact of the intimate partner violence they themselves have caused. Indeed, one observer described Mulloy’s ability to be authentic about his own experience as a white southerner (“the good old boy” he calls it) and the experience of his listeners, many of whom are African American (“the urban thing”) as a sophisticated form of cultural competence because it holds the men’s interest by presenting new information in familiar contexts. “You’re dealing with a heterogeneous population,” Mulloy explains. “The ability to do that is really important to keep the different segments of the population engaged.”

## Integrating coordinated community responses into reentry plans

At both roundtables, participants understood that stakeholders—whether within the criminal justice system or the anti-domestic violence network—needed to partner with others to increase their effectiveness.

The domestic violence field has long pointed to the need for coordination and enhanced collaboration to effectively address domestic violence, as abusers generally rely on silence and isolation to perpetuate their crimes. The roundtables revealed similar awareness among criminal justice staff. As an Oregon parole official put it, referring to AAP and his department’s domestic violence-specific caseloads and anti-drug and anti-gang units, “I think we’re doing some really good things, but we’re tending to do them in silos. We could probably do a much better job in terms of integrating those programs

*“There’s a lot of times where a parole officer came to our place and my husband wasn’t there and I wanted to say, ‘Hey, he’s abusing me, he’s not doing what he’s supposed to do’—just so he could go to jail and I could quit getting beat up. But I knew from experience that domestic violence isn’t taken very seriously,”*

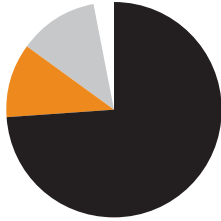
*“I went to a domestic violence shelter before, and I kind of felt like they didn’t believe that I was abused. What had happened was I stabbed my husband to get him off me, and the judge told me that if I even came in contact with him I was going to do 70 months. I had to leave directly from jail, and I went to a domestic violence shelter where they didn’t even have a comb [appropriate for my hair texture] for me. It was way, way out [of the city]—away from all my family, my peers, or anybody that I could talk to. My hair was all over my head from jail, the clothes I had on were torn from the fight—and they didn’t even have clothes large enough to fit me, besides a pair of overalls.*

*“[They told me,] ‘You need to go out and find a job.’ And for me to do that with my hair all over my head and a pair of ‘farmer john’ overalls, it was really traumatic. I just got to the point where I decided it’s better to go back and get beat down—and if I get beat down I just am not going to report it. And [my husband] knew that, too, because he knew that I’d get the 70 months.*

*“For me, the [ideal] system would have somewhere culturally specific for black women to go where they could talk to other black women who have been through [the experience of domestic violence].”*



## TEXAS



2004 STATE POPULATION<sup>1</sup>



2004 PRISON OFFENDERS<sup>2</sup>

### SOURCES

1. 2004 American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau
2. Fiscal Year 2004 Statistical Summary, Texas Department of Criminal Justice

STATE: BLACK or AFRICAN AMERICAN  
PRISON: BLACK

WHITE

STATE: ASIAN

STATE: OTHER\*

HISPANIC

\* Includes American Indian and Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander, some other race, and two or more races.

within our own department.” Such integration might include, for example, sharing information about clients with overlapping conditions, making more effective referrals. (Many participants noted that untreated alcohol and drug abuse can hinder efforts to address domestic violence.)

After visiting AAP, some participants suggested that closer coordination between pre- and post-release agencies could yield more consistent support for those coming out of prison, as well as for families. “One of the reasons we see revocations as high as they are,” said an official from Kansas, “is that there isn’t an opportunity for the parole officers to really get to know the family or the inmate prior to the release.” Improvements in overlap and coordination could also result in longer lasting, more comprehensive, and more consistent therapeutic support.

All of the jurisdictions had formal structures for coordinating the interactions of all of these various stakeholders. The Multnomah County Family Violence Coordinating Council, for example, involves the courts, the prosecutor’s office, batterer intervention program providers, and representatives from women’s shelters and other advocacy groups. In Kansas, the Shawnee County Reentry Program brings together more than 50 diverse organizations to develop coordinated reentry plans. A parole official in Milwaukee County credited the creation of a commission to coordinate agency activities as having a profound effect: “We started working differently with the courts, we started working differently with our state coalition against domestic violence and sexual assault, and we started working differently with victim organizations. So now we call it a real collaboration.”

## Summary and conclusion

There is a growing awareness among domestic violence advocates and criminal justice practitioners that the people they work with have overlapping lives and issues, even during a period of incarceration. Although these professionals have largely worked independent of each other in the past, the roundtable discussions revealed their shared interest in learning from and working with each other to address their common concerns. Because existing partnerships between criminal justice practitioners and domestic violence advocates are relatively new and fragile, they need support and cultivation.

## Roundtable participants: Where are their practices now?

Since participating in the roundtable discussions, there have been some noteworthy developments within the states that discussed ways to improve their responses to domestic violence among returning prisoners.

**OREGON**—Multnomah County’s Department of Community Justice, Adult Parole and Probation Division has expanded its “reach-in” program. Now, along with its men’s program at Columbia River Correctional Institution, there is a program for women being released from Coffee Creek Correctional Institution in Wilsonville. The curriculum for the Coffee Creek program is 52 weeks, and the men’s curriculum is being expanded to 52 weeks as well.

**KANSAS**—In fiscal year 2005, the Victim Services Division (VSD) of the Kansas Department of Corrections (KDOC) and the Kansas Coalition Against Sexual and Domestic Violence jointly provided domestic violence training for all parole staff. VSD also identified the state’s batterer intervention programs and connected parole staff to these programs; parole staff now make referrals to these programs on a regular basis. VSD is working specifically with parole staff to develop reintegration strategies for people who are leaving prison with a history of domestic violence. VSD also secured a grant to conduct a safety and accountability audit on the Kansas parole system. Among other things, the contract calls for the development of an assessment tool to screen all offenders for domestic violence.



If successful, however, they promise benefits for both the intimate partners and families whose safety may be at risk after an incarcerated person's release and for the returning individuals themselves, who, if they can refrain from abusive behavior, may profit from their loved ones' support.

The roundtable participants also recommended that more attention be paid to conducting interventions in a culturally competent manner both before and after release and that service providers build on existing family strengths while also offering support to protect families from safety risks.

Additionally, the roundtables demonstrated that training and ongoing dialogue about problems, challenges, and promising approaches were essential for the fields to grow, learn, and advance. The discussions in Nashville and Portland also illustrated the value of learning from women who are survivors of domestic violence and men who have experience returning from prison. Violent crimes must be addressed under all circumstances, but it is instructive to have information about how some men attempt to exert power and control over their intimate partners, why they feel entitled or compelled to do so, and why some women feel they must face these issues on their own. Similarly, domestic violence advocates who work with African American women need to recognize and understand how these women and their families may be influenced by a partner's incarceration.

Given how much remains to be learned about these relatively unstudied issues, the call for ongoing discussion may ultimately prove the most important roundtable outcome. Its significance was illustrated toward the close of the meeting in Portland, when a victim advocate from Wisconsin described a preparatory discussion between her staff and a group of criminal justice and parole officials. "What was obvious [to all of us] is that it's not just people who have battered in the past who are likely to batter in the future," she recalled. Their collective insight, she continued, presented a whole new way of thinking about their common problem. "So we're all going back to the drawing board to think about, 'How do we raise the issues of preparing to release people who have been in prison? How do we prepare a home? How do we prepare a context that people can return to so that they're much less likely to feel the need to hurt someone else?' It's a big learning curve for all of us," she concluded. "And there's a lot of discussion yet to be done."

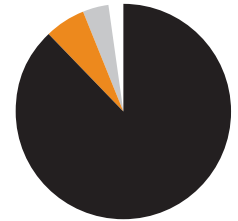
KDOC has hired a victim services liaison at one facility, and the Topeka Parole Office has begun reviewing the files of prisoners who violated their parole supervision to determine if they have a history of domestic violence. When a risk is identified, the liaison works with parole staff to develop supervision strategies.

**OHIO**—The Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction's Office of Victim Services (OVS) is piloting batterer intervention programs in its correctional institutions. Under the OVS plan, individuals will begin participating in the program before their release and will continue participating while under parole supervision. OVS plans to expand the program to 19 facilities.

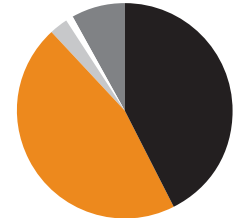
**MASSACHUSETTS**—The Family Violence Reduction Program (FVRP) has been expanded. Also, the state is exploring using male and female co-facilitators in the program to model appropriate behavior and contacting victims to inform them of inmates' enrollment in FVRP. Currently being developed is a standard interview to obtain information about incarcerated individuals' history of intimate partner violence.

Massachusetts' treatment provider, Spectrum Health Systems, Inc., has created tools designed to help staff connect and build trust with diverse, at-risk populations. Spectrum has also expanded the essential readings for relevant staff to include a handbook of domestic violence intervention strategies, *The Domestic Violence Sourcebook*, which includes material addressing intimate violence in families and developing competence to manage diversity.

## WISCONSIN



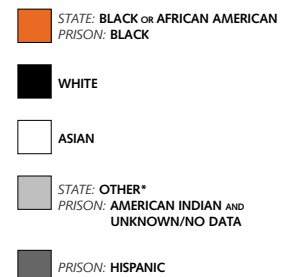
2004 STATE POPULATION<sup>1</sup>



2004 PRISON POPULATION<sup>2</sup>

### SOURCES

1. 2004 American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau
2. FY04 Profile, Wisconsin Division of Adult Institutions



\* Includes American Indian and Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander, some other race, and two or more races.



## FOOTNOTES

- 1 Only 45 percent of parolees will successfully complete their term. Within three years of release, 67 percent of former inmates were rearrested for serious offenses, and 52 percent were returned to prison for a new criminal offense or a violation of parole. See Patrick A. Langan and David J. Levin, *National Recidivism Study of Released Prisoners: Recidivism of Prisoners Released in 1994* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, June 2002, NCJ 193427).
- 2 Some recent efforts of the many that have been proposed were funded through the Serious and Violent Offender Reentry Initiative, a collaboration that funds states to design, implement, and evaluate reentry programs for juvenile and adult high-risk offenders. See <<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/reentry/sar/welcome.html>> (last visited March 27, 2006) for more information.
- 3 Creasie Finney Hairston, "Family Ties During Imprisonment: Do They Influence Future Criminal Activity?" *Federal Probation* 52 (1): 48-52.
- 4 See E. Sullivan, et al., *Families as a Resource in Recovery from Drug Abuse: An Evaluation of La Bodega de la Familia* (New York: Vera Institute of Justice, 2002); M. Bobbitt and M. Nelson, *The Front Line: Building Programs That Recognize Families' Role in Reentry* (New York: Vera Institute of Justice, 2004).
- 5 One-third of men in federal prisons for low-risk crimes acknowledged recent physical violence against an intimate female partner, and one in ten reported severe violence toward women. R.J. White, et al., "Extent and Characteristics of Woman Batters Among Federal Inmates," *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology* 46 (2002): 412-426.
- 6 Paige Harrison and Allen J. Beck, *Prisoners in 2004* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics Bulletin, October 2005, NCJ 210677).
- 7 Paige Harrison and Allen J. Beck, *Prison and Jail Inmates at Midyear 2004* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics Bulletin, April 2005, NCJ 208801).
- 8 Callie Maire Rennison and Sarah Welchans, *Intimate Partner Violence* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics Factbook, May 2000, NCJ 178247): 4.
- 9 See J. Joseph, "Woman Battering: A Comparative Analysis of Black and White Women," in *Out of Darkness: Contemporary Perspectives on Family Violence*, eds. G. Kantor & J.L. Jasinski, (pp. 161-169):165-166 (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1997); L. Greenfeld, *Violence by Intimates: Analysis of Data on Crimes by Current or Former Spouses, Boyfriends, and Girlfriends* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics Factbook, March 1998, NCJ 167237): 19.
- 10 See B.E. Richie, *Compelled To Crime: The Gender Entrapment of Battered Black Women* (New York: Routledge, 1996); T.C. West, *Wounds of the Spirit: Black Women, Violence, and Resistance Ethics* (New York: New York University Press, 1999): 83; G.E. Wyatt, et al., "Examining Patterns of Vulnerability to Domestic Violence Among African-American Women," *Violence Against Women* 6 (2000): 495-514; Kimberle Williams Crenshaw, "Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence Against Women of Color," in *The Public Nature of Private Violence*, eds. Martha Albertson Fineman and Rixanne Mykitiuk (New York: Routledge, 1994).
- 11 See R.E. Dennis, et al., "Addressing Domestic Violence in the African-American Community," *Journal of Health Care for the Poor and Underserved* 6 (1995): 294-293; see also Richie, 1996, for her discussion of "gender entrapment"—the process whereby African American women who are vulnerable to intimate partner violence are penalized for their own behaviors.
- 12 The Safe Return Initiative is funded by the U.S. Department of Justice's Office on Violence Against Women (<http://www.usdoj.gov/ovw/>). Safe Return provides technical advice and other support to grantees of the federal government's Serious and Violent Offender Reentry Initiative and other criminal justice and domestic violence agencies on preventing and intervening in domestic violence to maintain the safety of African American women as African American men leave prison.
- 13 *Family Violence Statistics* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, June 2005, NCJ 207846).
- 14 See J. Campbell, et al., "Intimate Partner Violence in African American Women," *Online Journal of Issues in Nursing* 7, no. 1 (2002); Greenfield, et al., 11.
- 15 Greenfeld, et al. Studies find that when poverty is considered, rates of domestic violence are similar, although not exactly alike, among African Americans and whites. See also Michael L. Benson and Greer Litton Fox, *When Violence Hits Home: How Economics and Neighborhood Play a Role*, Research in Brief (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice, September 2004, NCJ 205004): 2.
- 16 Anita Raj, et al., "Prevalence and Correlates of Relationship Abuse Among a Community-Based Sample of Low-Income African American Women" *Violence Against Women* 5 (1999): 272-291.
- 17 Cris M. Sullivan and Maureen H. Rumpitz, "Adjustment and Needs of African American Women Who Utilized a Domestic Violence Shelter," *Violence and Victims* 9 (1994): 275-286.
- 18 N.A. Cazenave and M.A. Straus, "Race, Class, Network Embeddedness, and Family Violence: A Search for Potent Support Systems," in *Physical Violence in American Families: Risk Factors and Adaptations to Violence in 8,145 Families*, eds. M.A. Straus & R.J. Gelles (pp. 321-340) (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction, 1989): 336.
- 19 Robert Hampton, et al., "Domestic Violence in the African American Community," *Violence Against Women* 9 (2003): 533-558.
- 20 Ibid.
- 21 O. Williams, in *The Black Family: Essays and Studies*, ed. Robert Staples (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 1999): Chapter 12.
- 22 Hampton, 533-558.



- 23 There are numerous sources for information about domestic violence, including the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence ([www.ncadv.org](http://www.ncadv.org)) and the National Network to End Domestic Violence ([www.nnedv.org](http://www.nnedv.org)). It is noteworthy that in contrast to social service definitions of domestic violence (such as the one given above), jurisdictions differ in their legal definitions of domestic violence crimes. See the Women's Law Initiative web site ([www.womenslaw.org](http://www.womenslaw.org)) (last visited March 27, 2006) for links to state definitions and statutes.
- 24 J. Campbell, et al. See also R.L. Hampton and R.J. Gelles, "Violence Toward Black Women in a Nationally Representative Sample of Black Families," *Journal of Comparative Family Studies* 25 (1994): 105-119.
- 25 National Center For Victims of Crime. *NETWORKS*. Spring/Summer 2004: 11
- 26 Greenfeld, et al., 23.
- 27 In constructing the dialogues this way, Safe Return used a process similar to that by which a leading domestic violence intervention model was inceptioned. First, women who were victims of domestic violence were asked what tactics were used upon them; later, men who were domestic violence abusers were asked why they engaged in the violence. The men's response (of having felt *entitled* to control their partners) helped inform practitioners in their approach to developing interventions. See also Ellen Pence, "Advanced Training for Creating a Process of Change for Men who Batter," (training session for men's nonviolence class, Feb. 19-20, 2004).
- 28 Safe Return conducted focus groups and asked several questions, which formed the basis for the facilitation of a number of discussion groups that addressed conflict and intimate partner violence among African Americans experiencing reentry. The summary report of these discussion groups, "Domestic Violence and Prisoner Reentry: Experiences of African American Women and Men," will be made available for download from <http://www.safereturn.info/discussion-groups>.
- 29 The women were participants of Operation Network, a Portland-based drug treatment program for African American women.
- 30 For more on the structural and political challenges faced by parole, see M. Jacobson, *Downsizing Prisons: How to Reduce Crime and End Mass Incarceration* (New York: New York University Press, 2005); J. Petersilia, *When Prisoners Come Home: Parole and Prisoner Reentry* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003).
- 31 See Langan, et al.
- 32 For more information, see Shelly Jackson, et al., *Batterer Intervention Programs: Where Do We Go From Here?*, Special Report (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice, June 2003, NCJ 195079) <<http://www.ncjrs.org/pdffiles1/nij/195079.pdf>> and *Do Batterer Intervention Programs Work? Two Studies, Research for Practice* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice, September 2003, NCJ 200331) <<http://www.ncjrs.org/pdffiles1/nij/200331.pdf>>.
- 33 For more information, see *Countering Confusion about the Duluth Model* at <[www.duluth-model.org/](http://www.duluth-model.org/)>.
- 34 SAVE has not been formally evaluated. The CDC administrator's unofficial findings have been that over half of SAVE participants stay out of jail for at least a year. For more information on CDC, see <<http://www.nashville-sheriff.net/cwc.htm>>.
- 35 For a review on the efficacy of several types of crime prevention programs, see Lawrence W. Sherman, et al., *Preventing Crime: What Works, What Doesn't, What's Promising*, Research in Brief (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice, July 1998, NCJ 171676) <<http://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles/171676.pdf>>.
- 36 For a discussion of programmatic approaches for male batterers and a discussion of several established risk measures in use, see Lynn Stewart and Natalie Gabara-Roth, "What Works in the Treatment of Family Violence in Correctional Populations: Issues and Directions, Parts I and II," *Journal of Community Corrections* (Winter 2003-2004, Spring 2004): (13-21; 13-22).
- 37 For more on virtual visitation, see <<http://www.cor.state.pa.us/greene/cwp/view.asp?a=428&q=130266&greeneNav=%7C>> (visited March 27, 2006).
- 38 Vera Institute of Justice, *Prosecuting Witness Tampering, Bail Jumping, and Battering From Behind Bars* (New York: Vera Institute of Justice, 2006).
- 39 To find your state's domestic violence coalition, visit <[http://www.ncadv.org/resources/StateCoalitionList\\_73.html](http://www.ncadv.org/resources/StateCoalitionList_73.html)> or <<http://womenshealth.gov/violence/state>>.  
For more information about victim-focused resources pertaining to prisoner reentry, see Anne K. Seymour, *The Victim's Role in Offender Reentry* (American Probation and Parole Association) <[http://www.appa-net.org/victims\\_role.html](http://www.appa-net.org/victims_role.html)>.
- 40 For more information about this protocol, visit the Resource Material page of the Judicial Review Hearings in Domestic Violence Cases web site <[http://www.vera.org/review\\_hearings/default.asp?page=2resources](http://www.vera.org/review_hearings/default.asp?page=2resources)>. Click on Milwaukee County (under Browse by Jurisdiction), and scroll down to Domestic Violence Offender Supervision and Victim Contact Checklist.
- 41 The fact that one of the AAP parole agents was Asian American indicates that while it may be helpful for agents to share the same ethnicity as those with whom they are working, it is not essential. A woman from Project Network reinforced this point, describing service providers she had encountered: "We've got Caucasian counselors, but they've actually learned about us. They don't go out of their way saying, 'Hey girlfriend!' and trying to be something they're not. They're just relating to us the way we need to be related to because they've actually been there learning the whole process. It's not something phony."
- 42 O. Williams, in *The Black Family: Essays and Studies*, ed. Robert Staples (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 1999) 273.





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The **Institute on Domestic Violence in the African American Community** provides an interdisciplinary vehicle and forum by which scholars, practitioners, and observers of family violence in the African American community will have the continual opportunity to articulate their perspectives on family violence through research findings, the examination of service delivery and intervention mechanisms, and the identification of appropriate and effective responses to prevent/reduce family violence in the African American community.



Since 1995 the **Office on Violence Against Women** has handled the U.S. Department of Justice's legal and policy issues regarding violence against women, coordinated departmental efforts, provided national and international leadership, received international visitors interested in learning about the federal government's role in addressing violence against women, and responded to requests for information regarding violence against women.

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