

# The Inside-Out Model: A Community Reentry Program for Female Inmates upon Jail Release



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## Abstract

Based off of standard program planning models, the Inside-Out Model takes a Logic, Interactive, and Asset-Based Community Development Model and fuses them to form the Inside-Out Model. The model is based on the premise that one must start from the inside to plan an effective program. Theoretically, a community will only make changes in their community by focusing on the resources inside their community. Furthermore, this article takes the Inside-Out Model and applies it to a community reentry program for female inmates upon release from jail. From the practical side, the model focuses on each woman (the inside) and develops outward to the community resources. The Inside-Out Model for this community reentry program is explained for practitioners to know precisely how to go about each stage in the program planning process.

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## Introduction

The growth of jail and prison populations expanded substantially starting around the 1970s (Weiss Riley et al., 2018; Travis, Western, & Redburn, 2014). The incarceration rate for women increased by 750% between 1980 and 2017 (The Sentencing Project, 2019). As a result, women make up approximately 25% of those released on parole and probation (Ney, Ramirez, & Van Dieten, 2012). According to Weiss Riley et al. (2018), historically the higher jail populations were among urban populations. However, recent research suggests a shift in rural area rates. Rural areas account for only 15% of the entire U.S. population, but around 20% of the U.S. jail population (Weiss Riley et al., 2018).

Females have unique circumstances that can lead to incarceration. Women often find themselves incarcerated because of drug use which is typically associated with past trauma or mental illness (Ney et al., 2012). Also, women tend to commit crimes that stem from being economically disadvantaged such as having lower job skills, educational status, or lack of stable and sufficient employment (Ney et al., 2012). Furthermore, women being more relationship driven than males may find themselves committing crimes for their significant others or children (Ney et al., 2012).

Upon release, they face many barriers, which thwart successful reintegration into their respective communities (Makarios, Steiner, & Travis, 2010; Olphen, Eliason, Freudenberg, & Barnes, 2009; Visser & Travis, 2003). These barriers include access to jobs, stable housing, treatment services (Olphen et al., 2009; Zhang et al., 2006; Makarios et al., 2010; Visser & Travis, 2003), family reintegration (Olphen et al., 2009; Visser & Travis, 2003), and education (Zhang et al., 2006; Makarios et al., 2010). Sufficient medical care is an issue as well. Women coming out of incarceration typically face challenges getting health care but are in need of it due to their lifestyle before jail and their inadequate health care in jail (Women's Incarceration, 2019). Another healthcare issue addressed in a multi-site study of drug use and mental illness among incarcerated women, researchers found that 22% of women experienced co-occurring mental disorders within the past 12 months, which is a concern because mental illness is one of the pathways that leads to the incarceration of women (Lynch, DeHart, Belknap, & Green, 2012). With an increase in rural jail populations and the exponential increase in women incarcerations, the number of released females who will likely experience these barriers also will increase. To facilitate successful reintegration, an explicit guide to developing an effective community reentry program is outlined in the Inside-Out model.

## The Inside Out Model

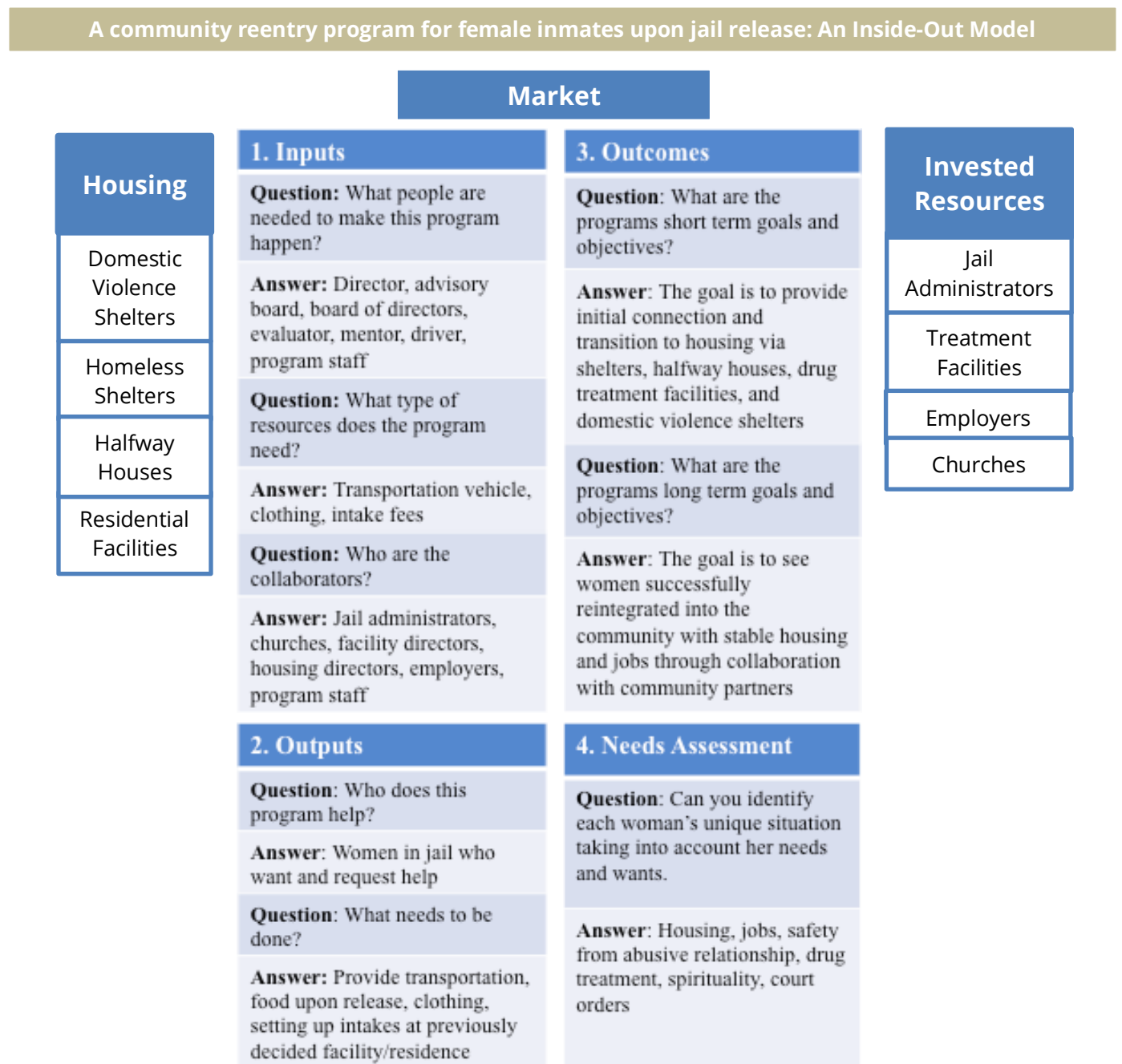
The Inside-Out Model as shown in Figure 1 is a fusion of an Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) Model (Bergdall, 2003; Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993), the Logic Model (Harvard Family Research Project, 2002; McCawley, 2001), and the Interactive Model (Caffarella & Daffron, 2013). The ABCD model aspect embedded in the Inside-Out Model is the belief that planners in these rural areas will make a difference in a community reentry program by discovering and investing in their local resources and capabilities, rather than looking to outside help (Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993). Bergdall (2003) argued to “shift community self-understanding from *passivity* . . . to becoming active agents of their own development” (p. 3). The ABCD model within the Inside-Out Model focuses on communities playing an active role in helping solve the problem of reintegration of female inmates upon release from jail. Instead of waiting for outside help, it empowers the local people to bring about change in their area. Also, the Inside-Out Model exhibits components of a Logic model within the program planning process. In Figure 1, the Logic model is indicated in the middle of the graphic with Steps 1 through 4 including Input, Output, Outcome, and Needs Assessment. The Logic model offers a systematic process and a logical order to developing a program (McCawley, 2001). It gives a sense of a start and finish to the program planning and evaluation process and provides a necessary structure throughout the development process. However, in the Inside-Out model, the aspect of the Interactive model “has no real beginnings or endings” (Caffarella & Daffron, 2013, p. 30). The sense of flexibility that comes with the Interactive Model is helpful in developing a reentry program for women because things seldom happen as planned in the order they are planned (Caffarella & Daffron, 2013). In creating a community reentry program, program developers need to be flexible to ebb and flow between steps as needed; however, the logic model’s step-by-step process and the Interactive Model’s flexibility appeals to planners without locking the Inside-Out model into functioning one specific way.

## Theoretical/Practical Understanding of the “Inside-Out Model”

To implement the Inside-Out Model, program planners will work from the inside out, which has a layered meaning of implementation. Theoretically, the first layer means working from the inside of the community to empower the people to make change without relying on external resources. The next layer of meaning indicates that you must begin to build the program from the inside such as developing job responsibilities, advisory boards, board of directors, and program staff before

being able to conduct the program. The final layer shows from a practical standpoint of conducting the program planners will start from the individual woman being released from jail while moving out to the community after assessing each woman's needs to better create a workable transition plan to successfully reintegrate the women into their communities.

**Figure 1: Inside-Out Model for Community Reintegration of Incarcerated Women**



To aid in understanding the model, the interior of Figure 1 provides a logical sequence for how to create a successful program following Steps 1 through 4. However, planning programs is complex, and there may be interaction between the steps if situations arise throughout the planning process. For example, the model is a recommendation for how to successfully plan the program, but circumstances may require changing the order. This is acceptable because it is part of the interactive aspect of the model and program planners can ebb and flow throughout the model as necessary.

### Inside Layer: Step 1

Step 1 of the Figure 1 graphic interior is called Inputs. These are contributions from within, such as an investment of staff, finances, knowledge, and collaborators (McCawley, 2001). For this specific program, considerations include determining the people needed to make the program happen by working from the inside of the program out. What follows are some questions to prompt thinking about the inputs for a program.

1. *Does the program need an executive director or president who will oversee the entire program while taking responsibility for the program's operation and success?* An executive director will be extremely helpful in overseeing the program and any staff hired.
2. *Will this be a non-profit organization?* If so, the program will need to become a 501(c) (3). See local, regional, state, and federal laws to ensure legal compliance. Most likely, the organization should become a non-profit organization.
3. *Does the program need an advisory board?* It is recommended to at least have an advisory board to help make the best decisions for the program's mission.
4. *Does the program need a board of directors?* A board of directors helps make policy decisions and judgments that further the mission of the organization (Caffarella & Daffron, 2013). A board of directors is also helpful because they can actually make policies. This is important because if an executive director quits there is another governing body in charge who can keep things running until they find another executive director. However, there are some legalities that might hinder people from wanting to be on a board of directors. For example, if the program requires the board of directors to pay for their own travel, contribute to the

organization, or help pay any tax penalties those things should be stated clearly at the beginning before allowing someone to serve on the board of directors. Look for individuals to serve on these boards who have strong community connections and individual qualities such as leadership, financial skill, and personal expertise (Caffarella & Daffron, 2013).

5. *What type of staff does the program need?* As an initial startup program, it might only need an executive director who will conduct the women's needs assessments along with coordinating transitional plans with community resources and an administrator who helps the executive director coordinate with community resources along with taking care of budgeting. Volunteers can be used to help fill in the gaps. However, as the program grows, more staff may need to be hired after evaluation.
6. *How will the program transport the women to their housing? How will they get to their jobs? Will the transitional program provide those services?* Perhaps the program has volunteers who agree to transport after being released from jail. It is important to make sure the organization is covered legally through insurance and the volunteers are as well in case something should happen during transport. The organization may want to determine the community's resource regarding available public transportation to get them to their jobs if the transitional program does not provide those services.
7. *With whom does the program need to collaborate? Will collaboration take place with local churches, facility directors, housing directors, or employers who are willing to employ women recently released from jail, jail administrators, and program staff?* All are important to consider because each has distinct resources that could help women in their transition.
8. *What resources will be put into the program?* Resources to consider include a transportation vehicle, clothing for the women upon release from jail, intake fees into treatment facilities, housing facilities, mental health facilities, and volunteers who are willing and available to pick up women at the jail at a moment's notice, any time of day or night since jails release at various times. Perhaps after being an established program, the executive director or advisory boards might have some connection with jail officials to help change the policy of releasing inmates at night.
9. *How much time will be invested into implementing this program?* It is important to weigh how much time it will require. Upon starting, there will be countless hours needed to successfully implement the program. Be



prepared to take a year or more before the program actually begins to be fully operational.

10. *Will you provide the women with mentors who can help the women through various difficulties along the journey of transition?* Mentoring for the women could help build community and social ties which increases their chances of successful reintegration.

These 10 considerations should be addressed before moving to stage 2.

## Inside Layer: Step 2

After delineating the inputs needed for developing a reintegration program for women, the next step identifies the outputs of the program. Outputs as described by McCawley (2001) “are those things that we do (providing products, goods, and services to program customers) and the people we reach (informed consumers, knowledgeable decision makers)” (pp. 3–4). In this context, program planners must think about what they will be doing in the program and the people they are wanting to impact. Questions to ask include: Who does this program want to help? Who is the program reaching? Overall, the program looks at helping women who are incarcerated in jail and are awaiting their release. However, planners should decide whether the program will help all women. As a program, a staff member may decide to conduct interviews to determine who would best benefit from the programs services or whether or not the women want the services. This is where the interactive component of this model shows itself. Will the program create requirements women have to meet to participate? As a startup program, it would be best to limit the scope of reach to women housed in one jail and focus on making a large impact in a small place especially since the focus is on community development. As the program branches out into other communities, it will have to be adjusted to account for different community dynamics.

The other aspect of Step 2 is what needs to be done and which services will the program provide. As mentioned, each woman’s individual needs are assessed in Step 4. At the current stage of planning, however, it is only necessary to create a broader list of things that need to be done. Here are some questions to ask:

1. *What services will the program provide?* Consider transportation, mentoring, meals, paperwork support for housing, jobs, rehabilitation, and domestic violence shelters, along with financial support.
2. *Will the program provide transportation upon release?* It is important to remember accountability when driving or housing women being released

- from jail. There should always be more than one person in the vehicle or room at all times to keep the reputation of the program above reproach.
3. *Will the program provide transportation after placing women in their transitional housing?* This is in reference to if a woman is being housed in a mentor's home as a transitional living place, she may need transportation to her job until she establishes herself financially to purchase her own vehicle or can afford to pay for transportation such as a bus or cab. However, depending on the woman and her situation she may need additional supervision which would require the mentor to provide transportation rather than her finding her own mode of public transportation.
  4. *Will the program provide food to the women upon release?*
  5. *Will the program provide clothing?* Some women being released may not have any clothes except their jail clothes.
  6. *Will the program set up intakes at places such as transitional housing, shelters, mental health facilities, and drug and alcohol addiction facilities?* Keep in mind many facilities and residences have set times that they will do intakes. Therefore, staff may need to set up a temporary plan of where the woman will stay until the intake takes place. The temporary place should be in a safe environment.
  7. *Will the program provide the money to enter into the chosen facilities/residences?* Keep in mind some of these programs are not free, and as a program planner, decisions need to be made as to how those fees will be paid. Will staff call the woman's family to see if they would be willing to help out financially, with clothing, or with transportation?

### **Inside Layer: Step 3**

After determining the outputs, the third step is to articulate the program outcomes. The Harvard Family Research Project (2002) described program outcomes as "the measurable results of your program" (p. 5). Measurable results may be found in short-term, intermediate-term, and long-term goals (McCawley, 2001). These measurable results can be referred to as program objectives which are "the specific outcomes of the program" (Caffarella & Daffron, 2013, p. 161). As the inside out model is a fusion of ABCD, logic, and interactive models, program planners will need all collaborators of the program including potential participants, program staff, key volunteers, director, advisory board, and board of directors involved in



the planning of both program objectives and program goals. Program goals differ from objectives in that they “are broad in scope,” whereas the objectives are specific and measurable (Caffarella & Daffron, 2013, p. 174). When meeting to determine the goals and objectives of the program, program planners will not want all of those collaborators at the table at the same time. However, they might informally ask future participants what they want to receive out of the program. After getting information from potential future participants, the planner in charge could conduct separate meetings with the advisory board and another meeting with potential program staff and key volunteers. These meetings will be a way to gather information to narrow down the programs goals and objectives. Finally, conduct a series of meetings among the board of directors to generate the program’s official goals and objectives. We need to remember that goals are broad directions for the program and objectives are specific and measurable; for example, a goal would be to effect successful transition of released women into housing, job, and treatment services through various asset-based community resources and an objective would be to ensure 70% of all women accepted into the program reach their intended destination of housing or treatment facility within 8 hours of release. Another objective could be to make sure all eligible women have jobs lined up upon release with reliable transportation for the first three months upon entrance into the program.

Both short-term and long-term outcomes should be identified during this stage of planning. Short-term outcomes may include providing all women connection and transition to safe housing via shelters, halfway houses, drug treatment facilities, and domestic violence shelters. A long-term outcome would be to see 50% of all women who used the program successfully reintegrated into the community with stable housing and jobs through collaboration with community partners after 3 years of initial contact with the program. Although this is a transitional program which collaborates with so many other community programs to successfully reintegrate women, measurement of long-term success can be helpful in planning short-term objectives.

### **Inside Layer: Step 4 ~ Outside Layer: Marketing**

At this stage of the inside out model, the program is at a developed stage before conducting an individual needs assessment. Step 4 of the inside logic model is when the individual needs assessment takes place. However, part of the interactiveness of the model allows fluidity in and between steps. An individual needs assessment requires interviewing each woman interested in the program. This is working from the inside, the individual woman, to the outside, into invested

community resources. The initial interview is a time to identify each woman's unique situation, needs, and wants. For example, the woman may already have housing but may need help finding a job or gaining drug treatment services. Furthermore, if residential drug treatment services are needed, a job may not be necessary since the drug treatment facility may not allow participants to hold jobs during treatment. Also, using an application before the interview could provide important information, such as if she has photo ID or social security card, is in a hostile relationship, needs drug treatment, or needs other help. This would give good background information to follow up with in the interview. In the interview, it is important to identify whether the woman is looking for religious or non-religious services to connect her with appropriate resources. Be sure to ask the following questions.

1. *What is the woman's age and marital status?*
2. *How many dependents does she have?*
3. *What is her release date?*
4. *Is she from the area? Is relocation needed or does her situation warrant staying in the community?* Many women may need to stay in the community because of court reasons or family. However, some women may do better in a new environment away from their previous friends. These are things to consider when asking these questions.
5. *What is her family situation? Is it helpful or abusive?*
6. *Does she have any court stipulations or fines to pay off?*
7. *Does she need drug and alcohol treatment? Is residential or non-residential treatment the best option?*
8. *Does she need mental health services?*
9. *Is she looking for religious or non-religious help?*
10. *Does she need housing? If so, is a homeless shelter, residential facility, halfway house, or volunteer mentors' home the best option for her particular situation?*
11. *Does she need employment and what type of employment will work best in her case?* For example, some women may know that working in a restaurant is going to tempt them to go back to drugs because many people they used to work with did drugs in the restaurant business. In this case, a different job is necessary.

12. *If she has children, what needs to happen to the children?* Many women may not be able to regain custody until court stipulations are followed. Furthermore, the women may not be stable enough to have custody because they need drug treatment or mental health treatment first.

This is not an exhaustive list but provides a general idea of how to begin assessing for each woman's specific needs.

Although Stage 4 is needs assessment, many potential participants may not know the program exists to help them. This is where the interactive portion of the model is helpful. Before conducting Step 4, the program may need to be marketed to future participants. If limiting the program to one jail, the marketing does not need to be extensive. A brochure stating the programs name, goals, services, and those eligible is important to distribute to the females in jail. Brochures should not have staples in them as most jails consider staples a safety risk. Also, the contact information should be easily identifiable on the brochure with name, phone number, email, and website. Some jails now have kiosks that allow women access to email. For those who have access to kiosks, they can easily email the reentry program instead of having to wait on traditional mail. Furthermore, the program can email the potential participant regularly about small details to figure out before release instead of having to navigate jail schedules and visiting regularly.

A website is vital to the success of any program. In a technological age, all programs need an internet presence. In the case of this program, a brochure distributed to the jails of female inmates might be sufficient as the target audience is the women in jail. However, some women may not be open to help. Therefore, a website will market to the women's families who want to help their loved ones during that transition phase. Many free platforms are available for creating websites, or a website developer can be hired. A website developer will have expertise on branding your program to create an appropriate logo that will appeal to the participant audience. Budgeting may or may not allow for the hiring of a website developer. If finances allow, Search Engine Optimization (SEO) is important to any website. SEO will allow individuals to search for keywords such as *transitional housing*, *jail reintegration*, and *drug treatment*, to easily locate the program's website. It is important for the website to be on the first search results page as the majority of people do not search beyond the first page. Both the brochure and website should be a sufficient start to successfully market the program to the potential participants.

## **Outside Layer: Housing and Invested Resources**

In the exterior layer, the program gets into the ABCD aspect of the Inside-Out model. As Figure 1 suggests, housing and invested resources are important to the success of this program. With housing a main issue for women being released from jail, the communities housing assets need to be identified. If the area is limited in housing assets, consider volunteer mentors who would be able and willing to house women. Some women might benefit from a mentor who willingly volunteers time and resources to help former inmates succeed; however, volunteers must be trained to help, not enable, and to recognize warning signs that the individual may not be doing well. An idea to consider is to connect with a nearby college or university. By working with a college or university, the program planner could look into setting up an internship program with certain majors on campus where the student would receive practical experience as a trained mentor. There also should be accountability for the program's reputation. So, the volunteer mentor should not be living alone with the participant to avoid any sexual allegations or inappropriate situations. Furthermore, volunteer mentors must pass a background check and interview to make sure they will provide a safe environment without triggering the participants. For example, a volunteer mentor on various prescription narcotics might not be the best choice for a woman who previously or currently struggles with drug use and abuse.

When using and collaborating with housing assets in a community, the program needs to be aware of any intake fees and requirements of the housing program and make certain that information is communicated clearly to the participant. The program may also be responsible for making sure the participants are safely transported to the housing location.

In addition to housing, invested resources are necessary to ensuring successful transition/reintegration into the community. Invested resources include places and people such as jail administrators, treatment facilities, employers, and churches. It is vital to maintain good rapport with all community assets because the success of the program is dependent upon positive collaboration. An example would be the jail administrators. A good working relationship might improve the times inmates are released from jail.

Identify local treatment facilities for drug and alcohol addiction along with mental health facilities and become familiar with all of their requirements. It would be helpful to create a list of the local facilities and a checklist of their entrance requirements so that when a woman needing services is identified, a plan is in place to advance entrance into the facility.

Next, identify local employers from various job skills and abilities that are willing to hire women being released from jail. A list of employer's names, contact information, job description, and status of hiring is needed to maintain an ongoing awareness of job opportunities for women. Some women may also need access to appropriate job attire, interviewing skills, and resume building. The reentry program can provide the clothing, interview skills, and resume building skills, or the program can locate the community assets that already offer these supports. Create a list of all the invested community resources that are willing to collaborate.

Churches also should be considered community resources. Many churches have donated clothing for people who are in need in the community. Also, some churches offer a food bank which might prove helpful to those participants who are in transitional housing. Furthermore, churches are a great place to find community volunteers who would be willing to donate their time to transport women to their transitional housing, job, or treatment facility. They also could be a great resource for accountability partners when program staff need to transport women. Locate the churches in your community and discover what they have to offer that would help further the program's goals and objectives.

If there is a local college or university near the community, reach out to the different departments that focus on service to others such as education, nursing, social work, criminal justice, and psychology. Universities can be a rich resource for the program by providing volunteers, program evaluators, finances, and job training.

After identifying the invested resources that the program can collaborate with, create a document with the contact person's information along with the services they can provide. Having all of the invested community resources documented and maintained will prove to be vital after conducting the individual needs assessment because it will allow appropriate identification of the resources that will best help each woman.

## **All-Encompassing Layer: Evaluation**

The placement of evaluation at the end of the paper is for simplicity, but evaluation should happen interactively during each component of the program. Evaluation as an all-encompassing layer of the program is purposeful. To properly determine the success of a program, each inside layer of inputs, outputs, outcomes, needs assessment, and community resources requires an ongoing evaluation. There are different types of evaluation to conduct including formative, summative, informal, and formal (Caffarella & Daffron, 2013). A formative evaluation happens

throughout the entire process while summative looks at the outcome(s) of the program (Caffarella & Daffron, 2013). Informal evaluation occurs through casual conversation and observation and is not necessarily planned while formal evaluations are planned and may take the shape of a survey, interview, and/or observations (Caffarella & Daffron, 2013).

If evaluation occurs throughout the entire process of planning and conducting the program, it is an interactive part of the Inside-Out Model. Starting with informal evaluations, this will happen as things progress. Take note of reflections in meetings regarding each layer of the planning process. For example, in the meeting someone may observe that there are too many people in the planning of the program or not enough people. During meetings or casual conversation, people might mention other resources needed in conducting the program especially after implementing the transition of the first woman in the program. As the program progresses, people may notice other collaborators who are important to the success of the program but have not been contacted. Write these informal observations/evaluations down throughout the planning process and implementation of the program and adjust as needed. The sole purpose of evaluation is to make the program better. Therefore, it is important to recognize these areas of improvement and make the changes. For example, informal evaluation might note that women change plans and do not show up after plans are made for pickup for temporary housing. At that point, a formal evaluation (e.g., survey or interview) of other female inmates might give insight as to why the women decide to choose something different last minute and what the program can do to fix the problem.

Formal assessments in each stage might include interviewing participants who successfully transitioned by asking them questions regarding the program. Here are some sample questions.

1. *What was their experience like in the program?*
2. *What are some of the things the program assisted them with?*
3. *What could the program do better to help women transition more smoothly?*
4. *What were the issues they faced during the program?*
5. *How did they find out about the program?*

A formal assessment in the form of a survey issued to community resources would be a great way to determine if collaboration is successful. In the survey, the program might ask the community resource to rate their experience in working with the program staff, volunteers, and transportation volunteers along with areas



that could be improved or areas that the program does well. Furthermore, a meeting with key stakeholders is an invaluable way to formally and informally evaluate the effectiveness of collaboration and execution of the program. After conducting the formal evaluations, compile the interview responses and survey answers into a document that shows the programs strengths and weaknesses. Take these results, and in future meetings with the advisory board, board of directors, program staff, volunteers, and community resources, begin a dialogue about ways to implement change and improvement. Evaluation aids in change, and change is what will make the program better and more successful in its goal of providing community reentry for women being released from jail.

## **Conclusion**

Throughout the Inside-Out Model, there is a combination of the ABCD Model (Bergdall, 2003; Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993), the Logic Model (Harvard Family Research Project, 2002; McCawley, 2001), and the Interactive Model (Caffarella & Daffron, 2013). The primary purpose of the Inside-Out Model is to provide rural communities with a detailed action plan of how to develop a program to help women in local jails successfully reintegrate back into the community. Recognizing the importance of community, the Inside-Out Model draws upon the inside help of a community to connect these women to the necessary resources. Furthermore, the focus is on the women first before connecting them to the resources. Thus, the focus is on the inside, the individual female, and branches to the outside community resources. To aid in implementation, the Logic model provides the necessary steps to take to make the program a success, including developing inputs, outputs, outcomes, and needs assessments that will appropriately develop the program. As with any project, flexibility is needed to make adjustments throughout the planning phase; therefore, the model incorporates an interactive ability that the program planner may choose to implement. Together, communities and program planners can begin to address the growing need to reintegrate women back into their respective communities successfully.

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## About the Author

**Cassie Schmitt-Matzen** is currently a Ph.D. student pursuing a degree in Exceptional Learning with a concentration in Literacy at Tennessee Technological University's College of Education. Her background is in Sociology with a concentration in Criminal Justice. The summer before her senior year as an undergraduate student, she was offered a full-time internship position with Adult and Teen Challenge of the Upper Cumberland, a residential faith-based program for drug and alcohol addictions. After a few months, the position turned into education director, and by the time she graduated with her bachelor's she was the full-time program director of Adult and Teen Challenge of the Upper Cumberland before leaving to start the doctoral program. Also, for the past six years she has taught women in the local community jail. With this career experience and teaching opportunity in the jail, her research interests in the Ph.D. program include helping marginalized populations specifically with a history in the criminal justice system and drug addiction with a focus on recovery programs and the process of maintaining recovery. Upon receiving her doctorate, she hopes to continue in her research endeavors while working to implement programs to serve marginalized populations. E-mail: Cdwoodward42@students.tntech.edu