

Members of the Mental Health Task Force:

On Wednesday, November 3rd, Century Correctional Institute hosted our bi-annual Re-Entry Seminar. Century Correctional Institute offers Institutional Re-Entry Seminars for inmates nearing their release. The purpose of the seminar is to increase an inmate’s awareness and understanding of available resources and services in the community, with the ultimate goal of reducing recidivism. Century CI quickly recognized that members of the Mental Health Task Force represent an abundance of resources that would be immeasurably valuable to inmates who may need the support offered by these organizations to be successful upon their release. We requested permission to send an email inviting task force members, who like to participate; and of course, task force members responded helping make this re-entry seminar a huge success!

Colonel Mindy Young from the Escambia County Sheriff’s Office spoke with the inmates offering the beginning of a new relationship with their community law enforcement officers, and inspiring them to be more than a statistic and an inmate number but an individual with a name and a future of their making.

Mike Martin of 211 NWFL sent Christy Myers to represent their agency. Ms. Myers shared what 211 is and what information/resources can be located in their communities through their local 211. Too frequently, resources are available but we seem to be missing the bridge of resources and connecting those in need to them. Connecting is vital to supporting previously incarcerated individuals in their success.

Other task force members showed interest but were unable to attend this event but expressed interest in attending future seminars. We look forward to partnering with them in the future.

Other presenters included: Representatives from the Pensacola Intake – Office of Community Corrections (Vicki Attaway, CPS & Kellie Andoe, CPS); Kevin Eason Re-Entry Alliance Pensacola (REAP); and Tomiko Daffin of the Veteran’s Administration.

Individuals reentering society after incarceration frequently need assistance with housing, employment, transportation, education/training, access to mental and physical health care, and support systems (AA, NA, CA; mentorship, etc).

Quick statistics:

First Judicial Circuit Court of Florida recidivism rates for individuals released from the Florida Department of Corrections

2015	2016	2017
23.6%	25.8%	24.2%

Escambia County’s recidivism rates for individuals released from the Florida Department of Corrections

2015	2016	2017
23.3%	24.5%	25.6%

Mental health Status at release recidivism rates:

	Male Recidivism Rate	Female Recidivism Rate
Mental Health Status at Release Inmate does not require on-going treatment	26.0%	13.3%
Inmate Requires on-going treatment	33.1%	16.0%
Total	26.9%	14.4%

*statistics from the Florida Department of Corrections 2020-2021 Recidivism report <http://www.dc.state.fl.us/pub/recidivism/RecidivismReport2021.pdf>

It is difficult to estimate the pervasiveness of mental illness among incarcerated populations, recent studies estimates about 1 in every 2 prisoners in the state and federal system have mental health issues, compared to 1 in 10 in the general U.S. population (James and Glaze 2006). With the knowledge that 86% of the incarcerated population will at some point reenter society this highlights the importance of successful collaboration and partnership of Century Correctional Institute and our community resources. The Mental Health Task Force has already proven they are ready to answer that call.

Thank you,
 Rebecca Brasch, LMHC, NCC
 Mental Health Professional at
 Century Correctional Institute

Reference:

statistics from the Florida Department of Corrections 2020-2021 Recidivism report <http://www.dc.state.fl.us/pub/recidivism/RecidivismReport2021.pdf>

James, Doris J. and Lauren E. Glaze. 2006. "Mental Health Problems of Prison and Jail Inmates." Bureau of Justice Statistics Special Report. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice.