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A LIFE IMPROVEMENT BUSINESS<sup>SM</sup>

# Providing Hope, Opportunity & Second Chances since 1975

## **BCPS Mission Statement**

Berks Connections/Pretrial Services improves lives and creates safer, more prosperous communities by providing services, support, and community reintegration to individuals involved in the justice system and to their families.

## **BCPS Vision Statement**

The communities we serve are safer and healthier because people in the justice system have the tools and support to live productive, law-abiding lives.



# Workforce Development for County & State Reentrants

## County Reentrants

- BCPS is contracted by County of Berks to provide reentry services to inmates in BCJS CRC since 2010
- United Way of Berks County supports 40% of budget
- WD education begins during incarceration
- Case management, job search / placement and retention support occur up to 3 years post-release

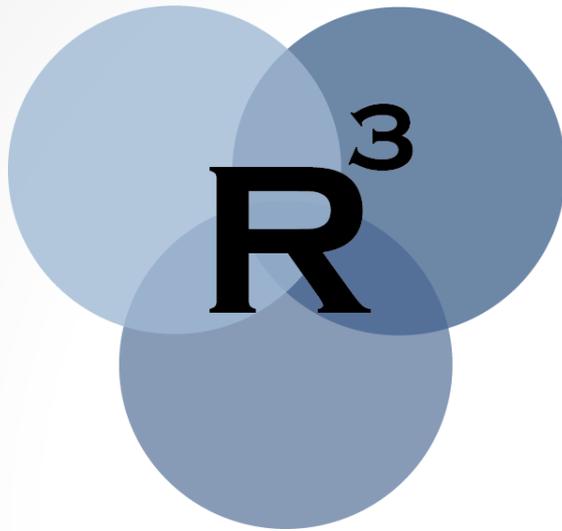


# Workforce Development for County & State Reentrants

## State Reentrants

- BCPS is a contracted provider of workforce development services for the PADOC
- Most reentrants are living in local CCC and some in the community
- Services include WD education, job search / placement and retention support and case management
- Participants eligible for up to one year of these services
- A cognitive behavioral intervention curriculum for employment is provided at SCI Mahanoy





# REBUILDING REENTRANTS & READING

In July 2017, BCPS received a \$1.2M Reentry Projects grant from the U.S. Department of Labor that supports this comprehensive training program in the construction trades.



# Best Practices

- Utilize a validated assessment tool
- Identify and remove barriers
- Use cognitive-based interventions
- Ongoing, individualized case management
- Develop and maintain relationships with employers
- Include a financial literacy component
- Be visible in the community/Share your successes



# Invest in Barrier Bashing

- Proper identification
- Transportation
- Clothing for interviews & work
- Access to and assistance with computers



# Cognitive Behavioral Interventions

- Staff trained in cognitive curricula and concepts
- Facilitate a group curriculum when feasible
- Educate employers why this matters!!



# CBI-EMP

- The University of Cincinnati Corrections Institute (UCCI) developed Cognitive Behavioral Interventions for Offenders Seeking Employment which is based on research that has shown positive results in changing offender behavior.
- The CBI-EMP curriculum examines ways of thinking and helps participants identify and manage high risk situations related to obtaining and maintaining employment. The program places heavy emphasis on skill building activities (through role play) to assist with cognitive, social, emotional, and coping skill development for the work environment.



# Case Management

- Staff needs to be flexible, responsive, empathetic, positive, and supportive
- Reinforce concepts learned in groups
- Guide job search
- Provide accountability and follow up
- Use CBI techniques
- Retention support!
- Provide positive reinforcement and pro-social contacts



# Employer Relationships

- Staff dedicated to employer recruitment and retention
- Recruit through outreach events and networking
- Partner with local Workforce Development Board
- Enlist the help of the Chamber of Commerce
- Be flexible and smart with referrals
- Offer one point of contact for retention support
- Offer “made to order” retention support
- Make good on your promises



# Financial Literacy

- Why personal finances are so important
- Basic budgeting and establishing good financial habits
- Personal coaching once employed
- Credit reports matter



# Tell Your Story

- Use website, social media, constant contact emails
- Connect with community leaders and people who make things happen
- Outreach events and Career Fairs
- Press releases



# Rebuilding Reentrants & Reading

- R3 utilizes best practices to transform participants' lives by improving employment outcomes and reducing recidivism.
- R3 is comprised of 3 components:

The logo for Reading Muhlenberg Career & Technology Center features the text "Reading Muhlenberg" in a bold, black, sans-serif font, with "CAREER & TECHNOLOGY CENTER" in a smaller, black, sans-serif font below it. To the right of the text is a yellow gear icon with a white semi-circle cutout.

**Reading  
Muhlenberg**  
CAREER & TECHNOLOGY CENTER

Evening classroom  
instruction at Reading  
Muhlenberg Career &  
Technology Center

The logo for Habitat for Humanity of Berks County features a stylized house icon with a green roof and two blue human figures standing inside. To the right of the icon is the text "Habitat for Humanity" in a bold, blue, sans-serif font, with "of Berks County" in a smaller, green, sans-serif font below it.

**Habitat**  
for Humanity®  
of Berks County

Hands-on learning on  
site at Habitat for  
Humanity Berks  
County properties



Case management &  
employment focused  
cognitive curriculum  
delivered by BCPS staff

# Building the Foundation

- Successful graduates of BCPS Workforce Development programs, who show motivation and an interest in this field are considered for participation.
- Job Site Supervisors are present for all training sessions to provide support and consistency.
- Participants are provided with their own set of tools, appropriate work wear, transportation to training sites and paid a stipend.



# Building the Foundation



- Participants receive a flagger certification, OSHA 10 certification and a PA child abuse clearance.
- An Employment Development Specialist provides a connection to employers and job opportunities. In order to help ensure ongoing success, case management and support is provided for one year following the completion of training.

# Expanding Knowledge & Refining Skills

Adult learners benefit from a combination of classroom instruction and hands-on learning.



Evening classroom  
instruction at Reading  
Muhlenberg Career &  
Technology Center



# Transforming Lives and Neighborhoods

Participants are helping to transform Reading's most blighted neighborhoods by helping build safe affordable housing for needy families.



Hands-on learning  
on site at Habitat  
for Humanity Berks  
County properties



# Evidenced-Based Recidivism Reduction

BCPS strives to utilize evidenced-based best practices in reentry.  
Our staff have been certified by UCCI to facilitate CBI-EMP.



Case management &  
employment focused  
cognitive curriculum  
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# Lessons Learned

## What Not To Do

- Requiring clients to secure signatures from employers they visit
- Randomly distributing lists of employers who hire people with a record
- “One size fits all” approach to clients and employers
- Allow clichés such as “No one will hire me” or “I’ve applied everywhere”





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[www.berksconnections.org](http://www.berksconnections.org)

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