New Hampshire

DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

REINTEGRATION STUDY

PART 1: SOCIAL NETWORKS & FAMILY SUPPORT

The goal of this study is to better understand the impact of programs and services that strengthen an individual's connections with their community and family.

October 2016 – September 2017

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90 Day Study

Introduction

This section of the Reintegration Study will focus on areas within NHDOC that may impact social networks and family supports for individuals. Based on a review of independently published research papers, there were consistent findings that demonstrate strengthening these ties will assist in the reintegration of the individual into society. A sample of this type of research was published by Christian et. al in a *Journal of Criminal Justice* article which indicates that "family can be a crucial link to the outside world" for an individual who has been incarcerated (Christian et. al., 1). Research published by the Minnesota Department of Corrections in 2011 indicates that "[e]ach visit in prison reduced the risk of reconviction," thereby improving one's rate of reintegrating back into their community (MNDOC, 18). Strengthening of social bonds is important because individuals released usually need to rely on families and friends for emotional support, transportation, employment opportunities, financial assistance and housing while making the transition back into society.

This study does not attempt to recreate established research results, but to identify NHDOC programs and services that fall within those researched areas and to measure the impact of programs/services offered against the established baseline of individuals released. While there are many factors that impact an individual's ability to stay within the community, this study will focus on areas that are within the Department's ability to influence. This report will look at programs and services based on available NHDOC data.

This study will review the first 90 days post-release for the most recent 12-month period where re-entry and return data is available[1]. This will allow for a more-rapid identification of trends and let NHDOC evaluate the impact of changes within a service or program that may have occurred. The baseline reintegration rates[2] will be used as the basis of comparison for the duration of this study. Each period's baseline rate will be compared against the reintegration rates for:

- Those who received social visitors during their last 90 days of incarceration.
- Individuals with minor children that meet the following Family Connections Center program criteria:
    - Received FCC Earned Time Credit
    - Were marked as "Completed Successfully" within 12 months of release
    - Participation in the program ended when they were released

Visitation

Visitation is a service provided to incarcerated individuals and is defined by Departmental policy. The visitation policy states the intent "[t]o establish a policy and procedure for facilitating a secure, safe, orderly, manageable and pleasant inmate and business visiting process… [and] to help with fostering relationships with family and community volunteers that will improve the opportunities for inmates to successfully reintegrate into the community (PPD)." Research by Sarah Tahamont at UC Berkley suggests that "contact with those outside the prison should be considered among the factors that affect [a person's] behavior" both during and after their period of incarceration (Tahamont, 11).

The study of visitation seeks to answer whether the rates of reintegration differ between individuals who received social visits during the last 90 days of their incarceration compared to the baseline of all individuals released. This report also will look to see how many individuals are using the service prior to release and map the level of impact this service has on successful reintegration over a 90-day time frame.

[1] Re-Entry and return data for a month is not available until 90 days later. Ex: Complete re-entry data for January is available beginning in April.

[2] Established in **Reintegration Study: Baseline Rates & Overall Findings** report. See Appendix A for these tables

Population Measured: Visitation

To determine social visitation reporting numbers for this assessment, data was taken from the offender management system to determine which individuals had received social visits during their incarceration[3]. This data was filtered to remove official visits (Attorney & Clergy) and looked only at social visitors: those recorded as being a family member, a friend/social acquaintance, or a community representative. By removing the official visits this study is better able to assess the possible impacts of social visits. Since the focus of this report is on reintegration, the target time-frame of interest in social visits was during an individual's last 90 days of incarceration. This helps to gain a better view of the potential impact that established social connections may have on an individual's successful reintegration.

Based on the data, an average of 24.5% (346) of those entering the community received social visits during their last 90 days of incarceration. On average, 118 individuals re-entered the community each month. Of these, an average of 29 people received social visits. This indicates that 75.5% of the total population reviewed received no social visits during their last 90 days of incarceration. Monthly breakdowns of these numbers can be seen below:

Table 1:

	Valid Re-Entries to the Community	Received Social Visits During Last Three Months	Percentage of Overall Re-Entries Each Month
Oct '16	121	27	22.3%
Nov '16	124	39	31.5%
Dec '16	118	27	22.9%
Jan '17	129	29	22.5%
Feb '17	81	20	24.7%
Mar '17	126	34	27.0%
Apr '17	122	28	23.0%
May '17	123	22	17.9%
Jun '17	126	31	24.6%
Jul '17	111	35	31.5%
Aug '17	109	31	28.4%
Sep '17	120	23	19.2%
Totals & Averages	1410	346	24.5%

Rate of Reintegration: Visitation

Reintegration rates for individuals who received social visits during the last 90 days of incarceration are 2.3% higher than the baseline rates on average. This represents a measurable level of successful reintegration among those who re-entered the community during the period assessed.

For each 30 day-period reviewed, the rates of reintegration were higher than the baseline population. The percentage of those people who received social visits and subsequently remained in the community were 98.2% (1% higher), 95% (1.7% higher) and 92.6% (4.2% higher) for each time period reviewed.

[3] Client_Visits_TBL

CHART 1: 0-30 DAY RETURNS

Overall, 1% higher than baseline

A total of 98.2% of individuals who received social visits remained in the community, compared to the 97.2% of the baseline group

Eight months had reintegration rates of 100%

Trending indicates that rates were slightly lower toward the end of the period reviewed

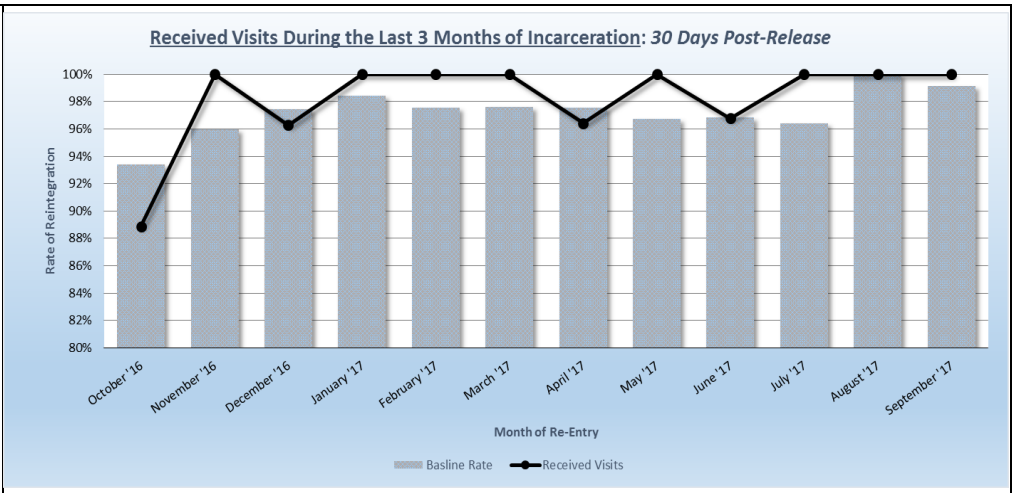


CHART 2: 31-60 DAY RETURNS

Overall, 1.6% higher than baseline

A total of 95% of individuals who received social visits remained in the community, compared to the 93.4% of the baseline group

Two months still had a 100% reintegration rate

Trending shows that rates were higher toward the end of the period reviewed

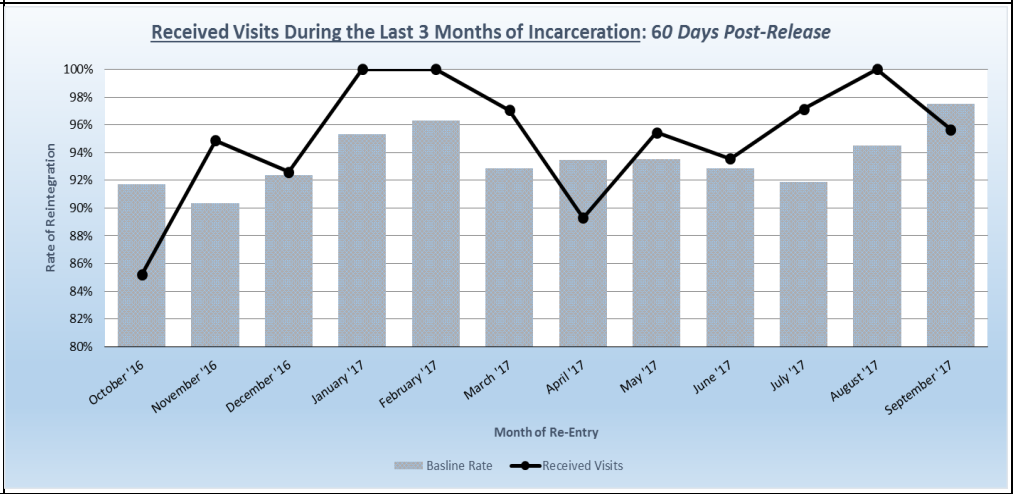


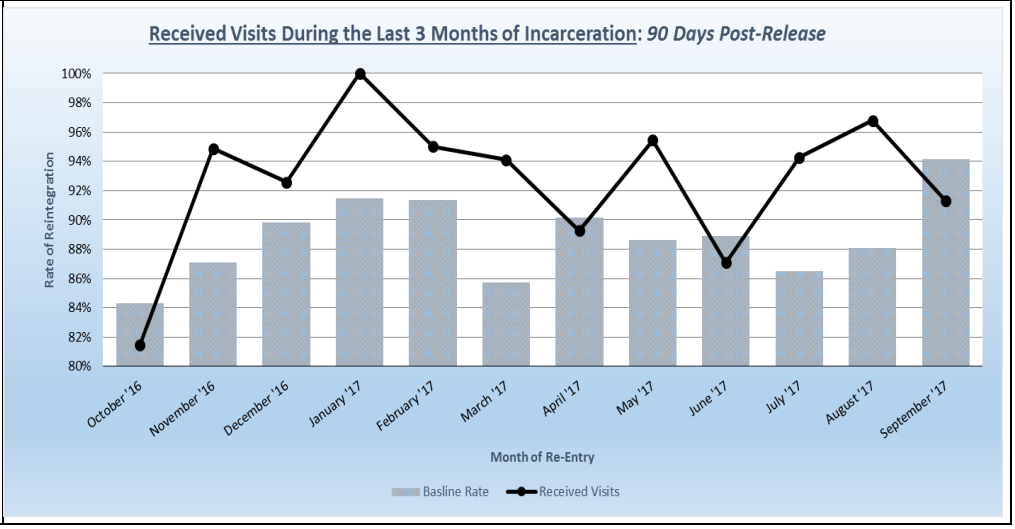
CHART 3: 61-90 DAYS

Overall, 4.2% higher than baseline

A total of 92.6% of individuals who received social visits remained in the community, compared to the 88.4% of the baseline group

One month still had a reintegration rate of 100%

Trending indicates slightly higher rates at the end of the period reviewed, though the trend was flatter during this period



Family Connections Center

The Family Connections Center (FCC) is a NHDOC program that "uses a strength-based approach to meet parents where they are at, to educate and support them, during their physical separation from their children due to incarceration. FCC connects the families left behind to family support programs in their communities, while creating healthy, fun activities for the children to participate with their incarcerated parent (FCC)." As evidenced by research conducted out of Rutgers University's School of Criminal Justice, the fostering and maintenance of "family support mechanisms are important in the successful reentry" of individuals into their community (Martinez, 5). The FCC program is limited to individuals who have minor children.

The primary question this section seeks to address is whether the rates of reintegration differ between the baseline and individuals who met any or all of the following criteria:

- Received FCC Earned Time Credit
- Were marked as "Completed Successfully" within 12 months of release
- Participation in the program ended when they were released

Due to the lack of attendance data, the differences in program attendance cannot be measured; instead the focus is on the overall data that shows participation in the program.

Population Measured: Family Connections Center

Having minor children is the primary prerequisite for participation in FCC programming. This does not automatically enroll an individual in FCC programming, however. An individual must self-report data about their minor children (total number, age, name, gender) to FCC personnel, who are then able to verify this information and enroll them in the program. Program enrollment is then entered into the offender management system and was targeted as a data point for this study. Further refinement was done to isolate the data points from the offender management system that correlate to an individual's participation in FCC programming. These points included:

- Individuals who had received Earned Time Credit (ETC) for participation/completion of FCC programming;
- FCC participation during the last 12 months of a person's incarceration;
- Instances where FCC participation terminated on a date and time that coincides with a person's release.

All three of these guidelines were used to determine FCC participation. By utilizing these three points, duplicate records were eliminated from the study. For example: A person whose FCC termination date matched their releases date AND who received ETC was counted only once. This eliminated the potential for skewed or inaccurate results.

Based on the above guidelines, 59 (4.2%) of the 1,410 individuals identified as valid re-entries to the community were determined to have participated in FCC programming during their period of incarceration. Unlike social visitation, FCC programming is not available to all individuals who are incarcerated. Self-reported data taken from the offender management system shows that a total of 779 (55.2%) of all individuals included in this study had minor children at the time of their re-entry into the community. Based on this data there were an additional 720 (51.5%) individuals released who potentially could have participated in FCC programming if they met the requirements.

Given the size of the subset of individuals from the overall baseline group who participated in FCC programming, it should be noted that small changes in any given month would result in more dramatic changes in the overall reintegration rates. The numbers of re-entries and the subset of individuals who participated in FCC programming can be seen below:

Table 2:

	Valid Re-Entries to the Community	Participation in FCC Programming	Percentage of Overall Re-Entries Each Month
Oct '16	121	3	2.5%
Nov '16	124	4	3.2%
Dec '16	118	3	2.5%
Jan '17	129	6	4.7%
Feb '17	81	1	1.2%
Mar '17	126	7	5.6%
Apr '17	122	2	1.6%
May '17	123	7	5.7%
Jun '17	126	13	10.3%
Jul '17	111	4	3.6%
Aug '17	109	6	5.5%
Sep '17	120	3	2.5%
Totals & Averages	1410	59	4.2%

Rate of Reintegration: Family Connections Center Participants

Reintegration rates for individuals who participated in FCC programming are 0.1% higher than the baseline rates on average. This shows no measureable effect on Reintegration rates among those who re-entered the community during the period assessed. Much of the impact on these numbers comes from two months with overall rates lower than their baseline counterparts (November '16 & June '17). The remaining ten months have 90-day rates equal to or greater than the baseline rates.

For two of the 30 day-periods reviewed, the rates of reintegration were higher than the baseline population. The percentage of those people who participated in FCC programming and subsequently remained in the community were 98.3% (1.1% higher), 91.4% (2% lower) and 89.6% (1.2% higher) for each time period reviewed.

Chart 4: 0-30 Day Returns

Overall, 1.1% higher than baseline

A total of 98.3% of the individuals who participated in FCC programming remained in the community, compared to 97.2% of the overall group

Rates of reintegration of 100% were observed in 11 months

Trending indicates that rates were higher toward the end of the period reviewed

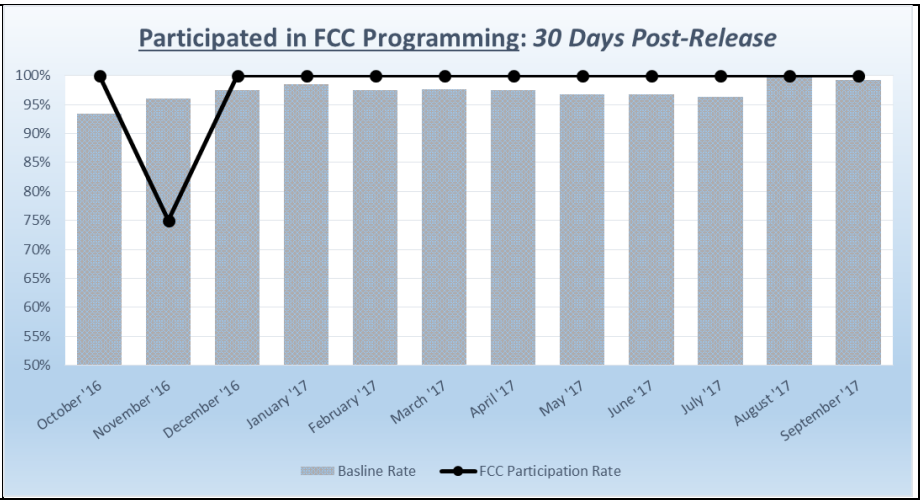


Chart 5: 31-60 Day Returns

Overall, 2% lower than the baseline

A total of 91.4% of the individuals who participated in FCC programming remained in the community, compared to 93.4% of the overall group

Nine months maintained a 100% rate of reintegration

Trending indicates that rates were higher toward the end of the period reviewed

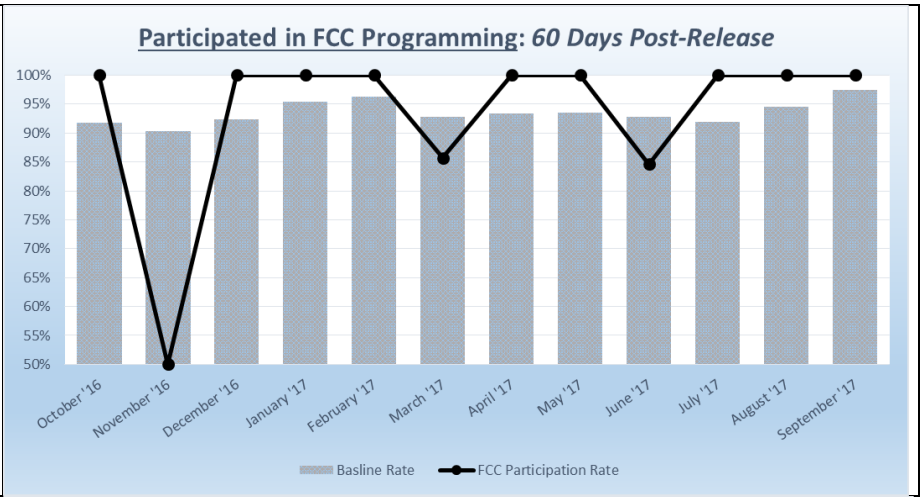


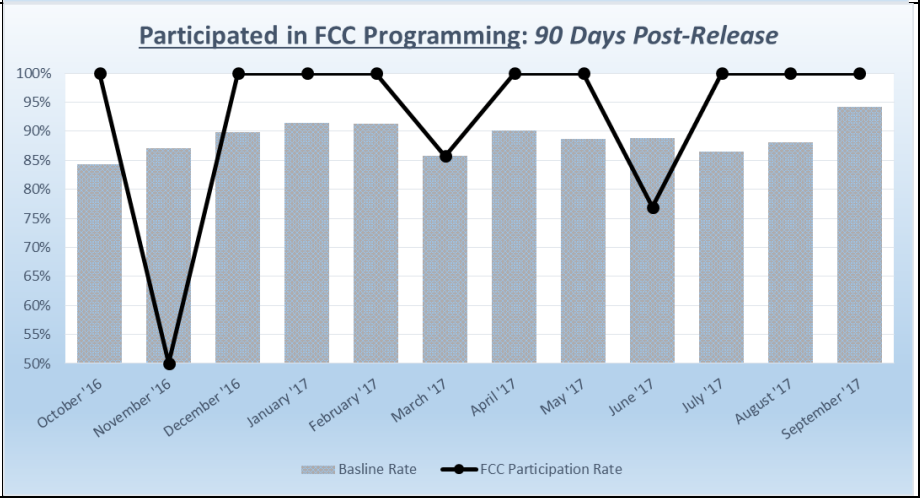
Chart 6: 61-90 Days

Overall, 1.2% higher than baseline

A total of 89.6% of the individuals who participated in FCC programming remained in the community, compared to 88.4% of the overall group

Nine months maintained a 100% reintegration rate

Trending indicates that rates were higher toward the end of the period reviewed



Appendix A: Baseline Population Study

The baseline for this period (October 2016 – September 2017) is as follows:

	Total Monthly Re-Entries	Excluded Re-Entries	Valid Releases	30-Day Rate	Individuals Returned to Facility	60-Day Rate	Individuals Returned to Facility	90-Day Rate	Individuals Returned to Facility
Oct '16	126	5	121	93.4%	8	91.7%	2	84.3%	9
Nov '16	125	1	124	96.0%	5	90.3%	7	87.1%	4
Dec '16	118	0	118	97.5%	3	92.4%	6	89.8%	3
Jan '17	132	3	129	98.4%	2	95.3%	4	91.5%	5
Feb '17	83	2	81	97.5%	2	96.3%	1	91.4%	4
Mar '17	134	8	126	97.6%	3	92.9%	6	85.7%	9
Apr '17	127	5	122	97.5%	3	93.4%	5	90.2%	4
May '17	126	3	123	96.7%	4	93.5%	4	88.6%	6
Jun '17	128	2	126	96.8%	4	92.9%	5	88.9%	5
Jul '17	114	3	111	96.4%	4	91.9%	5	86.5%	6
Aug '17	110	1	109	100.0%	0	94.5%	6	88.1%	7
Sep '17	125	5	120	99.2%	1	97.5%	2	94.2%	4
Total & Averages	1448	38	1410	97.3%	39	93.6%	53	88.8%	66

Appendix B: Works Cited

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