



STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE  
DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

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**NEWS RELEASE**

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**Contact:** Public Information Office  
105 Pleasant Street  
Concord, NH 03302

**Phone:** (603) 856-4555  
**Email:** [pio@doc.nh.gov](mailto:pio@doc.nh.gov)  
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**NH DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS HOSTS CHOOSE LOVE GRADUATION  
FOR THE FIRST TIME AT NEW HAMPSHIRE STATE PRISON FOR MEN**

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**Concord, NH** - Recently, New Hampshire Department of Corrections Commissioner Helen Hanks welcomed Scarlett Lewis, founder of the Jesse Lewis Choose Love Movement, to the New Hampshire State Prison for Men for their first-ever Choose Love Program graduation. Fifteen residents participated in the 14-week program, which teaches adults how to thoughtfully respond to any situation with kindness by using the Choose Love Formula (Courage + Gratitude + Forgiveness + Compassion-in-Action). Choose Love gives individuals the tools to handle adversity, have courageous conversations, and respond with love. It also promotes self-empowerment, resilience, connection, and optimism.

In January 2022, the New Hampshire Department of Corrections led the world by becoming the first correctional system to offer this social emotional learning (SEL) program to the incarcerated population at our New Hampshire Correctional Facility for Women, and now it is offered at the New Hampshire State Prison for Men.

The Corrections Choose Love Program incorporates the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) framework to ensure the material is accessible in a prison environment. The Corrections Choose Love Program includes daily engagement activities implemented during group sessions that reinforce and support social and emotional learning skills.

“As corrections professionals, we have a responsibility to transform the lives of our residents in a positive, healthy way to ensure their successful reintegration into society following their release from incarceration,” said Commissioner Hanks. “Many of our residents experienced significant trauma in their childhood and were not taught the skills surrounding self-regulation and compassion that Choose Love offers. This program has given individuals the opportunity to heal and move forward with their lives along a new path.”

“NHDOC is leading the way in rehabilitation by providing residents with essential life skills

taught through this program,” said Scarlett Lewis. “Many residents expressed that if they were provided with the opportunity to participate in Choose Love earlier in their lives, it may have helped them change course. By learning social and emotional competencies, these men can now improve themselves while helping their peers who are also navigating the system.”

The Choose Love Movement includes school programs and other no-cost programs like Choose Love for the Home, Communities, Athletic leadership, and the Workplace. The Choose Love Movement has been accessed in all 50 states and more than 100 countries, reaching 2 million children. Implementing Choose Love in NH Department of Corrections’ facilities will improve all participants’ social and emotional learning to enhance their relationships and interactions with their fellow resident inmates, families and communities which better prepares them for reentry.

The department’s goal is to utilize the Choose Love philosophy in all program offerings to include Education, Case Management, Religious Services, Family Connection Centers, and Transitional Housing. An added value to the Choose Love program is the connection incarcerated parents share with their children, since most schools throughout the State of NH have adopted Choose Love into their daily curriculum.



*NH State Prison for Men Residents pictured with Scarlett Lewis  
Courtesy Photo*



*Commissioner Helen Hanks and Warden Michelle Edmark pictured with Scarlett Lewis, Deputy Commissioner of the NH Department of Education Christine Brennan, and members of the Choose Love Program.*

*Courtesy Photo  
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