

Vera Institute of Justice

Criminal Justice Issues and Prisoners' Rights

<https://www.vera.org/publications/the-network-program-of-episcopal-social-services-a-process-evaluation>

Policy Issue Resources

Publication

The Network Program of the private nonprofit Episcopal Social Services provides therapeutic community services within New York State correctional and work-release facilities. This study examines how the program successfully integrated itself into the corrections environment by taking steps to gain buy-in from prison officials and staff. It also uncovers differences between the prison and work-release portions of the program. In the former, it found that the ESS network program attracted predominantly African-American offenders with long sentences, suggesting that participants use the therapeutic community to create a more supportive, less violent prison experience. The work release portion of the program adhered more closely to the ESS stated goal of providing training for re-entry. The decision to include family members in the therapeutic community was found to be a potentially significant innovation as it held promise for extending the therapeutic community's benefits beyond the initial re-entry period.

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