

Vera Institute of Justice

Criminal Justice Issues and Prisoners' Rights

<https://www.vera.org/blog/involving-families-in-reentry-policy-and-practice>

Public Facing Advocacy Writing

Two national organizations are featuring reentry-focused work by Veras Family Justice Program on their web sites. The Center for Effective Public Policy recently published [11 coaching packets](#) as part of its Prison Reentry Initiative Training and Technical Assistance Program. The series offers concrete steps for enhancing reentry-related practice, covering topics such as evaluation, case management, and motivating positive behavior change. Margaret diZerega, director of Veras Family Justice Program, wrote one of these packets, [Engaging Offenders Families in Reentry](#). As she summarized, Adopting a family-focused approach is about changing policy and practice in ways that acknowledge that family members are key variables in the success or failure of offenders transitioning to the community from prison.

Margaret also gave [a presentation](#) (starting at about 41:00 of the video) at the reentry conference Making Second Chances Work, describing her programs work with partners in corrections and parole to encourage supportive relationships between people in their custody and their family members. Even when corrections [staff] may never meet a family member, there are still some really important opportunities to take advantage of, Margaret told the audience. Discussions with youth and adults, for example, can help inform case management and make it more effective: Small things can make a big difference.

The conference was held in Washington, DC, for Second Chance Act grantees and hosted by the National Reentry Resource Center, a project of the Council of State Governments Justice Center.

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