

Reentry Education Programs and Criminogenic Needs

Recidivism research has identified categories of criminogenic needs, or needs connected to characteristics that contribute to recidivism. The criminogenic needs have been ranked as the “Big Four Needs” and “Lesser Four Needs” that should be addressed in order to increase the likelihood of a successful reentry.¹

| Big Four Criminogenic Needs | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| Criminogenic Need | Response |
| Anti-social cognition | Reduce anti-social cognition, recognize risky thinking and feelings, adopt an alternative identity |
| Anti-social companions | Reduce association with criminals, enhance contact with pro-social activities and people |
| Anti-social personality (temperament) | Build problem solving, self-management, anger management, and coping skills |
| Poor critical thinking | Address repeated mistakes, decision making patterns, inaccurate assumptions |
| Lesser Criminogenic Needs | |
| Family and/or marital | Reduce conflict, build positive relationships and communication, enhance monitoring/supervision |
| Substance abuse | Reduce usage, reduce the supports for abusive behavior, enhance alternatives to abuse |
| Employment/Education | Provide employment seeing and keeping skills, enhance performance rewards and incentives |

¹ <http://www.offendercorrections.com/content/?page=Criminogenic%20Needs>

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|---------------------------|---|
| Leisure and/or recreation | Enhance involvement and satisfaction in pro-social activities |
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When these underlying needs are met, research suggests the likelihood of recidivism decreases. Reentry education or workforce programming often focuses on the skill development needed for people to achieve the necessary credentials and skills for them to get good jobs and career advancement after incarceration. In addition to reaching education and training needs, reentry education program providers can also directly address the underlying criminogenic needs,

In an accompanying Tip Sheet, there is an overview of the connection between behavioral health, including the criminogenic needs, and the reentry education and workforce programming. Using this Template, program providers can focus in on how their program elements can directly address criminogenic needs. The chart below identifies the criminogenic needs. There are also two additional columns for providers and partners to identify the program services or elements that (1) currently exist to address the need and (2) proposed enhancements that could address these issues.

To What Extent Are Your Programs Mapping Program Elements to the Big Four Needs?

Use this chart to consider how current program elements address criminogenic needs? Are there any enhancements that you or partners would propose to add to the program to meet a criminogenic need?

| Criminogenic Need | Current Program Elements | Proposed Enhancement |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|
| Anti-social cognition | | |
| Anti-social companions | | |
| Anti-social personality (temperament) | | |
| Poor critical thinking | | |
| Family and/or marital | | |
| Substance abuse | | |
| Employment/Education | | |
| Leisure and/or recreation | | |