TRANSFORMFILMSINC presents a documentary by KEITH MCQUIRTER

# MILWAUKEE 53206

## GENERAL DISCUSSION GUIDE



STRENGTHENING FAMILIES. HEALING COMMUNITIES.

odyssey IMPACT

UNION
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
IN THE CITY OF NEW YORK

TRANSFORMFILMSINC

MILWAUKEE53206 MILWAUKEE53206 MILWAUKEE53206

#MKE53206

# TABLE OF CONTENTS


| | |
|---|---|
| INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT | 4 |
| LETTER FROM NICK STUART, CEO OF ODYSSEY IMPACT™ | 6 |
| LETTER FROM DR. SERENE JONES | 7 |
| STATEMENT FROM THE DIRECTOR KEITH MCQUIRTER | 8 |
| THEMES AND CENTRAL POINTS | 10 |
| THE ISSUES OF AN IMBALANCED JUSTICE SYSTEM | 11 |
| THE ISSUE OF FATHERHOOD AND PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY | 12 |
| TIME AS PUNISHMENT | 13 |
| BLACK WOMEN AND PRISON | 15 |
| IS THERE WHITE PRIVILEGE IN THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM? | 16 |
| DESTIGMATIZATION AND THE STRUGGLES OF REENTRY | 17 |
| CHILDREN AND THE FUTURE | 18 |
| KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS | 20 |
| ORGANIZATIONS CONCERNED WITH THE REENTRY OF FORMERLY INCARCERATED PERSONS (FIP) | 21 |
| ORGANIZATIONS COMMITTED TO PRISON REFORM, PRISON ABOLITION AND MASS INCARCERATION | 25 |
| CREDITS | 35 |

# INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

Friends,

We live in a moral and political crisis. **The United States' incarceration rate is the highest in the world**, creating what is currently known as "Mass Incarceration." Mass incarceration is a term that defines this country as a carceral country, a prison country, a country where prisons function as the primary response and operative "solution" to anything appearing to be criminal and transgressing the laws of the nation-state. No other country imprisons its citizens as much or at a similar rate as the United States of America. No other country financially benefits from incarcerated bodies as much as the United States of America.

This socially engineered atrocity has particularly illuminated the ways in which this moral problem disproportionately affects and dehumanizes impoverished Black and Brown citizens. And in lieu of this systemic moral and political catastrophe, rightfully coined, "**The New Jim Crow**", activists and organizers are fighting and negotiating with the state to foster a better system—or abolition of any system—where this injustice no longer takes place, where Black and Brown families are no longer unfairly and disproportionately imprisoned, for especially non-violent crimes. The conversations and dialogue initiated by organizers, activists and returning citizens surrounding Mass Incarceration and Prison Abolition is what occasions the creation of this documentary, MILWAUKEE 53206.

**53206 is the ZIP code with the highest incarceration rate among African-American males in the country.** While focusing exclusively on this section of Milwaukee, and unfortunately, exclusively on males in this area, this documentary sheds light on a nationwide dilemma and thus contributes to a growing national conversation already taking place among persons who are demanding justice regarding prisons from the state apparatus.

But what happens when we take a closer look at a few families in this ZIP code who are affected intensely by our unjust criminal justice system? What happens when we put a face to a statistic? What new insights can we glean from placing a human face, body and story to a person with a possibly ruined and uncertain future caused by the unjust politics of mass incarceration? These are the questions that this documentary intends to ask; this is the conversation MILWAUKEE 53206 intends to initiate.

Through the lives of Beverly Walker, Dennis Walton and Chad Wilson we see firsthand experiences of the pressure and pain regarding the effects of mass

# INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

incarceration. **Their stories in so many words humanize mass incarceration.** They open a window for us, they give us a view that we cannot see if we are unfamiliar with mass incarceration as a broadly engineered social injustice. Through them we see closely the eyes of a loved one on the outside, a loved one who struggles to keep everything together alone and without the presence of her husband. We see an advocate who was almost imprisoned and is able to genuinely reflect on the interconnections that made the chances of his imprisonment a probability and we meet a returning citizen who has made a full-fledged commitment to improving his life, the lives of his family and his community.

This project is an urgent clarion call. It is a request for help in helping those of us committed to justice and freedom with ending this moral and political catastrophe in which we are all complicit. This guide is meant to introduce a problem that a large part of the country knows little about. Therefore, we hope it helps to spark and direct conversation. It is not meant to be exhaustive and it does not cover all the avenues that can be discussed and analyzed when thinking about mass incarceration. Therefore, use this guide as you see fit, use it to think about key themes, use it as a resource to connect with organizations committed to social justice and mass incarceration. **This documentary and discussion guide intends to create a better and more just world for everyone here and on their way.** Our future depends on our response to our prison crisis.

# LETTER FROM NICK STUART
# CEO OF ODYSSEY IMPACT™

Three years ago we sat down to see how our films could help bring real change to our world, help shine a light on injustice and lift up the work of those working tirelessly for change. The issue of Mass Incarceration stood out.

I still have to do a double-take each time I read that sentence, the one that says "**America incarcerates more of its citizens than any other nation on earth**". Over the last three years I have read that dozens of times and still I find it incredulous. It can't be true. Except, it is.

In 2011 we looked at the lives of prisoners serving life without parole who were caring for fellow inmates, dying in a prison hospice, and showed how even lives society just wanted to hide away and forget about were capable of the deepest compassion. This time, we wanted to go to the other end of the story –, the families and communities the incarcerated leave behind. Because the ripples of incarceration flow outwards in ways we often don't see. It is not just those serving time who are "serving time".

"MILWAUKEE 53206" shows you the effects of mass incarceration on the lives and community of those "left behind" in the most incarcerated ZIP Code in the USA. But how can I help? What can I do, what can my congregation, my college, my business do, to help end mass incarceration?

This discussion guide offers each one of us an answer as to how we can help. Together we can be there to help those in need now, today. Together we will be able to condemn that sentence, that "America incarcerates more of its citizens than any other nation on earth" to the past.

# LETTER FROM DR. SERENE JONES, PRESIDENT OF UNION THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Dear Friends,

There is an epidemic of suffering that is plaguing the United States. Like an infectious disease, mass incarceration is chronic, self-sustaining and affects vast swaths of the population damaging the very fabric of our most vulnerable communities. Surely this is not what Jesus envisioned.

The brutality of mass incarceration is the moral scandal of American life. Indeed, the numbers make their own case: The United States represents 5 percent of the world's population, but we hold a staggering 25 percent of its total inmates. As of 2015, approximately 6.7 million people—mostly young black and brown men—were under correctional supervision.

Facts and figures, however, are not enough to affect change. MILWAUKEE 53206 brilliantly illustrates this crisis on a human scale, deftly highlighting the everyday tragedies left in the wake of a profoundly misguided system. The film exposes the current realities of mass incarceration and urges us to undermine business as usual. It insists that we remain vigilant and vocal against the pillars of racism, sexism, and classism by advocating for the universal rights of education, health care, and fair living wages. This is our call.

As people of faith, we are required—without exception—to help realize a just world. MILWAUKEE 53206 prods us to speak up, not only on behalf of those who have been locked away and effectively silenced, but also for the countless communities impacted by the criminal justice system. Prayer and consciousness-raising may be our first steps but MILWAUKEE 53206 also encourages us to listen to those who are jailed, imprisoned and detained as well as their families and loved ones. We must hear their stories without judgment or false moralizing. They must lead us.

We have the capacity as a human community to ensure that every individual has the opportunity to live their best lives. If we are capable of recognizing injustice, then we must also be willing to join in the fight to end it.

My sincerest thanks go to Odyssey Impact™ for helping to share this remarkable story, and to Jamall Andrew Calloway, Ph.D. Candidate at Union Theological Seminary for making this discussion guide possible.

Peace,

Rev. Dr. Serene Jones
President and Johnston Family Professor for Religion and Democracy
Union Theological Seminary

# STATEMENT FROM THE DIRECTOR KEITH MCQUIRTER

In 2008, I visited a correctional facility in New Jersey for research for a documentary film project. It was my first time visiting a correctional facility of any kind. As I sat in the cafeteria with the general population, and listened to community leaders give speeches about what's in store for the men when they return to society, I couldn't help but be stunned by what I saw – a sea of young Black men around my age and who looked like me. Intellectually, I've always been aware of the staggering number of Black men incarcerated in America, but after seeing it for myself firsthand, I left the facility physically sick and deeply disturbed.

Here I was at the beginning of my career and here they were, nearly one hundred young men, serving time and eventually re-entering society marked as felons. The barriers stacked against them to better their lives and their families' lives were vastly more challenging than anything I would ever experience. Statistically, half would probably be returning to the same or a similar correctional facility in the near future. Even more disturbing is the fact that in most cases, their children and grandchildren will follow.

Coming from a Black family that hails from the Deep South, my grandparent's and parent's generation fought on the front lines of the civil rights movement. They worked and fought their entire lives to break down barriers so that their families and communities of color could live better lives. That fight continues to this day, but for a long time stopped at the gates of the criminal justice system, where communities of color continue to be systematically decimated by its policies and practices nationwide. All this and my unresolved experience in 2008, led me to Milwaukee's zip code 53206, 2.7 square miles that holds the title of the most incarcerated zip code in America.

With so many families living with the impact of incarceration, it was important to find real stories that allow a rare glimpse into how incarceration impacts family systems and the community at large.

I look forward to this documentary becoming a part of the national dialogue for change in our criminal justice system, and I hope it will open up the hearts and minds of audiences who may be exposed to this crisis for the first time. I firmly believe that the Civil Rights Movement has never ended, but rather continues to keep pressing forward with each new generation. The fight for change is never easy, but it is a necessity if we are to keep striving for a better society.



*DIRECTOR, KEITH MCQUIRTER, AND DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRPAHY, DEREK WIESEHAHN, FILMING MILWAUKEE 53206.*

# THEMES AND CENTRAL POINTS

Mass Incarceration convicts us all. We are all complicit in its upkeep. That is why it is important for all of us to sit together and discuss the ways in which this injustice can end.

In MILWAUKEE 53206 we believe there are seven themes that are profound and should not go unnoticed. These themes are starting points for conversations. They intend to galvanize discussions that shed light on the countless ways that Mass Incarceration thrives underneath our eyes.

**Theme 1:** ***The Issues of An Imbalanced Justice System***
**Theme 2:** ***The Issue of Fatherhood and Personal Responsibility***
**Theme 3:** ***Time as Punishment***
**Theme 4:** ***Black Women & Prison***
**Theme 5:** ***Is There White Privilege in the Criminal Justice System?***
**Theme 6:** ***Destigmatization and The Struggles of Re-Entry***
**Theme 7:** ***Children and the Future***

Admittedly, this documentary does not cover every aspect of Mass Incarceration and you may have questions that are not reflected in this guide. That is perfectly okay. This guide is meant to start a discussion, not end it. The more questions and perspectives, the better.

Consider this guide an invitation to a conversation that we all need to have. Because we all need to help end Mass Incarceration.

# THEME 1

## AN IMBALANCED JUSTICE SYSTEM

### (CLIP: 3:00-4:18)

Oppression successfully functions as a complete network of oppressive components. In most cases, these components are viewed in isolation. For example, poverty, racism, global warming, patriarchy, gentrification and queerphobia are often viewed as distinct, individual social ills where they each have disparate activists and organizers committed to their eradication. However, what is suggested in this documentary is the interconnection of social ills and how the prison industrial complex operates as one oppressive component among many. **But are these social ills creating an unfair, imbalanced justice system in this society overall?**

**Common Questions**

1) What was enlightening in the radio conversation between Dennis and Chief Edward A. Flynn?
2) What does Flynn mean by “numerous instabilities”?

**Discussion Questions**

1) What other injustices in our society contribute to Mass Incarceration?
2) How does the issue of mass incarceration affect current relationships between police officers and Black and Brown impoverished communities?
3) What are some practices of police officers that contribute to Black and Brown incarceration?
4) Are Black males more prone to criminal behavior than other races?
5) Why does Flynn not mention anything about police brutality? How does policing contribute to the problem of mass incarceration?
6) How does the presence of police officers in your community make you feel? Is it possible that there are various perspectives on policing in general? What do you imagine some of those various feelings are? and why?
7) What role do prosecutors play in mass incarceration? What biases might a prosecutor hold that could contribute to such a national injustice?

# THEME 2

# FATHERHOOD AND PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY

Historically, crime in the African American community has always been linked with the topic of the non-nuclear Black family. From E. Franklin Frazier to Ta-Nehisi Coates (and other writers), the notion of the absent or negligent father or the destruction of the Black traditional family has always found its way in discussions concerning Black children and criminal activity. The people in this documentary invoke similar logics.

Dennis and Chad work for a not-for-profit organization entitled, Milwaukee Fatherhood Initiative, while Beverly and Baron constantly mention how Baron's absence negatively impacts the children in their blended family. The issue with focusing on the family when it concerns African American families is that it easily dissolves into the topic of personal responsibility and blame for incarceration as opposed to leaving ample room for addressing the systemic causes of Mass Incarceration. These questions will help us look critically at this scene in the documentary and ask ourselves what role does pathology often play in discourse surrounding Black and Brown imprisonment.

**Common Questions**

1) What role can families play in preventing criminal activity?
2) What about teachers? Pastors? Priests? Deacons? Ministers? Coaches? Community leaders? What role do they play in preventing criminal behavior? Why or why not?

**Discussion Questions**

1) In your opinion, why is there a constantly invoked connection between fatherhood and Black male imprisonment?
2) What does Dennis mean by "in the womb"? What are some things he believes are happening before we are born?
3) Can after school programs come into this conversation at any point? How can extracurricular activities help with preventing criminal activities?
4) Is there anything to be said about Black males who are incarcerated but had their fathers around (like Chad for example)?

# THEME 3

# TIME AS PUNISHMENT

Baron Walker, a man who was reared in 53206, has been incarcerated for over 21 years. Convicted of two bank robberies and two crime armed robberies, Walker was sentenced to 60 years in prison with the possibility of parole after 15 years was served. Unfortunately, Walker has been constantly denied parole because the board believes that "insufficient time has been served." Baron and Beverly disagree with the board, believing that Baron and other inmates are victims of judicial bureaucracy and arbitrary decision making. Such opinions regarding unfair decision-making is most noticeable in what we know as the "Truth In Sentencing" (TIS) law. Because of TIS, Baron is facing a difficult time getting released. This discussion focuses on the theme of time and rehabilitation.

**Common Questions**

1) Do people change?
2) How much time do you think is necessary for a person to change, to be rehabilitated?
3) What is the purpose of prison? And what purpose do you think long sentences serve?

**Discussion Questions**

1) Is the concept of "Time" a trustworthy and effective tool in determining one's punishment and evaluating if they have changed and are better equipped for civil society? What can function as a response to crime other than "Time"?
4) What are some better and more fruitful ways of evaluating whether a proper response to crime has been enacted other than incarceration?
5) Baron asks the question himself: "What more does the State need to no longer consider him a menace to society?" What do you think the State needs? Why does the State keep him and deny him parole?
6) What resources are available in our communities that can help people like Baron and Beverly?



*DENNIS WALTON, BORN AND RAISED ON MILWAUKEE'S NORTH SIDE IN ZIP CODE 53206, IS A COMMUNITY ORGANIZER, SOCIAL ENTREPRENEUR AND ACTIVIST.*

# THEME 4

# BLACK WOMEN AND PRISON

The incarceration rate for African American women is growing exponentially in this country. According to the Bureau of Justice Statistics, a staggering 1 in 16 Black women will be incarcerated, in comparison to 1 in 111 White women. Every prison statistic states clearly that Black women are the fastest-growing segment of the prison population in the U.S. Therefore, when we are discussing Mass Incarceration, we are not exclusively discussing a problem for Black men as prisoners and Black women as waiting family members; we are discussing a growing prison population across the board for Black women and men simultaneously. While this documentary does not focus on the story of a Black incarcerated woman, it does highlight the affects that prison has on a wife and mother who must—through overwhelming stress and pressure—keep her family together and with high spirits during the incarceration of her husband. Beverly is first and foremost, a person, she has dreams and aspirations and wishes that exist outside her familial roles. Secondly, Beverly is a wife, a mother, and a daughter. She has roles and responsibilities that carry their own pressures, independently, without incarceration functioning as an obstacle. Let us take a moment to think about Beverly and Black women at large.

**Common Questions**

1) Why are Black women overlooked in conversations surrounding Mass Incarceration when they are the fastest growing population?

2) What are some ways that Black women in particular are criminalized?

**Discussion Questions**

1) Would you hire Beverly to do a workshop at your job/church/organization?

2) Do you know someone like Beverly in your community?
What would you say to them?

3) What are some ways that you think you might be able to support Beverly and people like her you know in your community?

THEME 5

# IS THERE WHITE PRIVILEGE IN THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM?

## TIMOTHY'S COMMENT: 26:30 – 28:00

## CHAD'S COMMENT: "EVERYBODY BREAKS LAWS, NOT EVERYONE GETS CAUGHT"

In this scene, Timothy explains what numerous justice seeking people have said concerning the unfairness and unevenness of the law. Simply that something in its applicability is not right. A cursory glance at statistics of incarcerated persons would cause one to either consider that Black people are inherently more criminal, more lawless and more ungovernable than other American citizens or, that the laws practical instantiations are disproportionate. Many opt to believe the former and therefore pronounce a plethora of pathologies regarding Black people and their habit of committing crimes. Those who refuse such pathologies place their attention on the latter, asserting that something is unfair in our criminal justice procedures. Chad and Timothy are primary examples of people who pronounce the latter. Chad says, strongly, "Everybody breaks laws, not everyone gets caught" which means that certain people, that being Black people, must be in many ways more targeted and harshly punished than other people. Timothy – a young White male – realizes that he received a different treatment after getting caught than did his Black counterparts. He states clearly that it is for no other reason than him being white. This discussion attempts to differentiate the treatment of white versus people of color in the eyes of the law.

**Common Questions**

1) Do you agree that White people receive lighter punishment in comparison to those considered minorities? Why or why not?

2) If there are more White people in the U.S., and White people commit just as many crimes as Black people, then why are there higher concentrations of Black people in prisons?

**Discussion Questions**

1) How has Whiteness impacted society? Do you automatically assume that because a person is white, they are less likely to commit crimes?

2) What if Chad or Baron were white? Do you think their experiences with the criminal justice system would be different? If so, in what way?

3) Do you think that more diversity in our Police and Criminal Justice System would make a positive difference?

THEME 6

# DESTIGMATIZATION AND THE STRUGGLES OF RE-ENTRY

## (CLIP: 22:49-22:48)

Chad S.A. Wilson, father of five, has returned home after spending eight years in prison. He faces what so many people coined the "ex con" experience. Where he will have to navigate society while being marked, categorized, and tagged as a person who has done time and still needs to be carefully inspected. His records make it difficult for him to find a place of employment. He cannot vote in elections. A large portion of his rights as a citizen are revoked. Chad's predicament, unfortunately, is what helps engender a cycle in which convicted felons find themselves in situations where they must negotiate what is illegal and what is necessary for mere survival in spite of ethics. Chad is hired by Dennis to do activist work with the Milwaukee Fatherhood Initiative, but Chad's story is not the normal depiction of the struggle to find a life after incarceration. These questions are to get us thinking further about the stigma around convicted felons and some ways we can change our society to make life easier for people who have paid their dues.

### Common Questions

1) Does your place of employment or business make it an obligation for formerly incarcerated citizens to reveal their records? How does that affect one's chances of employment if they have a record?

### Discussion Questions

1) What would you say to Chad if he walked into your place of employment in search of a job?
2) What kind of information does an employer have the right to know about a person they are hiring? Is it ever necessary to inquire on an application about a person's conviction history?
3) What does the term "ex-convict" bring up in your mind? Who and what do you imagine upon hearing that term?
4) What difference does it make if you call someone an "ex-convict" or "ex-offender" rather than "a person with a conviction history" or a "formerly-incarcerated person?

THEME 7

# CHILDREN AND THE FUTURE

## MATTHEW 18:1-9
## MARK 10:15

Children are our future. They will one day replace our presence and be forced to make decisions intended to continue what we did correctly and to cease the wrongs we did as well. That is why it is important for them to have a healthy, expansive imagination. What Mass Incarceration does, in particular to Black and Brown children, is it infringes upon their imagination and dwindles what they think is available to them in the world. In this scene, Dennis from the Milwaukee Fatherhood Initiative is visiting kids in his neighborhood and asking them questions about their future and aspirations. Dennis introduces us to a young boy who, states that he has seen “so many people fall” that he envisions starting an after school group that will help prevent people from getting into trouble. Although his dreams of contributing to his community arecompelling, one must ask why does a young boy feel such obligation to prevent people from, as he put it, “falling”?

Furthermore, Beverly’s son struggles with playing football at his full capacity. He states that he is not trying his best. Beverly tries to encourage him to give his all no matter what. Baron, of course, is missing in this scene.

**Discussion Questions**

1) Why do you think the young boy feels so responsible for his community?
2) What sort of things were you imagining when you were his age?
3) What do you think goes through his mind when he sees police officers in his community?
4) What type of future would you wish for this young boy? What types of social ills might get in his way?



*BEVERLY WALKER IS THE DEDICATED WIFE OF BARON WALKER, WHO HAS BEEN INCARCERATED UNDER WISCONSIN'S OLD LAW FOR OVER 21 YEARS.*

# KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

**Truth in Sentencing:** Truth in sentencing laws are enacted to reduce the possibility of early release from incarceration. It requires offenders to serve a substantial portion of the prison sentence imposed by the court before being eligible for release.

**Parole & Probation:** Probation and parole are both alternatives to incarceration. However, probation occurs prior to and often instead of jail or prison time, while parole is an early release from prison. In both probation and parole, the party is supervised and expected to follow certain rules and guidelines.

**Milwaukee Fatherhood Initiative:** The Milwaukee Fatherhood Initiative was formed to address, respond to, celebrate and challenge dads from every walk of life to get engaged, involved and stay committed to their children and to protect and preserve the family unit. Their commitment is to make sure our children have strong, caring men to step up and, sometimes, step in, to let our children know we care.

**Police Brutality & Harassment:** The deliberate use of excessive force, usually physical, carried out during law enforcement activities by a police officer engaging the civilian population. This type of behavior also includes verbal attacks and psychological intimidation by a police officer.

**Pathology:** The science of the causes and effects of diseases, especially the branch of medicine that deals with the laboratory examination of samples of body tissue for diagnostic or forensic purposes.

# ORGANIZATIONS CONCERNED WITH THE REENTRY OF FORMERLY INCARCERATED PERSONS (FIP)

Reentry for incarcerated people can be just as debilitating a process as spending time in prison. Formerly Incarcerated Persons (FIPs) reenter a world that has continued to change while they were imprisoned; technology and cultural expectations have a tendency of being radically different from the world they remember if they were incarcerated for a great length of time. The stigma attached to spending time in prison is clear in terms of the limitations that FIPs face in trying to gain employment, procure federal assistance or join a flourishing community. Below you will find several organizations that deal with the following:

- Shifting tide of social, political, educational and economic systems
- Stigma attached to FIP status in job search and career management
- Repairing the psychic and emotional harm induced by prison.

**NATIONAL RE-ENTRY PROJECT**
The National Website on Reentry
Reentry Central is the national website for news and information on the subject of reentry and related criminal justice issues.
http://www.reentrycentral.org/

**PROJECT 180**
Over 30,000 Florida prisoners are released annually and reenter our communities. Many wish to become law-abiding citizens and have the best intention of living a conventional life yet most have few job skills, lack a formal education, and experience discrimination in housing and job markets because of their felony records. As a result, they become our local statistics—the homeless, the unemployed, the under-educated, the impoverished. Unable to make it in the conventional world, over 60% are rearrested for a new crime within three years causing further victimization and a drain on community resources. Project 180 seeks to break this cycle by providing workforce education and financial literacy classes for inmates and an annual reentry lecture series for the general public. Their long-term goal is to open a 24/7 residential program for offenders who wish to turn their lives around. Project 180 seeks to build community, not more prisons.
http://www.project180reentry.org/index.html

**HELP FOR FELONS**

Help For Felons is an organization that is dedicated to helping felons be successful in every aspect of life by providing helpful and current information related to felons and ex-offenders. Their goal is to provide the tools that are needed to not only live, but to be successful and live a fulfilling life. They have information regarding felon friendly jobs and careers, reentry programs, felon friendly apartments /housing and financial advice regarding loans and grants for felon.

http://www.helpforfelons.org/reentry-programs-ex-offenders-state/

**JUSTICE CENTER**

The Justice Center, with funding support from the Bureau of Justice Assistance, U.S. Department of Justice and the Center for Faith-Based and Community Initiatives, U.S. Department of Labor, developed a guide that offers practical recommendations for how state government officials and community-based service providers can better use limited resources to help people released from prisons and jails successfully and safely rejoin neighborhoods and families.

https://csgjusticecenter.org/reentry/publications/reentry-partnerships-a-guide-for-states-faith-based-and-community-organizations/

**ANNIE CASEY FOUNDATION Report**

This report offers technical assistance strategies and resources to reconnect men and women returning home from prison to their families and neighborhoods through employment, education, health and social services. The report gives guidance on how to reduce barriers facing the formerly incarcerated, including access to housing, work, health care, counseling and job training. Policy changes that could help are highlighted. In addition, the report reviews support available for families and children of the incarcerated to help address loss of income, emotional pain, disruptions in family life and social stigma.

http://www.aecf.org/resources/reentry-helping-former-prisoners-return-to-communities

**ST. LOUIS AREA REENTRY**

Provides general information, street addresses, phone numbers and websites for dozens of agencies, shelters, employment resources, food pantries and other organizations throughout the St. Louis area.

http://www.startherestl.org/re-entry.html

**EXOFFENDERS**

Is a resource for employment, reentry and assistance. The site lists nationwide resources for recently released ex-offenders.

https://exoffenders.net/

**CENTERFORCE**

The Centerforce mission is to support, educate, and advocate for individuals, families and communities impacted by incarceration.
http://www.centerforce1.org/

**SOCIAL SOLUTIONS**

In 2000, Social Solutions was launched by a small team of direct service workers who wanted to improve the effectiveness of social services. They asked themselves: How much effort does it take to produce desired outcomes for specific groups of clients? Efforts to Outcomes (ETO®) software was the result—a solution that would allow staff to record their efforts at the point of service delivery and relate those efforts to client outcomes down the road.
http://www.socialsolutions.com/blog/4-elements-of-successful-reentry-programs-for-inmates/

**CENTER FOR NULEADERSHIP**

The mission of the Center for NuLeadership on Urban Solutions is to influence socio-economic, criminal and juvenile justice policy by providing research, advocacy and leadership training to formerly and currently incarcerated people, their families, communities, allies and criminal justice professionals for the purpose of 1) increasing public health and safety by creating viable alternatives that challenge and change over reliance on incarceration-punishment policies and practices as a solution to socio-economic urban and rural problems; (2) reshaping the media portrayal and public opinion of people with criminal records by humanizing their popular image and offering language alternatives to counter current negative stereotypes, beliefs, misinformation and myths; and (3) promoting active participation in criminal and social justice policy decisions, discussions and deliberations by the people whose lives are most directly affected and who have a legitimate stake in the outcomes.
http://centerfornuleadership.org/

**THE CORRECTIONAL ASSOCIATION OF NEW YORK**

The Correctional Association of New York is a criminal justice policy and advocacy organization that works to create a more balanced, efficient, and humane criminal justice system. Currently, the Association is undertaking four core projects: the Public Policy Project, the Women in Prison Project, the Prison Visiting Project and the Juvenile Justice Project.
http://www.correctionalassociation.org/

**NATIONAL RE-ENTRY PROJECT**

The National Website on Reentry
Reentry Central is the national website for news and information on the subject of reentry and related criminal justice issues.
http://www.reentrycentral.org/




*CHAD S.A. WILSON WAS BORN ON MILWAUKEE'S NORTH SIDE IN ZIP CODE 53206. POST INCARCERATION, HE CONTINUES TO MAKE POSITIVE STRIDES BUT STILL STRUGGLES WITH THE DAILY OBSTACLES OF BEING LABELED AND STIGMATIZED AS A FELON.*

# ORGANIZATIONS COMMITTED TO PRISON REFORM, PRISON ABOLITION, AND MASS INCARCERATION

**CRITICAL RESISTANCE**

Critical Resistance (CR) is a national grassroots organization building a movement to abolish the prison industrial complex (PIC). They think of the PIC as the system of surveillance, policing, and imprisonment that government, industry and their interests use as solutions to economic, social, and political problems. Because the PIC is a huge, complicated system, they have to attack it from all different angles using many different strategies. Their broad abolitionist strategy embraces 3 main frames: Dismantle, Change and Build.
http://criticalresistance.org/

**BLACK & PINK**

Black & Pink is an open family of LGBTQ prisoners and "free world" allies who support each other. Their work toward the abolition of the prison industrial complex is rooted in the experience of currently and formerly incarcerated people. They are outraged by the specific violence of the prison industrial complex against LGBTQ people, and respond through advocacy, education, direct service, and organizing.
http://www.blackandpink.org/

**PROJECT NIA**

The Prison Industrial Complex Teaching Collective
The Chicago Prison Industrial Complex (PIC) Teaching Collective is an all-volunteer group that organizes interactive workshops, film screenings, and trainings which aim to inspire action. They also produce educational materials and resources. They provide opportunities for youth and adults to explore issues related to Mass Incarceration. They focus on practical steps to inspire, inform, and enable action, and on how to develop workable alternatives.
http://www.project-nia.org/pic-teaching-collective.php

**REAL COST OF PRISONS**

Aggregate site and compiled list of a range of advocacy and prison reform networks.
http://www.realcostofprisons.org/links.html

**EQUAL JUSTICE INITIATIVE**

The Equal Justice Initiative is committed to ending Mass Incarceration and excessive punishment in the United States, to challenging racial and economic injustice, and to protecting basic human rights for the most vulnerable people in American society.

http://eji.org/

**CITIZENS ALLIANCE ON PRISONS AND PUBLIC SPENDING**

The Citizens Alliance on Prisons and Public Spending, a non-profit public policy organization, is concerned about the social and economic costs of prison expansion.

http://2015capps.capps-mi.org/

**THE CORRECTIONAL ASSOCIATION OF NEW YORK**

The Correctional Association of New York is a criminal justice policy and advocacy organization that works to create a more balanced, efficient, and humane criminal justice system. Currently, the Association is undertaking four core projects: the Public Policy Project, the Women in Prison Project, the Prison Visiting Project and the Juvenile Justice Project.

http://www.correctionalassociation.org/

**THE SENTENCING PROJECT – END CRACK AND POWDER COCAINE SENTINCING DISPARITIES**

The Sentencing Project and its coalition partners, the American Civil Liberties Union, Open Society Policy Center and Drug Policy Alliance, are actively working to advance crack cocaine sentencing reform in Congress. Coalition members have launched a national campaign to educate the public about the crack and powder cocaine-sentencing disparity. The goal is to encourage the American public to make their voices heard in order to tame the mandatory penalties. The 1986 and 1988 Anti-Drug Abuse Acts established excessive mandatory penalties for crack cocaine that were the harshest ever adopted for low-level drug offenses and created drastically different penalty structures for crack cocaine compared to powder cocaine, which are pharmacologically identical substances. The law has diverted precious resources away from prevention and treatment for drug users and devastated communities ripped apart by incarceration.

http://www.sentencingproject.org/

**FAIR CHANCE PROJECT**

They are loved ones of long-term lifers, concerned community members, and Liberated Lifers intent on carrying out the fight to free thousands who have spent far too many years behind bars long after they accepted full responsibility for their crimes, long after they have been fully rehabilitated, long after they fulfilled all requirements to became eligible for parole. They are committed to building a future for all California residents beyond prisons. Their goal is to transform unjust sentencing laws and Parole policies while protecting the Human and Constitutional rights of those impacted by the prison system.
http://fairchanceproject.com/

**FORMERLY INCARCERATED PEOPLES MOVEMENT**

We Demand an End to Mass Incarceration
The first goal of changing the criminal justice system is to create and implement alternatives to incarceration, working toward a society where prisons do not exist. We demand the end of Mass Incarceration and commit ourselves to fighting the notion and the practice of building new prisons, juvenile detention facilities and immigration detention centers.

Mass Incarceration does not add to public safety, and diverts real resources from other social needs. We are cognizant that the Prison Industrial Complex is so expensive that it denies society the opportunity to provide basic structure such as children's education, medical care, mental health care, and support for our elders. We commit ourselves to pursuing a new direction, one that insures genuine safety for our community and transforms "hoods" back into neighborhoods.
https://ficpmovement.wordpress.com/about/ficpm-national-platform/

**THE HUMAN RIGHTS COALITION**

The Human Rights Coalition is a group of predominately prisoners' families, ex-prisoners and some supporters. Their ultimate goal is to abolish prisons. The prison system is based on a foundation of exploitation, punishment and corruption. Most of the people in prisons are poor, brown, urban, functionally illiterate, unemployed or under-employed before they were locked down, and are there for non-violent crimes. The prison system reflects all the other social inequalities in our system, and it does not work in its current incarnation.
http://hrcoalition.org/

**GRASSROOTS LEADERSHIP**

Grassroots Leadership focuses on organizing and direction action in the southern states. The website also contains useful research materials, including a comprehensive national study on the Corrections Corporation of America (CCA).
http://grassrootsleadership.org/

**AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION**

**Stop Solitary - Advocacy Campaign Tools**

ACLU. Website includes: Stop Solitary - Quick Facts, Stop Solitary Briefing Paper, Getting Started - Collecting Corrections and Other Data in Your State, Campaign Dos and Don'ts, Model Social Networking Language, Model Stop Solitary Legislation, Model Fiscal Analysis Memo Checklist for a Visit to a Supermax Facility, State-Specific Resources, Litigation Resources, Articles and Other Resources.

https://www.aclu.org/stop-solitary-advocacy-campaign-tools?redirect=prisoners-rights/stop-solitary-advocacy-campaign-tools

**SPIRIT HOUSE**

Who we are?

Since 1999, SpiritHouse Inc, a Durham, North Carolina based cultural arts and organizing organization, has worked with low-wealth families and community members to uncover and uproot the systemic barriers that prevent us from gaining the resources, leverage and capacity for long-term self-sufficiency.

"Collective Sun-reshape the mo(u)rning" is a multi-media, community intervention performance piece, that draws from more than five years of research, organizing and programmatic work that has been the emphasis of local campaigns to end Mass Incarceration, racial profiling, and the school to prison pipeline. As survivors of domestic and state violence, sexual assault, gang aggression, displaced/fractured families, and drug dependence, Collective Sun visionaries, dreamed about authentic accountability, grounded in an understanding of our struggles and our value. "Collective Sun," creates a platform where families and community members can use their own experiences and voices to become solution-oriented and civically engaged around issues facing their local communities.

http://www.spirithouse-nc.org/

**MODELS FOR CHANGE**

The new modelsforchange.net website offers up-to-date information about key accomplishments in the field. It also shares recent developments from Models for Change, a national comprehensive, multi-state juvenile justice systems reform initiative. The website includes:

- new research and data, easily searchable in a comprehensive publications section
- major policy and legislative developments
- examples of reform success
- highlights from the field

http://www.modelsforchange.net/index.html

**CENTER FOR JUSTICE AND RECONCILIATION**
Convinced that restorative justice is an important contemporary expression of those principles, the Centre has adopted the following mission: To develop and promote restorative justice in criminal justice systems around the world.
http://restorativejustice.org/

**WOMENS PRISON ASSOCIATION**
WPA works with women at all stages of criminal justice involvement. They promote alternatives to incarceration and help women living in the community to avoid arrest or incarceration by making positive changes in their lives. Inside prison and jail, they are a source of support to women and a resource to them as they plan for release. After incarceration, women come to WPA for help to build the lives they want for themselves and their families in the community. WPA helps women.
http://www.wpaonline.org/

**THE INNOCENCE PROJECT**
The Innocence Project, founded in 1992 by Barry Scheck and Peter Neufeld, is a national litigation and public policy organization dedicated to exonerating wrongfully convicted individuals through DNA testing and reforming the criminal justice system to prevent future injustice.
http://www.innocenceproject.org/

**WOMEN ON THE RISE**
Women on the Rise is a membership-based organization of women targeted and/or impacted by the criminal "justice" system. Women on the Rise works to educate, heal, and empower ourselves, one another, and our communities to demand justice, dignity, and liberation for all.

As Women on the Rise, we assert that public safety is created by strong, interdependent communities, and empowered women and families, not by prisons and police. We honor our lived experience, reclaim our inherent power, cultivate a passion for justice, and engage in bold, collective action to transform our communities and the institutions that affect our families and our lives.
http://www.rjactioncenter.org/wor

**WOMEN AND PRISON: A SITE FOR RESISITANCE**
Makes visible women's experiences in the criminal justice system. Documenting these stories is integral to this project of resistance. The stories are supported by a collection of resources, such as organizations, reports, essays, and links to a wide range of information on women and prison.
http://womenandprison.org/about/

**PRISON POLICY INITIATIVE**
Up-to-date listings for organizations providing legal services to people in prison and jail.
http://www.prisonpolicy.org/resources/legal/

**THE RACIAL DISPARITY INITIATIVE (The Sentencing Project)**
The goals of the project are to make visible the often invisible discriminatory practices of denying employment to individuals with criminal records, to reduce the class and race based stigma of criminality and to challenge the popular media discourse that demonizes individuals with criminal records and individuals making the transition from prison to civil society. This project aims to challenge the belief that employing individuals with criminal records is a public safety risk.
http://www.sentencingproject.org/issues/racial-disparity/

**ALL OF US OR NONE**
Prison sentences for millions of people with felony convictions never really end when prejudice and discrimination based on felony criminal histories persist outside the prison walls. Former prisoners, prisoners, people convicted of felonies and their allies have come together to combat the many forms of life-long discrimination in All of Us or None.
http://www.prisonerswithchildren.org/our-projects/allofus-or-none/

**BLACK & BLUE**
History and Current Manifestations of Policing, Violence & Resistance
Over the past couple of years, Project NIA has spearheaded the development and dissemination of several curriculum projects focused on youth criminalization and on exploring the roots of violence more generally. We have been excited to partner with such organizations as the Chicago PIC Teaching Collective, Chicago Freedom School, Teachers for Social Justice, and the Jane Addams Hull House Museum on some of these projects.
https://policeviolence.wordpress.com/

**THE OPEN SOCIETY INSTITUTE (OSI)**
The Open Society Institute is part of the Soros foundations network. The goal of the Soros foundations network is to transform closed societies into open, democratic ones and to protect the values of existing open societies. The OSI Criminal Justice Initiative supports work to reduce the excessive reliance on punishment and incarceration in the United States, and to promote fair and equal treatment in all aspects of the U.S. criminal justice system.
https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/topics/criminal-justice

**BIRTHING BEHIND BARS**
This is a national campaign to address pregnancy and other reproductive justice issues in prison.
http://www.birthbehindbars.com/

**THE NATIONAL PRIORITIES PROJECT (NPP)**

NPP focuses on the impacts of federal tax and spending policies at the community level. NPP works to translate policy information into everyday language in order to assist national and grassroots groups in their efforts to improve schools, create living wage jobs, provide affordable housing, and develop alternatives to excessive spending on the military and prisons.

https://www.nationalpriorities.org/

**NATIONAL RE-ENTRY PROJECT**

The National Website on Reentry

Reentry Central is the national website for news and information on the subject of reentry and related criminal justice issues.

http://www.reentrycentral.org/

**NATIONAL FATHERHOOD INITIATIVE (NFI)**

National Fatherhood Initiative (NFI) is the nation's leading non-profit organization working to end father absence. Underlying many of society's most pressing challenges is a lack of father involvement in their children's lives.

http://www.fatherhood.org

**WISDOM**

ROC Wisconsin is an urgent call to our state to:

- Restore communities that have been harmed by Mass Incarceration;
- Restore families to wholeness and health;
- Restore balance, fiscal discipline and humane priorities to our state's criminal justice system;
- Restore men and women back to the community who do not need to be incarcerated;
- Restore people to health through increased treatment alternatives to incarceration, decreased use of solitary confinement, better support for those who return from jail or prison.

http://www.rocwisconsin.org/about/

**HEALING COMMUNITIES USA**

Healing Communities is a framework for a distinct form of ministry for men and women returning from or at risk of incarceration, their families and the larger community. Healing Communities challenges congregations to become Stations of Hope for those persons affected by the criminal justice system.

http://www.healingcommunitiesusa.com

**LIVE FREE INITIATIVE OF PICO**

With hundreds of congregations as well as countless leaders and movement partners throughout the country, the LIVE FREE Campaign is working to end the scourges of gun violence, mass incarceration, and the criminalization of Black and Brown bodies that tears at the soul of our society. What we have found is that the road to ending gun violence and mass incarceration runs directly through cities and counties. While we attempt to influence federal and state policies whenever possible, our primary focus is on ensuring that sheriffs, prosecutors, police chiefs, mayors, city council members, and county commissioners are held accountable as allies, and not obstacles, to criminal justice reform.

http://www.livefreeusa.org/#county-reports-section

**SAMUEL DEWITT PROCTOR CONFERENCE**

The Samuel DeWitt Proctor Conference, Inc. (SDPC) represents a cross section of progressive African American faith leaders and their congregations in the United States. Founded in 2003 as a 501(c)(3) organization, the SDPC was called into being to continue the rich legacy of the faith community's engagement in issues of social justice.

http://sdpconference.info

**AMACHI**

The Amachi mentoring organization was developed in 2000 to provide children impacted by incarceration with a different path by establishing the consistent presence of loving, caring mentors. Since the organization was created, there have been at least 350 Amachi-modeled programs in more than 250 US cities and all 50 states. To date, these programs have served more than 300,000 children.

http://www.amachimentoring.org

**SCHOLARCHIPS**

ScholarCHIPS provides college scholarships and a support network for children of incarcerated parents, inspiring them to complete their college education.

http://www.scholarchipsfund.org

**FAMILIES AGAINST MANDATORY MINIMUMS**

FAMM (Families Against Mandatory Minimums) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization fighting for smart sentencing laws that protect public safety. We see a country where criminal sentencing is individualized, humane, and sufficient to impose fair punishment and protect public safety. Our supporters include taxpayers, families, prisoners, law enforcement, attorneys, judges, criminal justice experts and concerned citizens.

http://famm.org

**CORRECTIONS CORPORATION OF AMERICA**

CCA founded the private corrections management industry three decades ago, establishing industry standards for future-focused, forward-thinking correctional solutions. A commitment to innovation, efficiency, cost effectiveness and achievement has made the company the partnership corrections provider of choice for federal, state and local agencies since 1983.

http://www.cca.com

**VOLUNTEERS OF AMERICA**

Volunteers of America is a faith-based human services organization. We are dedicated to helping individuals and families in need create positive and lasting change through social service programs that support and empower them to live safe, healthy and productive lives.

https://www.voa-gny.org

**NAACP**

The mission of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) is to ensure the political, educational, social, and economic equality of rights of all persons and to eliminate race-based discrimination.

http://www.naacp.org

**#CUT50**

#cut50, an initiative of The Dream Corps, is a national bipartisan effort to smartly and safely reduce America's incarcerated population by 50 percent over the next 10 years.

http://www.cut50.org

**ELLA BAKER CENTER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS**

We are named after Ella Baker, a brilliant, black hero of the civil rights movement. Following in her footsteps, we build the power of black, brown, and poor people to break the cycles of incarceration and poverty and make our communities safe, healthy, and strong.

http://ellabakercenter.org

**FORTUNE SOCIETY**

The Fortune Society's mission is to support successful reentry from incarceration and promote alternatives to incarceration, thus strengthening the fabric of our communities.

https://fortunesociety.org

**SKIP, INC.**

Our mission is to provide support services to children of incarcerated parents and their families and to increase public awareness of the underlying problems of these children as victims through education, advocacy and research. The purpose of SKIP programs is to help children ("Skippers") of incarcerated parents and their families better cope with separation due to incarceration; to

maintain family ties, and to break the cycle of incarceration by:

- Informing the community at large of the underlying problems of children with incarcerated parents and the necessity of community support.
- Increasing family awareness of community services and support that are available to them. SKIP programs help "Skippers" to become self-reliant and responsible adults by giving them hope and options for the future; thus, enabling them to become productive citizens.

http://www.skipinc.org

**NATIONAL H.I.R.E. NETWORK**

Established by the Legal Action Center in 2001, the National Helping Individuals with criminal records Re-enter through Employment (H.I.R.E.) Network is both a national clearinghouse for information and an advocate for policy change. It is one of several special projects at the Legal Action Center. The goal of the National H.I.R.E. Network is to increase the number and quality of job opportunities available to people with criminal records by changing public policies, employment practices and public opinion. (Read the National H.I.R.E. Network's operating principles and advocacy priorities.

HIRE accomplishes these goals by providing leadership on public policy advocacy, providing technical assistance and training on overcoming labor market barriers based on a criminal record, and promoting collaboration between individuals directly affected by the criminal justice system, advocates, practitioners, researchers, and policymakers working to improve the employability of people with criminal records. The National H.I.R.E. Network is generously supported by the Open Society Foundations.

http://hirenetwork.org

**RESTORATIVE JUSTICE ONLINE**

The Centre for Justice & Reconciliation is a program of Prison Fellowship International. Its mission is to develop and promote restorative justice in criminal justice systems around the world.

http://restorativejustice.org

**VERA INSTITUTE OF JUSTICE**

We work with others who share our vision to tackle the most pressing injustices of our day—from the causes and consequences of Mass Incarceration, racial disparities, and the loss of public trust in law enforcement, to the unmet needs of the vulnerable, the marginalized, and those harmed by crime and violence.

https://www.vera.org

**REENTRY EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES BENCHMARKING STUDY**

Reentry Employment Opportunities Benchmarking Study:

https://www.icf.com/perspectives/reports/2016/lessons-in-reentry-from-successful-programs-and-participants

# CREDITS

**WRITER:**

Jamall Calloway, PHD
Union Theological Seminary NY

**GUIDE PRODUCERS:**

Reverend Frederick A. Davie M.Div.
Executive Vice-President, Union Theological Seminary

Reverend Derrick Harkins D. Min
Senior Vice-President for Innovations in Public Programs, Union Theological Seminary

Anne Faustin
Director of Social Impact Campaigns, Odyssey Impact

**COPY EDITOR:**
GZ&A Gary Zarr & Associates

CONTRIBUTOR:

Wesley Morris

Jeremy Vinson

**DESIGN:**

Erin Sullivan
Social Media and Marketing Manager

Ian Rees
Senior Communications and Marketing Associate GZ&A

**THANKS TO THOSE WHO REVIEWED THIS GUIDE:**

Rev. Dr. Harold Dean Trulear, Ph.D.
National Director, Healing Communities USA

David Liners
State Director WISDOM

Tracey L. Meares
Walton Hale Hamilton Professor, Yale Law School

Kirsten Kelly
Senior Producer, Transform Films, Inc

Melissa Nuber
Manager of Social Impact Campaigns

MILWAUKEE53206 MILWAUKEE53206 MILWAUKEE53206

# #MKE53206

Odyssey Impact I 12 West 31st Street, 8th Floor, New York, New York 10001

# MILWAUKEE 53206

## A COMMUNITY SERVES TIME

MILWAUKEE53206 MILWAUKEE53206 MILWAUKEE53206

#MKE53206