



**“Reducing Recidivism Rates in Middlesex County: A Review of
East Jersey State Prison”**

By Madison Bogard

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December 10, 2019

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Dear Mr. Hicks,

Thank you for attending my presentation; your active participation within this project is greatly appreciated! As Acting Commissioner of the New Jersey Department of Corrections (NJDOC) you have made a state-wide commitment to reducing recidivism—a large step towards improving the lives and communities directly impacted by incarceration. While I understand you are responsible for overseeing thirteen facilities within New Jersey, I believe that one facility in particular--East Jersey State Prison—is in need of improvements. East Jersey State Prison currently lacks the social rehabilitative services that are provided to individuals in other institutions throughout the state. This lack of resources greatly impacts an individual's ability to transition from prison back into the community, resulting in higher rates of recidivism. With your help, more resources can be allocated towards East Jersey State Prison to increase successful re-integration and continue to reduce recidivism rates.

The project I am proposing should be of great interest to you because it directly impacts both the New Jersey Department of Corrections and the state of New Jersey on both macro and micro levels. This proposal aims to save the NJDOC over 10 million dollars in annual recidivism rates from East Jersey State Prison alone. If this project has positive outcomes, it can be implemented across the twelve other institutions throughout the state and save the NJDOC and taxpayers substantial money. While there are large monetary benefits to reducing recidivism, you would also be increasing social and economic opportunities for individual's post-incarceration and healing the communities directly impacted by the criminal justice system. While you read through my proposal, these benefits will be further expanded upon.

The rate of recidivism within East Jersey State Prison remains high, with one in three individuals becoming re-incarcerated within three years of release. This statistic highlights the demand for an increase in rehabilitative resources available to individuals, and I am certain that with your help and engagement within this project, we will be able to reform the programs provided at East Jersey State Prison. Please feel free to call me at 616-540-8549 or send an email to mx2@scarletmail.rutgers.edu with any questions. Thank you for your time!

Sincerely,

Madison Bogard

Reducing Recidivism Rates in Middlesex County: A Review of East Jersey State Prison

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Submitted on:
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Prepared for:
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Project Proposal

Abstract

Recidivism is a multi-faceted issue that requires an allocation of resources in multiple areas of rehabilitation. One of the most important areas is social rehabilitation. Social rehabilitation refers to resources that generate skills necessary for the transition from prison back into the community. High rates of recidivism can be attributed to a lack of social rehabilitative resources provided within the correctional institution. This proposal outlines a plan to address the current lack of social rehabilitative resources provided at one correctional facility in New Jersey: East Jersey State Prison (EJSP). In comparison to all other correctional institutions within the state, EJSP provides the least amount of social rehabilitative resources surrounding education, transitional services and cognitive behavioral programs.

This proposal encompasses numerous academic studies and evidence-based research to create a comprehensive plan for EJSP. This plan focuses on improving the social rehabilitative resources provided within EJSP, with an aim to decrease overall rates of recidivism. One main component of social rehabilitation is education. Previous studies have found that individuals who participate in any form of education while incarcerated are 43% less likely to return to prison (Bender, 2018). Studies have also found that individuals who work towards their post-secondary (university level) degrees have the lowest rates of recidivism compared to all other counterparts. This suggests that an increase in educational opportunities within EJSP will be beneficial to individuals post-release. Correctional facilities in other states have also implemented comprehensive transitional services to guide individuals both within prison and once released. These services can be used within the New Jersey Department of Corrections to help create detailed plans for each individual based on an assessment of needs and goals. Another component of social rehabilitation is cognitive behavioral programs that instill skills that aid in socio-economic mobility as well as deter individuals from engaging in future criminogenic behaviors. An implementation of evidence-based cognitive behavioral programs within EJSP will help further reduce recidivism rates. This proposal includes sections detailing the steps required to increase social rehabilitative services within EJSP as well as an estimated budget and predicted monetary savings.

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Introduction

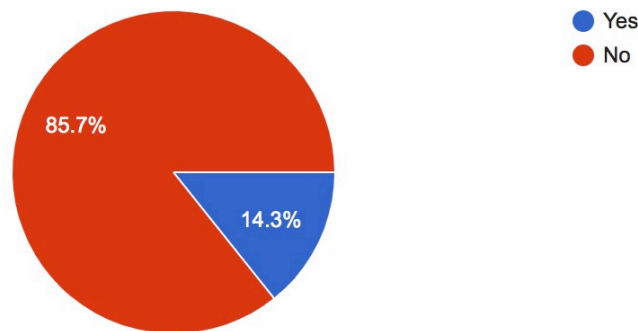
Problem

This proposal focuses on one institution in particular--East Jersey State Prison (EJSP). EJSP, located in Middlesex County, currently provides the least number of social rehabilitative resources in comparison to all other correctional institutions within the state. Social rehabilitative programs address the factors associated with recidivism by preparing incarcerated individuals with the skills required to successfully transition back into the community. According to the New Jersey Department of Corrections (NJDOC), the only social rehabilitative resources provided at EJSP include: anger management, family reunification, parenting classes, and pre-secondary and secondary education. There are currently no rehabilitative resources that focus on building skills to aid in the transition back into the community.

Figure 1: Survey of Individuals Formerly Incarcerated at East Jersey State Prison

While incarcerated, do you believe there was an adequate number of rehabilitative resources available to you?

7 responses



To examine this problem further, I distributed a survey to individuals who had been formerly incarcerated at EJSP. As Figure 1 shows, 85.7% of survey participants claimed that EJSP did not offer an adequate number of rehabilitative resources. When asked about what programs were made available, the list of answers was short—with some claiming that no programs were offered (Figure 2). These responses lead me to believe that not only is there a lack of social rehabilitative resources offered to individuals at EJSP, but the resources that are provided are not easily accessible.

Figure 2: A Continuation of Survey Responses

What rehabilitative programs were offered to you while incarcerated?

7 responses

1

Only Programs for Ged and learning more about law I recall
None
Drug treatment, anger management
None. I was told "we have no programs for you."
Recovery, trade, work program

Recidivism: The By-Product of Inadequate Rehabilitation

The definitive lack of social rehabilitative resources provided within EJSP directly contributes to New Jersey’s high recidivism rate, negatively impacting the individuals and community of Middlesex County. Recidivism refers to an individual’s return to criminal behavior after release. The effectiveness of correctional institutions is often measured by rates of recidivism; whereas, the higher the rate of recidivism, the lower the effectiveness of the institution (Esperian, 2010). In 2011, a study followed 10,835 individuals released from New Jersey State Prisons. Within three years, 31% of individuals were re-incarcerated--7% higher than the national average (New Jersey Reentry Corporation, 2017). This means that approximately one in three individuals are re-incarcerated after only three years post-release. This strikingly high rate of re-incarceration indicates that New Jersey prisons are becoming cyclical in nature; whereas individuals are entering a cycle of release and re-incarceration. There are many recognized factors contributing to high recidivism rates including: lack of socio-economic status, educational illiteracy, lack of vocational job skills and lack of interpersonal skills. The goal of social rehabilitative programs within the correctional setting is to address these factors before the individual transitions back into the community. However; the current absence of social rehabilitative resources within East Jersey State Prison is one of the largest contributing factors to high recidivism rates.

This cycle of recidivism, perpetuated by EJSP’s inadequate rehabilitative programs, not only impacts incarcerated individuals, but the surrounding community and state of New Jersey as a whole. On an individual level, high recidivism rates create socio-economic instability for incarcerated individuals. Through the continuous process of release and re-incarceration, an individual is unable to keep a steady source of income. This economic instability coupled with the “offender” status pushes returning prisoners to revert to criminogenic behaviors to “make

ends meet” (Morenoff & Harding, 2014). Beyond the individual economic strain of recidivism, when individuals fail to reintegrate, the surrounding community is socially affected. Middlesex County, the community surrounding EJSP, has a crime rate of 15.1—one of the highest in the state (New Jersey Reentry Corporation, 2017). When incarcerated individuals do not receive appropriate social rehabilitation, they spread prison culture back into the community. Prison culture can be described as the values, norms and beliefs of prisoners such as violence and drug use. As individuals increase the number of times they are re-incarcerated, prison culture becomes further ingrained and is spread back into the community upon release. The high recidivism rates of East Jersey State Prison further impacts the state of New Jersey as a whole. Economically, the cycle of recidivism creates excessive and unnecessary costs. In 2014, the 31% of reincarcerated individuals released in 2011 were costing the New Jersey Department of Corrections (NJDOC) \$200 million dollars per year (New Jersey Re-entry Corporation, 2017).

As detailed throughout this section, the core problem this proposal aims to address is East Jersey State Prison’s lack of social rehabilitative resources. Due to inadequate rehabilitation, individuals enter a cycle of recidivism which negatively impacts Middlesex County and New Jersey as a whole. The next section details past studies and research that provide a framework for addressing this problem.

Literature Review

This section details a framework focused on social rehabilitation to improve East Jersey State Prison. This shift in focusing on rehabilitation in the 1970s was a pivotal moment in the history of correctional programming and has shown the most effectiveness in reducing recidivism (Duwe 2017). This framework has come to be known as “what works” and consists of principles of effective correctional intervention that target dynamic risk factors. By exploring this framework, this section examines three aspects of social rehabilitation: education, transition services, and cognitive-behavioral therapy. Models of success from other carceral institutions are highlighted to further strengthen this framework.

Education

An evaluation of the Serious and Violent Offender Reentry Initiative found that education is among the top cited needs of incarcerated individuals reintegrating back into society (Duwe, 2017). With a multitude of studies confirming this finding, correctional education should be a key service provided in correctional facilities. However, East Jersey State Prison suffers a severe deficit in the number of educational opportunities provided. Currently, EJSP offers only up to GED level courses. In addition, participation in educational programs is voluntary once the individual is 21 years of age. This poses a large problem as 37% of individuals released from EJSP have not completed high school (or GED equivalent), and 92% have no college education (New Jersey Re-entry Corporation, 2017). This lack of education among individuals released from East Jersey State Prison poses a serious problem as unemployment rates appear to directly correspond with levels of education. “According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (2012), the unemployment rate is highest for individuals who have less than a high school diploma (12.5% as of April 2012), and lowest for individuals who hold a bachelor’s degree or higher (4% as of

April 2012)” (Duwe, 2017). This lack of education coupled with poor employment prospects contribute to the high rate of recidivism of individuals released from East Jersey State Prison.

Improving correctional education as a form of social rehabilitation is one of the most successful tools in reducing recidivism rates. In 2013, Davis and colleagues conducted a meta-analysis of correctional education programs and found that individuals who participate in any type of education program while in prison are 43% less likely to return to prison (Duwe, 2017). This study also found that individuals who obtain their post-secondary degree while in prison have the lowest recidivism rates compared to all other counterparts. In other words, there is a direct correlation between education and recidivism whereas, the higher the level of educational attainment, the lower the rate of recidivism. Davis and colleagues also found that participating education programming increased the odds of post-release employment by 13 percent (Duwe, 2017). 3

Since the meta- analysis conducted by Davis and colleagues in 2013, there have been a few other studies conducted on the effectiveness of prison based educational programming. One study, conducted in Minnesota, researched the effectiveness of correctional post-secondary educational programming on reducing recidivism rates. Offenders were released from Minnesota prisons between 2007 and 2008 and recidivism data was collected through the end of 2010. The conclusions of this study found that earning a post-secondary degree in prison significantly decreased the risk of reoffending, lowering the hazard by 14% for re-arrest and 24% for re-incarceration (Duwe & Clark, 2014). They also found that obtaining a secondary degree in prison increased the odds of securing post-release employment by 59 percent. Post-secondary educational opportunities within the corrections setting reduces recidivism in two ways, through direct learning and associative learning. Direct learning can be understood as the explicit material covered in classrooms. As individuals increase their knowledge in various subjects, they are able to appeal to a larger pool of employers. This direct learning helps incarcerated individuals meet the requirements of the modern world by providing enhanced exposure to basic information (Wheeldon, 2011). Wheeldon also describes the importance post-secondary education has on associative learning—or the skills individuals learn just by participating in the higher educational environment. The post-secondary classroom environment is comprised of informal contact, pro-social models and critical thinking skills that are needed to help incarcerated individuals transition back into the community. In addition, an educational environment provides an environment that is far removed from the “criminal subculture” that is predominant within the carceral institution and allows inmates to familiarize themselves with the norms of society. It is through these interactions with educators that incarcerated individuals develop social and cognitive skills that help them handle the barriers associated with reentry (Wheeldon, 2011). Increasing correctional education programs is one way to improve the current lack of social rehabilitative resources provided at East Jersey State Prison.

Transitional Services

Transitional services are a necessary aid in successful social rehabilitation. Transitional services are services that prepare incarcerated individuals for the barriers and challenges they may face when transitioning from the carceral institution back into the community. Transitional services, also known as prisoner re-entry programs, have been a response to the growing numbers of

released prisoners with seemingly high recidivism rates (Duwe, 2017). These services improve programming across multiple areas such as housing, employment and substance abuse treatment. According to New Jersey Department of Corrections, there are currently no comprehensive transitional services provided at East Jersey State Prison that address all aspects of re-entry. While data relative to East Jersey State Prison specifically is not publicly available, the national unemployment rate for incarcerated individuals is around 27 percent—over 20 percent higher than the national average experienced by the general population (Couloute & Kopf, 2018). In addition, according to the National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse, “around 85 percent of all offenders are substance involved and substance involved individuals have the highest rates of recidivism of all formerly incarcerated individuals” (New Jersey Re-entry Corporation, 2017). While these statistics are national averages, they are applicable to New Jersey, and more specifically, East Jersey State Prison. With the current deficit in transitional programs at EJSP addressing issues such as employment and substance use, formerly incarcerated individuals are at a higher risk of recidivism. This section will detail re-entry programs used in other correctional facilities throughout the nation that have reduced recidivism rates by targeting the risk factors associated with recidivism.

In 2003, the Michigan Department of Corrections implemented the Prisoner Reentry Initiative that created policies in attempt to reduce recidivism. One of these policies included forming a Transition Accountability Plan to assess inmate needs and help improve the transition back into the community. As a result, between 2006 and 2015, the number of people re-incarcerated with new convictions dropped 43 percent in Michigan (Reducing Recidivism, 2017). The Transition Accountability Plan (TAP) is developed for each individual offender and integrates the prisoner’s transition from prison to the community by developing a treatment plan. The TAP is updated throughout an inmate’s sentence and is presented as part of the parole decision process as the inmate approaches his or her release date. The TAP is also updated during parole supervision, as the offender re-enters the community. The TAP contains the Needs, Goals, Tasks and Activities for each offender. Figure 3 depicts an example Transition Accountability Plan used by Michigan Department of Corrections.

Figure 3: Example Transition Accountability Plan (TAP)

	Area of Focus	Example
Needs	Criminogenic factors that contribute to risk	Finding employment after being released
Goals	Designed to mitigate each criminogenic need	Work on building resume and finding felony friendly businesses
Tasks	Developed with each offender to meet goals defined in plan	Enroll in GED program and meet with social worker
Activities	Created to break down each task into manageable steps	Meet with case manager to enroll in GED program

In 2001, Boston implemented the Boston Reentry Initiative (BRI) to focus on social service resources provided to inmates who pose the greatest risks of committing crimes when released back to the community. “With the assistance of caseworkers, BRI individuals are required to develop a transition accountability plan that includes a wide range of ‘wrap around’ services customized to address their individual needs. Each transition accountability plan charts out a recommended and coordinated regimen of treatment and supervision beginning at the House of Correction and continuing after release” (Braga et al, 2008). Some of the issues addressed include securing: drivers licenses, health insurance, housing, clothing, employment and transportation. Another large aspect of the Boston Reentry Initiative is outside mentors who frequently meet with incarcerated individuals. Mentors work with BRI participants to assist in acquiring basic needs such as employment, housing and continuing treatment when released. Both case managers and mentors attend frequent panel sessions with the BRI participant, discussing the progress made as well as guiding the next steps. This collective unification is applied to offer a sense of encouragement and support to the BRI participant while sending the message that incarcerated individuals have the resources available to succeed once released. The Boston Reentry Initiative has been met with much success as “relative to the comparison group subjects, BRI participants were found to have 30 percent lower rates of recidivism” (Braga et al, 2008).

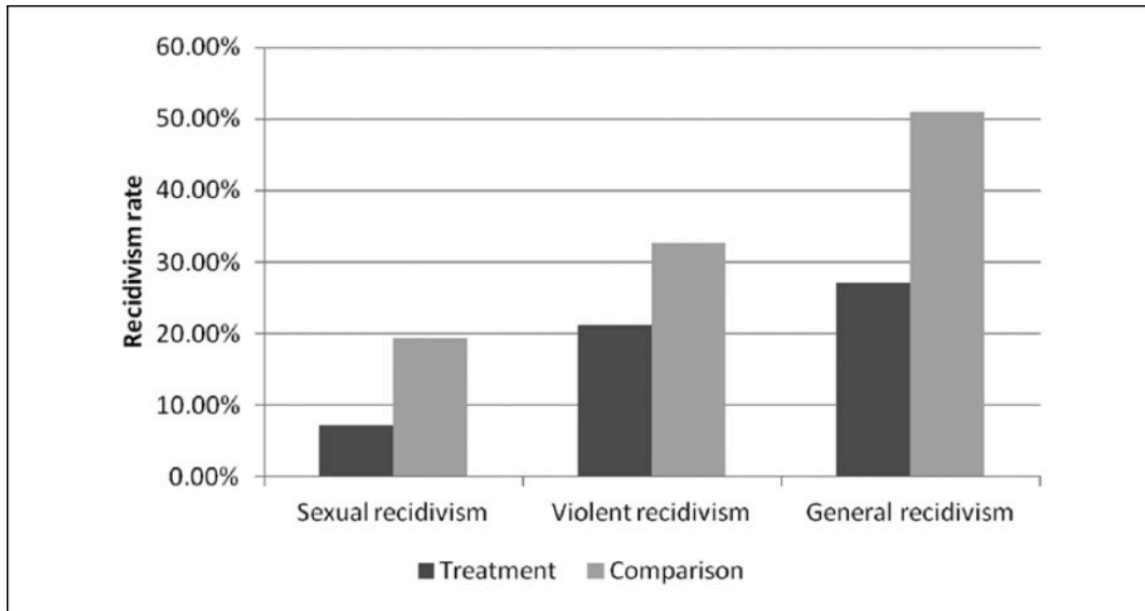
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“The Federal Interagency Reentry Council names four main focus areas for any reentry program to be effective: employment, health care, education and housing” (New Jersey Reentry Corporation, 2017). Both the Michigan Reentry Initiative and the Boston Reentry initiative focused on these areas and significantly reduced recidivism rates within their respective states. This indicates the importance of transitional services in successful social rehabilitation.

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy

Cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) programs address the link between dysfunctional thought processes and harmful behaviors and can be used to reduce recidivism by addressing aspects associated with criminal behavior such as impulse management, self-control, self-efficacy and social skills (Duwe, 2017). CBT’s main goal is to reduce future criminological behavior in individuals post-release, further aiding in overall social rehabilitation.

Figure 4: Effects of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy on Recidivism



(Mpofu, E., Athanasou, J., Rafe, C., & Belshaw, S. (2018))

Figure 4 explores one particular study conducted by Mpofu and colleagues (2018) that compared recidivism rates of moderate and high-risk offenders who received CBT treatment against those who did not receive treatment. As the graph shows, individuals who received CBT treatment had overall lower rates of recidivism among sexual, violent and general crimes committed as opposed to their untreated counterparts.

6

Moral Reconciliation Therapy (MRT) is one of the most popular CBT programs given to incarcerated individuals. MRT takes a cognitive behavioral approach and assumes that cognitions affect behaviors. Because individuals are able to monitor and alter their cognitive thoughts, MRT believes that by changing one's cognitions, one can directly change their behavior. MRT is a structured program that involves 12 to 16 sessions. During these sessions, individuals focus on several areas including "confrontation of beliefs, attitudes and behaviors, assessment of current relationships, reinforcement of positive behavior and habits, positive identity formation, development of frustration tolerance, and development of higher stages of moral reasoning" (Ferguson & Wormith, 2012). MRT aims to reduce recidivism rates by challenging individuals to analyze their thought processes and pre-disposed beliefs before they act. In 2010 Little, Robinson, Burnette & Swan published an article titled "Twenty-Year Recidivism Results for MRT-Treated Offenders." After the 20-year period, 81% of individuals who had not undergone MRT were reincarcerated while those who had completed MRT had a reincarceration rate of 60% (Ferguson & Wormith, 2012). A recent meta-analysis of Moral Reconciliation Therapy conducted by Ferguson and Wormith concluded that participation in MRT leads to significantly lower reincarceration rates, lower re-arrest rates, and a higher rate of clean records following MRT (Ferguson & Wormith, 2012).

This data on CBT as an evidence-based treatment can be used to guide the creation of CBT driven programs at EJSP. Through the focus on criminogenic risks most associated with recidivism, programs such as MRT aid in social rehabilitation.

Plan of Action

My proposed plan of action is guided by the framework of social rehabilitation. By increasing areas of social rehabilitation such as education, transitional services and cognitive behavioral therapy, overall recidivism rates for East Jersey State Prison will decrease.

Step 1: Increasing Post-Secondary Education Programs

The first step of my plan is to offer post-secondary programs within East Jersey State Prison. Post-secondary classes surrounding core curriculum subjects such as Calculus, Chemistry, Biology, Writing and History should be made available. These fundamental courses will give individuals the basic foundation of higher education learning and will be the easiest to transfer over if the individual chooses to pursue higher education at an institution post-release. In order to find instructors for these courses, EJSP can reach out to local institutions such as Rutgers University and Middlesex Community College. Many professors at these institutions already teach post-secondary classes at other facilities within the state. EJSP should also contact NJ-STEP, a New Jersey based initiative that helps incarcerated individuals who have begun post-secondary education transition into institutions of higher education after release.

Step 2: Requiring Mandatory Enrollment in Education Programs

The next step of my plan is to require all incarcerated individuals within EJSP to be enrolled in an education program, whether it be pre-secondary, GED level, or post-secondary education. As statistics show, participation in any education program while incarcerated reduces the likelihood of an individual returning to prison by 43% (Bender, 2018). Thus, the greatest measure to combat recidivism rates at EJSP is to increase participation in education. This will require an increase in teachers to accommodate the 1,230 incarcerated individuals. 7

Step 3: Implementing Transitional Services

The third step of my plan is to implement transitional services at East Jersey State Prison. The first part of this step will involve the implementation of a Transitional Accountability Plan (TAP) for each individual within East Jersey State Prison. When an offender first arrives at EJSP, they will meet with a Case Manager to create an individualized TAP that will be updated monthly throughout the course of their sentence. This TAP will be presented at their parole hearing and given to their parole officer to be continued post-release. Case managers and social workers will be trained on how to accurately and appropriately create TAP's for each individual.

The second part of this step involves partnering with New Jersey Prison Fellowship who provides mentors to assist incarcerated individuals. The third part of this step involves creating mandatory meetings between the incarcerated individual, case workers, social workers and mentors throughout the length of the individual's sentence. These meetings will be used to create short term and long term goals for the individual, while also allowing assessment of the progress made.

Step 4: Implementing Cognitive Behavioral Therapy

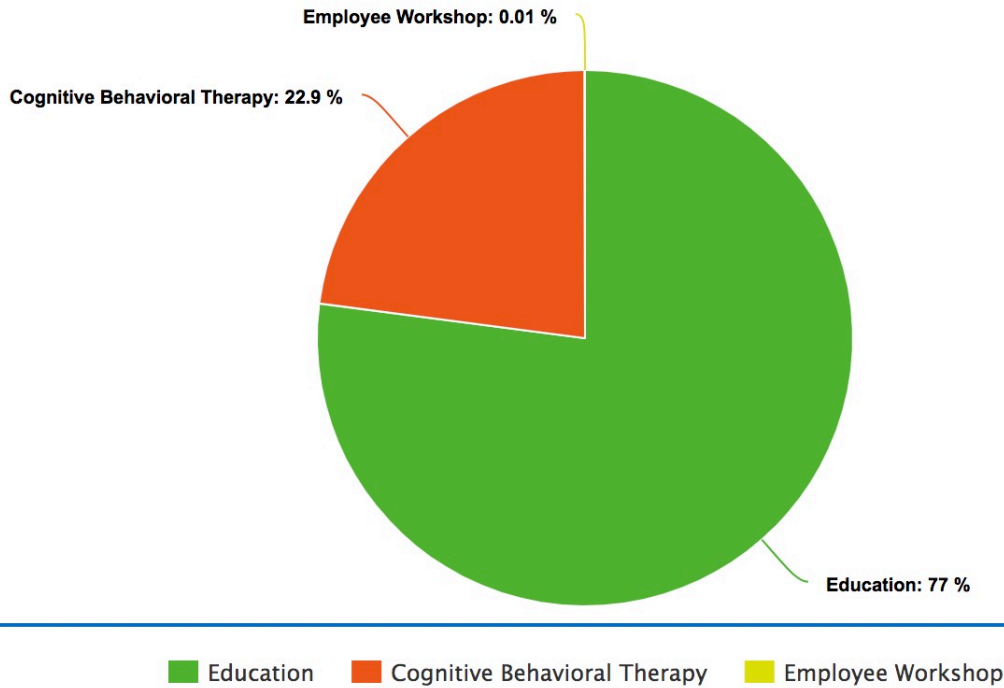
The fourth step of my plan involves the implementation of Cognitive Behavior Therapy within East Jersey State Prison. There are multiple different CBT programs; however, I believe the best CBT program for EJSP based on research is Moral Reconciliation Therapy (MRT). MRT has the greatest success in reducing recidivism among moderate to high-risk offenders. Since East Jersey State Prison is a medium security prison, I believe this program will be the best course of action.

Budget

The following budget consists of the approximate costs of each step of the proposed plan. The budget includes a comprehensive price of education, transitional services and cognitive behavioral therapy if every individual at East Jersey State Prison participated in all three areas of social rehabilitation. Educational programs cost on average \$1,400 per individual each year (Bidwell, 2013). To get the total cost of education I multiplied this cost by the maximum number of individuals at East Jersey State Prison at a given time (\$1,400 x 1,230 individuals). The following budget also consists of an approximate estimate for a Transition Accountability Plan training workshop among case managers and other social service members. Moral Reconciliation Therapy, a form of CBT, costs approximately \$419 per individual (Duwe, 2017). To get the total cost of CBT at EJSP I multiplied this cost by the same 1,230 individuals. The approximate total costs are disclosed below.

Education:	\$1,722,000 per year
Employee Workshop:	\$5,000
Cognitive Behavioral Therapy:	\$515,370 per year
Total:	\$2,242,370

Figure 5: Budget



Cost Benefits

In 2018, the New Jersey Department of Corrections budget was close to one billion dollars, yet according to their annual breakdown, only 2% of these funds were allocated towards “Making Academic and Educational Gains” and only 20% was given to “Expanding Inmate Health and Rehabilitation” (State of New Jersey Transparency Center, 2018). This lack of monetary funding surrounding social rehabilitation directly contributes to the high rates of recidivism within New Jersey. East Jersey State Prison bears the brunt of this limited funding as it experiences the greatest deficits in social rehabilitative services as compared to all other carceral institutions throughout the state. Each incarcerated individual costs the Department of Corrections \$54,865 a year. In 2014, the 31% of re-incarcerated individuals released in 2011 cost the NJDOC nearly \$200 million dollars. If these individuals had successfully reintegrated into society, the NJDOC and taxpayers would avoid these unnecessary costs. This section highlights the cost benefits of implementing my proposed plan of action at East Jersey State Prison that focuses on allocating funds towards social rehabilitation rather than incarceration. By expanding the funds given to social rehabilitative resources such as education, re-entry services and cognitive behavioral therapies, rates of recidivism will decrease, saving the NJDOC and taxpayers large sums in reincarceration rates.

Education

Prison education is a highly cost-effective investment. A study by the Department of Policy Studies at the University of California at Los Angeles found that a \$1 million investment in incarceration prevents about 350 future crimes, while that same \$1 million investment in prison education prevents more than 600 future crimes (Benefits of Prison Education). In other words,

prison education is almost twice as cost effective as incarceration. Another study found that for every \$1 invested in prison education, taxpayers save \$4 to \$5 in re-incarceration costs during the first three years post release (Bender, 2018). By investing in education at East Jersey State Prison, the communities directly surrounding EJSP experience lower crime rates and will pay lower taxes.

Investing in prison education rather than incarceration also has significant benefits on the economy. Nationally, the U.S. economy is estimated to lose around \$60 billion per year from loss of labor from the high numbers of incarcerated individuals (Bender, 2018). By investing in education, formerly incarcerated individuals at EJSP will have increased chances of obtaining employment once released which will spur economic activity and productivity in the surrounding communities.

Transitional Services

Transitional services, also known as re-entry programs, such as the Michigan Prisoner Reentry Program (MPRI) and the Boston Reentry Initiative (BRI) are highly cost effective. According to the New Jersey Re-entry Corporation (2017) MPRI has reduced the reincarceration rate by 43 percent and the overall prison population has dropped by more than 11 percent. The MPRI program costs only \$56 million dollars as compared to the \$2 billion Michigan Corrections Department budget. “According to MPRI’s 2010 progress report, the program has reduced annual spending on prisons by \$293 million.” As a result of the re-entry program decreasing overall prison population rates, Michigan announced it would be closing three prisons, resulting in an additional \$118 million in savings annually. While I am proposing an implementation of re-entry programs at just EJSP—a relatively smaller scale than aforementioned—the monetary benefits will still be paramount. If this proposed plan yields significant benefits at EJSP, it can be implemented on a larger scale throughout the state.

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy programs are another cost-effective method of social rehabilitation. Aos and Drake (2013) found that CBT programs yield a significant cost benefit. Research reported a cost-benefit ratio of \$24.72; that is, for every dollar spent on CBT programming, there is a benefit of \$24.72. “Of the 26 interventions for adult offenders, CBT had the third highest return on investment” (Aos & Drake, 2013). Prison education and re-entry programs were also in the top five highest returns on investment.

Discussion

The lack of social rehabilitation services offered at East Jersey State Prison provides poor preparation for individuals as they transition from the carceral institution back into the community. This lack of resources directly increases an individual’s likelihood of recidivating—which often results in re-incarceration. To end this cycle of recidivism within East Jersey State Prison, improvements surrounding social rehabilitative services need to be made. This proposal outlines a framework focused on increasing social rehabilitation within the correctional setting to decrease overall rates of recidivism. Through the implementation of the steps provided along

with your direction as Acting Commissioner of the New Jersey Department of Corrections, I believe that East Jersey State Prison can successfully rehabilitate individuals and decrease rates of recidivism. I hope that this proposal outlines the monetary, social and community benefits of increasing rehabilitation at East Jersey State Prison.

In order to determine whether this plan is effective, recidivism rates should be collected three years after the implementation of the proposed plan. Recidivism rates collected will include re-arrest, re-conviction and re-incarceration rates.

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