

22%

In Harlem, 22% of parolees are re-incarcerated within a year of release, 40% within three years.

87%

87% of individuals who are released from prison on parole "owe" prison time and can be sent back to prison for a period of time for failing to obey any condition of their release.

60%

In 2014, 59.5% of those incarcerated or on parole had at least one child, and 11.3% report having more than 4 children.

2,500

Harlem in particular has a high concentration of parolees:
 • Every year 2,500 people return from NY state prisons to Harlem.
 • 126th Street to 119th Street is known as a "re-entry corridor" where 1 in 20 men has been incarcerated.



CIRCLES OF SUPPORT: SHARING THE JOURNEY HOME

HARLEM PRISONER RE-ENTRY INITIATIVE



WHO WE SERVE

The program supports parolees aged 16 and over who are returning home to Harlem from New York State correctional facilities. The families often bear the enormous financial and social impact a prison sentence has on an entire household—particularly on children—and receive our special attention.



WHAT WE DO

Family & Faith Services:

- Accompany parolees home from prison, welcome them back to the community.
- Help congregations to be places of welcome for people returning home from prison and their families.
- Organize outings for families or host a community meal.
- Support parolees' relationships with their children: create a kid-friendly play space that these parents can enjoy with their children, offer tutoring, and provide occasional child care.
- Connect parolees and their families to community services: through regular orientations, resource fairs and ongoing referrals.
- Accompany parolees to appointments or job interviews.
- Individual and family counseling.
- Support groups (with child care) for parents or partners of returning parolees.
- Coaching: speakers bureau, life skills, opportunity for reflection.
- Job training and job readiness: mock interviews, resumes, networking.
- Benefits assistance.
- Educational and health services by referral.

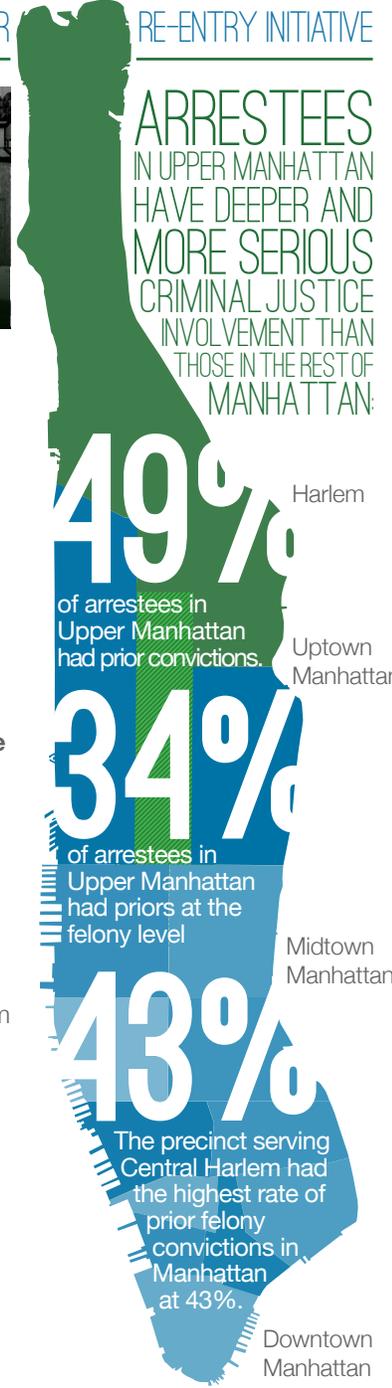


OUR APPROACH

Mobilizing Communities:

- Research has indicated that "informal social controls" occurring in an individual's "natural community" (i.e. family, friends, congregation) are more effective in creating behavior change than formal controls (i.e. law enforcement).
- Harlem is a community of faith with over 400 houses of worship.

In Harlem, there is an existence of strong grassroots, community players, willing to partner on a solution to the urgent, endemic problem of recidivism. The JC Flowers Foundation has joined the Harlem Community Justice Center, and the Interfaith Center of New York to form the Circles of Support. Central to the program is our partnership and working with the faith communities and families both formally and informally before and after release. By involving the parolee's family members and faith-based volunteers the program fosters informal social networks to support successful re-entry, a more effective means of changing behavior than the formal controls used by law enforcement.



“WHEN I WENT TO PRISON, I TOOK MY FAMILY WITH ME” —PROGRAM PARTICIPANT

PARTNERS

- JC Flowers Foundation
- Harlem Community Justice Center
- Interfaith Center of New York
- St Mary's Episcopal Church Manhattanville
- St Ambrose Church, Harlem
- All Souls Episcopal Church Harlem
- Episcopal Charities New York