

Parole Success Factors

Through the Lens of the Framework to Reduce Recidivism



Presenters: Emilie Coyle & Jackie Omstead
With research from Nyki Kish

Rethinking Recidivism

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Our Statement of Purpose

The Canadian Association of Elizabeth Fry Societies (CAEFS) works to address the persistent ways in which women and gender-diverse people impacted by criminalization are denied humanity and excluded from community.



Where we are coming from...

- Established in 1968
- National Office representing 24 self-governing local member societies
- Co-Creators of "Creating Choices" – intended to be the guiding document for federal women's corrections in Canada
- Monitor conditions of confinement in the six federal prisons designated for women through in-person visits and phone lines



The Failure of Creating Choices

The need for ending oversight of the Correctional Service of Canada,
from the members of Creating Choices

May 27 2012

Criminalized women & gender-diverse people

- CAEFS work is **driven by and in collaboration with people** who experience incarceration or are at risk of being incarcerated.
- **Criminalized women and gender-diverse people are involved in our network in a number of different capacities**, including as part of our national office team, board, advocates, and as executive directors of Local Elizabeth Fry Societies.



Centering Humanity in Language

- Person-centered language
- For example: People in prison, incarcerated people, people.
- Our language does not always mirror the legal terminology.
- "Offender" and "inmate" are not in our vocabulary, even if they are in the legislation.



Our Vision

A world without prisons with strong and well-resourced communities for everyone.



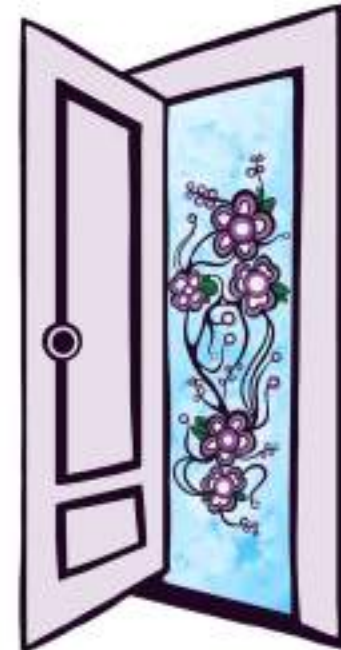
- The safest communities are the ones with the most resources, not the most surveillance
- We can shrink prisons out of existence
- Everyone has the right to safety, security, and dignity
- Punishment does not stop harm from happening

“Prisons do not disappear social problems, they disappear human beings. Homelessness, unemployment, drug addiction, mental illness, and illiteracy are only a few of the problems that disappear from public view when the human beings contending with them are relegated to cages.”

– Angela Davis

Who is responsible for reducing recidivism?

- We aim to **disrupt the view that responsibility solely rests on the person** who has been criminalized.
- How do we - as a community, as service providers, as government - **ensure that people have what they need** so that they can live full and happy lives?
- **Requires us to rethink risk as needs.**



Framework to Reduce Recidivism

Reduction of Recidivism Framework Act

S.C. 2021, c. 16

Assented to 2021-06-29

An Act to establish a federal framework to reduce recidivism

Preamble

Whereas the purpose of the correctional system is in part to contribute to the maintenance of a just, peaceful and safe society by assisting the rehabilitation of offenders and their reintegration into the community as law-abiding citizens through the provision of programs in penitentiaries and in the community;

Whereas nearly one in four people who have been incarcerated reoffend within two years of their release;

Whereas people who have been incarcerated should have the necessary resources and employment opportunities to be able to transition back into the community and avoid falling back into their old ways;

Whereas victims are at the heart of the justice system and the best way to protect them is to reduce crime and recidivism;

Whereas Parliament recognizes the need to reduce recidivism in order to provide safe and secure communities for all Canadians;

And whereas cooperation and coordinated action between the federal and provincial governments that respect the legislative competence of each are required to develop a federal framework that, in the interest of reducing recidivism, ensures the needs of people who have been incarcerated are met and supports their rehabilitation;

Now, therefore, Her Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate and House of Commons of Canada, enacts as follows:

Short Title

Short title

1 The Act may be cited as the *Reduction of Recidivism Framework Act*.

Federal Framework to Reduce Recidivism

Development and implementation

2 (1) The Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness must, in consultation with representatives of the provinces, with a variety of Indigenous governing bodies and Indigenous organizations and with other relevant stakeholders such as non-governmental, for-profit, both-profit and private sector organizations, develop and implement a federal framework to reduce recidivism.

Enactment

3 The framework must include measures to

- (a) create and promote and develop standardized and evidence-based programs aimed at reducing recidivism;
- (b) promote the reintegration of people who have been incarcerated back into the community through access to adequate and ongoing resources as well as employment opportunities in order to lessen the likelihood of their reoffending;
- (c) support both-profit and communal initiatives that aim to rehabilitate people who have been incarcerated;
- (d) review and implement international best practices related to the reduction of recidivism; and
- (e) evaluate and improve risk assessment instruments and procedures to address racial and cultural bias and ensure that all people who are incarcerated have access to appropriate programs that will help reduce recidivism.

Reports to Parliament

Tabling of framework

3 (1) Within one year after the day on which this Act comes into force, the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness must prepare a report setting out the federal framework to reduce recidivism and cause the report to be tabled before each House of Parliament on any of the first 15 days on which that House is sitting after the report is completed.

Publication

3 (2) The Minister must publish the report on the website of the Department of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness within 10 days after the day on which the report is tabled in Parliament.

Report

4 (1) Within three years after the day on which the report referred to in section 3 is tabled and every year after that, the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness must prepare a report on the effectiveness of the federal framework to reduce recidivism that sets out his or her conclusions and recommendations.

Tabling of report

4 (2) The Minister must cause the report to be tabled before each House of Parliament on any of the first 15 days on which that House is sitting after the report is completed.

The Bill

Received royal
assent on June 29,
2021

**Private members
bill introduced by
MP Bragdon**

- CAEFS participated in consultations with a larger community of organizations + targeted membership consultation
- “Bare-bones” framework was released in June 2022

FFRR Pillars

Housing

Employment

Education

Health

Positive
Support
Network

Applying the Framework

I got an offer, the only offer that came from them, was for. I think it was like \$14 an hour. It was from, just like a sheet of paper that was posted at the house that said If you come and pick up garbage for \$14 an hour one day a week for 8 hours... and I'm like, I'm not, I'm sorry, I'm in my mid 50's leaving prison with no money and I'm really trying not to be in that kind of a low paying job, and I know that sounds awful, but how am I supposed to catch up in life if I have to pick garbage for less than minimum wage? It's just really hard to make enough income to make you feel like you can remove yourself from the prison system. I think that's why so many people go back.

- Drew

After-Incarceration

- Housing
- Employment
- Education
- Health
- Positive Support Network

Pre-Incarceration

- Housing
- Employment
- Education
- Health
- Positive Support Network

During Incarceration

Planning for release,
from the beginning



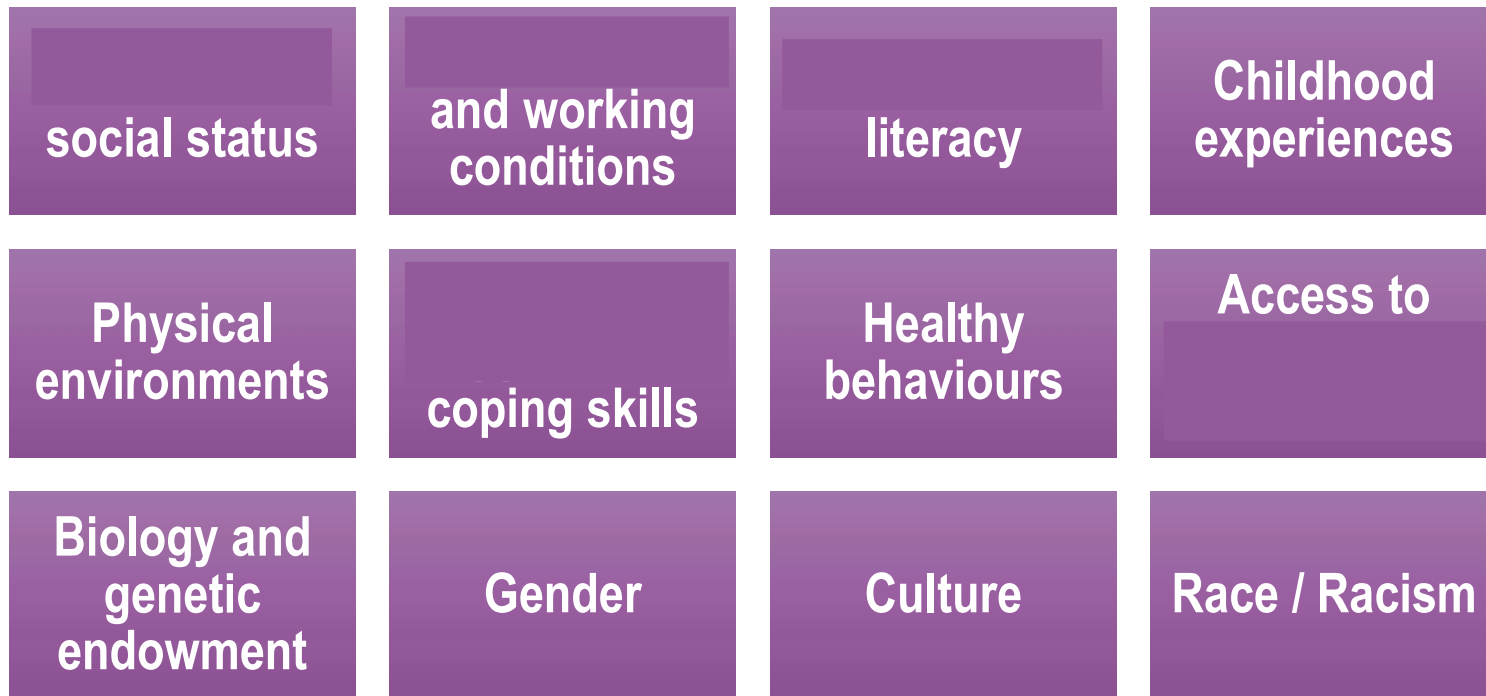
- **Employment** → Work-releases, community capacity building, fair wages
- **Education** → Access to computers and the internet
- **Health** → Physical care that goes beyond basics, mental health care
- **Positive Support Network** → Getting people out – not just bringing people in, Conflict resolution and dignity
- **Housing** → Earliest possible dates

What is missing?

Social and Economic Influences on Health



Source: Government of Canada



Source: Government of Canada

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