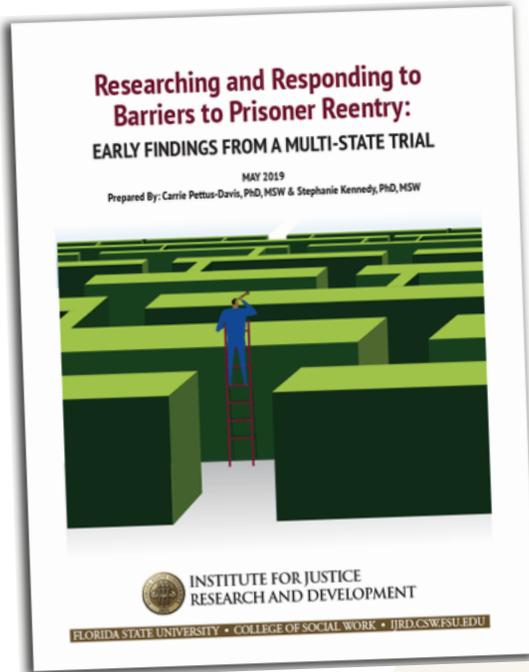


## KEY TAKEAWAYS FROM QR 1

# RESEARCHING AND RESPONDING TO BARRIERS TO PRISONER REENTRY



Our [first report](#) was released only a few months after the study started. In this report, we detailed the internal and external barriers to reentry that study participants faced as they transitioned from prison to our communities. Participants' experiences clustered into internal barriers such as: experiences with employment, experiences of trauma, the impact of mental health and substance use disorders, and having limited opportunities for social connection. These internal barriers affected how our participants moved through their world and interacted with the 5-Key Model.

*Key takeaways include:*

- Employment is a primary focus for many individuals leaving incarceration - shortly after release, many participants were working multiple jobs and long hours.
  - Participants were often employed in low-wage physical labor jobs which limited their opportunities for financial self-sufficiency.
  - The desire for work and the necessity of employment created multiple obstacles when participants also

needed to meet post-release supervision obligations or access therapeutic supports.

- 96% of study participants reported having experienced at least one traumatic event.
  - 60% of study participants had a close friend or family murdered and more than 70% witnessed someone being seriously injured or killed.
  - Nearly 45% have been attacked by someone using a gun, knife, or other weapon.
  - More than half of the participants have been robbed by someone using force or the threat of force.
  - Participants also described the incarceration experience as a form of trauma.
- Participants with mental health issues and substance use disorders were in particular need of support.
  - Participants are often highly motivated to maintain sobriety and connect with 5-Key practitioners for validation and support.
  - 5-Key practitioners are available to all participants throughout the day and are willing and able to immediately intervene with any individual on the verge of mental health or substance use crises.
- Participants often have limited opportunity for social connection during incarceration.
  - After release they must rebuild trust and re-learn how to connect.
  - Despite seemingly insurmountable obstacles, participants sought out ways to connect with 5-Key Model practitioners, their family, friends, employers, community, and faith.

External barriers to success included:

- Housing instability
- Lack of consistent access to transportation
- Lack of consistent access to a home phone or cell phone
- Lack of consistent access to a computer or the internet



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