

Helping Your Loved One Stay Crime and Drug Free



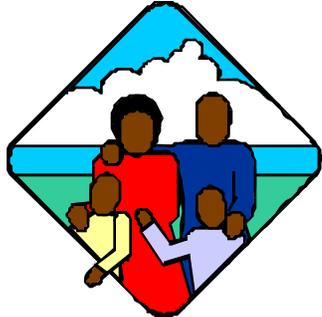
You and GDC working together to build a better future for you and your family.



GDC Website - www.dcor.state.ga.us

Purpose:

Our purpose is to provide you, the family, with information that will help your loved one be crime and drug free. This will help to make our communities a better, safer place to live. The goal is to break the cycle of your family member's returning to jail or prison so your family can move forward to a better future.



Can You Help?

As a result of your loved one's actions, maybe you feel at times that you are serving time right along with them! If so, we would like to give you some food for thought and maybe some skills that will help you and your loved one. This brochure is intended to be educational, informational, and motivational. There is nothing magic about "going back home." It takes hard work and the willingness to change. But sometimes we need to be motivated to change and to do hard work. So let us try to find some motivation. We want you to read the questions below and answer them, even if you do not write the answers down.

1. Would it be enough for you if your loved one stopped getting caught doing wrong, or would you want him or her to make real changes?
2. What do you think motivates your loved one when he or she does wrong or breaks rules?

3. Why do you think your loved one should change if he or she decided to?
4. If your loved one did make changes in his in her life, what would things look like for you and him or her?

Think about these questions seriously. You can even write down your answers. If you do, they could provide you and your family member more reasons to make changes.

Thinking About Your Situation

If the answers to these questions have you thinking, the rest of the brochure may be of help. Or if you just want your family member to have a better chance of staying crime and drug free and did not even answer the questions, then the rest of the brochure is for you.

In the rest of the brochure, you will find some ideas and skills and concepts that have been long used to benefit loved ones of people who have been in the criminal justice system. The first one is called *Enabling*.

Enabling:

The first topic we want to discuss is called *ENABLING*. When people *ENABLE* someone, they are giving support for bad behavior. In other words, *ENABLING* someone is making excuses for them, making light of their negative behavior, or overlooking their bad actions.

Some people are *ENABLERS* because they do not want to admit their friend or family member has done bad things. Others enable people because they want to keep the behavior a secret. Still others enable friend or family members because they are afraid the family member will

leave them, hurt them, not talk to them again, or stop loving them.

Enabling only makes the problem worse. When someone is enabled, her or his bad behavior is supported, which helps support a cycle of crime and drug use. To stop enabling, a person must hold the family member accountable for his or her actions.

Accountability:

ACCOUNTABILITY means that someone holds a person responsible for his or her behavior, which means NOT accepting the family member's excuses for bad behavior.

Holding a friend or family member accountable when she or he shows bad behavior or a bad attitude means keeping it real, saying what really is happening, and telling the hard truth. This is also called "tough love".

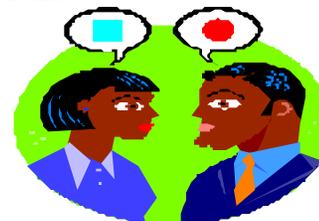
An example of Accountability:

Tony, your family member, paroled out to your home. One of his conditions of parole is that he not use any alcohol or drugs. Tony has a history of alcohol use. The next night you come home and find that Tony had his old friends over and they were drinking alcohol. After his friends leave, you remind Tony that he is not supposed to be drinking. He says he only wanted to celebrate his freedom. As an enabler, you would say "Oh, Ok, I understand" and let it go. As someone who is using accountability, you would say, "Remember that if you want to keep your freedom, you've got to do what the parole rules say" and maybe offer to get him to an AA meeting or in touch with a sponsor.

This type of response is a form of good communication. There are many good communication skills that can help your friend or family member to stay drug and crime free.

Communication:

Communication is another way someone can affect whether a friend or family member stays crime and drug free or not. Good communication with a family member who has been involved with drugs or crime is important. Poor communication can lead to misunderstandings, arguments, and even fights. Good communication can prevent such problems.



Good communication is more than just talking. It is also listening and understanding. Sometimes people speak and listeners say they hear what was said when they did not. Here are some keys to good communication:

- At least two people are involved in every conversation, so listening and speaking are both important.
- Look at the person.
- Take turns when speaking.
- Ask the other person a question to see if they understood what was said. Do not just ask, "Did you hear me?" but ask if he or she understood what was said or ask him or her to repeat what was said in his or her own words.

Good communication takes practice and patience but it is worth the effort when everyone gets along better. Much of the communications we do are about problems. In order to help friends or family stay crime and drug free, effective problem solving is another good skill to know.

Problem Solving:

Everyone has problems at one time or another. How problems are handled is what will lead to more trouble or not. Some basic steps of problem solving are:

- Stop and Think When you realize there is a problem give yourself some time to think before you act.
- Describe The Problem Describe the problem without putting blame on anyone. Writing it out is best.
- Get Information Figure out who all is involved in the problem and how they feel about the problem.
- Choices & Consequences Think of ways to handle the problem and what would happen to everyone involved if those ways were chosen.
- Choose the Best Solution Choose the best way to handle the problem that will result in no one getting hurt and gets your family closer to a normal life.
- Keep Learning Always remember to learn from mistakes. Use your experience about old problems that were handled well.

Many of our problems are better solved when we ask for help, which is another skill to keep friends and family drug and crime free.

Asking For Help:

There are times when we can not decide how to handle a problem or we need more information before we make a decision. Here are a few simple steps we can take to be better at asking for help that we need:

1. Decide what help is needed.
2. Decide whom best to ask.

3. Think of ways we can ask this person (the phone, a letter, or talk to them face-to-face?).
4. Decide when would be the best time to ask the person for help or information (for a face-to-face, should we just show up or make an appointment?).
5. Then ask!

If someone is on the wrong side of the things we've talked about so far, *Enabling, Accountability, Communicating, Problem Solving, and Asking for Help*, that person would be more likely to end up in the trap of Co-Dependency.

Co-Dependency:

Co-Dependents are those who live for others and put others first at their and their family's expense. A person who is co-dependent "depends" on another person so much that the other person can treat them any way they want. A co-dependent person (and his or her family) suffers the negative consequences of the other person's bad behavior.

So someone covers for a substance-using family member, and ends up going hungry because she lost a job. Or a parent "pulls some strings" to keep her son out of jail, and the son ends up stealing from the parent. Or a girlfriend covers cuts and bruises gotten in a beating from a boyfriend, but she ends up just getting beat again.

There are always exceptions, but co-dependency is usually passed on from family members to other family members. It affects the ability of everyone in a family to have healthy, satisfying relationships.

Co-dependents have relationships that are one-sided, where only the needs of the other person are met. The

co-dependent ends up having less and less of a life, maybe even becoming depressed or suicidal. Relationships like this affect everyone in the family, with children often learning to be a co-dependent or an abuser. In other words, a child sees the co-dependency or abuse as normal, and the destructive cycle continues. We want to help break that cycle.

Using the skills covered here is one way to avoid the co-dependency trap. If a person does not enable, holds a friend or family member accountable, uses good problem-solving skills, knows how and when to ask for help, and avoids becoming co-dependent, then the offender will be less likely to be involved with crime and drugs. And when they get out of the system, they'll stay out!

The New Georgia Department of Corrections (GDC)!

In the past several years, the Department has made MANY changes, a great many of them for ONE SINGLE PURPOSE. This purpose is TO KEEP PEOPLE who have gotten in trouble FROM COMING BACK after they get released out of the criminal justice system.

These changes have many names and have many people involved. Evidence Based Practice, What Works, Reentry, and Transitioning from Prison to Community are a few. But they all are intended to help offenders like your loved one NOT COME BACK into the system once they are out.

This purpose has come from the President, the Governor, the Commissioner, and maybe even fellow members of your community. Think about it this way. Two offenders are about to be released from prison. One, we'll call

Johnny, exits the gate. He has clothes, a bus ticket, and \$25. The other, Jimmy, has clothes, ticket, and \$25, but has taken the opportunity to go to the new programs that research has shown to reduce his chance of getting back into substances and crime. Here's what Jimmy might have been through (please note that many of these programs have limited space and restrictions on who can attend):

COMPAS: COMPAS is a questionnaire that all offenders complete that tells the GDC what they should be working on to keep them from coming back to prison. Some of the things that might be identified are education, work skills, substance abuse, and attitudes. The COMPAS results are a crucial part of keeping your loved from returning.

Day Reporting Centers: DRCs help those who have substance abuse problems. Judges can order selected offenders to go through a day reporting center instead of returning to prison. Offenders in DRCs receive intensive outpatient substance abuse services and other services and skills intended to keep them out of prison, such as monitoring, GED help, and assistance finding jobs.

Corporate Take 5: local corporations agree to "take" five offenders who get released. The offender receives special training, a good paying job and money set aside for release. The corporation receives benefits such as tax and bonding help, and monitoring of the offender by the GDC.

Housing Initiative: Some offenders spend months and years in prison after they become eligible for parole because they have no place to live. Selected offenders who have this problem are given help. Sources from the

private sector partner with the GDC to provide housing to offenders who cannot find a place on their own.

Transitional Centers: TCs are work release sites preparing offenders for re-entering their communities. TCs have been expanded to offer more opportunities to learn new skills and earn money for when they are released. All TCs are enhancing their collaboration with community partners to provide even more skills and better work experiences.

PIE Program: PIE is “Prison Industry Enhancement”. Selected offenders are allowed jobs while they are locked up, and receive a competitive wage for work they do in fields that are short on workers. The offender receives training and saves money for after release. The companies have jobs waiting for the offenders who have been given skills that the companies want to see their employees have.

Pre-Release Centers: The GDC has initiated several new PRCs, designed to intensify services for those who are about to be released, and centralize the process. The PRCs are preparing offenders for release with workforce, thinking, substance abuse, academic and other skills.

In-house Transitional Centers: ITCs are for offenders who cannot get or are not yet in a transitional center. The ITC program focuses on job preparation and training, computer skills, substance abuse, attitudes, and education upgrading.

Faith & Character-based Dorms: Selected prisons have a program that focuses on spiritual development. Inmates are volunteers and are not required to profess a particular faith. They learn new skills and attitudes, are taught about faith and faith communities, and are encouraged to practice their

own faith. When released, the graduates are offered a mentor from a faith organization along with other support.

Specialized Reentry Services: Research has shown that the few months after an offender is released are the most risky time for them. New training is being given to staff to provide offenders additional skills and preparation for release just before they leave the facility.

SO WHO HAS THE BETTER CHANCE TO STAY CRIME AND DRUG FREE???

The ONLY reason to have all these new initiatives is to give your loved one a better chance to stay out of the system. And the GDC is looking for other ideas and research to help do this.

New Research-supported Practices:

The GDC is making changes to its opportunities all the time. Why? People change, times change, offenders change! What works today might not work tomorrow. The GDC is committed to using research to make sure we are providing the latest in opportunities for offenders!

What Works: Extensive training in what works, also known as evidence-based practice, is being provided to all staff at all levels. Staff from the commissioner to the counselors, are learning how to help offenders improve their lives. We want your loved one to stay home!

We hope that this information will help and we wish you the best in helping your friend or family member to stay drug and crime free. If you would like to know more about any of the skills and information discussed here please call the number on the front and ask to speak to a counselor, supervisor, or other staff member.