

Instructor's Guide

for

Youth Corrections Series for Young Men: Choices, Consequences, and Your Future

Life Skills

Overview

Whether you are 15 or 50, you are responsible for managing your own life. That means learning how to handle your finances, find and keep a job, build a support network, and take care of yourself every day.

It also means planning for the future. Your students should begin thinking about and developing their life plan the moment they enter the program. That means considering their education, work readiness, living arrangements, family situation, transportation issues, and leisure activities. That's why it is important for you to help your students develop a plan for how they will acquire and make use of the life skills necessary to be an active, contributing member of society.

This video stresses the need for such a plan. It can help you teach students how to get the documents and resources they need, effectively plan for their future, and carefully manage their money. It encourages students to begin planning as soon as possible and to be aware of the changes that will take place in their everyday lives once they are released. Most importantly, it reinforces the need for students to commit to their plan and take appropriate action to be successful.

The video provides opportunities and questions for group discussion. Feel free to follow the cues, pausing for activities and discussion as your own schedule dictates.

Presentation Suggestions

Begin by asking students to think about their futures. What do they want to do with their lives? Where will they live when they are released? What will they do with their free time? What kind of job will they seek? How will they get around? What's the first thing they plan on buying? Ask students if they've given any thought to furthering their education or career. Try to gauge how realistic their expectations are. Encourage them to plan, and even to dream, but help them to understand the potential barriers they will face and the need to have a plan so that they can overcome those barriers.

When you feel students have begun thinking about these issues, give them the **Anticipation Quiz** to complete prior to watching the video. If you wish, allow the students to state their answers and discuss them.

Show the video. Encourage students to take notes or to make changes to the answers they put down for the Anticipation Quiz while watching the video.

At the conclusion of the video, ask students to discuss any changes they made to their answers on the Anticipation Quiz as a result of information they learned. Follow up this discussion with the **Activities**.

Use the **Discussion Questions** to request oral or written responses from students or assign the questions as homework essays.

Give the **Quick Quiz** at the conclusion of class and correct the quizzes as a group. Assign the **Homework Option**, if desired.

Anticipation Quiz

Directions: Answer these questions as completely as possible. You may revise your answers as you watch the video.

1. What are the three biggest life skills you need to learn to be successful upon reentry?
2. What are some things you need to plan for *before* reentry?
3. What are some of the expenses you need to budget for upon reentry?

Answer Key

1. How to solve problems, how to make decisions, and how to access resources.
2. Answers will vary. Possibilities include: Where you will live. Where you will work. How you will budget your money.
3. Answers will vary. Possibilities include: groceries, rent, car payments, insurance, gas, utilities, clothes, and eating out.

Activities

Activity #1

Title: Developing a Reentry Plan

Format: Individual

Time: 20-30 minutes

Materials: Worksheet, pen

Procedure:

1. The video discusses the need for a reentry plan. It lists 10 basic skills they should master upon reentry. Use the first worksheet at the end of this guide to get students started on planning how they will go about learning these skills and completing these tasks.
2. When everyone has finished, bring the class back together for a general discussion about developing a reentry plan. What other skills should be added to this list? What strategies do students have for making their transition successful?

Activity #2**Title:** Before and After**Format:** Individuals**Time:** 20-30 minutes**Materials:** Worksheet, pen**Procedure:**

1. One of the counselors in the video discussed 10 key areas that need to be addressed in one's life plan. The second worksheet at the end of this guide lists those ten areas and provides space for students to describe what their situation was like *before* they were arrested and what they imagine it can be like *after* they are released.
2. Have students complete the worksheet on their own, using another sheet of paper if they need more space. If there is limited time, have them focus on the three or four areas that require the most significant change.
3. Finally come back together as a class and discuss strategies for making positive changes in each of the ten areas.

Discussion Questions

1. To be successful upon reentry, you need to develop a "life plan." But what is a life plan? What is it made up of? What parts of your life can you plan for? What can't you plan for? What obstacles do you anticipate facing? How will you overcome them?
2. Counselors and former inmates stress the value of being work ready, but what does that mean? What skills are valued in the workplace today? What can you do right now to make yourself more employable and prepare for the world of work?
3. How do you spend your leisure time? What do you do for fun or for relaxation? Are these activities potentially harmful or dangerous? What hobbies or interests can you pursue that are safe, legal, and enriching for you as a person? What hobbies or interests have you always wanted to try but haven't?

Quick Quiz

Note: You may read these questions out loud, allowing time for students to respond, or copy and hand this out as a written exercise.

Directions: Indicate whether each statement is true or false, according to the video.

1. Street smarts are all you need to survive in the world.
2. It's important to have a plan for your future *before* you are even released.
3. You will need to begin establishing a positive credit history upon release.
4. Money was meant only to be spent, not saved.
5. Most adults make thousand of decisions a day.
6. You shouldn't be afraid to ask for help.
7. You don't need to think about where you will work until you are released.
8. What you do in your free time will have no effect on the rest of your life.

Answer Key

- | | |
|----------|----------|
| 1. False | 5. True |
| 2. True | 6. True |
| 3. True | 7. False |
| 4. False | 8. False |

Homework Option

Have students think about and begin to plan a weekly or monthly budget. Assume a weekly income of \$300.00 or monthly income of \$1,400.00. Be sure they take into account taxes, rent, insurance, utilities, transportation costs, food, clothing, and any other necessities. Do they have enough to live on? Is there any left over to save?

Reentry Plan: First Steps

Getting a driver's license or other government issued ID

Having a copy of your birth certificate

Learning how to set up and manage a bank account

Writing a check and balancing a checkbook

Putting together a budget and living by it

Knowing how to establish a record of credit and check your credit rating

Filling out a job application

Making a resume

Using a library

Using the phone book

10 Keys to Successful Reentry

Area of Concern	Before	After
Employment		
Education		
Living Arrangements		
Relationship with Family		
Financial Management		
Transportation		
Health		
Personal Well Being		
Interactions with Others		
Leisure Time		