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## An Occupation-Based Program for Formerly Incarcerated Youth and Staff in an Employment Re-integration Program

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# An Occupation-Based Program for Formerly Incarcerated Youth and Staff in an Employment Re-integration Program

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## Background

Each day, approximately 60,000 youth (ages 12-17) are currently incarcerated in the U.S. (OJJDP, 2013). Depending on their crime, these youth will eventually be released back into society. This transition signifies a demand for community re-entry success. The programming for youth has vacillated between punishment and rehabilitation since establishing the first juvenile court in the U.S. (Dempsey et al., 2021). Eventual re-integration into school, community, and the workforce is of utmost importance for youth development when exiting the juvenile justice system but can be incredibly difficult due to barriers caused by incarceration. Having been incarcerated makes it more challenging for youth to attend school, obtain a license, find public housing, and attain public benefits (Juvenile Justice Information Exchange [JJIE], n.d.) Furthermore, because of the effects following being a part of the juvenile justice system, the youth exemplify a lack of social interaction skills, hindered relationship patterns, altered values and beliefs (AOTA, 2020).

*A special thank you to the administration, staff, and youth of Jail to Jobs*

## Problem

Youth have underdeveloped skills and patterns that interfere with their occupational participation as they re-integrate to their communities.

## Purpose

To create an occupation-based program geared towards community reintegration to address the youth's underdeveloped skills and patterns to improve their participation in occupations.

## Methods

### Five Phases:

- *Strengths and Needs Assessment Phase*
- *Program Development Phase*
- *Program Implementation Phase*
- *Program Evaluation Phase*
- *Sustainability and Partnership Phase*

## Self-Regulation Program

Week	Activity
1	Mindfulness
2	Sensory Processing
3	Deep Breathing
4	Zones of Regulation
5	Meditation/Yoga
6	Triggers/Calming Techniques
7	Wellness Recovery Action Plan

## Discussion

### Project Strengths:

- Facilitated occupational performance of youth and staff simultaneously.
  - Highlighted the role of occupational therapy.
- ### Project Limitations:
- Individualized for a specific agency.
  - Focus on self-regulation limited further attention on other occupational concerns.

### Implications for Occupational Therapy:

- Advocate for the profession
- Discover additional resources
- Address other skills and patterns
- Address other occupations
- Create an inclusive environment

Scan for References

