

Reentry Spotlight: Reentry to Resilience (R2R), North Carolina



Part 1: Introduction

Many of the youth who enter the R2R program come from difficult, trauma-filled pasts, often making mistakes along the way. But through the program, they discover their inner strength and resilience. One participant reflected, “I never thought about life after high school.” Another shared, “When I was locked up, I realized how strong I was, both mentally and physically.” For many, it isn't until they face their lowest points that they understand the harsh realities of life, like one participant said, “The streets don't love anyone. I never took that in until I was locked in this cell, ready to start my change.”

Today, these young people are rewriting their stories. WC, once at a crossroads, is now a high school graduate, living independently, paying his own bills, and taking construction and real estate classes with aspirations to own a business and invest in real estate. Alex, who earned a residential electrician certificate, is now working as an electrician. Jamir is finishing high school while working part-time and exploring college and career options, determined to graduate from college and save enough money to buy a home. The R2R program is helping these young men transform their lives, showing them that their past does not define their future and that their futures are full of potential.

Part 2: Program Description

The Reentry to Resilience (R2R) program, based in North Carolina, is dedicated to supporting youth as they transition back into their communities after a period of confinement in a Youth Detention Center (YDC). Focused on education and holistic development, R2R provides comprehensive, wraparound services designed to reduce recidivism and help young people build a brighter future.

At the heart of R2R's approach is community-based case management, which begins before a youth's release and continues after they return home. By collaborating closely with court counselors, probation officers, YDC staff, and the youth's families, R2R creates personalized plans that support a successful reintegration into society.

Part 3: Key Components and Success Stories

R2R's impact extends beyond basic case management. The program helps youth reintegrate into their regular schools, rather than alternative schools. They assist young people in exploring and pursuing higher education or vocational training, guiding them through enrollment processes or certification in various trades. R2R also helps youth secure employment, providing job training and essential life skills to ensure long-term success. In addition, the program offers critical support in helping youth transition to independent living, equipping them with the necessary tools to manage their own housing, finances, and daily responsibilities.

Mentorship and emotional support are also key components of the program, helping participants rebuild confidence, set goals, and envision a positive future. The R2R program empowers youth to transition from a past filled with challenges to a future full of opportunity, providing them with the skills and support they need to thrive independently and succeed in their communities.

Recognizing the importance of mental health, R2R is focused on adding services that will provide much-needed support to young people in the areas of the state they serve. With a more comprehensive approach to mental wellness, they plan to help youth address the emotional and psychological challenges that often accompany reentry.

The R2R program itself is a testament to resilience. Implementing a successful reentry program is no easy feat, and the R2R team has faced and overcome many challenges along the way. Despite these obstacles, they've continued to provide vital services to youth without missing a beat. Their ability to adapt and collaborate with other organizations has been key to their success. By building strong, lasting relationships within the community, R2R has been able to expand its network of support, ensuring that the youth they serve receive comprehensive, effective care.

One notable challenge occurred when one of R2R's key partners faced a funding crisis, putting a critical component of the services they offered at risk. This could have caused a significant disruption in the support R2R was able to provide. However, rather than giving up, the team showed extraordinary perseverance. They worked tirelessly to find solutions and secure alternative support, ensuring there was no interruption in services. Thanks to their resilience, the youth they serve never even noticed the shift, as they continued to receive the care and resources they needed without disruption.

This is just one example of how the R2R program exemplifies resilience, not only in the youth they help but in their own ability to adapt and thrive through challenges. Their dedication to

their mission and the communities they serve is unwavering, and their ability to overcome obstacles demonstrates the strength and commitment that drives their success.

Part 4: Looking Ahead

As R2R looks to the future, they are focused on both sustaining their program beyond the SCA grant and continuously improving the services they provide. One of their primary goals is to enhance the family engagement component of their program. They understand that involving families more deeply in the reentry process is crucial for the success of the youth they serve, and they are actively exploring ways to strengthen these connections.

In addition to improving family involvement, R2R is working to enhance their life skills and financial literacy curriculum. By refining these areas, they aim to better equip the youth with essential tools and knowledge that will support their long-term independence and success in the workforce.

Lastly, R2R is expanding their network and building stronger relationships with local businesses, schools, and community-based organizations. By expanding their network of partners, they will be able to offer more resources and opportunities, ensuring that the youth have the support they need to thrive academically, professionally, and personally.

ABOUT YRTTAC

The Youth Reentry Training and Technical Assistance Center (YRTTAC), administered by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) and housed at the American Institutes for Research (AIR), supports capacity-building efforts among 50+ Second Chance Act Reentry grantees. YRTTAC focuses heavily on best practices in successful reentry of youth and young adults returning to their communities who are in out of home placement, like detention and juvenile justice secure state operated facilities. Our technical assistance is designed to build the capabilities of grantees in reentry and navigation of their Second Chance Act grant and is accomplished through individualized coaching, development of resources, and curating peer-to-peer learning events. This approach braids research, programmatic innovations, lived expertise, and best practices to improve the youth reentry field. Learn more about YRTTAC [here](#).

