Preliminary Findings from the Multi-site Evaluation of the Serious and Violent Offender Reentry Initiative

Debbie Dawes, M.P.A.
RTI International

AAHMI Conference
June 17, 2008

Funded by NIJ Grant No. 2004-RE-CX-0002
Overview of SVORI

- Serious and Violent Offender Reentry Initiative funded agencies to develop programs to improve criminal justice, employment, education, health, and housing outcomes for released prisoners

- 69 agencies received federal funds ($500,000 - $2,000,000 over 3 years) to develop 89 programs that
  - Targeted adult & juvenile populations
  - Incorporated partnerships among state and local agencies to provide comprehensive services to prisoners returning home
  - Were locally designed to meet local needs and organizational capabilities
Overview of Multi-site Evaluation of SVORI

- **Implementation Assessment**: Identify local SVORI program components — what was intended & what was achieved

- **Impact Evaluation**: Determine the extent to which SVORI increased services & programming; improved employment, health, & personal functioning; and reduced criminal activity of returning prisoners

- **Cost-benefit Analysis**: Determine whether benefits outweigh the costs (subset of impact sites)
Findings from the Implementation Assessment

- SVORI programs were run by adult or juvenile correctional agencies, with the involvement of community- and faith-based organizations.
- Most programs delivered reentry services prior to and after release, but the pre-release phase was prioritized.
- Programs geographically concentrated, both pre-release (specific institutions) and post-release (specific release communities).

- Primary focus of adult programs:
  - Employment: 42%
  - Community integration: 27%
  - Substance use: 14%
  - Mental health: 10%
  - Education: 2%
  - Family: 0%
  - Other: 6%

- More about service receipt later…

www.svori-evaluation.org
Findings from the Impact Evaluation

- Findings from the slides that follow are based on a longitudinal study of 1,700 adult males who were released from 14 states.
- The men included individuals receiving services through SVORI funding and a comparison group of men who received standard services available at their correctional facilities or in their communities.
- The men were interviewed 1 month before release and at 3-, 9-, and 15-months after release.
- This presentation will focus on their reported needs for services at the pre-release interview, the services they actually received, and other information about their reentry experience.

www.svori-evaluation.org
Characteristics of Adult Male Respondents

- 29 years of age
- About 40% reported being married or in a steady relationship & about 60% reported having children < 18 years
- About 60% had a HS diploma or GED
- About 2/3rds reported having a job 6 months prior prison & 90% “ever had a job”
- Most had family & friends who were AOD & crime involved
- About 2/3rds reported drug & alcohol use in the 30 days prior to prison

www.svori-evaluation.org
Service Need and Delivery: Programs & Services Measured

- Needs assessment (receipt only)
- Case management (receipt only)
- Staff for release planning (receipt)
- Post release supervision (receipt)
- Legal assistance
- Financial assistance
- Public assistance
- Obtaining identification
- 1-on-1 mentoring
- Assistance obtaining documents
- Housing placements/referrals
- Transportation (post-release only)
- Assistance getting driver’s license
- Dental health services
- Physical health services
- Mental health services
- Drug treatment services, AA/NA
- Abuse support groups
- Anger management/violence counseling
- Job services
- Education/GED/tutoring/literacy
- Money management
- Life skills training
- Personal relationships training
- Training to change attitudes regarding criminal behavior
- Domestic violence services
- Assistance with receipt of child support
- Child support debt modification
- Child custody modification
- Parenting skills development
- Assistance with child care

www.svori-evaluation.org
SVORI Top 10 Self-Reported Needs (30 days pre-release)

- More education (94%)
- Financial assistance (86%)
- Driver’s license (83%)
- Job training (82%)
- Job (80%)
- Public health insurance (75%)
- Life skills (75%)
- Transportation (72%)
- Money management skills (71%)
- Change in criminal attitudes (64%)
Service Needs & Receipt Groups

- **Coordination & Supervision (received only):** needs assessment, case management, worked with anyone to reintegrate, supervision

- **Transition Services:** legal assistance, financial assistance, public benefits assistance, healthcare insurance, mentoring, assistance obtaining documents, finding place to live, transportation, getting drivers license, clothing/food

- **Health Services:** tx for physical, MH, AOD, abuse groups, anger management programs

- **Employment/Education/Skills Building Services:** assistance finding job, educ. services, money management, gen. lifeskills, assistance w/ personal relationships, changing criminal thinking

- **Family Services:** DV support group, batterer intervention

- **Child Services:** getting child support, assistance modifying child support debt, custody, parenting class, assistance finding child care (for the ~ 600 cases with children < 18 years)
Service Receipt (30 days pre-release)

- Coordination & Supervision: 60% SVORI, 33% Non-SVORI
- Transition: 29% SVORI, 17% Non-SVORI
- Health: 33% SVORI, 28% Non-SVORI
- Employment & Education: 39% SVORI, 24% Non-SVORI
- Family: 8% SVORI, 4% Non-SVORI
- Child: 11% SVORI, 6% Non-SVORI

www.svori-evaluation.org
Service Receipt (3 months post release)

www.svori-evaluation.org
Service Receipt (9 months post release)

- Coordination & Supervision: 44% SVORI, 31% Non-SVORI
- Transition: 9% SVORI, 7% Non-SVORI
- Health: 13% SVORI, 13% Non-SVORI
- Employment & Education: 12% SVORI, 8% Non-SVORI
- Family: 1% SVORI, 1% Non-SVORI
- Child: 3% SVORI, 2% Non-SVORI

www.svori-evaluation.org
Service Receipt (15 months post release)

- Coordination & Supervision: 30% SVORI, 24% Non-SVORI
- Transition: 6% SVORI, 6% Non-SVORI
- Health: 11% SVORI, 12% Non-SVORI
- Employment & Education: 9% SVORI, 6% Non-SVORI
- Family: 1% SVORI, 2% Non-SVORI
- Child: 2% SVORI, 2% Non-SVORI

www.svori-evaluation.org
Service Receipt

Employment/Education/Skills Building Services

- 15-M Receipt
  - Non-SVORI: 6%
  - SVORI: 9%

- 9-M Receipt
  - Non-SVORI: 8%
  - SVORI: 12%

- 3-M Receipt
  - Non-SVORI: 8%
  - SVORI: 15%

- Baseline Receipt
  - Non-SVORI: 24%
  - SVORI: 39%

- Baseline Need
  - Non-SVORI: 73%
  - SVORI: 74%

www.svori-evaluation.org
Important Findings on Service Needs and Receipt

- Needs were highest for employment, education, and skills building services, followed by transition services and child services.
- Needs were lowest for health-related services and family services.
- Service receipt much lower than needs.
- Service receipt was highest before release then declined substantially over time.

www.svori-evaluation.org
Reentry Experiences Among the Sample

Supports Self with a Job

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>3-Months</th>
<th>9-Months</th>
<th>15-Months</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SVORI</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-SVORI</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Reentry Experiences Among the Sample

Job Has Benefits

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>SVORI</th>
<th>Non-SVORI</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3-Months</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9-Months</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15-Months</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

www.svori-evaluation.org
Reentry Experiences Among the Sample

Housing Independence

- 3-Months: 71% SVORI, 70% Non-SVORI
- 9-Months: 79% SVORI, 80% Non-SVORI
- 15-Months: 73% SVORI, 69% Non-SVORI

www.svori-evaluation.org
Reentry Experiences Among the Sample

Housing Stability

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>3-Months</th>
<th>9-Months</th>
<th>15-Months</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SVORI</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-SVORI</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

www.svori-evaluation.org
Reentry Experiences Among the Sample

- Common factors related to desistance
  - Committed not to go back to prison
  - Supportive family
  - Stable place to live
  - Learned to deal with stress
  - Good job
  - Stopped using drugs

- Common factors related to recidivism
  - Use of alcohol/drugs
  - Friends
  - Not enough money
  - Probation/Parole Officer was not helpful
  - Too much pressure
Conclusions

- SVORI: Ambitious effort to improve integrated, individually targeted services through DOC coordination of state & community agencies & organizations

- Within a year, most programs were able to increase the level of services provided to offenders pre and post release—but levels were still low, particularly post release

- From release up through 15 months post release, SVORI participants are doing better—if only moderately so—across a wide range of outcomes