



*For immediate release*

## IDOC Awarded Almost 1 Million in Grants to Improve Juvenile Re-entry

Indianapolis, IN (September 22, 2010) - The Indiana Department of Correction (IDOC) was recently awarded \$732,389.00 for the Second Chance Act Juvenile Re-entry Demonstration Project grant by the U.S. Department of Justice (USDOJ) Office of Justice Programs (OJP) Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.

IDOC will partner with Marion County and the Juvenile Justice Task Force for the initiative of enhancing existing transitional services offered to high-risk incarcerated youth returning to Marion County from state juvenile correctional facilities.

A juvenile offender's increased risk of re-offending in the period immediately following release is a significant concern for successful re-entry. To address this issue, youth will report to the AIM (Aftercare for Indiana through Mentoring) Re-entry Academy, a program through the Juvenile Justice Task Force, for the first month after release. While at the Academy, youth will participate in a series of life-skills and job readiness classes, receive educational and employment assistance, and be connected with community-based resources. There is also a mentoring component which incorporates service learning activities for youth and mentors, whereby juvenile offenders meet weekly with a mentor shortly after commitment to the Department and continue to do so upon return to the community.

Designed to improve outcomes for people returning to communities from prisons and jails, the Second Chance Act is first-of-its-kind legislation that authorizes federal grants to government agencies and nonprofit organizations to provide employment assistance, substance abuse treatment, housing, family programming, mentoring, victims support, and other services in an effort to reduce recidivism.

In addition to Second Chance Act funding, IDOC has also received \$43,400.00 through a Justice and Mental Health Collaboration Project planning grant from the UDOJ OJP Bureau of Justice Assistance. This project will establish a cross-system Collaboration Team at the state level to work with IDOC facility Community Advisory Boards; enhance re-entry services through increased family involvement in the treatment of youth with mental health and co-occurring mental health and substance abuse disorders; and strengthen existing mental health programs by providing intensive training to staff working with this vulnerable population.

The project will bring multiple agencies and organizations together to accomplish its goals; organizations include the Indiana Division of Child Services, the Indiana Department of

Education, the Indiana Juvenile Justice Task Force, the Youth Law Team, the IU School of Medicine, and Youth Suicide Prevention – IUPUI at Fort Wayne, the Indiana Council of Community Mental Health Centers, the Department of Mental Health and Addictions, and the National Alliance for Mental Illness.

“Re-entry has become a serious public policy issue for the juvenile justice system. It is our duty to do everything we can as juvenile justice partners to establish evidence-based best practices that give Indiana’s incarcerated youth the best chance for a successful re-entry and a successful future,” commented IDOC Commissioner Edwin G. Buss

So far for this fiscal year, the IDOC has received over \$950,000 in state and federal grant funds for the Department’s youth programs and services.

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