This chapter provides three activities and two assessments for training community health workers (CHWs) to understand the ways that imprisonment shapes the health of individuals, family members, and communities affected by incarceration.

This chapter corresponds to, and is meant to be used with, Chapter 15, “Promoting the Health of Formerly Incarcerated People,” of Foundations for Community Health Workers, Second Edition.
CHAPTER AT A GLANCE

Promoting the Health of Formerly Incarcerated People

The United States incarcerates more people than any other country, with rates of detention far higher than those of other democratic nations. As a result, more people than ever before are affected by the experience and consequences of mass incarceration, particularly within poor communities and communities of color. Frontline CHWs are likely to encounter clients whose lives have been affected by incarceration, either their own or that of a family member. Some CHWs may have direct experience with incarceration themselves. Understanding the effects of incarceration on health and well-being, as well as the many challenges facing clients as they re-enter society following a period of incarceration, will enable CHWs to better support their clients and communities.

Training CHWs on the health impacts of incarceration occurs primarily in one semester of the CHW training program at City College of San Francisco (CCSF) and is reinforced throughout the program. Many learners have direct experiences of incarceration or have close friends or family members who have been incarcerated, and they are encouraged to share and integrate their own experiences as part of the learning process. The content in this chapter is designed to be covered in two to three classes or training sessions.

This guide is meant to be used when teaching/training Chapter 15 of Foundations for Community Health Workers, Second Edition. The step-by-step learning activities presented here are just a sample from our curriculum and do not include all training activities that we facilitate over the course of a nine month CHW certification process. We recommend reading Chapter 15 in Foundations, as the textbook provides more material about promoting the health of formerly incarcerated people, as well as a deeper explanation of concepts related to activities in this guide.

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| ACTIVITY 15.1: MYTH AND REALITY ICEBREAKER (20–30 MINUTES) | • Discuss key features of mass incarceration in the US.  
• Identify common myths and misconceptions about mass incarceration.  
• Ask critical questions about mass incarceration. |

This activity invites learners to begin questioning some of the things they have been taught to believe about incarceration as they hear a series of statements and decide if each one is myth or reality. Forced choice activity
## CHAPTER AT A GLANCE (continued)

### Promoting the Health of Formerly Incarcerated People

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| **ACTIVITY 15.2: HEALTH IMPACTS OF INCARCERATION (60 MINUTES)** | - Identify health impacts of incarceration on individuals who are incarcerated or formerly incarcerated.  
- Explore the impacts of these health issues on individuals as they re-enter society.  
- Critically analyze incarceration as a social determinant of health. |
| This activity provides learners with an opportunity to discuss the health impacts of incarceration on individuals who are incarcerated and to begin to understand incarceration as a social determinant of health.  
Small group discussion  
*Includes:*  
- Learner Handout 15.2 A: Ecological Model  
  Health Impacts of Incarceration. |
| **ACTIVITY 15.3: CASE STUDY, PHYLLIS (40 MINUTES)** | - Identify common barriers to re-entry for people returning home from prison.  
- Discuss the roles that successful CHWs can play in helping formerly incarcerated clients navigate barriers and obstacles. |
| This activity engages learners in identifying and addressing unique challenges facing formerly incarcerated clients.  
Small group discussion  
*Includes:*  
- Learner Handout 15.3 A: Phyllis Case Study |
| **ACTIVITY 15.4: RE-ENTRY OBSTACLE COURSE (45–60 MINUTES)** | - Explain systemic barriers facing people recently released from incarceration.  
- Discuss the importance of a social safety net for people returning to the community after incarceration. |
| This activity provides learners with an opportunity to understand some of the many systemic barriers to re-entry and the importance of a social safety net for people seeking to rebuild their lives after being incarcerated.  
Role play  
*Includes:*  
- Learner Handout 15.4 A: Re-entry Scenario, Michelle  
- Learner Handout 15.4 B: Re-entry Role Play Cards |

### TRAINING WITH VIDEOS FROM CHAPTER 15 OF FOUNDATIONS

Chapter 15 of the textbook includes one video showing a CHW working with a client who recently came home from prison, three interviews with CCSF faculty, and seven digital stories of formerly incarcerated people and their journey to becoming CHWs.
## Promoting the Health of Formerly Incarcerated People

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<td>This three-part assignment is designed to develop and assess learners' understanding of proposed legislation to address employment discrimination facing formerly incarcerated people (Ban the Box). It also assesses learners' communication and professional writing skills. Learners will research Ban the Box efforts and write a letter to a policy or decision maker.</td>
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<td><strong>ASSESSMENT 15.2: JAIL AND PRISON JEOPARDY</strong></td>
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Activity 15.1

Myth and Reality Icebreaker

This activity invites learners to question some of the things they have been taught to believe about incarceration. It can be used as a pre-test, an icebreaker, or as one of the early activities in a training about health impacts of incarceration.

We recommend that this activity be conducted before learners have read Chapter 15 to assess their knowledge of incarceration and health and engage them in a dialogue about beliefs and realities of incarceration.

1 Introduction

Explain to learners that there are persistent myths that affect how people view and understand many issues in our society. Ask people for some examples of myths or false beliefs that are widely held in society but not necessarily true. Explain that incarceration is one such issue about which many people hold beliefs and viewpoints that differ from the facts.

Tell learners that this activity provides them with an opportunity to talk about what they know and think they know about incarceration.

Ask learners to stand or move to the center of the room. Point out the signs you have taped to either side of the room. Explain that you will read a series of statements. After each statement is read, learners should move to either side of the room, depending on whether they believe the statement to be myth (not true) or reality (true).

2 Myth or Reality

Read each of the following statements aloud. After each statement, ask learners to move to the side of the room with the sign representing their belief about the statement—whether it is a myth or reality.

Once learners have moved to either side of the room, ask a few learners to share why they are standing beside myth or reality. You might ask one learner from each side to share. Once learners have shared their
Myth and Reality Icebreaker (continued)

reasons, you can give learners the option to move to the other side if something that
another learner says changes their belief.

After learners have taken their stance and a few reasons have been offered, provide the
correct answer to whether the statement is a myth or reality. You may want to provide
some supplemental information from the textbook or your own knowledge to help learn-
ers understand the realities of mass incarceration.

To make the activity even more interactive, you can ask learners on the correct side to
share anything else they know about the statement.

Sample Statements to Read Aloud

1. The United States has the second highest rate of incarceration in the world, second
   only to Rwanda.
   Myth. The US has the highest rate of incarceration in the world, 762 per 100,000
   residents.
   (The Sentencing Project, 2014)

2. The vast majority of people in jails and prisons have been convicted of serious or vio-
   lent offenses.
   Myth. In 2012, only 5.9 percent of federal prisoners and slightly more than half of
   state prisoners were sentenced for violent crimes.
   (The Sentencing Project, 2014)

3. Approximately 400,000 people are held in immigration facilities in the US each year,
   even though most have no criminal records.
   Reality. People detained in immigration facilities are often confined with little access
   to their families or outside legal support and are often denied adequate medical and
   mental health care.
   (Keller, 2003)

4. African Americans are over-represented in prisons because there are significantly
   higher rates of drug use in that community.
   Myth. People of all races use drugs at approximately the same rate, but people of color
   are much more likely to be incarcerated for drug possession or use.
   (Alexander, 2010; Human Rights Watch, 2009)

5. Almost all transgender and gender nonconforming prisoners prefer to be placed in
   isolation for their own safety.
   Myth. Many transgender and gender nonconforming people prefer to be housed in
   general population and are isolated against their will. This can cause them to be
more vulnerable to humiliation, verbal harassment, sexual and physical assault, and other harms.

(Sylvia Rivera Law Project, 2007)

6. Under the current federal drug laws, judges can sentence people to any length of time they see fit.
   
   **Myth.** Mandatory minimums require judges to use a prescribed formula according to the weight (amount) of the drugs.
   
   (The Sentencing Project, 2014)

7. About 1 out of every 35 adults in the US is under the control of the criminal justice system.
   
   **Reality.** Whether incarcerated in jail or prison, on probation, parole, or under house arrest, 1 out of every 35 adults in the US is under the control of the criminal justice system.
   
   (Glaze & Kaeble, 2014)

8. The Federal Adoption and Safe Families Act was enacted to maintain family unity when parents are incarcerated.
   
   **Myth.** The Federal Adoption and Safe Families Act encourages “fast-track adoptions” by requiring termination of parental rights if a parent has not had custody of a child for 15 out of the previous 22 months.
   
   (The Sentencing Project, 2012)

9. A person coming home from prison can be denied Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and food stamps simply because of their conviction.
   
   **Reality.** The federal government passed a lifetime ban on TANF and food stamps for people with felony drug convictions, regardless of whether they were rehabilitated and are in recovery. States can individually choose to opt out of the ban.
   
   (The Sentencing Project, 2012)

10. Sometimes doctors who have been found to be incompetent or who are facing criminal charges are permitted to work in prisons.
   
   **Reality.** Medical care in some state prisons is notoriously poor, in part because of the commonly accepted practice of allowing “impaired physicians” who are themselves facing criminal charges to work in prison healthcare settings rather than serving sentences in those prisons.

   (Skolnick, 1998)
Debrief and Reinforcement

After all the statements have been read and discussed, ask learners to return to their seats. Ask them to share what, if anything, surprised them during the activity. After a few minutes, ask learners to identify any themes that have come up in the discussion. Some key points that may arise, or that you may want to reinforce as you close out the activity, include the following:

- There are many common misperceptions about incarcerated people, including the false beliefs that people of color are more likely to commit crimes and therefore are more likely to be incarcerated. In reality, it is the laws and policies that target and disproportionately affect people of color that account for the higher rates of people of color in jails and prisons.

- Some beliefs reinforced by our society’s narratives about incarceration are simply not true. For example, the idea that a person who spends time in prison has “repaid their debt to society” is contradicted by the reality that people continue to be punished for their incarceration history long after they leave prison, by residual health problems, as well as by systemic discrimination in housing, employment, social services, and other areas.

References


Activity 15.2

Health Impacts of Incarceration

This activity provides learners with an opportunity to discuss the health impacts of incarceration and to analyze incarceration as a social determinant of health.

We recommend facilitating this activity after learners have already developed an understanding of public health concepts, including social determinants of health and the ecological model, introduced in Chapters 3 and 4 of Foundations.

Introduction and Review

Frame this activity as an opportunity to explore some of the health impacts of incarceration and to build upon concepts that have already been discussed, including the social determinants of health and the ecological model from Chapter 3.

Depending upon how long ago these concepts were introduced, you may wish to review them. Ask learners to explain the social determinants of health and to provide several examples of how social determinants influence health. Draw or show the ecological model and ask learners to explain what it is. Ask learners to name examples of factors that influence health at each of the four levels of the ecological model. Make sure learners are able to articulate a clear understanding of social determinants of health and the ecological model before you continue.

Remind learners that social inequalities produce health inequities (such as unequal access to basic rights and resources including food, housing, education, employment, health care, safety, and civil rights), meaning that some populations will get sick and die much earlier than others. Mass incarceration is driven by many of the same factors that are the basis for health inequities in the US.

Tell learners that, for this activity, they will be asked to reflect on the health impacts of incarceration, using the different levels of the ecological model to

Materials Needed

- Flip-chart paper and markers
- Copies of "Learner Handout 15.2 A: Ecological Model—Health Impacts of Incarceration" (included at the end of this activity)

Trainer Preparation

- Review Chapter 15.
- Draw the ecological model (included at the end of this activity) on flip-chart paper or a blackboard.

Learner Preparation

- Ask learners to review Chapters 3 and 4, especially social determinants of health, the ecological model, and causes of health inequalities.
- Ask learners to review Chapter 15.

Learning Outcomes

After this activity, learners will be able to:
- Identify health impacts of incarceration on individuals who are incarcerated or formerly incarcerated.
- Explore the impacts of these health issues on individuals as they re-enter society.
- Critically analyze incarceration as a social determinant of health.
Health Impacts of Incarceration (continued)

demonstrate how incarceration affects individuals, family members, community, and
society as a whole.

2 Small Group Activity
Assign learners to four small groups and distribute the handout on the ecological model.
Tell learners that each group will be responsible for identifying ways that mass incar-
ceration affects the health at their level of the ecological model. Group 1 will work on
the individual level, group 2 will address the impacts on family, group 3 will address the
impacts on communities, and group 4 will address the impacts on the society or nation.

Group 1: Individual
Group 2: Family
Group 3: Community (neighborhood)
Group 4: Society (nation)

Ask learners to identify as many specific examples as they can think of for their level of
the ecological model based on their own experience and knowledge, as well as the infor-
mation from the training and reading. Each group should ask one member to write down
their examples on the handout.

3 Large Group Report Back and Discussion
After about 10 or 15 minutes, ask learners to reconvene as a large group. Draw or post the
ecological model on flip-chart paper or on the board. Explain that a representative from
each group will share some of the examples they came up with, teaching the large group
about the health impacts of mass incarceration at their level of the ecological model.
Start with the individual level and work up to the level of the society.

As each group reports back, write their examples on the large ecological model. Ask
the large group if anyone has examples they would like to add and write those exam-
ples down. If you notice any key ideas missing, ask the group about them or add them,
explaining to the group how you see them fitting in.

Some of the key factors related to incarceration that impact health at each level of the
ecological model might include these:

Individual
- Challenges reunifying with family and friends and the resulting stress and negative
  impact on physical and mental health
- Lack of access to quality health care
- High rates of HIV disease, hepatitis C, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, substance use,
  and other chronic health conditions
Health Impacts of Incarceration (continued)

- The lingering impact from exposure to sexual assault and other forms of violence and trauma including solitary confinement
- Posttraumatic stress and other mental health conditions
- Dental problems
- Already existing physical and mental health issues that have been made worse by incarceration
- Post-release issues, including these:
  - Lack of access to quality health care services
  - Stigma and discrimination
  - Homelessness/poverty
  - Interruption in medication access
  - Discrimination in housing and employment
  - Isolation
  - Risk of returning to prior risky behaviors including drug use

Family

- Family members who are separated from a loved one in prison and may have difficulty visiting or maintaining the relationship
- Challenges related to family reunification, including overcoming feelings of anger and estrangement
- Children who lack relationships and ongoing support from incarcerated family members
- Loss of child custody
- Children who may no longer be living with biological family members
- Permanent family separation
- Loss of family income
- Increased risks for poverty, homelessness, and food insecurity
- Increased chance of incarceration of other family members
- Stigma and prejudice from others in the community and from service providers
- Post-incarceration issues, including these:
  - Loss of income and eligibility for benefits such as food stamps
  - Inability to live with family/friends in public housing
Health Impacts of Incarceration (continued)

Community (neighborhood)
- Loss of human potential in communities where many members have been incarcerated
- Loss of positive social contributions
- Fragmented family and community relationships
- Loss of economic contributions
- Stigma and discrimination related to higher rates of incarceration
- Resources invested in mass incarceration that could have been invested in community resources including housing, employment opportunities, transportation, and green spaces
- Community violence
- Weakened social networks
- Families and children caught in a cycle of criminal justice system involvement and incarceration

Society (nation)
- Disenfranchisement of people with felony convictions (not allowed to vote)
- Loss of economic and social productivity as millions are locked away
- Health, wealth, and racial inequities based on disproportionate incarceration rates for poor people of color
- Mass incarceration leading to higher rates of physical and mental health conditions
- Dehumanization of people who are labeled “criminals”
- Resources invested in mass incarceration that could have been invested in public resources such as housing, health care, education, and employment
- Fractured family and community networks that result in less support for children and youth

4 Large Group Discussion
Explain that even though prisons have been structured to literally create a wall between people who are incarcerated and their families and communities, prisons are part of society, and the reality is that most people who experience incarceration will eventually be released. More than 11 million people are released from jails and prisons each year, and 95 percent of incarcerated people are on parole.
Health Impacts of Incarceration (continued)

Facilitate discussion about what happens to people who have recently been released from prison, by posing questions such as these:

- What barriers and challenges do people returning home from prison face?
  - They may lack stable housing. The federal “one strike” housing policy bans anyone with a drug-related or violent offense from living in Section 8 or other federally assisted housing, and the entire family can be evicted if a formerly incarcerated family member is found living there.
  - They may be unable to work (this includes employment discrimination).
  - They may face discriminatory policies that exacerbate these problems (ban on food stamps, denied federal assistance for housing and student financial aid, employment discrimination, voter discrimination, etc.).

- What types of resources do people coming home from prison require in order to be healthy?
  - Assistance with family reunification, support for accessing health care, and access to education and job training.

Facilitate discussion about how health issues that developed during incarceration may pose challenges to re-entry (or returning home from prison) by asking questions such as these:

- What types of health issues may people coming home from prison face?
  - They may have chronic health conditions such as heart disease, cancer, posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and Alzheimer’s disease—70 percent of released prisoners have a chronic disease or a mental health or substance use issue.
  - They may lack access to medical care.
  - They may have lost benefits and/or have had negative experiences with medical settings.

5 Closure and Reinforcement

Reinforce key messages shared by learners, from the reading in Foundations and other sources, such as the following:

- Highlight the fact that health is not an individual issue. Incarceration affects not only the individual’s health, but also the health and well-being of entire families and communities, and ultimately, society as a whole. In this way, incarceration is itself a social determinant of health.

- Ask the group to look back at this list of long-term effects on health based on incarceration. Examine the mythology of prisons, for example, the myth that they make society safe and are places where people pay a debt to society and go to be rehabilitated.
Health Impacts of Incarceration (continued)

- Discuss the difference between these commonly held beliefs about prison and what learners now know about the long-term impacts of prison.
- Ask learners what are some of the consequences of the prison system on the health, safety, and well-being of communities and society as a whole.
- Emphasize the idea that many criminal justice policies are, in fact, health policies. The systemic barriers to re-entry are designed to further punish and marginalize formerly incarcerated people, with devastating consequences for communities of color. People in the world of public health have an obligation to challenge these policies in the interest of creating healthier, safer communities.
For this activity, each small group will create a list of health impacts of incarceration for one of the levels of the ecological model.

Group 1: Impacts on the individual
Group 2: Impacts on the family
Group 3: Impacts on the community (neighborhood)
Group 4: Impacts on the society (nation)
Case Study, Phyllis

This activity engages learners in analyzing a client case study in small groups. Learners are asked to identify and address unique challenges facing formerly incarcerated clients.

1 Introduction

Explain that learners will participate in a small group discussion of a case study and will need to apply the skills they have already developed as CHWs in training. Assign learners to small groups of three to four and hand out copies of the case study for each learner. Ask for volunteers to help read the case study aloud. Clarify any outstanding questions about the information provided in the case.

2 Small Group Discussion

Tell learners that they will have approximately 10 minutes to discuss the case study and respond to the questions posed on the handout. Ask each group to select one person to record their responses and one person to share these ideas during a large group report back. Circulate among the small groups to clarify the activity or respond to questions, as necessary, and to note comments to share during the subsequent large group discussion.

3 Large Group Discussion

Ask one member of each small group to report back their responses. To avoid duplication and to provide each group with an opportunity to share, ask each group to start by sharing their response to just one of the case study questions:

1. How might Phyllis have been affected by her experience of incarceration? How might her family have been affected?

2. What are some of the obstacles and challenges that Phyllis is likely to face as a formerly incarcerated woman re-entering society?
3. What concepts and techniques will guide your work with Phyllis?

4. How will you work to establish a supportive working relationship with Phyllis and to build trust?

5. How will you apply client-centered concepts and skills for working with Phyllis?

6. What might you do or say that would undermine your effectiveness in working with Phyllis?

7. Are there systemic barriers in Phyllis’s life that you think frontline health workers could play a role in challenging?

Facilitate discussion, leaving room for all learners to ask questions, raise concerns, and share additional ideas about how to best support Phyllis.

4 Reinforcement

Reinforce key messages about case management including those identified by learners and those from Foundations. These may include the following:

- People returning to communities following a period of incarceration face many challenges and systemic barriers to successful re-entry.

- Post-conviction penalties, while not technically part of someone’s prison sentence, are continuing forms of discrimination that contribute to poor health and re-incarceration.

- People recently released from incarceration are often juggling an overwhelming amount of life challenges, and health concerns may be a lower priority than housing, employment, debt, or family reunification.

- Having experienced discrimination, stigma, and structural barriers to re-entry, people recently released from incarceration may feel particularly distrustful of those they perceive to be part of those systems and therefore they may be reluctant to attempt to access services.

- Using a strength-based perspective can help support clients in developing a sense of their own personal power and agency.

- It’s important to practice cultural humility. Don’t make assumptions about the knowledge, behaviors, or values of your clients or impose your own cultural norms. Be aware of how the relative power you have as a case manager (compared to a client) can affect your interaction.
Learner Handout 15.3 A: Phyllis Case Study

You are a CHW working at a community-based clinic. Today you are meeting with Phyllis, a new client. She is a 32-year-old woman with two young children who was just released from prison after serving three years for a drug-related offense. Phyllis has asthma, has recently tested positive for hepatitis C, and wants to work on her substance use issues, but received no treatment while in prison. She is a survivor of sexual abuse from an early age but has never had mental health counseling for the trauma she experienced.

Phyllis wants to reunite with her children. They were initially cared for by her mother and were eventually placed in foster care. Phyllis used to live in public housing but can’t return because of her conviction. Child Protective Services requires her to have at least a two-bedroom apartment if her children are to live with her and to pay back $18,000 to the state for the cost of having her children in foster care. Phyllis doesn’t have a high school diploma and her prospects for securing a well-paying job are not good.

Phyllis arrives at your clinic a week after her release from prison because her asthma medication has just run out.

Discussion Questions:

1. How might Phyllis have been affected by her experience of incarceration? How might her family have been affected?

2. What are some of the obstacles and challenges that Phyllis is likely to face as a formerly incarcerated woman re-entering society?

3. What concepts and techniques will guide your work with Phyllis?

4. How will you work to establish a supportive working relationship with Phyllis and to build trust?

5. How will you apply client-centered concepts and skills for working with Phyllis?

6. What might you do or say that would undermine your effectiveness in working with Phyllis?

7. Are there systemic barriers in Phyllis’s life that you think frontline health workers could play a role in challenging?
Activity 15.4

Re-entry Obstacle Course

This activity provides learners with an opportunity to understand some of the systemic barriers to re-entry, or returning to a community after a period of incarceration. It also invites learners to understand the importance of social safety nets for people seeking to rebuild their lives after having been incarcerated. In this activity, one learner plays the role of someone recently released from prison, while other learners take on various roles representing barriers to re-entry or sources of support.

Introduction

Distribute copies of the re-entry scenario for Michelle. Explain to the learners that they are going to participate in an activity called the Re-entry Obstacle Course.

OPTION We have included a shorter (6 characters) and a longer (10 characters) version of the Re-entry Role Play Cards. The longer version has a more complex path for Michelle to navigate and involves more back and forth between the characters. You can decide to use either version based on the time you have available and the willingness or enthusiasm of the learners.

Ask for a volunteer to read the scenario aloud. Explain that one learner will play Michelle, and five to nine other learners (depending on which version you choose) will play people and institutions in Michelle’s life after her incarceration—either barriers to re-entry, or sources of support. The learner playing Michelle will go to each other learner and interact with them based on the information in the role play scenarios they are given.

After this activity, learners will be able to:
- Explain systemic barriers facing people recently released from incarceration.
- Discuss the importance of a social safety net for people returning to the community after incarceration.
Re-entry Obstacle Course (continued)

other actors or stakeholders, noting key messages about the challenges of re-entry that they can share during the large group discussion.

Ask for a volunteer to play the role of Michelle. Once a volunteer is established, explain that you need five to nine other volunteers to help create this skit. As learners volunteer, hand each person the following:

- One Re-entry Role Play Card
- A nametag with the name of the role they are playing
- Tent card (only for those roles representing institutions)

2 Re-entry Obstacle Course Role Play

Ask learners to take a moment to read and understand their roles. Explain that the roles they are given are predetermined, but they can improvise their lines based on their own knowledge, experiences, and ideas about how people in these roles may behave or speak. Acknowledge that some learners may have direct experiences interacting with real people in these roles and that those people may have helped them or may have created obstacles for them. Encourage learners to draw upon these lived experiences as they wish as they prepare for their roles.

Depending on the layout of the room, you may want to ask learners to rearrange the desks or chairs into a kind of obstacle course so that Michelle has to weave her way through the room. Desks should be set up in the order of the numbers on the role play cards (if you have chosen the shorter version, the desks do not have to be set up in the order of the cards). Learners whose role is an institution should have a tent card to identify them as well.

Give learners 5 minutes to prepare their roles and choose a desk or chair for the role play. Start the role play by guiding the learner playing Michelle to the learner playing role play card #2, the Halfway House Manager. As the role play progresses, make sure each role has enough time but does not last longer than 3 minutes. If learners get stuck, you may wish to ask other learners to offer suggestions, or make your own.

3 Large Group Discussion

Engage learners in a discussion about the role play. Based on the discussion and what learners bring up, you may wish to ask some of the following questions:

- What was it like to put yourselves into these roles? How did it feel to play these roles?
- What kinds of barriers did Michelle encounter coming home? What is the effect of those barriers?
- What is the purpose of these various policies (“one-strike” housing, food stamp ban)? Do they make us safer as a community?
Re-entry Obstacle Course  (continued)

- What would it take to remove some of these barriers?
- Where did Michelle find support?
- What role can CHWs play in the life of someone like Michelle?

4 Reinforcement

Reinforce key messages related to challenges of re-entry, including those shared by learners during the activity as well as messages from Foundations and other sources. For example, you may wish to reinforce the following messages:

- The long-term impacts of incarceration do not end once a person is released from prison. In fact, the journey of re-entry is filled with challenges due to the fact that the person was incarcerated.

- Systemic barriers to successful re-entry (post-incarceration penalties) related to housing, employment, health care, family reunification, and so on negatively impact the lives of people recently released from prison and their families and communities in many ways.

- Systemic barriers to re-entry are designed to further punish and marginalize formerly incarcerated people with devastating consequences for communities of color.

- These are policies that have been created, and they can be changed.

- People in the world of public health have an obligation to challenge these policies in the interest of creating healthier, safer communities.
Learner Handout 15.4 A: Re-entry Scenario, Michelle

Michelle is coming out of Federal prison after serving a nine-year sentence for drug sales. She is given $200 “gate” money and a bus ticket to the halfway house where she has to serve the last six months of her sentence. Prior to incarceration, she had been living with her sister in public housing and would like to return. She is good with computers and wants to get an office job using those skills. Michelle also has asthma that has worsened during her time in prison and needs to see a doctor and get medication refills. We follow Michelle as she goes through the obstacle course of re-entry—from trying to get housing and public benefits to trying to acquire healthcare, a job, and more skills.
Activity 15.4

1. Michelle, just leaving jail or prison

Michelle is coming out of Federal prison after serving a nine-year sentence for drug sales. She is given $200 “gate” money and a bus ticket to the halfway house where she has to serve the last six months of her sentence. Prior to incarceration, she had been living with her sister in public housing and would like to return. She is good with computers and wants to get an office job using those skills. Michelle also has asthma that has worsened during her time in prison and needs to see a doctor and get medication refills.

2. Halfway house case manager

The case manager shows Michelle to her room and gives her the house rules. Among them are the following:

• She is required to be back in the house by 6:00 PM every night.
• She must get a job within the first two weeks.
• She must turn over 35% of her earnings to the halfway house.

3. Parole officer

The parole office meets Michelle at the halfway house to read her the terms of parole—among them are these:

• No use of alcohol or drugs.
• No association with anyone else who has been in prison.
• No leaving the county limits.

A violation means an immediate return to prison.

4. Manuel, the Community Health Worker

Manuel works at a clinic that serves formerly incarcerated people and is committed to helping people stabilize their health and get back on their feet.

Manuel and the clinic doctor meet with Michelle. She gets the right medication for her asthma and is given some resources by Manuel to help her get signed up for the benefits she’s eligible for.
5. Student loan officer
Michelle wants to go back to school to take accounting classes, and she applies to community college. She applies for a student loan but is told she's not eligible because of her drug conviction.

6. Manager of an office taking employment applications
The manager meets with Michelle and is impressed by her application. He sees that she checked the box that asks if you've ever been convicted of a crime. Following new regulations designed to avoid employment discrimination against former prisoners, he asks Michelle to tell him about her conviction, decides it isn't relevant to the job she's applying for, and tells her she'll have a second interview next week. He tells her he believes in second chances as she's leaving his office.
Activity 15.4

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Michelle is coming out of Federal prison after serving a nine-year sentence for drug sales. She is given $200 “gate” money and a bus ticket to the halfway house where she has to serve the last six months of her sentence. Prior to incarceration, she had been living with her sister in public housing and would like to return. She is good with computers and wants to get an office job using those skills. Michelle also has asthma that has worsened during her time in prison and needs to see a doctor and get medication refills.

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A violation means an immediate return to prison.

4. Food stamps/benefits office eligibility worker
Michelle comes to apply for food stamps, but the worker can't help her because she doesn't have an ID. They send her to the DMV.
5. DMV clerk
Michelle comes to the DMV to get her state ID, but she can't locate her birth certificate. The clerk can't help her without that. Michelle calls her sister to see if she can help her find her birth certificate.

6. Sonia, Michelle's sister
Her sister Sonia stayed in touch with Michelle during her imprisonment and is very welcoming, glad to have Michelle home. She helps her locate her birth certificate. Michelle gets her ID, goes back to the food stamp office and discovers that she isn't eligible for food stamps because of her drug conviction.

Sonia talks to her housing manager at her HUD apartment. She learns that her sister can't come back to live with her because of her drug conviction.

6. Sonia, Michelle's sister (continued)
The stress of learning that she can't go back to live with her sister and can't get food stamps makes Michelle's asthma worse. Sonia learns from a friend at church about a clinic that serves formerly incarcerated people and is committed to helping people stabilize their health and get back on their feet. She tells her sister about it and Michelle gets an appointment at the clinic.

7. HUD housing manager
The housing manager is a by-the-book guy. Although he has the authority to make an exception and allow Michelle to come back, he believes people who have any history of drug use should not be allowed public benefits, so he uses the one-strike housing policy to ban her from her former home.
8. Manuel, the Community Health Worker
Manuel works at a clinic that serves formerly incarcerated people and is committed to helping people stabilize their health and get back on their feet.
Manuel and the clinic doctor meet with Michelle. She gets the right medication for her asthma and is given some resources by Manuel to help her get signed up for the benefits she's eligible for.

9. Manager of an office taking employment applications
The manager meets with Michelle and is impressed by her application. He sees that she checked the box that asks if you've ever been convicted of a crime. Following new regulations designed to avoid employment discrimination against former prisoners, he asks Michelle to tell him about her conviction, decides it isn't relevant to the job she's applying for, and tells her she'll have a second interview next week. He tells her he believes in second chances as she's leaving his office.

10. Student loan officer
Michelle wants to go back to school to take accounting classes, and she applies to community college. She applies for a student loan but is told she's not eligible because of her drug conviction.
Training with Videos from Chapter 15 of Foundations

In addition to the videos that accompany the activities in this guide, there are videos in Chapter 15 of the textbook. We encourage you to use these videos as training resources. The videos highlight key concepts and skills CHWs need to conduct initial interviews or assessments with new clients and you may use them to facilitate discussion about these concepts among learners.

At CCSF, we show the videos in our CHW certificate courses. The students feel more free to critique and discuss the video role plays because they are not the actors. As they discuss the role plays, they enhance their ability to analyze and explain key concepts for client-centered practice. We often show these videos right before we ask students to participate in their own role play scenarios in which they are asked to demonstrate the same client-centered skills.

All of these videos can be found on the Foundations YouTube channel (www.youtube.com/channel/UCKSB1-LQsSfsRp24Q9W2Jlw) and are described in the Video Directory included in the appendix of the textbook.

One video for Chapter 15 shows a CHW working with a client who recently came home from prison:

⦁ Listening to a client’s priorities, a counter role play

When we show video demonstrations of CHWs working with clients, we tend to use the plus/delta (+/∆) framework to guide discussions. Very briefly, the +/-Δ framework (described in greater detail in “Training Techniques”) asks learners to identify and discuss positive examples of CHW practice in role plays or videos as well as suggest areas for improvement. The delta symbol (Δ) represents change. For example, you may pose the following types of questions to generate discussion:

⦁ What happened in this role play?
⦁ What did the CHW do well in terms of supporting this client (+)?
⦁ What could the CHW have done differently to better support the client (Δ)?

Three videos are interviews with CCSF faculty related to the topic of incarceration and health:

⦁ Incarceration as a public health issue
⦁ First meeting between a patient and a CHW
⦁ A CHW with a history of incarceration
You can use the video interviews to facilitate discussion, as well, by posing questions such as these:

- What were the central messages conveyed in this interview?
- How might these concepts be helpful to your work as a CHW?
- What additional information do you want to highlight about this topic?

Finally, we have included seven digital stories created by patients and CHWs from the Transitions Clinic Network (TCN). The TCN is dedicated to providing comprehensive primary health care to patients coming home from prison. These videos tell the stories of formerly incarcerated people and their journey to becoming CHWs.

- Ron’s Story: A Grandma’s Love
- Jermila’s Story: A Step Forward
- Tracy’s Story: From Deliverance to Recovery
- Emory’s Story: Hope and Transformation
- Juanita’s Story: Everyone Has Purpose in Life
- Ernest’s Story
- Lee’s Story: Change

You can use these digital stories to facilitate discussion as well by posing questions such as these:

- What do you think of this story?
- What does this story tell you about the topic of incarceration in our society?
- What did you learn that may inform your work as a CHW?
We have included a selection of assessments that cover important skills for this chapter. There is not an assessment for every activity or for every learning outcome in this chapter. We encourage you to adapt these or add any other assessments from your own resources.

**ASSESSMENT 15.1: Letter to a Decision Maker**

- This three-part assignment is designed to develop and assess learners' understanding of proposed legislation to address employment discrimination facing formerly incarcerated people (known as Ban the Box). It also assesses learners' communication and professional writing skills. Learners will research Ban the Box efforts across the country and in their region, and then they will write a letter to a policy or decision maker encouraging that person to adopt Ban the Box policies.

**ASSESSMENT 15.2: Jail and Prison Jeopardy**

- This interactive group assessment provides an opportunity to review material covered in *Foundations* and assess learners' knowledge about issues related to incarceration and health. We include the slides for the Jeopardy game with answers and questions for three of the five categories filled in.
Assessment 15.1  Letter to a Decision Maker

This assessment is typically done over the course of several weeks and after learners have been trained on writing a professional document.

PART 1: INTRODUCE THE ASSIGNMENT

Carefully explain and review the assignment. Provide learners with copies of the assignment and the template for their letters (included at the end of this assessment).

Explain that this assignment will be focused on a national campaign called Ban the Box. The Ban the Box campaign, started by an organization of formerly incarcerated people called All of Us or None, calls for the removal of the checkbox on employment applications that asks about criminal convictions. Ban the Box attempts to challenge employment discrimination and stigma about incarceration by asking that employers evaluate eligible candidates based on their skills and qualifications, rather than on past convictions. Ban the Box policies have been implemented in over 40 states and by some multinational corporations, including Target stores. You can learn more about the campaign at bantheboxcampaign.org.

Start by asking learners what they know about Ban the Box efforts and by taking some time to make sure learners understand the campaign. You may want to ask the group questions such as these:

⦁ What is Ban the Box?
⦁ Who is leading these efforts?
⦁ Where have they been successful?
⦁ Is Ban the Box already occurring in your region or area? Why or why not?

Address the following topics as you introduce the assignment:

⦁ Employment discrimination (along with the stigma of having been incarcerated and the fear of discrimination) is a major barrier facing formerly incarcerated people as they attempt to reintegrate into society.

⦁ Joblessness is directly connected to health, mental health, housing, and family reunification.

Distribute the learner handouts and explain that the first step will be learning about Ban the Box in a general way, so learners can understand more about the issue and the strategy. Emphasize the importance of the Ban the Box campaign as an effort led by formerly incarcerated people.

Explain that for the second step, learners will conduct their own research to identify key decision makers at the local or state level who can make a difference on this issue.
**Letter to a Decision Maker (continued)**

Explain that the third step will require answering a set of questions in preparation for writing the letter to a decision maker.

Explain that the fourth and final step will be writing a letter to a decision maker to encourage them to Ban the Box.

Explain the basis for assessing or grading this assignment, such as by reviewing the assessment with learners. Share the deadlines for each part of the assignment and expectations for how the assignment will be received (hard copy, e-mail, etc.).

**PART 2: PROGRESS REPORT AND PREPARING TO WRITE THE LETTER**

In between the introduction of the assignment and the final due date of the letter, collect the first page of the learner handout (Ban the Box Research Summary) and review/grade learners’ work. Use this guide to assess learners’ understanding of the issues related to Ban the Box and to ensure they have completed the research necessary to write the letter to their policy or decision maker. Make time to answer questions or address issues that may arise.

Review the instructions for writing the letter and remind learners of the final deadlines. You may want to ask learners to meet in small groups to discuss their target decision makers and their ideas for writing their letters. Learners can support one another to think through their arguments and the points they want to make.

**PART 3: SUBMISSION OF THE LETTER**

Learners will submit their letters for evaluation. We recommend that you don’t set the due date as the last day of class, as learners may want to refine their letters based on your feedback and send them to the decision makers they chose.

Facilitate a large group discussion, asking questions such as these:

- What did you learn from doing this assignment?
- What was most challenging about this assignment?
- What is your next step, now that you have written this letter?
Letter to a Decision Maker  (continued)

RUBRIC FOR ASSESSING OR GRADING LETTERS

This assessment is graded based on three different performance categories and possible scores ranging from 0 to 30 points each.

Acceptable performance may vary from trainer to trainer. We are including our version of a grading rubric, but feel free to adjust this to fit your unique situation.

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<tr>
<th>CATEGORY</th>
<th>CRITERIA</th>
<th>POINTS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Responsiveness to assignment</td>
<td>EMERGING: 20 points or less</td>
<td>SATISFACTORY: 21–26 points</td>
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<td></td>
<td>The letter does not respond to the assignment, it does not include all of the information requested, or it presents different or incomplete information.</td>
<td>The letter is responsive to the assignment and meets minimum requirements.</td>
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<td>2. Organization of the letter and the quality of writing</td>
<td>The letter is poorly organized, difficult to follow, and information is not clearly written or presented or is difficult to understand.</td>
<td>Greater clarity of organization or writing would strengthen the letter to the level of proficiency.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Thoroughness, and the quality of information provided</td>
<td>The letter is incomplete.</td>
<td>The letter meets minimum standards, but does not go beyond.</td>
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Total points | | | |

Assessment guidelines are as follows: Passing = 63 points or above.
Letter grades are as follows: A = 81–90 points; B = 72–80 points; C = 63–71 points; F = below 54 points.
LEARNER HANDOUT: BAN THE BOX RESEARCH SUMMARY AND SAMPLE LETTER

Your name: ________________________________

Date: ________________________________

This assignment is worth _________ points.

Submit your research summary by ________________________________.

Submit the final letter to a decision maker by ________________________________.

For this assignment, the first step will be to learn about the Ban the Box efforts generally. Follow these steps:

1. Visit the website www.prisonerswithchildren.org/our-projects/allofus-or-none/ and read about the organization, All of Us or None.


Next, you will need to do your own research to answer questions about employment discrimination in your area. Some suggestions for doing research include these:

- Use Google or other search engines on the Internet.
- Look for a prisoner’s rights organization in your area that you can contact.
- Determine if you know of a politician who has expressed an interest in the rights of incarcerated or formerly incarcerated people. You could reach out to this politician in order to learn more.
- Search on the Internet for your local city or county government website, and look for the list of city council members, aldermen, or supervisors (or other local elected officials). You can identify your national policy makers by going to the Library of Congress website, http://thomas.loc.gov/home/thomas.php. You can find out who represents you in the House of Representative and in the Senate, as well as search information on the progress of any national bill that could be of interest to you.
- Use this website for California policy makers: www.leginfo.ca.gov/. Similar sites exist for each state.

Based on the research you conducted, answer the questions on the following page.
Letter to a Decision Maker  (continued)

Ban the Box Research Summary
Your name: ____________________________

Date: ____________________________

1. Briefly define what Ban the Box means.

2. List some examples of places or services that use questions such as “Have you ever been convicted by a court?” as part of their screening or application process in your city and state. Does your own employer still have the box listed on their applications?

3. Is there a campaign in your city or state to eliminate (Ban) the Box? If so, who is involved? (What groups and types of individuals? You do not need to list specific people’s names). What is the role of formerly incarcerated people in the effort to Ban the Box in your area? Has legislation been introduced to Ban the Box?

4. Identify a key person or decision maker, whether at the local or state level, who could help Ban the Box for your area. Provide the name of this person, the position or role the person plays, and their contact information (mailing address).

Sample Letter to a Decision Maker

Instructions: For this portion of the assignment, you will use what you learned from conducting your research to write a letter to the decision maker you identified in Step 4 of the research summary. In this letter you will attempt to persuade your decision maker to help Ban the Box. Please note that letters received by policy makers via traditional mail are taken more seriously than e-mails. Your letter will use the following format.

Name of Decision Maker
Address
Dear ..., 

Introduction: Introduce yourself and where you are from (you can mention your CHW training). State your action/request regarding what you want your decision maker to do.

Example of an introduction paragraph (Note: This sample letter is about lighting on campus. Your letter will be on the topic of Ban the Box): As one of many night students here at City College, I am concerned with our safety. The lighting on campus is inadequate, with only 60 percent of all lights in working order. Recently there have been three incidents of assault in dark stairwells. Therefore, I urge you to consider adding to and fixing the lights around the stairwells.
Letter to a Decision Maker (continued)

**Paragraph with supporting facts:** Facts should start with general information and then focus more locally. For your letter, you will include facts about how the Box affects formerly incarcerated people who are trying to rebuild their lives. Explain how the community you are advocating for is affected and any other facts that show there is a need to Ban the Box. This is where data matters more than opinions.

**Paragraph on benefits:** This paragraph should state how your suggested action would help your defined community. Share how everyone will benefit and how it will make your city or state a model for others. Some praising of your decision maker is useful here. For example, you might mention other efforts this decision maker has made that show they care about this same community.

**Closing:** Thank your decision maker for their consideration.

**Example:** Thank you for your consideration of our proposal, and I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

Your name and contact info
Assessment 15.2 Jail and Prison Jeopardy

This interactive group assessment provides you with an opportunity to review material covered in Chapter 15 and to assess learners' knowledge about issues related to incarceration and health. The Jeopardy PowerPoint can be easily customized and updated to reference material in the textbook or from other sources or activities.

This assessment can also be used as an activity.

MATERIALS NEEDED

- Computer and projector
- Jeopardy PowerPoint (www.wiley.com/go/berthold2etg)
- Clock or watch for timekeeping
- Paper and pens to write answers
- Flip-chart paper and markers or chalkboard
- Optional: Four bells, buzzers, or other noisemakers

Before beginning this activity, review the Jeopardy PowerPoint, changing slides as desired and creating slides for the fourth and fifth categories. If you want to use the Final Jeopardy category, add an answer and question for that slide.

Practice running the slideshow and using the hyperlinks on the game board to go to each desired slide. Use the home symbol ( ) on the lower right-hand corner of each slide to return to the game board.

You may wish to print out the slides directly or as handouts so that you can have the questions and answers written in front of you.

1: INTRODUCTION

Explain that learners will be playing the game, Jeopardy. Ask who in the group has ever watched Jeopardy, and have one or two learners explain how it is played. Make sure these key aspects of the game are communicated:

- Each category has a series of statements or answers with five different point values.
- Each team can chose which category and point value they wish to answer.
- The answers must be given in the form of a question.
Jail and Prison Jeopardy  (continued)

Example:

Answer:  This civil rights activist was best known for refusing to give up her bus seat in 1955, an action that helped launch the Montgomery bus boycotts.

Question:  Who was Rosa Parks?

Break learners into four teams and pass out pens and paper. Give the teams about 2 minutes to come up with team names. Ask learners to share their team names with the group, and write the name of each team on the board or on flip-chart paper, making a score card with four columns, like this.

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2: PLAY JEOPARDY

Launch the Jeopardy presentation by opening the PowerPoint document and selecting Run Slideshow from the options presented. The first slide is the game board and each of the point value slides within the categories are linked through the game board. Whenever you want to return to the game board, click on the home symbol on the lower right corner of each of the slides.

Start with Team 1, and ask them to choose a category and a point value ($100, $300, etc.). Once they have chosen a category and point value from the game board, click on the chosen category and point value and read the answer out loud. Every team has 30 seconds to come up with the correct question and write it down on a piece of paper.

When time is called, Team 1 holds up their answer sheet. If they provide the correct question, they are awarded the appropriate number of points. Write the number in the column beneath their team name on the flip-chart paper or the board.

Next, have each of the other three teams holds up their questions. Any and all teams that provide the correct question are awarded the points for that slide. Record all points on the score card.
Jail and Prison Jeopardy (continued)

Click on the slide for the answer to appear on the slide.

Return to the game board by clicking the home icon at the bottom right-hand corner of the slide.

Continue with the next team by having them pick a category and amount, giving everyone 30 seconds in their teams to write the question, and repeating the previous steps.

OPTION You can also play this game using noisemakers for teams to “buzz” when they know the answer. If you wish to play this way, follow the preceding instructions, but instead of asking the team that chose the category and point value to respond first, allow the teams to compete to see which team responds correctly first. Read the answer to the group, and the first team to hit their buzzer, blow their whistle, or otherwise make a noise is allowed to answer first. If they provide the correct question, they are awarded their points and the next team chooses a category and point value. If they choose incorrectly, the other three teams have the opportunity to “buzz” again, and the first team to answer correctly is awarded the points. Note: this method is not recommended if you wish to assess the activity by providing letter grades for learners.

Continue for as long as you wish or until all the slides have been reviewed. Once you are done playing, tally up all the points for each team.

You may want to make note of those statements learners are having the most difficulty with and either discuss them as a large group throughout the game, or spend some time at the end of the game discussing the statements as a group.

OPTION If you are using the Final Jeopardy slide, ask each team to decide how many points they are going to bet and write that down on their piece of paper. Once each team has written down their bet, click the Final Jeopardy link at the bottom of the game board to reveal the final statement. Give learners 2 minutes to discuss the statement and write their question on the paper. Have each team share with the group their question. If the team has answered correctly, the amount they wagered is added to their total. If they have answered incorrectly, the amount is subtracted from their total.

Tally up the final points for each team and reveal the winning team or teams. Give everyone a round of applause.
Jail and Prison Jeopardy (continued)

TIPS FOR GRADING AND SCORING

Because this is a team activity assessment, you may not wish to assign letter grades, preferring instead to use the assessment as a way to understand the shared knowledge of the group and identify places where more discussion is needed.

If you do wish to grade the assessment, we recommend that you allow each team to provide their question for each turn.

Track and tally up the total amount of possible points based on the slides played and the point values associated with each of them. For example, if you played all of the first three columns, the number of possible points would be 4500 points (each column has a total point value of 1500).

Divide the number of points awarded to each team by the total number of points possible to calculate the grade as a percentage. Passing = 70% or above. Letter grades as follows A = 90–100%; B = 80–89%; C = 70–79%; F = below 70%.

For example, if Team 1 received 3800 out of a possible 4500 points, their score would be 88 percent, or a B.

Depending on the difficulty of the game and how well learners did, you may opt to grade on a curve. This can be done by awarding the team with the highest score an A and then adjusting the other teams' scores accordingly. For example, if the winning team got 75 percent of the questions correct, you would add 20 percentage points to their score to make their score an A. Then each subsequent team would also have 20 percentage points added to their scores.