

COMING HOME: GETTING OUT, COMING HOME, SHOW # 1812

STEVE ADUBATO, host:

Out of prison and going home, next on CAUCUS: NEW JERSEY.

Unidentified Announcer: Major funding for this edition of CAUCUS: NEW JERSEY has been provided by The Fund for New Jersey, a private foundation focusing on New Jersey public policy issues, and by the New Jersey Institute for Social Justice.

Unidentified Man #1: Let's give it up to my God and yours...

Group of People: Thank you!

Unidentified Man #1: ...my mother and yours...

Group of People: Thank you!

PAULA M. LEVINE reporting:

This is the morning meeting at Integrity House, a halfway house and drug rehab facility for ex-offenders. It's also where Joey Pinto now lives after having spent half of his life in prison.

Mr. JOEY PINTO (Former Prisoner): Between 18 and 36, I've been in prison six times, due to the fact of drug-related--on everything, heroine, cocaine, PCP. And due to the length of my drug history and--it cost me incarceration for a period of--in and out for the last 18 years of my life.

LEVINE: It's a trend Joey is now trying to turn around, but how do you go from 18 years of prison life to making it in the real world? Dave Kerr has come up with an approach that seems to work.

Mr. DAVE KERR (President & Founder, Integrity House): Our whole model is called therapeutic community. In the therapeutic community, the community itself, the house, the people, the food, the rooms, the furniture, the residents, the staff, everyone--the community itself is the healing agent.

LEVINE: But it's not quite as warm and fuzzy as that sounds.

Mr. KERR: The first six to 12 months is very structured. It has--wake up sometimes 5 or 5:30. They begin their kitchen functions, clean their room. Then they have breakfast, then they have a--a morning meeting.

Mr. PINTO: Here you go.

LEVINE: Then they have work duty and lunch and school and lots of counseling sessions.

Mr. PINTO: My conflict today was a--was Iselena here.

LEVINE: At first, it was a tough adjustment for Joey.

Mr. PINTO: I was, like, 'Oh, my--what'd I just put myself through?' You know, in dealing with a situation like, 'You telling me what to do, Joey Pinto? Nobody tells Joey Pinto what to do. Joey Pinto runs his own life.'

And I just, like, put a wall up and blocked them, and I used to fight with them.

LEVINE: But two weeks back in lockup convinced him to try again.

Mr. PINTO: And I said to myself, 'What did I just do? I'm letting myself down, letting my family down once again. What am I going to do with myself?' Tools that they gave us in the program to deal with life on life's terms--it finally sunk in.

LEVINE: The second time around, he was more successful, and part of that was due to his family's support.

Mr. PINTO: Hey, Ma. How you doin'?

I got to say, I've got a loving family. I'm very blessed, 'cause they never gave up hope on me. They've been with me every step of the way. I mean, I talk to them every day. They come visit me. Their door's always open for when I go home on passes. You know, I'm trusted today.

LEVINE: Joey's now in the second phase of treatment, called re-entry. He lives in transitional housing, and he can come and go with a little more freedom.

Ms. MARY TAYLOR (Director of Transitional Housing, Integrity House): When they come to my facility, we reintegrate them into the mainstream of society. So we begin to develop their social skills without the use of drugs or alcohol. We provide or try to get--encourage them into vocational training, jobs.

LEVINE: Joey works at intake, helping new residents adjust.

Mr. PINTO: When you first come into Integrity, you're lost, you're confused, and by me speaking about it to the new residents that's coming in, I'm really helping somebody, but most of all, I help myself seven days a week.

Unidentified Teacher: Experiment...

LEVINE: He also attends GED classes five days a week from 12:30 till 3, and he spends time with his mentor just about every day.

Unidentified Man #2: Basically we give you the tools, and it's up to you to make the decisions.

Mr. PINTO: He gives me extra counseling, and he inspired me because he's been through almost the same pain and suffering I've been through, and we can relate on a day-to-day basis. And he inspired me to do the things he's doing, and I just follow his footsteps.

LEVINE: Joey's been clean now for 22 months, but every day is still difficult.

Mr. PINTO: She made me feel kind of disappointed.

I attend meetings a lot. I got group therapy, speak to a counselor seven days a week and as much as I need him. The door's always open for me. My frustration--I run to the gym immediately. By working out, it relieves a lot

of pressure on yourself. But the main thing is, as soon as you go into a problem, share with somebody.

Mr. KERR: I think the key is that you have to come to grip with your fears and with yourself: 'Who am I really? I've said who I am for yea--for--for nine months in a safe, structured environment. Now I've got to really--can I actually live up to what--to who I said I was? Can I live up to a different lifestyle?'

Mr. PINTO: Good morning, Robert.

ROBERT: Good morning, Joey. How you doin'?

LEVINE: Well, Joey is certainly going to try.

Mr. PINTO: It's a challenge at times, but I'm hoping to get my GED in March, and I'm going for a certification to be a certified counselor, and hopefully within a--under five years, I can be working for Integrity.

Clap for your recovery! I'll clap for mine!

Unidentified Residents: Yeah!

Mr. PINTO: Give it up to Integrity House!

Unidentified Residents: Yeah!

ADUBATO: Welcome to Coming Home: The Challenge of Prisoner Reentry, a special CAUCUS series looking at what's being done to transition prisoners successfully back into society. I'm Steve Adubato. Joining us to discuss the personal obstacles and the legal barriers faced by ex-prisoners as they work to return to life on the outside are: Judge John D'Amico, chairman of the New Jersey State Parole Board and a retired Superior Court judge; Nancy Fishman, a senior law and policy analyst with our partners at the New Jersey Institute for Social Justice; Charley Flint, a professor of sociology at William Patterson University and an expert on women's prisoners' issues; and finally, David Kerr, who you just saw in the taped piece, the founder and president of Integrity House, which is a drug treatment facility located in Newark, New Jersey.

I want to thank you all for joining us.

By the way, how is Joey doing?

Mr. KERR: Joey's doing great. He's got a...

ADUBATO: You know, I look at him wi--is the Joey you recognize on the taped piece the Joey in real life?

Mr. KERR: Yeah, he--oh, yeah. Definitely. He's the same. He's one of the very hard-core--because he had many trials, and the only reason he came in the first time was to get out of, you know, court pressure, and he left and then he came back. And he's a good example of--our philosophy now is you have to stick with people; you have to keep them close and give them the help they need. When they relapse, if they relapse, bring them back in, give them the kind of concern and--that they need. And that's what Joey got, and he's still doing it.

ADUBATO: Twenty-two months clean as we do the program. Professor, let me ask you this--Charley, excuse me. Joey faces certain issues. What would a woman in a--I'm not going to say a comparable situation--but a woman who is about to be released--excuse me, released into a halfway house like this--what would she face that Joey doesn't?

Dr. CHARLEY FLINT (PhD, Sociology, William Patterson University): Well, I don't know if Joey has children, but that's one of the major problems for women. We know transitional housing is the thing for that, but definitely any program that's going to successfully get women back into society will have to deal with the issue of parenting and reuniting the children with their mothers. That would be one. Another one is the trauma that a lot of women tend to suffer during, before and even after. They have to deal with that trauma that they have done. A large number of women who are incarcerated have histories of abuse. So that's another thing.

ADUBATO: Nancy, what happens to these families?

Ms. NANCY FISHMAN (Analyst, New Jersey Institute for Social Justice): The families?

ADUBATO: Yeah.

Ms. FISHMAN: Well, I mean, the families, while someone is away, lose--lose potentially a bread winner, a source of support, a role model for their kids, part of their network. Their extended families lose someone. They gain a different kind of role model, a source of stress and anxiety, both while they're away and--and when they come back, both in the sense that they--they may love this person, they may have had it up to here with this person, and they may be--most likely are of strained financial conditions themselves in neighborhoods or areas without a lot of economic resources. And so having them back in the family may also be a source of strain.

ADUBATO: Let's do this. Judge, before I come to you, I'm going to ask folks watching to--to respond to what we're doing right now, to reach out. This is the second of a three-part series we are doing, in fact, called Coming Home: The Challenge of Prisoner Reentry. We're doing it, as I said, in cooperation with our partners at the New Jersey Institute for Social Justice. Reach out for the telephone number you see on your screen. I promise you, what we will do is send you a series of reports that were done by the re-entry roundtable. A group of experts got together from across the state and the nation--Right?--to talk about re-entry issues successfully--prisoners successfully re-entering society; first of all, what the problem is, how to deal with it. And we promise you, we'll send you these reports, other valuable information. All you have to do is reach out. If--also, if you log on to our Web site, I promise you, we will link to the Institutes, where there will be direct information.

Judge, let me ask you this: We're talking about successful transition, getting out, coming back. Joey's working hard over at Integrity House. Are we doing nearly enough to help former-prisoners in that transition from the inside to getting out?

Judge JOHN D'AMICO (Chairman, New Jersey State Parole Board): The short answer is no, of course. Parole is responsible for about 13,000 ex-offenders throughout the state, and we are just now coming around to the realization as

a society, both nationwide and in New Jersey, that we need to focus on the real problems that cause the average parolee, frankly, to return to jail.

ADUBATO: Which are?

Judge D'AMICO: Substance abuse, we need treatment; lack of education and work skills, we need training, vocational training, GED programs; housing, family support, all of the...

ADUBATO: Time out. Aren't they supposed to get that in prison?

Judge D'AMICO: Well, they have housing in prison, of course.

ADUBATO: Well, they have housing. Let's talk about the other things, the support.

Judge D'AMICO: Well, the--unfortunately, not enough prisoners have access to these services, and so we find that--when they come into the ambit of the Parole Board, that we must look for placement, such as...

ADUBATO: Integrity House.

Judge D'AMICO: ...Dave Kerr's Integrity House, with whom we have a contract.

ADUBATO: But Dave Kerr--but Dave Kerr's program is a wonderful program, has been around for two decades. Everyone says you guys are great. But as--how much of the problem can they deal with?

Ms. FISHMAN: Well, I think one of the things I was thinking about and--and how fortunate in a certain way Joey is, getting to go through Dave's program, which is one of the--the--the great programs in the state, but only 15 percent to 20 percent of people leaving prison actually come through any halfway house. The others will go straight to--will go straight from--from prison to the street, and an increasing number of them come out at this point without parole supervision. One-third of the people who were released last year maxed out, which means that they reached the end of their sentences inside, and when they came out, they had no parole supervision and no help at all.

ADUBATO: So what does that mean?

Ms. FISHMAN: It means basically that they come out to the street with whatever they're--whatever they've got in a--in a bag, whatever possessions they have, maybe a little bit of money if they've s--kept some in an account, the clothes on their back...

ADUBATO: Right.

Ms. FISHMAN: ...and they're on their own.

ADUBATO: And so, David Kerr, let me ask you this. You see this on a very personal level. How frustrated are you?

Mr. KERR: Well, a good example of--is Wayne. When you look at Wayne, he's got two teeth in his mouth.

ADUBATO: Wayne is?

Mr. KERR: Wayne is a--a--what we call a student member of Integrity House's family. And you know, he came out of prison and the whole thing. And the problem is, people like him, if they want their teeth fixed, they get a--one appointment with a dentist per month, maybe, for four to six weeks. This a little thing, but self-esteem is a very important part of recovery.

ADUBATO: But--but translate that to successfully re-entering into society.

Mr. KERR: Because if--if Wayne needs to have a self--self-esteem, he needs to feel that he is somebody, and this is even double for the women, and when they come out with half their teeth missing, health problems, and then we come to find out we ca--we can't get the kind of medication they need, there's these problems, and then h--he can't get his teeth fixed but once every three, four weeks or five weeks, and meanwhile, the--the--the appointment should be every other--every other day with his health appointments, and so there's a lot of--a my--myriad of issues that we are working on now to get done in the prison before they come out.

ADUBATO: OK. Now let me--I want to understand. So this is a health issue that needs to be dealt with. And, Judge, I know you want to jump back in. Professor, I want to get you back in, but there are a range of legal obstacles as well. You come out of prison, you can't vote.

Dr. FLINT: Right.

ADUBATO: Right?

Judge D'AMICO: Or get a job in any profession.

ADUBATO: Or.

Dr. FLINT: Right. ...(Unintelligible).

Mr. KERR: Or drive.

ADUBATO: OK. So--so why don't we put it on the table. We're talking some huge barriers here, correct, Professor?

Dr. FLINT: Correct. Well, see, that's what I'm--I'm--as David was beginning to talk about, there are a lot of problems that are inter--interconnected that we don't necessarily as a society see as part of a crime problem, but they are. I mean, just the thing of getting a particular license to get a job--let's say barber shopping...

ADUBATO: Right.

Dr. FLINT: ...I don't know whether that's still--say in New Jersey, but most inmates can learn how to cut hair inside, but if you're going to set up a shop outside, you're going to need to be licensed. If you're a convicted felon, you may not be able to do that. It's the...

ADUBATO: To get a barber's license without a driver's license.

Dr. FLINT: Barber license, driver's license. That's the other thing Dave was saying. If you're in a place you don't have public transportation, you can't get a driver's license to get a car, you can't get to work. So it's a myriad of things, and this is even double for women, when he was talking about

self-esteem. Women come in with problems, we don't have enough of the social resources, that is money and everything else, to give them programs inside, 'cause for me, re-entry starts once they enter. I mean, I know Clinton tried to do--I mean, Edna Mahan tried to do this for the women, but they just don't have enough in the budget for that for when they come out.

ADUBATO: It sounds like a huge obstacle course--Excuse me--Nancy, right?

Ms. FISHMAN: Yeah. I mean, I think one of the--the points that--that Professor Flint has hit very well is that this is not just one barrier. I mean, this is not just, 'Well, they're having some trouble getting a job because they don't'--it's--it's basically everyone...

ADUBATO: Because they don't have all their teeth.

Ms. FISHMAN: It's--or it's--it's...

ADUBATO: That's the beginning of it.

Ms. FISHMAN: It's everywhere they turn, and from a legal perspective, there are lots of different barriers and restrictions, and they may have all on their own had a particular justification. But you put them together, and what you have is basically every exit blocked for people if you have trouble getting a job, because certain jobs are limited to you, or because you can't get a driver's license back. Well, maybe you also can't get public benefits because--just to get yourself stabilized because you have a drug conviction.

Dr. FLINT: Right. Right.

Ms. FISHMAN: You can't go live with your mom because your mom lives in public housing, and you can't go into public housing because you've got a drug conviction. You're...

ADUBATO: Oh, excuse me. But we did all these things, legislators, policy makers, Judge...

Judge D'AMICO: Right.

ADUBATO: ...did all these things to prot--quote, unquote, "protect society" against certain people who had done certain things. That makes sense on the surface, right?

Judge D'AMICO: The--time to take another look, though, and I credit Governor McGreevey for signing the bill creating the Sentencing Study Commission.

Ms. FISHMAN: Yeah.

Judge D'AMICO: I'm hoping not only that that commission...

ADUBATO: Charged to do what?

Judge D'AMICO: To look at all of the sentencing laws in the state. But I'm hoping that they will look also at the collateral sentencing consequences that we've been discussing.

ADUBATO: That--that--that Nancy is talking about.

Judge D'AMICO: Exactly.

Ms. FISHMAN: Yeah.

ADUBATO: Because it's one thing to say, 'Let's look at these mandatory minimums that--that the judge would have no discretion in a certain case; if you've done certain things, you're going away for this much time,' which has quadrupled the prison population in the last several decades.

Ms. FISHMAN: Right.

ADUBATO: But I want to make sure that we put this on the table. To what degree is society prepared to deal with the kinds of recommendations--folks, I want to remind you, if you are watching and you want to get more information, our job here at public television is to be a conduit, if you will, to the institute and the work you're doing and your colleagues in the re-entry roundtable. I promise you, if you reach out for our resource guide, we will send you within six weeks--You see the number on your screen, (973) 233-9886. Write that down. Call us and I promise you, within six weeks, we'll send you a free-of-charge resource guide with this valuable information.

But here's the thing: What do most people say they want. What do most folks out in the public say they want with respect to these--do they want these barriers done away with?

Ms. FISHMAN: Well...

Mr. KERR: Well, here--here's the problem, and--and the way I see it, and it--it--you know, people don't understand the real problem. For example, they don't understand that a woman must have self-esteem in order to get recovery. They just think, 'I did it. She can do it.' 'Well, she did something bad, so she should do the time, and why should we give her teeth--any kind of--or health? Let them'...

ADUBATO: Right. And why is that my problem when I'm having trouble getting health care for my kids?

Mr. KERR: Exactly--when I could--and so what we have to do is look at the whole picture. That's what Nancy was saying. Let's look at this whole picture. We're all involved in it. Not a quick fix. We can't take so--one little piece of it out and say, 'Let's fix this.' We've got to look at the sentencing laws, we've got to look for the follow-up in the community, we've got to look at mentoring problems for Joey, people like them, health...

ADUBATO: Are we doing it? Because it--the reports that we're going to put out there for folks to get--All right?--they make very specific recommendations. To what degree are the policy makers and we in society prepared to put those possible solutions, if you will--not any one of them...

Judge D'AMICO: Well, I can tell you...

ADUBATO: ...on the table and to have a real dialogue?

Judge D'AMICO: I can tell you what the Parole Board is planning, and that is a series of regional community conferences where we present the issues. You know, parolees live in every community in this state, so everyone has a stake in solving these problems. So we will be reaching out to the community, the

faith-based community, the educational community, the employment sector, the chambers of commerce at various places in New Jersey, telling our story, describing the problem and--and asking for public support for some of the reforms that we need.

ADUBATO: Which could mean more money, which will mean more money...

Dr. FLINT: But...

ADUBATO: ...at a time where government is facing huge deficits, that taxpayers are allegedly saying, 'You'd better not be raising my taxes.' What is the sell here, Professor?

Judge D'AMICO: My...

Dr. FLINT: Well--but--well, you can sell it by maybe redistributing the money that we already being--that are using. I think that's what the judge here is saying.

Mr. KERR: It costs more for prison than treatment.

Ms. FISHMAN: Yeah.

Dr. FLINT: Right. Rather than building--we know to have someone under guard, under control for s--24/7 is going to cost more money. And we...

ADUBATO: And to that--excuse me, Professor be--for interrupting you. The correction--the Department of Corrections--we had Commissioner Devon Brown here, first part of the program...

Ms. FISHMAN: Yeah.

ADUBATO: ...in the series, and he said, 'We are the second largest department in state government,' and I'm thinking...

Ms. FISHMAN: Over \$1.1 billion.

Dr. FLINT: Right.

ADUBATO: Say that again.

Ms. FISHMAN: It's over \$1 billion if you take into account Corrections and some of the other criminal justice spending. It's a hu...

ADUBATO: That being an indictment of whom and what?

Ms. FISHMAN: It's a huge, huge amount of money. It--it basically says that we need to re-envision what we're doing. It's not smart policy, and the...

ADUBATO: It's not working.

Ms. FISHMAN: Well, it's not working if two-thirds of the people who...

Dr. FLINT: Keep coming back.

Ms. FISHMAN: ...who come out are coming back.

Judge D'AMICO: Go back.

Dr. FLINT: Yeah.

Ms. FISHMAN: And frankly, one-third of the people who wi--who eventually get re-arrested, it happens in the first six months. We know--we know a whole lot about what people need. We know a whole lot about when they need it.

ADUBATO: Both in prison and in the transition.

Dr. FLINT: And--right.

Ms. FISHMAN: Right.

ADUBATO: Now, Professor, I'll let you...

Ms. FISHMAN: I'm sorry.

ADUBATO: ...finish your point, because I interrupted you before. Go ahead.

Ms. FISHMAN: Right.

Dr. FLINT: And I--I think that's what we have to do. We have to get the public to see that. You're going to pay one way or the other. Let's make our money work more effectively for us. We--research after research, people after people--everybody says that the large, custodial institution's just not getting the problem solved, so what we need to do, as I said, is reallocate that. We can--we can bring in...

ADUBATO: To what? Be specific.

Ms. FISHMAN: Right.

ADUBATO: What do ...(unintelligible).

Dr. FLINT: To community corrections. Dave talked about Integrity House. There's another organization, New Jersey Association on Correction, which also have some community-based kinds of things. There are other ones, KENTA. There are a few in New Jersey.

ADUBATO: Well, forget about the names of the programs. What should we spend our money on?

Dr. FLINT: We should spend our money on finding alternatives for women who were convicted of drug offenses with children. We can build facilities that can keep that family together, give the women the skills they need. I mean, there are some societal things that we need to change. And I think that's what we're all saying. These things are systemic. What we've done in Corrections basically is respond to a crisis, whether the crisis is overcrowding, whether the crises are perceived or real, that kind of thing.

ADUBATO: Fine.

Dr. FLINT: So that's a specific thing that we can do.

ADUBATO: In--in the time that we have left, I want to talk about specific recommendations...

Judge D'AMICO: Yeah.

Ms. FISHMAN: Yeah.

ADUBATO: ...because I want people to know, when we send them the resource guide, that you're not ago--you're not only going to get a description of the problem...

Judge D'AMICO: Right.

ADUBATO: ...but some recommendations. John?

Judge D'AMICO: Increase substance abuse treatment.

Dr. FLINT: Right.

Judge D'AMICO: The Parole Board is expecting to receive more funds to construct more halfway houses and tu--and treatment centers.

ADUBATO: More halfway houses for drug rehab.

Judge D'AMICO: Right, because drugs is a major, major problem. Up to 75 percent of our prisoners have had an involvement with drugs.

ADUBATO: What per--what about programs for families? What specifically are we talking about here?

Mr. KERR: Could I--could I tell you about...

ADUBATO: Go ahead, David.

Mr. KERR: ...the Bridge to Recovery? The neighborhoods have to take hold of the situation. It's partly their responsibility. So the Bridge to Recovery is right in Newark.

ADUBATO: What is it?

Mr. KERR: It's a faith-based group run by all of us, agency people, mentors, church people, faith-based people, to take the responsibility of recovery on. If you have a person, who's going to find him a job? Who's going to get him housing? Who's going to mentor? Who's going to take care of his spirituality? We can't just keep relying on handouts of money and all that, not that we don't need that...

ADUBATO: Right.

Mr. KERR: ...but we all need to take part of this responsibility. And the other thing we're doing with the churches is a database called WEBUS, which links--because people fall through the crack. The judge was--saw what we're doing with WEBUS. We can't allow people to come in, get help one day, and all of a sudden they disappear the next day.

ADUBATO: Gotcha. Nancy, some of the other recommendations in the report are?

Ms. FISHMAN: Yeah. We make a number of recommendations that have to do not with--just with more money, but have to do with changing laws and policies and

making it...

ADUBATO: Such as?

Ms. FISHMAN: ...possible for people to earn their way back into society.

ADUBATO: Give us one example.

Ms. FISHMAN: We talk about certificates of rehabilitation. A certificate of rehabilitation, which they've--they've got in--in Chicago, in Illinois, in New York and a number of other states. We have all kinds of barriers we've talked about that keep people from getting certain kinds of jobs, certain kinds of benefits, etc. Most of those are lifetime bans. What a certificate of rehabilitation does--and we provide them right now in a very limited context for--for licensing--allows people who have, after a few years, shown that they've put--put in hard work to--to live a good life, have done what they're supposed to do, showed up at their meetings, tried to get a job, stayed out of trouble...

ADUBATO: And they get this certificate?

Ms. FISHMAN: And they get a certificate of re--they...

ADUBATO: Who gives them the certificate?

Ms. FISHMAN: The certificate could be--it could be done either administratively through the Parole Board, it could be done by the court that sentenced them. That allows them to get some of their rights and benefits--rights back, get some of their access to jobs and employment, just sort of the basic prerogatives of--of citizenship, to say that...

ADUBATO: So--so it makes the obstacle course not as difficult?

Ms. FISHMAN: Yes.

ADUBATO: OK. And where would the--is this legislation needed, regulatory? What are we talking about here?

Mr. KERR: Yeah, you need the...

Ms. FISHMAN: It's through legislation.

Mr. KERR: It's a great idea.

Dr. FLINT: I think legislation, policy changes.

ADUBATO: Legislation is needed. Listen--devil's advocate. Couple minutes left.

Ms. FISHMAN: Sure.

ADUBATO: Judge, if someone says, 'Wait a minute. You do that, you're "soft on criminals."' You would say?

Judge D'AMICO: I would say the--what's the alternative?

Dr. FLINT: Right. Yeah.

Judge D'AMICO: Put them back in jail and then have them come out less prepared than they were before?

Mr. KERR: They have to earn the certificate. Right.

Judge D'AMICO: What we need is jobs...

Dr. FLINT: Right.

Mr. KERR: Right.

Judge D'AMICO: ...we need training, we need education. We need to prepare people. We need to encourage the employment sector to step up to the plate. And...

ADUBATO: Real quick on juveniles.

Ms. FISHMAN: Listen...

ADUBATO: Is there any other specific recommendations for juveniles?

Mr. KERR: Housing, case management.

Dr. FLINT: Yes.

Ms. FISHMAN: Well...

Mr. KERR: We got to follow those kids up when they leave.

ADUBATO: OK. Real quick.

Ms. FISHMAN: It's also important that kids be reconnected with...

ADUBATO: About two minutes left. Go ahead.

Ms. FISHMAN: ...with schools.

Dr. FLINT: Right.

Ms. FISHMAN: That the--the real failure for kids--and what's so important, particularly--although juveniles are--are--are older than we--we think they are--reconnecting them with their families before they get out.

Mr. KERR: Right.

Ms. FISHMAN: ...reconnecting them with schools, with some of the agencies that are supposed to be providing the support and background. But listen, I--I--there is one thing I want to get in...

ADUBATO: Real quick.

Ms. FISHMAN: ...which is that, you know, what does the public want? The public wants to be safe in their homes, they want people to be taxpaying members of their society, safe in their homes, supporting their families, and--and--and I think most people coming out of prison would say they want that too, but you have to make it possible for them to do it.

ADUBATO: Professor, how prepared are we to have such a dialogue that Nancy lays out, the rest of us?

Dr. FLINT: I don't think the society is. We focus--all of us--more on the individual and we can change that particular individual, but I think what we're saying--there are some structural things that must be changed, too. This society has to realize we cannot continue to incarcerate people. They're going to come out. Let's make them prepared to do that. And my thing is, even before--we've got to do some preventives, especially with our juveniles. We've got to find a way to make the educational system and all those other systems--family, faith, communi--more accountable when it comes to the children. We have to do that.

ADUBATO: Finally, in the 30 seconds left, David, let me ask you. You've s--been at this for 20 years plus.

Mr. KERR: Forty years.

ADUBATO: Forty years, 20 years over there and then everything else. Real quick, how optimistic are you whether we're going to do any of these things?

Mr. KERR: It's the--it's the best look I've ever seen. Got an excellent Parole Board, we've got Devon Brown, we've got all the focus--New Jersey Institute; we've got a consortium approach, we've got the faith-based leaders. So I think now is the time we can move this agenda.

ADUBATO: And we're going to continue this dialogue in the third part of our Getting Out, Going Home prisoner re-entry series. Thank you so much. Great program.

Announcer: If you would like more information on this program, or if you'd like to express an opinion, e-mail us at info@caucusnj.org, and visit us on the World Wide Web at www.caucusnj.org.

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