

Creating a Continuum of Care: National Models & Promising Practices

Focus Area: Working with youth with high/multiple needs in community-based settings

Model: Roca Intervention & Reentry

Roca's theory of change is that young people, when re-engaged through positive and intensive relationships, can change their behaviors and develop life, education, and employment skills to disrupt the cycles of poverty and incarceration.

Roca's Intervention Model is a cognitive-restructuring, behavioral change and skill development intervention, which focuses on high-risk young men. Roca's model focuses on 17-to-24-year-old young men who are either: 1) aging out of the juvenile justice or juvenile probation systems with a strong propensity for re-incarceration as an adult; 2) connected with the adult justice system; or 3) are high-risk members of the community being served who have a strong propensity for incarceration as an adult.

This is a four-year program designed to allow participants enough time to undergo meaningful behavior change, which will enable them to stay out of jail and go to work. The first two years involve intensive interaction between the program and the young man, focusing on gradually engaging the participant in programming and promoting behavior change. The subsequent two years focus on sustaining the positive change in behavior. The ultimate goals of the model are reducing participants' incarceration rates and increasing participants' ability to retain employment over time.

The main elements of the model:

- Relentless Outreach – Extraordinary effort to engage and re-engage young people, and never give up.
- Transformational Relationships – Focus on building meaningful relationships with young people for the purpose of behavior change.

Roca Voices: Listen to participants and program staff talk about the impact of the model in their own words at:

<https://rocainc.org/impact/voices>

- Stage-Based Programming – Programming is tailored to meet young people where they are, cognitively and behaviorally.
- Engaged Institutions – Systems and organizations are engaged strategically to assist in young people’s change process.
- Performance-Based Management – Rigorous data tracking and continuous evaluation of strategies and outcomes.

Outcomes:

High Risk Young Man Program – Roca’s Intervention Model is designed to help high-risk young men leave the streets and gangs and go to work. Through repeated outreach, tailored programming and collaboration with community partners, Roca helps young men transform their lives. In 2017, Roca served more than 800 youth and young adults, 84% of whom had no new arrests, 79% stayed in the program and 76% remained employed for more than 3 months. More than 226 participants were placed in jobs and another nearly 274 were enrolled in some type of transitional employment.ⁱ

Young Mothers Program – Roca’s Intervention Model was adapted to help high-risk young mothers get out of violence and poverty, go to work, and care for their children. Roca helps young mothers transform their lives and create better future for their children. In 2017, the program served 200 young mothers and 237 children. Eighty-eight percent stayed in the program and 97% remained employed for more than 3 months.ⁱⁱ

See more at: <https://rocainc.org>

See also: *Roca’s High Risk Youth Intervention Model: Initial Implementation Evaluation Report*, Crime and Justice Institute at Community Resources for Justice, December 2009.

http://www.socialimpactexchange.org/files/Roca_Interim_Implementation_Evaluation_Rpt_Dec09.pdf

ⁱ Fiscal Year 2017 – High Risk Young Men Performance Benchmarks and Outcomes Report, Roca, 2018. <https://rocainc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/FY17-Young-Mens-Outcomes-Report.pdf>

ⁱⁱ Fiscal Year 2017 High Risk Young Mothers Performance Benchmarks and Outcomes Report, Roca, 2018. <https://rocainc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/FY17-Young-Mothers-Outcomes-Report.pdf>