



Seirbhís Phríosúin
na hÉireann
Irish Prison Service



Crois Dhearg na hÉireann
Irish Red Cross



etbi
Education and Training
Boards Ireland
Boird Oideachais agus
Oiliúna Éireann

Prison to Community Project:

Background

Inmates who are released back into society face many challenges and it may be difficult for them to make a successful transition. When leaving prison, these individuals may still face issues that were problematic before serving their sentence – such as unemployment, substance abuse, low self-esteem, anti-social relationships and lack of support. Individuals that have successfully completed the **CBHFA Programme** as Red Cross volunteers have likely developed their confidence, teambuilding and leadership skills, which ultimately has provided them with a foundation that they can use when reintegrating into their community. More specifically, volunteers are more likely to successfully reintegrate back into their community when they are supported in their transition process and given the opportunity to continue volunteering in very specific contexts that best use their training and experience gained as an inmate Irish Red Cross CBHFA volunteer.

Overview

The Prison to Community Project has been designed with the above framework. Trained volunteers are able to further their skills and personal development by completing the Volunteer Facilitator Training in order to become facilitators of the ***Culture of Non-Violence and Peace Workshop*** – a two day workshop provided to Probationers and members of the community in various counties in Ireland. The Culture of Non-Violence Workshop focuses on Violence Prevention and Overdose Prevention, and more specifically on handling anger, managing stress, developing coping skills, and goal setting.

Peer-to-peer education is identified as an effective method of teaching and learning. Peer educators serve as positive role models that reinforce behaviour change (Kelly *et al*, 1991) and peer education has been recognised as an important tool to educate hard to reach populations (Rhodes, 1994). The structure of the Culture of Non-Violence Workshop also allows participants to work in groups, in order to generate discussion and ideas, as well as enhance teambuilding skills.

Outcome

There have been many CNV workshops run by Irish Red Cross volunteers that have taken place throughout Ireland since 2016. As a result of the success, the second phase of the Prison to Community Project is to further recruit participants of the workshop and train them to become Irish Red Cross volunteer facilitators, in hopes to expand the project and have a greater impact on the community. This training workshop will allow Probationers to learn about the content covered in the workshop, as well as learn communication, teaching and facilitation skills.