



SAFER COMMUNITIES STRONGER FAMILIES

Annual Report

October 1, 2021 – September 30, 2022

In Partnership with

Michigan Department of Corrections

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Article 2, Section 413

Goodwill Flip the Script Program

I. Executive Summary

During the fiscal year, while still enduring and operating through the residuals of the COVID pandemic, Flip the Script (FTS) Safer Communities Stronger Families (SCSF) program adjusted successfully and maintained service offerings in a true hybrid model. This was accomplished while conserving the successes of each probationer referred to FTS for services and supports. The objective focus continued to be reduction of recidivism for persons who are primarily on probation, and to provide personalized mentorship, job coaching, and supportive services. Goodwill Industries of Greater Detroit's (Goodwill) Flip the Script Stronger Communities Stronger Families (SCSF) goal continues to be the redirection of program participants toward a positive personal development and employment path.

Goodwill and the Michigan Department of Corrections (MDOC) as partners for the past eight years, continue to maintain regular communications, and to ensure all program elements are managed for participants' long-term success. Wayne County 3rd Circuit Court has continued to refer individuals to the program as an alternative to long-term imprisonment, or short-term jail sentences.

Approximately 82% of persons referred, who have fully participated in the SCSF program, have not returned before a judge, nor have they been incarcerated and/or detained. Overall, the continued positive impact of the SCSF program for participants has been consistent and has continued to reduce the number of 'justice involved' individuals who commit petty crimes, and who are ultimately incarcerated in local/State prisons, while reducing the corrections expenses shouldered by taxpayers.

Working to engage participants to participate consistently in a hybrid classroom model has necessitated service delivery adjustment. Traditional classroom services, workshops, and activities were offered in both the face-to-face and virtual modes (i.e. Hybrid). New virtual tools and methods allowed the service team to continue with first-rate participant service supports. The enrollments and educational recovery outcomes are still exceeding expectations, and other metrics were above the 75-80% success ratings.

Participant's financial literacy, money management, and credit development outcomes and achievements were at optimal levels. Job Placement outcomes for male participants were above the quantitative goals for FY 2022 expectations. Service activities for the Women Empowerment

participants, however, continued below the FY 2022 metric/goal forecasts. The program received very few probationary referrals/women participants for services this fiscal year.

However, FTS continued to promote the services externally with hopes to outreach more women for the program and services.

The MDOC and Goodwill Detroit team worked collaboratively to share ideas, and suggestions to how best to review the quantitative FY 2022 goals for SCSF programming and service enhancements.

II. SCSF Participants and Their Challenges/Barriers

Over the past eight years, probationers/referrals in the SCSF Program are sent directly by the MDOC's Probation Departments, and the Wayne County Third Circuit Court.

We continued to recognize that SCSF participants, the City of Detroit residents, and persons residing throughout Wayne County, continue to demonstrate barriers to obtaining competitive employment and soft and professional skills. The list of barriers is extensive, yet familiar to individuals referred to Flip the Script as young, inexperienced offenders from across the region and/or State. However, the intensity of the challenges for SCSF participants is likely much more acute (mirroring other aspects of Wayne County population data as compared to state population data).

Overall, many SCSF participants are not prepared to achieve sound, but necessary life goals. Childcare needs, low academics in math and reading, housing insecurity, food access unavailability, are the immediate crisis that most face before starting into the SCSF program. Many probationers are disconnected, and were disengaged from the educational, financial, health, and employment systems that could offer a positive path forward. Many males referred do not have vital documents such as a State ID or Driver's License, and many have no personal and/or reliable transportation, and have limited, to no traditional work experience.

Many SCSF participant suffer from very low Reading and Math levels, and a significant number of participants struggle with identified, and/or unidentified learning disabilities. Some can identify certain words, or phrases that may be familiar, but often the participants possess very low reading and comprehension levels, and struggle expressing themselves orally, or in writing. Obtaining and maintaining employment is another challenge, given the participant's low educational abilities, which

often prohibits them from completing online web-searches, and/or job applications in digital-based systems.

Although the women referrals were lower than expected, the few women serviced were in crisis due to prior emotional, physical, and even sexual abuse, and many have experienced sexual assault and/or domestic violence at the hands of a controlling male partner(s). Other female probationers referred were enrolled into residential housing programs to assist them with caring for their children and were also in negotiations with the Wayne County Family Court and are facing the potential removal of children from their care, while equally being under-employed and/or unemployed.

Childcare assistance continues to be a significant obstacle for many SCSF participants, especially the women/female participants. When combined with unreliable transportation, food, and housing challenges, the resulting barriers becomes nearly insurmountable.

Many SCSF participants have been reared and/or taught in homes and/or living environments where criminal behavior is accepted and normalized. Most time, many SCSF participants have social networks that are of little help in moving beyond these barriers, and in most cases, the networks are ‘the’ obstacle. In particular, many of the male trainees are members of formal or informal street organizations (i.e., gangs/cliques) that are engaged in regular criminal activity. Those that are not members of such groups are generally “raised and/or socialized by the streets” and, as a result, have either mixed/mingled in a similar manner, or learned to avoid all social support systems as a survival tactic.

Lastly, there are aspects of the criminal courts system that create various challenges to employment and life success for the SCSF participant. Many probationers often communicate that they are required to be available for appointments with their probation officer, and/or Judge during the day—a requirement that is quite challenging, especially with the expectation that the person obtain and maintain employment, particularly in cases where they are expected to work a full 8 to 10-hour shift. Similarly, contracts such as our SCSF program equally expect that services are delivered, and results achieved on a timeline consistent with the State’s fiscal year calendar. Meaningful results frequently take from 18 to 24 months, and sometimes longer, in order to achieve optimal levels of growth. This means that results/outcomes frequently are not available and are likely to carry over from one fiscal year to the next.

Participants:

- During the past 2 years, while navigating the COVID-19 living and work environment, many MDOC probation officers continued to be lenient with the probationers who were referred to SCSF for services. As an unintended consequence, some participants possessed the attitude and/or disposition of a “lack of urgency” for completing class work/assignments timely.
- For participants who continued in traditional classroom, or virtual sessions, there were distractions. A number of probation agents pulled participants from the program to assist with childcare and housing challenges. Though this was an issue, and remains a barrier, SCSF participant childcare challenges were exacerbated due to the limited available childcare centers, along with the lack of affordable childcare options.
- Over 80% of male participants lacked a high school diploma or GED. The majority of the male and female participants, consistent with past years, initially scored below the 4th grade level in math, and at or below the 4th grade level in reading.
- Over 90% of SCSF participants enrolled during this year were on probation, and 25% were repeat offenders, and were appropriate for a diversionary strategy in order to avoid long-term incarceration.
- Less than 60% of the male participants had never held a traditional job assignment or had been previously employed.
- Over 70% of participants reported being concerned with both unreliable transportation, and housing crisis, which in many cases means that there is “no permanent residence” in place during or after program completion.

III. Services, Strategies, Activities and Progress towards Goals

Goodwill Detroit’s Flip the Script program, which operates the SCSF, has successfully responded to the regional re-entry and diversionary challenges nearly two decades. The SCSF program has its history in service to parolees who had been in long-term prison sentences, but over the last 10 years has increasingly focused its attention on ‘alternative sentencing efforts’ and reducing the likelihood of recidivism among probationers participating in services.

Many participants this fiscal year experienced the same pressures that landed them into the justice system (i.e. Criminal court) in the first place. Flip the Script’s holistic and tailored approach is designed to deter ‘justice involved individuals’ from costly state confinement, while continuing to produce measurable and/or favorable outcomes. SCSF participants are pushed, and expected to focus on personal skill building, educational attainment, job readiness, and financial literacy. In addition to building themselves up, participants must also learn to be more accountable, and to explore new life improvements such as anger management and conflict resolution, employment demands, and academic recovery skilling. The investment each probationer is required to make is in his or her own personal success is paramount.

Encouraging SCSF probationers and making certain that they remain on track is a total team and collaborative effort. The continued support and validation from our community partners, including the Detroit Police Department (DPD), the Office of Detroit Mayor Michael Duggan, and the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan and the United States Attorney’s Office ensures that our reach in supporting SCSF participants extends beyond Goodwill Industries’ Community Center. Veteran and rookie officers from the DPD have participated in scheduled immersion sessions with SCSF cohort groups and classes, building bridges that will assist in fostering healthy relationships between police and community residents.

This year, Goodwill Industries International (GII), Second Chance Initiatives, publicly recognized the Flip the Script SCSF program and invited staff to participate as a conference presenter for Goodwill organizations nationally on effective re-entry service models. FTS is often recognized as one of many leading programs internationally, so much so that it periodically hosts visits from international audiences seeking to learn best practices and community reintegration work. Flip the Script’s effective program model has received multiple commendations from the community and CARF, a national accrediting body for its comprehensive employment and training services for the justice involved populations.

Our current SCSF participants “client satisfaction” survey responses rated 93% on their experience and direct impact on their lives.

SCSF programming includes a variety of services designed to meet the needs of participants:

- An intense “Rites of Passage” Cognitive Behavioral training (CBT) program that teaches clients how best to cope with trauma, and personal accountability.
- Employment and work readiness counseling and coaching.
- Wraparound services and supports to meet basic client needs.
- Intense one-on-one coaching, and mentorship.
- Assistance with obtaining legal identification, including state ID, birth certificates, and also driver’s licenses.
- Financial literacy and related services, including debt avoidance, basic budgeting, credit counseling and repair, assistance with recovery from identity theft, smart money management, assistance opening a savings or checking account, and exposure to other financial tools.
- Remedial education services, Basic Reading/Literacy, Mathematics, and Digital Awareness and Literacy.

IV. Performance Outcomes

A. Community-Based Male Alternative Sentencing Diversionary Program

	Target Number (goal)	Total (Actual Number)	Outcome = Actual Value/Total
Enrollees (target 155)	155	152	98% (based off target goal)
Program completers (target goal - 80% of total enrollees)	124 (80% out of 152 Participants)	74/152 Participants	49%
Job Placements (target goal - 70% of participants placed in competitive employment within 90 calendar days of completion.)	106 (70% out of 152 participants)	103/152 Participants	68%
30-day retention (target goal - 70% of employed participants achieving 30-day employment retention)	72 (70% out of 103 employed participants)	83/103 employed participants	80%
90-day retention (target goal - 60% of employed participants achieving 90 day employment retention)	62 (60% out of 103 participants)	49/103 employed participants	48%
Successful completion of court ordered sentence. (Target goal - 80% of program completers successfully completing court ordered sentence - Contractor must provide offender names(s) and program completion dates to the MDOC Program Manager. The MDOC will compute data and provide to Contractor on an annual basis.	22 (80% out of 28 program completers successfully completing probation)	27/28 program completers successfully completing probation	96%

For FY 22, 74 offenders completed the Rites of Passage Program. Out of the 74 offenders who completed the program, 46 are still on active probation and 28 discharged from probation. Out of the 28 offenders discharged from probation, 27 discharged successfully. The successful discharge rate is $27/28 = \underline{96\%}$

B. Beyond Jobs Women's Empowerment Services

	Target Number (goal)	Total (Actual Number)	Outcome = Actual Value/Total
Enrollees (target 62)	62	3	5% (based off target goal)
Program completers (target goal - 80% of total enrollees)	2.4 (80% out of 3 Participants)	2/3 Participants	67%
Job Placements (target goal - 60% of participants placed in competitive employment within 90 calendar days of completion.)	1.8 (60% out of 3 participants)	2/3 Participants	67%
30-day retention (target goal - 80% of employed participants achieving 30-day employment retention)	1.6 (80% out of 2 employed Participants)	2/2 employed Participants	100%
90-day retention (target goal - 80% of employed participants achieving 90 day employment retention)	1.6 (80% out of 2 Participants)	2/2 employed Participants	100%
Successful completion of court ordered sentence. (Target goal - 80% of program completers successfully completing court ordered sentence - Contractor must provide offender names(s) and program completion dates to the MDOC Program Manager. The MDOC will compute data and provide to Contractor on an annual basis.	N/A – Both offenders who completed programming are still on active probation	N/A – Both offenders who completed programming are still on active probation	N/A – Both offenders who completed programming are still on active probation

For FY 22, 2 offenders completed the Women’s Empowerment program. Both of those offenders are still on active probation therefore no successful discharge rate can be generated.

Women’s Empowerment provided ongoing supportive services that focused on Workplace and Employment readiness for eligible women facing critical issues including poverty, financial strain, homelessness, and domestic abuse.

The women’s empowerment service component is designed to offer gender and culturally specific ‘career planning and development services’, along with continuing education for women 16 -40 years of age.

During the 2021-22 fiscal year, the Women’s programming and services continued to experience low referrals and challenges from the MDOC and Wayne County Circuit Courts due to women’s childcare needs, unreliable transportation, and low-level educational challenges. As indicated by the data in the table below, the challenges are continually exacerbated by the female client’s ongoing personal challenges and program requirements, resulting in fewer referrals for services versus the previous moments. However, with the negotiated program metrics for women, FTS – SCSF has continually sought to recruit women, and gain new referrals from the MDOC Probation Offices, and the Wayne County 3rd Circuit Court. Unfortunately, after months of outreach and strategic communications, the women referrals did not increase for the 2022FY. However, with continued COVID-19 and childcare cost challenges (being the largest), the Women’s Empowerment Program had a significant drop in outcomes in serving and supporting female participants.

C. Education Recovery for All Adult Populations

	Target Number (goal)	Total (Actual Number)	Outcome = Actual Value/Total
Enrollees (contract target 145)	145	117	81% (based off target goal)
Number of participants achieving grade level increase (target goal - 70% of total enrollees)	82 (70% of 117 enrollees)	105/117 Participants	90%

V. Other Program Services—Financial Literacy and Coaching

All SCSF participants were provided the opportunity to access Goodwill’s United Way Financial Opportunity Centers - Center for Working Families (CWF) program for support with Income Support Services, Financial Literacy, Debt Avoidance, and Credit Building. These services most often support low-to-moderate income individuals, and families in achieving greater financial stability and/or economic prosperity and the means to pursue their life goals.

During this fiscal year, sixty-five (65) SCSF participants benefitted from the financial coaching services. Fifty (50) probationers accessed their credit report for credit counseling and developed a personal budget. Forty-one (41) individuals established savings, with an increased net worth. Twenty-five (25) probationers reduced their non-asset related debt.

IV. Continuance Service Improvements and Enhancements

We continue to observe when a participant’s basic needs are adequately met and supported, crisis and challenge areas are addressed, class participation dramatically increases, and personal transformation begins. Participants were provided with a variety of personal hygiene items, including toothbrushes, face clothes, and toothpaste, mouthwash, soap, deodorant and underclothing. Work boots and clothing, and other interview attire are provided as needed.

Additionally, a close relationship between Flip the Script team and MDOC probation agents and staffers is quite substantial in shaping the probationer’s long-term success. When SCSF participants realize that the two entities are working collaboratively to resolve their issues, participants become more accountable to the court’s referral orders. As a result, Flip the Script staff have encouraged all agents who have participants enrolled to take full advantage of our site and space to engage probationers whenever needed, and to schedule times at Flip the Script to conduct their interviews, which improves probationer compliance and attendance.

The Flip the Script team has continued to implement new service delivery strategies and practices to enhance the SCSF programming for the fiscal year.

Those enhancements included:

- Remote/Virtual Testing has been made available for participants to take their GED Test online at Goodwill's FTS Site. This option has increased the participant's access to GED testing access as the city of Detroit has few Test Centers open.
- New GED and academic testing tools and resources (e.g., GED Online Academy) inclusive of Singapore Math Strategies, and Trauma Informed Teaching.
- Lyft & Uber rides to participants for practice tests/exams, and employment interviews.
- Improved outreach and communications with Wayne County 3rd Circuit Court, and with the MDOC Probation Offices has persisted. FTS has also sought to view the live YouTube court sessions, and to be added to the court's quarterly meetings with the Judges in order to provide regular updates and program insights.
- Partnerships with Detroit Police and other local mental health professionals, along with childcare providers.
- Usage of a career development scorecard earlier in the Rites of Passage curriculum.
- Advocacy for the use of probationer's restricted driver's licenses to allow employed participants to drive during work hours.
- Pairing all SCSF participants with a workforce and/or financial coach prior to employment (as opposed to after employment) sentencing environment and/or region of Detroit - Wayne

In summary, Flip the Script's Stronger Communities Stronger Families continues as viable alternative sentencing option to reducing criminal court cases, petty criminality, and minimizing recidivism for young participants with felony convictions in need of transformation.

Many participants have expressed the FTS - SCSF program is a viable alternative to gang life and running in the streets. Participants have often shared with staff "they feel like they've grown into men, who are no longer behaving like boys". The SCSF project also has earned a high level of respect, and true engagement with local law enforcement agencies and service providers. Goodwill Detroit's Flip the Script - SCSF project has also achieved sustained success, and continue to provide a proven, cost-effective community-based resource for reintegration of offenders and the reduction of criminal activity.