

AFTER INCARCERATION, THERE'S LIFE

# BEYOND THE WALL

Coming to  
**WORLD CHANNEL**  
on April 10, 2018

Check local PBS listings.

**#WORLDxReEntry**

"Beyond the Wall is riveting, gritty, powerful and provocative, but it is not a film – it is real life."

– Middlesex Sheriff Peter J. Koutoujian

The film captures "the powerful emotional, financial and even spiritual challenges they face as they try to stay out of prison."

– WBUR Radio Boston

"Stark Reality"

– Newburyport News

## 2 **Beyond the Wall**

### **Why you should watch this film and take action...**

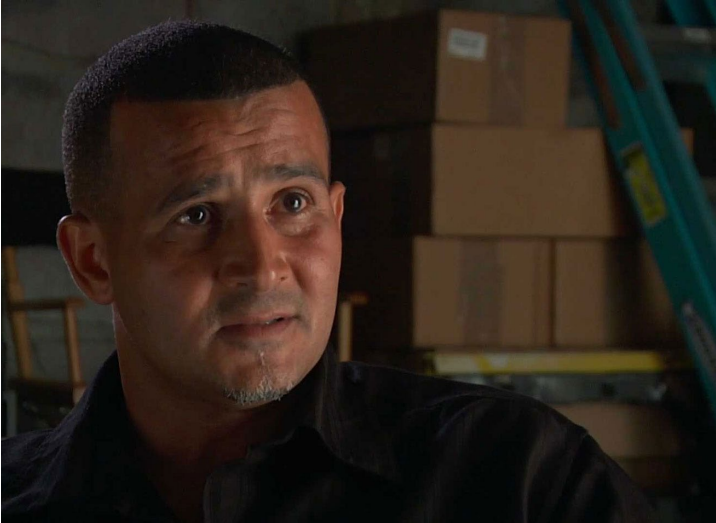
The U.S. locks up more people per capita than any other country in the world. Of the 11 million who are incarcerated each year in the U.S., 650,000 of them will be released. Within three years, two-thirds will be back behind bars. Beyond the Wall introduces us to the personal stories behind these staggering statistics.

The film, together with this viewing guide, asks us to think critically about the harsh realities of reentry. Why is it that the formerly incarcerated return to communities where drugs are easier to find than jobs or stable housing? How do we balance personal accountability with community responsibility to provide safe and supportive environments to succeed? What can we as concerned citizens, criminal justice workers, and reentry counselors do to break the cycle of recidivism?

In the words of the central figure of the film, Louie Diaz, "If you continue doing what you've always done, you'll continue getting what you've always gotten." When it comes to reentry, something needs to change. We encourage you to watch the film, use this guide, and take action to be part of that change.



## 3 **Beyond the Wall** (continued)



“If you continue doing what you’ve always done, you’ll continue getting what you’ve always gotten.”

-Louie Diaz

### **How to Watch the film...**

Beyond the Wall has been made widely available on public media via the **WORLD Channel**:

- National Broadcast: Premiering April 10 at 8:00 pm Eastern time, check local listings: <http://www.pbs.org/about/about-pbs/stations/>
- Online streaming: Available at <http://worldchannel.org/programs/episode/arf-s6-607-beyond-wall/>
- Check the film website: [beyondthewallfilm.com](http://beyondthewallfilm.com) for upcoming community screenings

### **Watch with Others and Create Impact...**

Community conversations are vital to the campaign of the film. Multiply the impact of Beyond the Wall by watching and discussing it with others—particularly with those involved in the criminal justice and reentry system.

- Host a viewing party: Invite friends and colleagues to watch the broadcast on WORLD Channel or the online stream of the film. Use this viewing guide to initiate a discussion about the film and encourage an activity that supports the film’s impact campaign.
- Organize a screening: DVDs and public screening rights for events are available for sale here: <https://beyondthewallfilm.com/host-a-screening/>
- Use this guide and the activities and discussion questions at a meeting or gathering where these issues are topics of discussion.



[impact@beyondthewallfilm.com](mailto:impact@beyondthewallfilm.com)



[beyondthewallfilm.com](http://beyondthewallfilm.com)



[@beyondthewallfilm](https://www.facebook.com/beyondthewallfilm)



[@BTWDoc](https://twitter.com/BTWDoc)

## 4 Know the **Facts...**



Combine the power of the personal stories in the film with the numbers and statistics that help to illuminate the larger social patterns of recidivism.

### Incarceration in the U.S.

**2.3  
Million**

incarcerated in the U.S. Daily

Source: Prison Policy Initiative

**11  
Million**

cycle through local jails each year.

Source: Prison Policy Initiative

**Over  
650,000**

are released from prisons each year.

Source: [https://www.justice.gov/archive/fbci/progmenu\\_reentry.html](https://www.justice.gov/archive/fbci/progmenu_reentry.html)

Within three years of release, about **two-thirds of released prisoners are rearrested.**

- Of those prisoners who were rearrested, more than half (56.7 percent) were arrested by the end of the first year. Source: *National Institute of Justice*

# 5 | Know the **Facts...**



## Substance Abuse

- 65% of people in prisons and jails have substance abuse history. *Source: National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse*
- 1 in 5 are locked up for drug offenses. *Source: Prison Policy Initiative*
- Three quarters of those returning from prison have a history of substance use disorders. *Source: National Reentry Resource Center.*



## Racial Inequity

- 1 in every 10 African American men in their thirties is in prison or jail on any given day. *Source: The Sentencing Project*
- African Americans are incarcerated in state prisons at a rate that is 5.1 times the imprisonment of whites. In five states (Iowa, Minnesota, New Jersey, Vermont, and Wisconsin), the disparity is more than 10 to 1. *Source: The Sentencing Project*



## Employment

- Employment rates and earnings histories of people in prisons and jails are often low before incarceration as a result of limited education experiences, low skill levels, and the prevalence of physical and mental health problems; incarceration only exacerbates these challenges.
- A large, three-state recidivism study found that less than half of released prisoners had secured a job upon their return to the community. *Source: National Reentry Resource Center*

# 6 Discuss...

An important goal of the film is to promote the knowledge and experience of the formerly incarcerated. Consider inviting someone with direct experience in reentry to lead or participate in your discussion. If you need help identifying someone locally, email [impact@beyondthewallfilm.com](mailto:impact@beyondthewallfilm.com). Use these questions to help generate discussion.

## Recidivism

- What are some of the barriers that individuals face when returning to the community after incarceration? How might this affect the success of their transition back into society?
- Why do you think recidivism rates are so high in the U.S.?
- What actions can be taken to lower recidivism rates here in the United States?
- Are there ways in which you would like to get directly involved in assisting returning citizens. Do you know anyone working on these issues in your community?

## Characters in the Film

- Why are places like Billy's Barbershop so essential to a successful transition after incarceration?
- Why is it important for returning citizens to have a mentor like Louie Diaz?
- What does Louie mean when he says, "If you continue doing what you have always done, you will continue getting what you have always gotten"?

- In the film Billy Cabrera says, "We get a handbook on how to conduct ourselves in prison, when you get released you don't get a handbook on how to live life." What does he mean by that?

## Substance Abuse and Recidivism

- After release from prison, a very large percentage of people (well over 60%) return to drugs and alcohol. How does substance abuse relate to recidivism?
- What are some signs of relapse?
- What can you do if someone you know is showing signs of relapse?

## General Prison Population

- Why is the United States the world's leader in incarceration?
- What reforms should be enacted in the prison system in the United States to make it more effective and just?
- What kinds of programs are available to incarcerated individuals in your community?



# 7 Take **Action...**



## **Make it personal: Building empathy with the characters**

Establishing a personal connection with an issue is a great place to start your advocacy. As we see in the film, personal stories have the power to get people's attention, build empathy, and compel others to be emotionally invested in the issue. Identify your personal connection and practice articulating it to others in a compelling way.

### **Identify your personal "why"**

Journal your reflections to the following questions to help Identify your personal connection to the issue and why you feel compelled to take action for change.

- Did you identify with someone in the film?
- Have you had a personal struggle with substance abuse or addiction?
- Do you know someone who has struggled to stay sober or stay out of the criminal justice system?

### **Share with others**

Once you have established your personal "why," practice sharing it with others so that they might be compelled to learn more or take action. For those that watched the film with a group of people, pair up and share with each other for practice. If you are concerned with confidentiality, consider changing the names and keeping private any identifying details.



# 8 Take **Action** (continued)

## **Break the stigma: Create an online dialogue about reentry**

A goal of the film is to challenge the stereotypes and stigma that fortify the barriers of reentry. Take your advocacy to the next level by starting a dialogue about reentry in a public forum—such as social media, a blog, or a letter to the editor. This is a good time to use your personal “why” to help start the conversation.

### **Online Q&A**

Live chats on Twitter, Facebook, or YouTube are popular ways to create public dialogue about an issue. Consider amplifying the voice of someone local who has been formerly incarcerated by having them participate or lead a Q&A. Make sure to share your online dialogue widely on social media and tag it with the hashtag #BTWdoc to connect the conversation to a national dialogue related to the film. For tips on how to host an online Q&A, visit <https://knowhownonprofit.org/how-to/how-to-organise-a-live-discussion>.

### **Letter to the Editor**

Most local newspapers accept letters to the editor written by community members about current issues and events—check out your paper’s op-ed section to learn its specific policies. Letters are typically around 250 words, although newspapers may publish longer columns of about 600 words as featured editorials. As you craft your letter, consider including your personal “why” to draw the reader in and incorporating statistics from the film or from local research to bring perspective to the issue. Make sure to include links to sources so that the newspapers can verify the statistics, and keep confidentiality in mind if you are sharing details about someone other than yourself. If you are published, share it widely on social media with the hashtag #BTWdoc. For more tips on writing great letters to the editor, visit <https://www.wikihow.com/Write-Letters-to-the-Editor>.





# 9 | Take **Action** (continued)

## **Think big picture: Examine the obstacles of reentry**

As we see in the film, there are many factors beyond personal will power that contribute to a community member's success—or lack of success—upon reentry. A good paying job, stable housing, or access to counseling could make a world of difference for returning citizens. And yet, these fundamental needs are often out of reach due to policies or lack of resources in our communities. Look to your local nonprofit organizations, elected officials, and research institutions to understand the local policies that create obstacles for reentry and consider how you might influence them.

### **Ban the Box**

Has your employer, county, or state “banned the box”? As of January 1, 2018, 30 states and 150 counties and cities have removed the check box on applications that asks applicants if they have ever been convicted of a crime. Eliminating this box prevents employers from immediately excluding applicants with criminal records from their hiring pool. For more information and a current list of states that have banned the box, view this article from the National Employment Law Project: <http://www.nelp.org/publication/ban-the-box-fair-chance-hiring-state-and-local-guide/>.

### **Funding**

How well funded are the reentry initiatives in your community? A lack of resources is a frequent challenge for organizations and agencies charged with providing human services to the community. Look into ways that you can advocate for more public funding or organize donation drives for private funding. To get connected with your local reentry network, check out the National Reentry Register: <https://csgjusticecenter.org/nrrc/reentry-services-directory/>.



# Hosting a **Screening & Conversation**

Online activities are great, but there is nothing quite like having an inperson conversation. This month, the WORLD Channel invites you to gather your community whether it be through a neighborhood group, work place, faith based community, or just a group of your closest friends to watch important films about the American criminal justice system and engage in a conversation and exploration.

The following section provides a brief outline on how to gather, engage, and follow-up with those you choose to invite to a screening and conversation.

## STEP 1: PLAN AND SECURE

- Select a timeframe and date for your event
- Review this guide, and familiarize yourself with the film and social media content

## STEP 2: WHO TO INVITE?

- Begin compiling your invitation list. Use your own address book.. Be sure to ask permission to send an e-blast to clubs or organizations you belong to
- Make sure your invitation list is a reasonable size given how many people you can seat

## STEP 3: REACH OUT (AT LEAST TWO WEEKS PRIOR TO YOUR EVENT)

- Draft and send an email invitation to your list
- Monitor your RSVP list to track who is attending

## STEP 4: CREATE A PROGRAM

- Create an agenda for your event (see examples on next page)
- Be sure to test television or computer/wifi connectivity in your space for screening media content

## STEP 5: FOLLOW-UP

- Three or four days prior to the event, send a reminder to everyone you invited, and ask them to RSVP. For guests that have already RSVP'd reconfirm their attendance

## STEP 6: DAY OF SCREENING

- Arrange your furniture so seating faces the screen with clear sight lines
- Have some food and snacks available for guests
- Have a camera at the ready to take some snapshots of your event and share on social media using **#WORLDxReEntry**

# Hosting a **Screening & Conversation** (continued)

## Sample Agenda

Use this as a model for your event. You can shift items around as your specific program necessitates, but always have a clear plan for the event and make sure you are keeping to the schedule.

<b>6:30pm</b>	Doors open Guests begin arriving Snacks & refreshments are available
<b>7:00</b>	Gather your guests and explain why you wanted to host the event
<b>7:05</b>	Watch a segment of Beyond the Wall content, or the entire film, made available by WORLD Channel. Select an episode from: (Insert Link)
<b>8:00</b>	Use this guide to lead your guests through a conversation. Consider inviting your guests to contribute an online activity as outlined at the beginning of this guide.
<b>8:50</b>	Wish guests a goodnight!

You can choose to embellish this agenda and make it your own, but try not to run too long.

**Getting Beyond the Wall** - A new 12 session treatment program for incarcerated and recently released men and women. If you would like to learn more about bringing the program to your prison, jail, or community, please visit: <https://beyondthewallfilm.com/the-curriculum/>.



# 12 | Learn **More...**

## **Other Films in WORLD Channel's Re-Entry Programming Block for April 2018:**

***The Corridor***, premiering April 17, 2018 on WORLD Channel

<http://www.thecorridor documentary.com>

The Corridor is a feature length documentary portrait of the first high school in the United States providing education to adults serving time in jail. The Corridor centers around the tension between two central questions that societies have been grappling with for thousands of years, and which continue to be debated into the twenty first century. The first: how should society achieve justice? The other: what is our capacity to change our course in life?

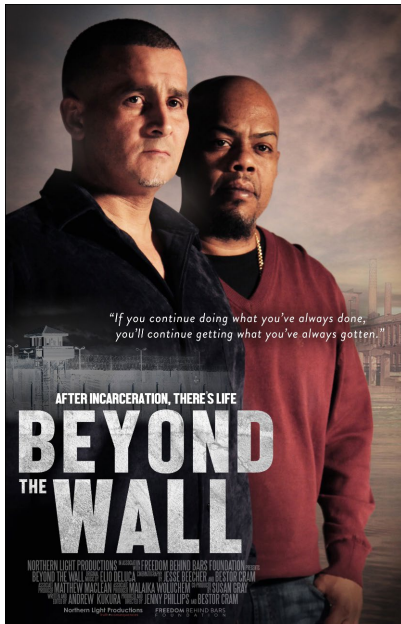
***Milwaukee 53206***, premiering April 3, 2018 on WORLD Channel

<https://www.milwaukee53206.com>

MILWAUKEE 53206 chronicles the lives of those living in the ZIP code that incarcerates the highest percentage of black men in America, up to 62%. Through the intimate stories of three 53206 residents, we witness the high toll that excessive jail sentencing takes on individuals and families that make up the community. The film examines Milwaukee's ZIP code 53206 to illuminate the story of people from across the United States who live with the daily effects of unjust and long jail sentences.



# 13 | Additional Resources



specializing in coordinating with global partners who offer leading-edge and effective content, curriculum, and training to better prepare people reentering the community after incarceration.

<https://massinc.org> - The homepage of Massachusetts Institute for a New Commonwealth

<https://beyondthewallfilm.com/> - the official website of the film, Beyond the Wall.

<http://worldchannel.org/link> - the film's broadcast page on the America ReFramed series, airing on the WORLD Channel.

<http://successfulreentry.com> - The homepage of Successful Reentry, a campaign partner

<http://www.crj.org> - The homepage for Community Resources for Justice, a campaign partner specializing social justice services

<https://www.vera.org/ending-mass-incarceration> - The homepage for the Vera Institute of Justice's program on Ending Mass-Incarceration



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