**Education for Inmates**

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**Introduction**

Imagine you’re a teenager, stressed out, and not thinking clearly. First instinct is to hang out with the wrong crowd, roaming the streets looking for trouble. Next thing you know, you’re thrown in prison and have to serve 13 years. And you think to yourself, my life is over! But as years go by, you become an adult and decide, “I’m going to get my life together.” You decide to spend those prison years getting an education. You deserve a second chance just like anyone else, would you agree?

**Research Question**

Do you know why education for inmates in important programs in New York who offer this to inmates, and someone you know who is in prison taking this opportunity?

**Background**

Organizations like Hudson Link, has reduced the rate of recidivism greatly. According to an article in the New York Amsterdam News, the graduates from Hudson link have a 0% recidivism rate since it first started in 1998.

**Methods**

The information I am going to share with you today comes mostly from two organizations that supports inmates getting an education which are, Hudson Link for Higher education in Prison and the Prison Studies Project. Also, from the New York Amsterdam News.nhg and someone I personally know.

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**Findings**

I. Hudson Link for Higher Education in Prison is an organization that helps those currently incarcerated gain an education.


1. During that time, Bill Clinton was president and decided to eliminate the Federal Pell Grant which provided mostly all the funding for education programs for inmates. This was devastating to a group of men in the Sing Sing Prison. They took action and approached several religious and academic volunteers. According to an article for the New York Amsterdam News, These volunteers saw their needs and decided to form the Hudson Link Organization in January 1998.

B. Professionals support and volunteer their time and service to educate this community of inmates incarcerated.

1. There are a few colleges that partner with Hudson Link to provide degrees for inmates. Some are Mercy College, Nyack College, SUNY Sullivan Community College, and Vassar College. One of the first colleges to partner with Hudson Link was Mercy College. According to Hudsonlink.org, this college program provides the opportunity for inmates to obtain their Associate and Bachelor’s degrees in Behavioral Science.

2. “Hudson Link’s greatest strength is the commitment of all of our stakeholders: the students, professors, staff, board, and our supporters. They have all contributed to the effort to change lives and thereby change our world. We are united in our belief that individuals can be transformed through education.” This was said by Rosemarie Murray, one of the many volunteers in the Hudson Link Program. According to Hudsonlink.org, she has taught literature for several years in Sing Sing Prison and loves it.

II. Prison education is not only important for the inmates themselves, but also for society.

A. Prison education is important for inmates and society for several reasons.

1. According to Hudsonlink.org, Prison education provides life skills and re-entry support to inmates to help them make a positive impact on their own lives, their families and communities. It increases inmate’s confidence, purpose and hope to change and do better. Also, it provides them with knowledge and skills to become “employable and productive” people upon their release.

2. It reduces the overall crime rate, which makes the community be safer. According to the Prison studies Project, found that a $1 million investment in incarceration will prevent 350 crimes, while an investment in prison education will prevent over 600 crimes. According to the Prison studies project, reported that recidivism rates for incarcerated people who participated in prison education programs were on average 46 percent lower than the rates of incarcerated people who didn’t take college classes.

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**Conclusions**

My Cousin Denis Martinez, who is currently incarcerated, wanted to share a message with students and everyone in society.

“Prison is very similar to society. In here you can find some of the worst people you can encounter, But I’ve had the privilege to share a cell with some of the most humble, smart, caring, and positive people too. There’s good and bad people in any social circle. Its easy for us to stereotype, but it’s hard for us to judge people as individuals.”

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**References**

