



**Fresno County Sheriff's Department**  
**Richard Pierce, Sheriff**  
**News Release**

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## Community Connections Project

Sheriff Richard Pierce as pleased to announce today that a press conference will be held at the Sheriff's Administration Building on Thursday, October 9, 2003 at 10:00 AM. At this press conference the Sheriff will introduce and discuss several new contract agreements with local organizations to provide intervention and prevention programming for inmates housed in and recently released from the Fresno County Jail.

In partnership with the Fresno County Office of Education; of the Fresno County Economic Opportunities Commission; Samaritan Women Hope Now For Youth, and J. Jeff Fly, and Turning Point of Central California, the Fresno County Sheriff's Department is establishing the Community Connection Project. The Community Connections Project is a collaboration of these agencies to provide male and female inmates committed to make real and positive change in their lives expanded educational services, drug treatment, and transition support services once they return to the community. The purpose of the Community Connection Project is to identify the specific problems and barriers of each participant and provide the resources and assistance for successful transition from incarceration to community living. The goal of the Community Connections Project is to return to the community offenders that are self-sufficient, healthy, productive citizens at home, in school or at work.

Fresno County Office of Education is expanding their educational services to include basic community living and employment skills. Turning Point of Central California will be providing comprehensive substance abuse treatment

services. The substance abuse services will be provided both in-custody and up to three (3) months after release from the County Jail. County Office of Education and Turning Point will collaborate with the Sheriff's staff to help the inmates develop realistic Community Transition Plans.

Samaritan Women, Hope Now For Youth, Fresno County Economic Opportunities Commission, and Turning Point will be providing up to three (3) months of community-based intensive transition support and case management services when male and female inmates are released from jail. These organizations will be assisting with locating appropriate housing, education and employment services, accessing domestic violence treatment and anger management programs, counseling and treatment services, transportation, healthcare, childcare, and other support services and resources available in the community.

The funding source for the Community Connections Project is the Inmate Welfare Trust Fund, not taxpayer dollars. The Inmate Welfare Trust Fund is generated through commissary sales and profits from inmate telephone calls and this Fund is primarily designated to be used to provide programming for the benefit of the inmate population.