

Is My Sisters Keeper for me?

If you are a woman presently incarcerated or recently released from a correctional facility in Cumberland County and you have concerns about your safety and well-being during your return to community, you may benefit from a mentor.

A mentor is a woman interested in your welfare, who is familiar with your challenges and trained to work with you in a mutual relationship that will support all of our positive efforts for a successful transition.

For more information:

In-jail MSK referral forms are at the desk of your correctional officer.

If you are already in the community, contact us at:



Cape Elizabeth United Methodist Church
280 Ocean House Road Cape Elizabeth, Maine 04107
207.799.8396 • mysisterskeeper@ceumc.org

Incarcerated women often return to the streets facing the same issues they faced when they were sentenced. They have often lost children, family, home, positive relationships and employment. If they go back to using the same survival tactics that precipitated the imprisonment, many return to jail during the first few months often for probation violations. Research by faith-based and secular organizations indicates that those who have successfully transitioned for 2 years attribute their success to:

- 1] Sustaining belief in God or a Higher Power
- 2] Strong and positive personal support, a mentor relationship
- 3] Maintain focus on recovery from addiction

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Mentee Information



Faith in Action

A Mentoring Program to support safe and successful transition to community for women in corrections in Cumberland County.

Our Mission

My Sister's Keeper provides mentors for women transitioning from incarceration to community. With mutual respect, love, guidance, acceptance, accountability without shame, mentors strive to empower women to make positive choices for their spiritual, physical, emotional and mental health needs. Working collaboratively with faith groups, community groups and government agencies, MSK assists women with the resources they need and provides mentors with direction, through training and practical and emotional support.

Our Vision

With support of Faith Communities, My Sister's Keeper interfaith mentoring will assist women to transition safely and successfully from incarceration to community.

History

In 1999, a prison ministry volunteer began meeting weekly for faith sharing and spiritual support with women in Cumberland County Jail. She shared their prayer requests at early morning Sunday worship and was asked to write a newsletter article about this ministry. She called it "My Sister's Keeper".

When a mother of 2 small children was released from jail and needed immediate assistance for food, clothing and shelter, this church family provided loving support and generous donations to help meet her basic needs.

"I was in prison and you came to me."

Matthew 25:36

Present Mentor Program

Professional MSK staff work closely with jail staff and community service providers during re-entry planning. Assignments are made to Mentor volunteers who have completed a basic training program and attend monthly meetings for ongoing support, training and supervision. They then provide a wide variety of re-entry services to women with diverse strengths and challenges.

17 area Faith Communities offer meaningful support to mentors in their midst and the women they serve. With their valuable personal and practical supports, Faith Communities have become an integral part of My Sister's Keeper.

Why Mentoring?

Transitioning to community is often a challenging situation, yet it can also offer significant opportunities. An MSK mentor is a caring and capable woman who has completed mentor training and is prepared to be there in a relationship of trust and confidence to assist with overcoming the challenges and finding hopeful new opportunities.

What does a Mentor do?

She listens in confidence to her mentee as they develop a covenant agreement that supports all necessary rehabilitation efforts and also positive personal goals. The mentor relationship is maintained through regular phone contacts and personal support on an agreed upon basis.

Mentor services often include:

- Assist with connection to appropriate community services for provision of basic needs.
- Being a friend and advocate in matters of important concerns and decisions.
- Appreciation of her mentee's unique self and her strengths and abilities.
- Encouragement in self-care and the development of a healthy support system.
- Support and encouragement to maintain necessary rehabilitation and medical programs.
- Guidance as requested in self-care and child care.
- Assistance with strategies to accomplish positive goals.
- Understanding and acceptance when there are disappointments.
- Support in connecting with the Faith Community of her choice.
- Assist with new opportunities such as schooling, job training, employment and personal growth.

"Keep on loving each other as brothers and sisters. Don't forget to welcome strangers. By doing so, some people have welcomed angels without knowing it."

Hebrews 13: 1 & 2