

# **Native Hawaiian Justice Task Force Summit Research Methods**

**October 2012**

## **Data Collection**

Testifiers were asked by the Task Force to respond to two questions:

1. *Why are Native Hawaiians disproportionately represented in Hawai'i's criminal justice system? (and)*
2. *How can we address this serious matter?*

A total of seven public Native Hawaiian Justice Task Force community meetings were held between June 7, 2012 and August 3, 2012: Four in O'ahu, and one each in Hilo, Kona, Maui, Moloka'i (which included participants from Lāna'i), and Kaua'i. One hundred and fifty-eight participants provided either oral and/or written testimony. Table 1 depicts the location, dates, and number of participants providing testimony by island. Table 2 depicts the gender and group classification. Testifiers were classified into one of five groups: agency representative, community member, professional, pa'ahao, or 'ohana of current or former pa'ahao.

Testimony of 149 oral testifiers was audio recorded. Since the Kaua'i hearing recording did not capture three of the 13 oral testimonies only 10 oral testimonies were available for analysis from Kaua'i, yielding a sum total of 146 oral testimonies. Oral testimony from the O'ahu meetings were electronically transcribed using Dragon Naturally Speaking software. However, the accuracy of the conversion from audio to text was inconsistent. Five staff members revised these transcripts to assure transcripts accurately captured all oral content. Given the project timeline and resources, a decision was made to complete data analysis directly from audio recordings for the remainder of testimonies from the Neighbor Island hearings.

Written testimony included the text of testimony as well as documentation of programs and research. Thirty-three participants submitted both written and oral testimony. Inclusion of both pieces of data from a single person is justified if the content is sufficiently different; otherwise,

inclusion of the same content twice overinflates coding frequencies which could lead to erroneous conclusions. To determine if both pieces of data from a single testifier were distinct enough to justify inclusion in the final data set, the content of the written testimony of each of these 33 testifiers was compared to their oral testimonies. Twelve written testimonies were deemed sufficiently unique from the testifier's oral testimony that both their written and their oral testimony were included as separate pieces of data in the final data set. Twenty-one written testimonies were determined to have content that was consistent enough with oral testimony that inclusion would be repetitive; subsequently, only the oral testimony was included in the final data set for these 21 testifiers.

Figure 1 depicts the entire data collection process used to secure the final 158 unique testimonies: 49 were transcribed oral testimonies from O'ahu testifiers, 97 were audio recordings of oral testimony from Neighbor Island testifiers, and 12 were unique written testimonial documents.

Table 1  
Number of Testimonies by Location

Location	Date(s)	Number of Testimonies
O'ahu	June 7-8, 2012	55
Kona	July 7, 2012	15
Hilo	July 14, 2012	26
Maui	July 21, 2012	23
Moloka'i/Lāna'i	August 1, 2012	29
Kaua'i <sup>a</sup>	August 3, 2012	10

<sup>a</sup> Technical difficulties resulted in only 10 of 13 oral testimonies being recorded.

Table 2

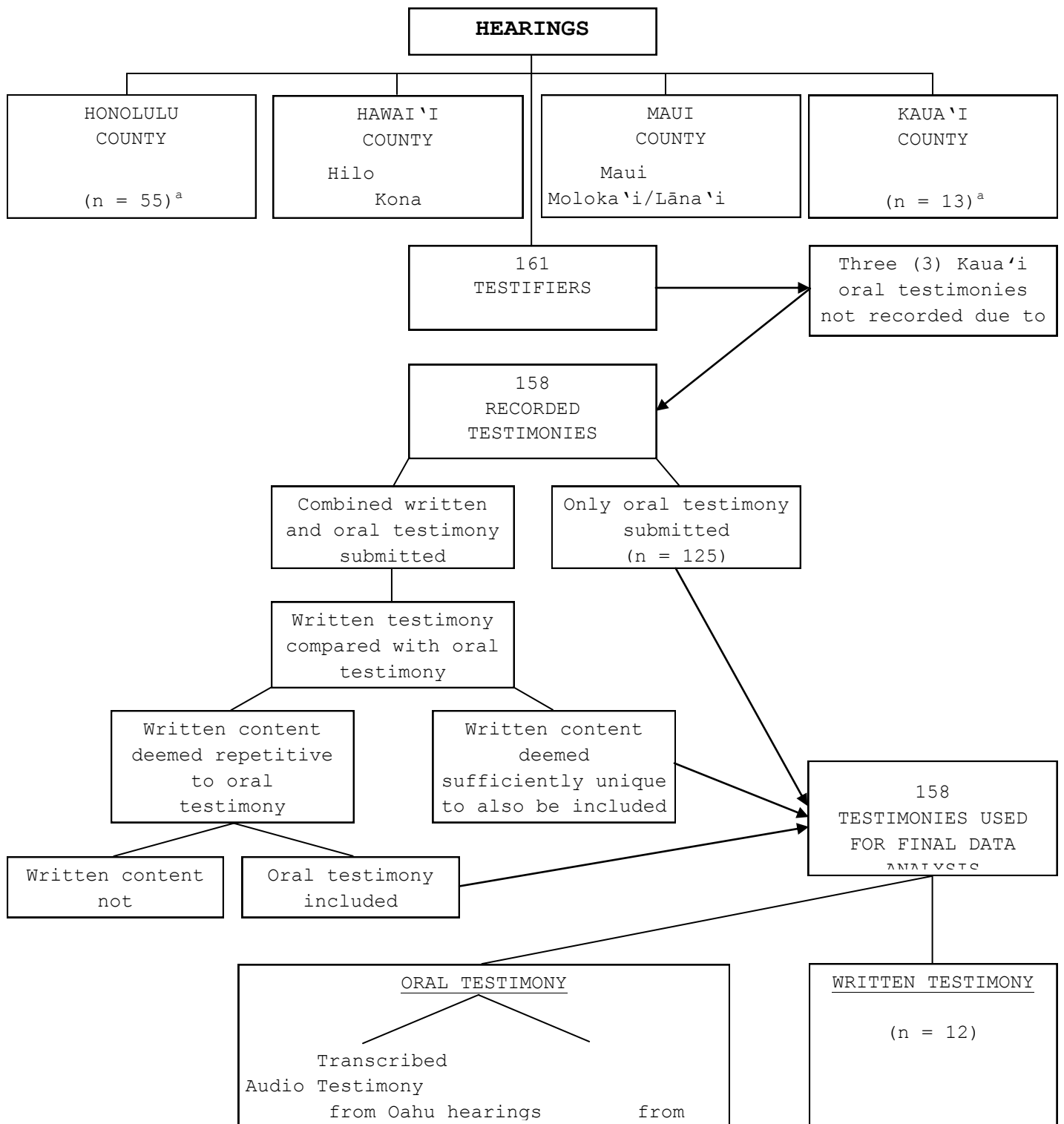
## Participant Role by Gender

Participant Role Group	Gender			
	Male		Female	
	n (n=83)	%	n (n=75)	%
Agency representative	17	21%	21	28%
Community member	31	37%	25	33%
Professional	19	23%	11	15%
Pa'ahao	12	15%	6	8%
'Ohana of pa'ahao	4	4%	12	16%

**Data Analysis**

The data analysis team consisted of three members of the OHA Research Division: the Director, a Program Manager, and Program Improvement staff member. Qualitative data analysis is an iterative process that requires continual interaction and review of the data to ensure confidence in the final interpretations and reliability of the coding process. Results typically include the frequency of a set of common codes used to group content with similar meaning, then clusters of codes with similar content referred to as themes, and finally synthesized descriptive analysis of "what the content really means."

Figure 1. Data collection process



<sup>a</sup>Number of testimonies by county

A standard process was used:

- 1) Initial analysis of three O'ahu testimonies independently analyzed to establish a coding scheme;
- 2) Initial assessment of inter-rater agreement of codes, discussion and to refine the coding scheme;
- 3) Independent analysis of all data by each team members;
- 4) Further checks on stability of inter-rater agreement, team discussions of analysis, refinement of the coding scheme, and creation of clustered themes (iterative);
- 5) Reanalysis of data with final coding scheme, final frequency counts of codes, and;
- 6) Discussion among research team members of final results.

A grounded theory approach was applied in which initial codes were not pre-determined but rather emerged from the data to identify common components across testimonies.

**Inter-rater agreement.** Three testimonies were used to establish the initial inter-rater agreement of themes. All testimonies were independently analyzed. The initial inter-rater agreement was 83%, an acceptable measure of reliability. Subsequent checks resulted in inter-rater agreements that ranged from 75% - 84%, with inter-rater agreement increasing throughout the process of analysis.

**Thematic identification.** Qualitative coding for two research questions frequently involves the creation of two separate coding schemes: one for each question. However, research team members quickly realized that testifier's responses to the two questions asked by the Task Force were intertwined throughout an their testimony. Some testifiers did not answer the questions directly but instead shared their personal experiences and opinions. Thus, separate coding by question was deemed inappropriate and a single coding scheme was utilized for both questions.

During July to September, 2012 researchers worked independently on data analysis and met regularly to share their findings. For transparency purposes, the initial coding and cluster schemes were presented in Appendix A. Following the completion of the second wave of data analysis researchers me to finalize the coding scheme and debated how new and previously

identified themes could be combined, collapsed, and interpreted. The lead researcher applied team recommendations to draft the initial results in response to each question asked by the Task Force. A final review of the results was completed by all research team members to assure consensus with overall data interpretation.

## Results

Results are organized according to the two questions posed by the Task Force:

1. *Why are Native Hawaiians disproportionately represented in Hawai'i's criminal justice system? (and)*
2. *How can we address this serious matter?*

Table 3 presents the frequency of the final coding scheme used to categorize responses to both question. Notably, the majority of testifiers did not address both questions. Refer to Appendix A for the initial coding scheme and clustering process used to clarify major themes. Culture, policies/laws, and reintegration via multiple approaches emerged as the final themes of how testifiers perceived the task force could address this matter.

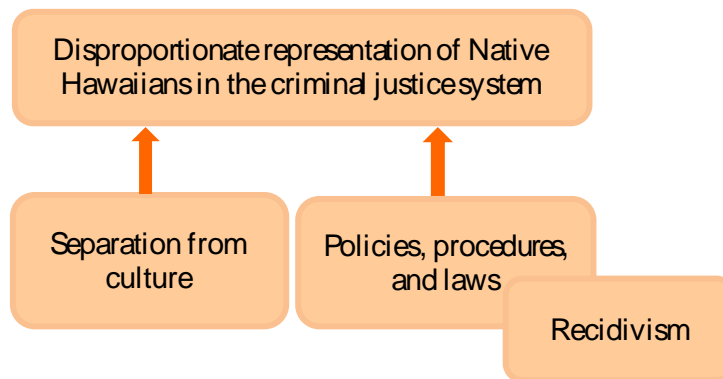
Table 3  
Frequency of final coded categories

	Final Coding
Models/ approaches	50
Policy/ Laws	43
Separation from culture	42
Reintegration	39
Culture based programs	35
Correctional Corporation of America (CCA) - Mainland prisons	28
Economic issue	25
Maintain cultural beliefs and practices	21
Preventative Drug Treatment	18
Training	18
Restorative Justice	14
Pu'uhonua	13
Ho'oponopono	13
Sovereignty	12
Recidivism	11
Disparate Sentencing	9

**Q1. Why are Native Hawaiians disproportionately represented in Hawai'i's criminal justice system?**

As shown in Figure 2, participants identified *separation from culture* and *policies, procedures, and laws* as two critical reasons for disproportionate representation of Native Hawaiians in the criminal justice system. Recidivism was embedded within the discussion of policies, procedures, and laws.

Figure 2. Participant identified factors associated with the disproportionate representation of Native Hawaiians in the criminal justice system



**Separation from culture.** Participants provided a variety of perspectives on the historical causal factors associated with the overrepresentation of Native Hawaiians in the criminal justice system. These perspectives were expressed in terms such as "historical trauma", "generational trauma", "cultural trauma", "loss of identity", "loss of connection to culture", "discontinued use of cultural practices such as ho'oponopono", "loss of self-governance", and "disconnected from land". Many participants linked these factors directly to the 1893 overthrow of the Hawaiian Kingdom which led to a shift in the economic and political balance of power. This resulted in loss of land, language, cultural practices, and decreased psycho-social well-being. Participants described this systemic historical cultural loss as negatively impacting the social structure and dynamic of families and thereby individuals.



*"Cultural historical trauma is the aftermath of colonization, the aftermath of dominant, one culture over another. It's psychological, it's economical, it's social, it's emotional and here's a corker, it's intergenerational. And why is it intergenerational? It's intergenerational because when that trauma happens, there's usually grief, depression, existential grief, a certain numbness, cultural wounding, a sense of not belonging...I don't belong here, I don't belong there. The makua, the parents and grandparents who are suffering from, or have been impacted by cultural historical trauma, have a real tough time getting out of that and raising their kids in a healthy way...We in the Hawaiian community have understood that trauma was such an important link to a lot of the disparities, a lot of the socioeconomic issues that affect our people."*

**Policy, procedures, and laws.** Testifiers consistently expressed concerns related to their knowledge or understanding of current policies, procedures, and laws regarding the justice system, public services, and prisons. These included: 1) inequity/disparate sentencing, 2) lack of access to quality legal representation, 3) inability of ex-offenders to get jobs, housing, education, and other public benefits, 4) issues related to the transfer of Hawai'i prisoners to the continent.

***Inequitable sentencing and lack of access to quality legal representation.*** The most common statements in this category dealt with inequitable sentencing. In addition to the historical context, many participants testified that inequitable sentencing and lack of access to quality legal representation were contemporary factors contributing to overrepresentation of Native Hawaiians in prison. Although several participants mentioned inequitable sentencing as a cause for high rates of Native Hawaiians being incarcerated, they did not elaborate; however, one participant presented some data that supported those identifying this as a problem. The data presented raised the question as to the qualitative decisions being made by officers and prosecutors providing support to those who testified that institutional racism was linked to sentencing decisions. Some participants shared personal stories of their experience with public defenders and pointed out that these offices are inadequately staffed. An overburdened system reduces the chance for quality legal representation. In

addition, a few written testimonies included data on both adults and youth that supported disparity at all points of contact with the criminal justice system.

***Inability to get jobs, housing, education and other benefits.*** Many participants testified that current policies and laws make it difficult for ex-offenders to get jobs, housing, education, and other public benefits. This inability to succeed post-incarceration was recognized as a direct link to recidivism.

*"Once a person has been incarcerated and then released, they become part of a permanent underclass as jobs, public benefits, education and opportunity are legally and practically placed out of reach so that the person reoffends and is caught in a closed [cycle] of marginalization. The period after incarceration is referred to by some scholars on the subject as the period of invisibility. It is legal to discriminate against ex-offenders in housing, employment and public benefits. If you think getting a job is hard, try doing it with tattoos and a felony and with your prior work experience coming from inside or from ten years ago."*

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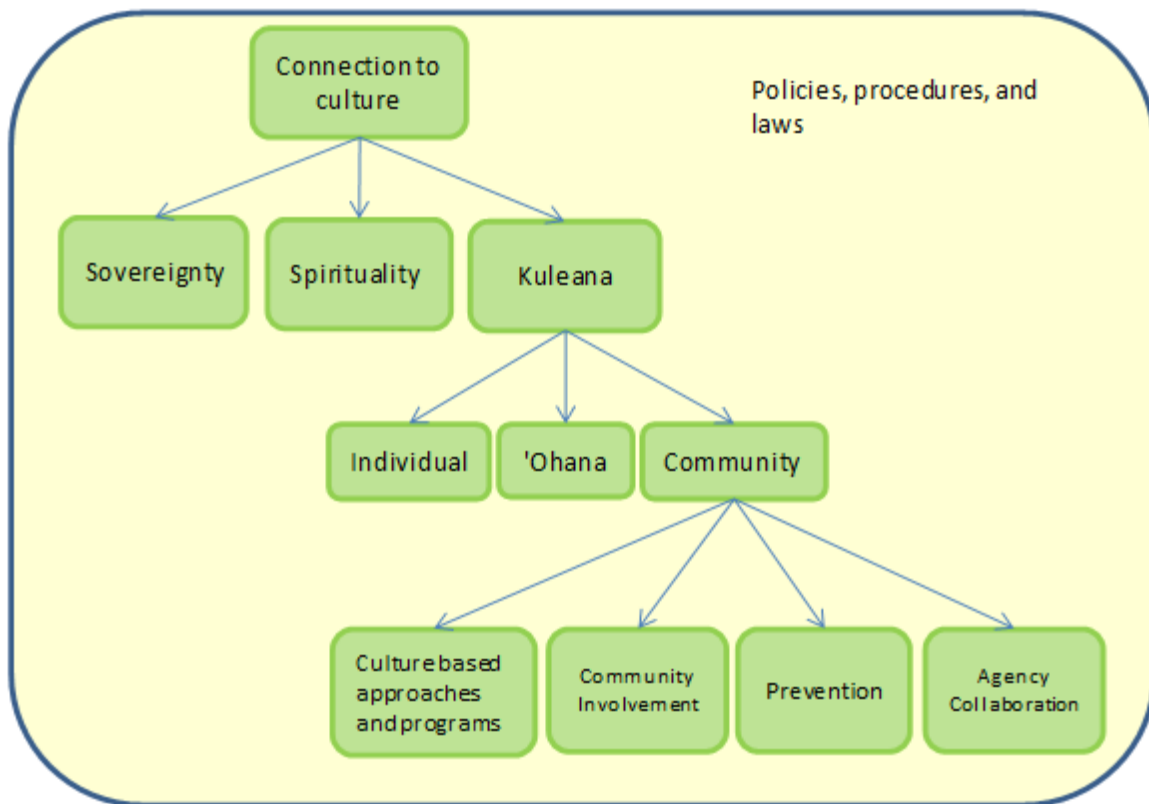
*"The biggest contributor to not reoffending and against recidivism is maintaining long-term employment."*

***Transfer of Hawai'i prisoners to the continent.*** The most consistent message relayed by participants was how imperative it was to "bring our prisoners home." Native Hawaiian prisoners sent to the continent had no 'ohana support or contact. There were various issues raised about the inability for these prisoners to practice their religion, in particular the Makahiki, or to speak their language. In contrast to these statements, were comments made by some testifying that their 'ohana serving time in prisons on the continent did not want to come back to Hawai'i because they regarded the treatment in our prisons as worse. This prompted comments about training for correctional officers and other prison staff, as well as, policies that allow for practice of Native Hawaiian religion equitable to those given Christian based religions.

**Q2. How can we address this serious matter?**

*Connection to culture and policies, procedures, and laws* were clearly the major themes throughout the testimonies. Figure 3 attempts to visually describe how *connection to culture* was expressed in relation to other components that participants discussed. Since much of the testimony regarding the solutions necessary to reduce the disproportionality of Native Hawaiians in the criminal justice system indicated the need to review and revise existing *policies, procedures, and laws* it is represented in the figure as the context influencing the expression of many of these relationships. The relationships between the components pictured in the Figure 3 are described in more detail below.

Figure 3. Major themes explaining testifiers responses connected to culture



**Connection to culture.** The major theme throughout the testimony was the importance of culture and the need to incorporate culture in preventive, treatment, and rehabilitative efforts. Participants presented testimony regarding connection

to culture in relation to meta-level cultural values (e.g., spirituality), inter-personal layers (e.g., individual, 'ohana), and community systemic approaches (e.g, community involvement, agency collaboration). Although *kuleana* and *community* are incorporated into the components linked to the *connection to culture* theme, they were also the context within which much of the discussion for solutions took place and therefore will be further discussed as *kuleana of the community*.

***Meta-level concepts.*** Participant testimony reflected three values classified as sovereignty, spirituality, and kuleana.

*Sovereignty.* While some sovereignty testimony was connected to the loss of sovereignty and the ultimate impact of that on the current incarceration problem, there was testimony that suggested 1) when the Hawaiian nation is formalized there must be consideration of how current and future incarcerated Native Hawaiians will be handled, 2) Native Hawaiians are already sovereign and therefore the state is obliged to remedy the situation of incarcerated Native Hawaiians.

*Spirituality.* There was much testimony that spirituality is an innate element of being Hawaiian. Spirituality was expressed in the traditional Hawaiian belief one's connection to 'āina, in the Christian tradition of "ke akua" (e.g., God, the Lord), and in the metaphysical "sense of being." Many testified that when working with the incarcerated to connect them back to their culture, spirituality was inherent in that connection. One cannot work the land, paddle, fish, make nets, dance hula, oli, and participate in other cultural activities without understanding the spiritual connection to the 'āina, to the kai, and therefore to ke akua. Practitioners, professionals, and community members were keenly aware of the symbiotic link between a Native Hawaiian sense of well-being and spirituality. One does not exist without the other.

*"Because we have such limited time, I wanted to talk about a lot of things, but I had to narrow it down to things of relevance so, I'm going to speak on the importance of Hawaiian culture, traditional practices and approaches towards rehabilitation of native Hawaiians. Towards healing, ho'oponopono.... My main point that I'm pushing today is cultural rehabilitation. In the*

prison, religion is very powerful. They encourage the inmates to get involved. Right now there is a struggle going on with Hawaiian religion. Hawaiians are being oppressed, suppressed. Early on they were told that Hawaiian's don't have a religion. And the second questions came back, "Okay, where's your bible?" and my response what "why do we need a bible?" Our bible is codified in our mo'ō lelo, our chants and prayers. ...But, the thing about it is these inmates, the Hawaiian man, they have the i'ini, the desire to reconnect; find out who they are, where they came from. And that is what makes it very powerful and important. All the other western cognitive restructuring, life skills, whatever, they go because they're mandated to go.

One thing I learned is that every single Hawaiian that was there, they all respected, no matter how hardened a criminal they were, they respected prayer, and they respected the ceremony. It's been a struggle for the makahiki for the prisons and the inmates. Why Hawaiian spiritual and culture. Like I said, they have the i'ini, the desire. This is something that they want to do that they cherish. The universal values such as kuleana, responsibility, respect, initiative, leadership, are all embedded in our cultural practices. Teamwork, cooperation, it's already embedded. In order for the ceremony to happen, in order for the hula to be pono, you have to cooperate. You have to have discipline. You have to show up....But I know that a spiritually grounded inmate, at least from the point of the administration, is an easier inmate to manage. But for me, I think the prison administration, their lolo, they're stupid. If they allow these guys to find themselves, they would find that they would have a lot less violence and trouble with the inmates. "

Kuleana. Participants testified to the kuleana of individuals, 'ohana, and the community. There was varied testimony regarding the kuleana of an individual; however, these could be reduced to three groups of comments. The first were those individuals testifying who expressed a belief that it was their kuleana to work with current or formerly incarcerated adults and youth, at-risk youth not yet associated with the criminal justice system, or in prevention efforts with children, youth, and families. Many expressed their deep felt passion for their field of work. Second were those who believed it was

their kuleana to pass on their cultural knowledge and practices with this population. Third were comments from formerly incarcerated individuals and family members of formerly incarcerated individuals who stated that an individual must be ready to change and must be willing to accept their kuleana as part of that change. This would include rules of programs, participation in program activities, holding themselves accountable for their own behavior while incarcerated, acknowledgment of their crime or the circumstances that brought them to prison, and where possible restoration in some form.

In testifying to the kuleana of 'ohana as part of the solution there were two main types of statements. There were statements that parents must raise their children "correctly" and "teach them the right way." All of the 'ohana should be responsible for supporting parents to raise their children with a sense of values and respect. Others testified that if an individual goes down the wrong path, then the 'ohana can be a support network. These statements were tempered by others from professionals, as well as, former pa'ahao who noted that in some cases there was too much hurt and relational damage suffered by 'ohana and therefore a reluctance or refusal to be part of any program or ho'oponopono process. In this sense, the 'ohana too must be ready for change before reconciliation at any level can be successful.

There was much testimony regarding the kuleana of the community in addressing the disproportionate numbers of Native Hawaiians in the criminal justice system. The community, which for purposes of this report, is defined as a broad set of agencies, systems, programs, volunteer organizations or individuals, faith based organizations, and any others working to address this issue. Four primary solutions emerged in connection to the community's kuleana. These will be described in the following section.

### **Kuleana of the community**

As shown in Figure 3, the four themes that emerged regarding the *kuleana of the community* included: 1) culture based approaches and programs, 2) community involvement, 3) prevention, and 4) agency collaboration.

***Culture based approaches and programs as necessary components for reintegration.*** The testimony data consistently revealed the need for culture-based approaches and programs as intervention for those incarcerated and as post-incarceration support. Culture based programs in conjunction with education and relevant job training was viewed as critical to ensuring successful transition back to the community. Many participants shared their own programs that worked with incarcerated men and women to reconnect them to their culture. These programs include cultural components such as learning about Hawaiian history, cultural practices, individual mokuauhau (genealogy), participating in cultural practices such as oli and makahiki, and using ho'oponopono as a method for healing family relationships. There were programs presented that did not clearly describe cultural components, but focused on addressing life skills, mental health services, and employment skills. Job skills training for today's employment market was discussed as necessary to ensure that upon release ex-offenders can find employment to support themselves. Refer to Appendix B for a list of programs mentioned by participants during their testimonies.

*"The Hawaiian perspective is very important... There is power in the language that is native to these islands...Culture based means using the kupuna and other as mentors. There is strength in particular we look at Native Hawaiians that are incarcerated we have to communicate to them as fellow community members that there is already a strength they have in being native..."----*

*"What I wanted to begin with, aside from the fact that I wanted to make it important, that culture is a major part of recovery and rehabilitation, I wanted to talk about being able to give them the culture because it grounds them. It grounds them in who they are, what they're doing, but it also is a reminder for those that were blessed enough to be raised in a family that instilled morals and values. For those that come out of incarceration that had that instilled, what happens is at Ho'omau Ke Ola, they are reminded. It's brought back to them, just like all those things they used to practice in childhood, small kid time. It's almost like a little tug on the ear to remind them what they should already know and begin to practice and open up their eyes to."*

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*"The biggest contributor to not reoffending and against recidivism is maintaining long-term employment."*

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*"Can we link criminal justice system with the needs of the economy and develop a system of training in green jobs, ag, and sustainable ag that will bring Hawaiian values, culture, connection and create long-term plan that will help Native Hawaiians and the state?"*

Many participants clearly articulated the necessity of continuing culture-based approaches and programs post-incarceration. Pu'uhonua was suggested as an approach to ensure that men and women who are struggling after release from incarceration could find continued connection to their culture, healing, education, and training. In some cases, the pu'uhonua described would include transitional housing. A few participants further suggested Kulani Facility as a possible pu'uhonua site. Others suggested pu'uhonua as a more conceptual approach rather than physical space. It was suggested that agencies could themselves serve as pu'uhonua via their services and relationship with their clients.

*"We need transitional programs incorporating culture and help with getting jobs, childcare, employment skills, place to live, etcetera."*

**Community involvement as a support mechanism for reintegration.** Community involvement varied from individuals who participate in programs on a volunteer basis to share their knowledge and skills to local businesses that support programs or hire formerly incarcerated individuals to faith based organizations that provided assistance in obtaining housing, work training, and spiritual guidance. Testimony from program personnel also indicated their awareness of the important role that the community played as a support network for those formerly incarcerated. There was also testimony that revealed several programs started as grass roots initiatives to fill a need identified within the community regarding formerly incarcerated adults and youth who were having difficulty reintegrating.



***Prevention to reduce Native Hawaiians involvement with the criminal justice system.*** Comments related to prevention were clearly articulated in association with education, economic opportunities, and substance use. Some participants presented testimony that it was through education of our youth to be adequately prepared for the employment needs of the future that we will prevent their need to engage in risky, illegal actions. Other participants testified we need to create economic opportunities for our youth and our ex-offenders. Economic opportunities must be sustainable and provide adequate wages to ensure our youth can afford to remain at home and our ex-offenders can survive financially. Several participants indicated that one of the most pervasive problems in the Native Hawaiian community is substance abuse. These participants discussed prevention in association with preventative drug programs. Unlike the cultural programs described above these were often statements for the need to have more such programs without further elaboration.

***Agency collaboration must be supported to ensure successful reintegration.*** All role groups attested to needing better reintegration services. For agency leaders, staff, and other program personnel this translated into a call for collaboration between agencies to ensure that each inmate has a transition plan prior to release. The transition plan would ensure that the connections to acquire basic necessities, mental health and medical services, and enrollment in transition programs were ready so the inmate does not feel overwhelmed and become vulnerable to old habits. Those testifying for the transition plan also advocated for the state to make it easier for agencies to collaborate to achieve better reintegration.

*"So what, at a task force level, can happen that can make that goal? Well, that can be things like supporting bills and legislation to promote interagency cooperation. You know, because we can talk about the evaluation component of things; we can talk about specific organizational or specific branches within the state's health system; we can talk about needing to cross between judiciary and health; and yet, we could also similarly talk about the need for cross between DOE and and and the judiciary system. I mean, it's a similar need; it just depends on what part of the system. So if we're talking about*

*transformational thought, then we need people that can all play well together at the table.”*

### **Policies, procedures and laws**

It was clear from numerous testimonies that policies, procedures, and laws are integrated into all aspects of how Native Hawaiians enter, exist within, and exit the criminal justice system. Table 4 depicts the group response to Q2 related to policies, procedures and laws.

Table 4

Categories of testifiers responses regarding how the problem could be addressed

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- Support bills and legislation that would promote interagency collaboration and take down barriers between agencies.
- Support bills and legislation that would support the creation of public-private partnerships for services.
- Support bills and legislation that require cultural components to be integrated into programs addressing Native Hawaiians during and after incarceration.
- Create incentives for businesses to hire ex-offenders.
- Create policies that would require the development of a discharge or transition plan for inmates to ensure a system of care post-incarceration.
- Advocate to change Medicaid policies so that culture based treatments can be covered.
- Eliminate the contract with CCA and until that occurs ensure that there are provisions within the contract that allow for cultural practices such as ‘olelo, pule, and oli.
- Change the current adult and youth criminal justice system to include a broader range of options to such as diversion and restoration options.
- Review and revise the misdemeanor laws for both adults and youth. The current laws ensure that people are imprisoned for substantial amounts of time for crimes such as trespassing. Many of these non-violent offenders are housed with violent offenders.

## **Personal experiences as examples of the impact of incarceration**

Selected excerpts from three individuals are presented below. These experiences highlight the impact of *connection to culture* and *community kuleana* (in the form of programs aimed at reintegration). They highlight impact of incarceration on 'ohana, success, barriers to successful reintegration, struggle, and are a testament to both formal and informal community based programs addressing healing, prevention, rehabilitation, and reintegration.

**Testimony Excerpt #1.** *"Aloha, I'm DD and I thank you for letting me share. My mom has been through a lot with me, a very, very bumpy road. My mother didn't understand prison. When I was in prison, my mother said she was going to bring me some fish and poi, and I was like, no mom, you can't bring fish and poi to prison. So, she had to go through a process too. It was very traumatizing, not just for me, but for them. I come from a family of educators. My mother's a teacher, my sister's a teacher and I was trying to be a teacher myself and then my life went another path. I believe that our prison is going to trail blaze this place because the women that come out of prison, when we come out of prison, we go to TJ Mahoney's and they teach us time management skills, they teach us life skills. They teach us how to handle life on the outside... "life on life's terms," that's what they say. Most of us in prison are not educated. A lot of them are not educated. .... What happened in our prison, with our warden and his vision, of pu'uhonua, he wanted it to become a place of healing. ...I feel like I am a product of his vision because when I got to that prison he was just starting up and a lot of things happened to me. I got sent to Kentucky and I could relate to AA sharing about how the men joined gangs. We shouldn't be leaving the islands to go to prison. I went to Kentucky and my mother was very traumatized because she would visit me every single weekend in prison. Even though I did all these things, she still was my biggest support. You've got two minutes to pack your bag and go to Kentucky when they call your name, you're going, and you're on the flight.*

*It was really a traumatizing event for me. But some things that happened to me there, and even though that traumatized me, when I got back, I got into the Hina Mauka program which was a really awesome program in our prison system. ... because our Hina Mauka*

program in the WCCC is based on Hawaiian culture. Every day, we wake up and chant. We do our chants, we have beautiful women in prison. Last year they went to honor the three kupunas, the halau and they danced, the women from prison. And they danced beautiful kahiko. It was just so touching that everyone in the audience cried.

You know, when you're sitting in prison, you might look at us like criminals...but no, we just made bad choices. Some of us had dramatic events that happened in our lives that took us on a different path, but we're all the same. I got out of prison and I went to TJ Mahoney and I did six-months there. I learned a lot of skills, learned how to get back and reintegrate back into society and stay committed. Because what I learned in TJ's was that it was the small things that I had to take care of, because those were the things that were going to take me back out. I had to learn to follow rules, and that was tough. TJ's has lots of rules.

I'm here today as the peer support specialists for WCCC which two years ago when I got out of prison, the warden said do you want to be on my team? And I said what team? And he said the Trauma Informed Initiative team and I said, sounds good to me, because trauma is what gets us to prison. A lot of us, and even if you're a normal person, you still got trauma issues, and most of us stuff those issues. And that's why women are always in recidivism because they don't open up and take the power out of the trauma. We join the trauma team and I got to go to Baltimore. Two years ago I went to Baltimore and got to meet some other peer specialists from all over, women that were in prison, with all kinds of stuff that happened to them. They were up on a panel and they were inspiring. I looked at this one lady and I said "I want to be like that," because she was inspiring. She came from a very trauma family. She came from prison; she had her master's degree and all this good stuff. And that's what I wanted to do be. So last year, I got to go to Boston and learn about the use of seclusion or restraint. We're trying to eliminate that in our prisons.

So today, I'm trying to go back and get my degree at LCC. I'm full time. ... On the outside I formed a little group with me and my girlfriends, because all the girls I went to prison with, we share a bond. We're so tight that not even our family knows

the secrets that we shared with each other. Unfortunately, the paroling authorities don't let us hang out together because it's illegal action. So we're not really allowed to hang out, but there are ways you can do that. Because my parole officer is a wonderful lady and she, she sees what I'm doing out in the community, she's allowed me to associate with other [inaudible] people's that are also doing well. But once they violate their parole, we're not allowed to hang out any more. And we understand that. We are on the outside trying to help another sister survive, trying to teacher her skills. Work is important, you have to get up, go to work on time. Those are the small things in your life that you have to be faithful to. In our prison, one of the best things that came out of prison for me, was not just the ability to learn about myself, but to make a connection with my god. We have bibles in our prison. We have lots of bibles in our prisons. We have lots of people from all over donate things to us. We have all kinds of churches in our prison. And for us, just building a foundation is what is going to work."

**Testimony Excerpt #2.** "Both my parents were in and out of prison when I was younger. I grew up with those struggles. I am the oldest of three kids. I have two younger brothers and my mom actually had my youngest one when she was in prison. And she ended up in Woman's Way cause she saw how hard everyone was having trouble. They end up going back in prison, in and out and again, and she didn't want to go through that. So she chose Woman's Way and that actually helped her. And around that time, too, a lot of the programs that you guys are talking about now days, it wasn't around back then for kids like me and my brother. It would have nice to have them, but we made it through somehow, and my father unfortunately he did not seek help or anything. He was in and out all the way up until the day he committed suicide with an overdose two weeks before my 18th birthday. He left behind two kids...two older kids and a six month year old girl. And, I see my brother and he, in two days, he turns 18.

Two years ago I was in high school and I was one of those kids, roaming the streets, doing everything that everyone else used to do. The kids, it's not just about educating them. But getting them to understand, understand how it is. And a lot of them do,

but a lot of them don't know what to do about it and don't know how to deal with it. And no disrespect to any psychology majors or anything in here, but those steps and everything, some of 'em they'll do it in that room when you are talking to them, they'll write that paper down or whatever you want them to write, and as soon as they walk out that door, it's in one ear and out the other. And I see it all the time and I only see it getting worse and these kids are getting younger and younger, starting younger and younger. And it's scary to see that. Cause my brother is still struggling to this very day with self-esteem and everything cause he believed that he had to go, he had to, he believed that cause of my father and cause my mother and everyone else that went through that. Cause it wasn't just that, it was before them too, they saw that. He believed that that's what he was supposed to do, that was where he was going to end up. And I believed that too. I thought I was just going to end up a druggie, end up doing all that kind stuff, but I was grateful and thankful that my grandma tried to step in and save us. And she raised me, teaching me about Hawaiian ways and Hawaiian morals and all that. And I am an active, to this very day, an active civic club member of Ko'olaupoko Hawaiian Civic Club. And I give them credit cause they are very active and last year I was part of a cultural mentoring program for these kids and Alu Like, funded by Alu Like, and it was basically I just helped these kids and we took them all around the island. Took them all around the east side. We put them to work in the lo'i and everything. And these kids wanted to learn. When it came to learning the chants and the olis indoors, they were so like, not there. But when it came to outdoors, hand-on everything, they were there. They wanted to. It was all about, like, getting them the motivation to do it. It seems like, to me, that they want to do Hawaiian, they want to know all about the Hawaiian culture. They want to. And that was the way that we got through to a lot of kids. And it's sad, cause we couldn't do it again this year and a lot of the kids wanted to.

Task Force Member: JJ, we are so glad that you did come and share with us. I have one question. JJ, you mentioned that the program is not happening this year. Why is that? Do you know?

JJ: We couldn't get the funding to do it. And that was one of the main motivations for the kids to actually show up was that

they were getting paid to do it. But they showed up on their own too, even when we didn't provide transportation. We were doing it all on our own. We had aunties watching them, aunties helping us, you know. We put them to work with tools and everything, cutting down bamboo, we cleaned heiau, we took them to Kahuku up in the military area, like, searching for different heiau. And they loved it. They loved it. They wanted to keep going, they wanted to learn more and everything. And just teaching them those Hawaiian ways was enough for them."

**Testimony Excerpt #3.** "Aloha, my name is KK. For me I am a convicted felon. I've been pulling time for over fifteen years now. I was recently let out for the very last time. You know I've heard a lot of good things about a lot of points in this room today and it really affects me because I've been a criminal for all of my adult life and most of my teenage years. I've stole, done drugs, dealt drugs, did everything possible to find my place. You know it's funny about what Pastor D was saying about that heart yeah. It reminds me of something that my grandma used to tell me when she was raising my up. You know would always have dishes in the sink. And she would tell me, 'KK, how come you nevah wash the dishes in the sink'. I said because I nevah make those dishes that's mom's dishes. She said if you see dishes in the sink you just wash it no matter what whose dishes that is. And you when GG was bringing me down here I was asking what is this meeting all about. Is the goal to get funded? He looked at me and he said it's not about money it's about the people. And you know what, after hearing everybody share I see that I'm involved in a room full of that same type of person. And that's why I hang around with people like Pastor D because I want to be that type of individual, that type of man. You see the many, many years I've been on the street and involved with drugs and pretty much lost I've lost that part of me. I come from one strong Hawaiian family, one big Hawaiian family and we've grown up with those same principles, morals, and values that is taught in the Ka Malama program. See I've done everything. I've been in Maui Drug Court twice. Awesome program. I've been a, I am a BEST client. I am an OHA Scholar recipient. I'm going on my third semester in the human services field trying to get my degree in human services. After going into the Ka Malama program it opened my eyes on principles, morals, and values that I lost along the way. You know malama,

*'ohana, ho'oponopono. You know Mary Kawena Pukui said malama kekahi i kekahi, take care of one another. We cannot do this alone. We cannot do it just one individual trying to change the Native Hawaiian people. You know I never know that Pastor D was never funded for that program. That was all from aloha, from the heart because he care about us, me. You know to have someone to have a network of people who cares about someone like me who has never done nothing good in his life who is always trying to find a place in life. It feels real good.*

*He said he been doing it for nine years without funding, just from the heart. But if I do my math correctly when I went to the class and I went, I did it twice it was so good so I get two certificates. I can almost teach the class [laughter]. But if I do my math correctly I had at least twenty people in my class. Now over nine years if that class was held once a year, 20 x 9, and you think of that number and you think that is not so bad so what if five people of that 20 actually succeed and make it. You calculate how many children each individual has, wives, and then you calculate that number but it is not just that individual that is in the class but at least 5 to 10 people that individual goin' affect. Not only the family but when that individual goes into the community. I believe that to be you know an awesome part of restoring our Hawaiian people. It has affected me so much that is why I am in the human services because I want to open up my own adolescent youth program and I want to instill these same teachings that I learned in the Ka Malama program about principles, morals, and values of old Hawaiian traditions."*

## **Discussion of results**

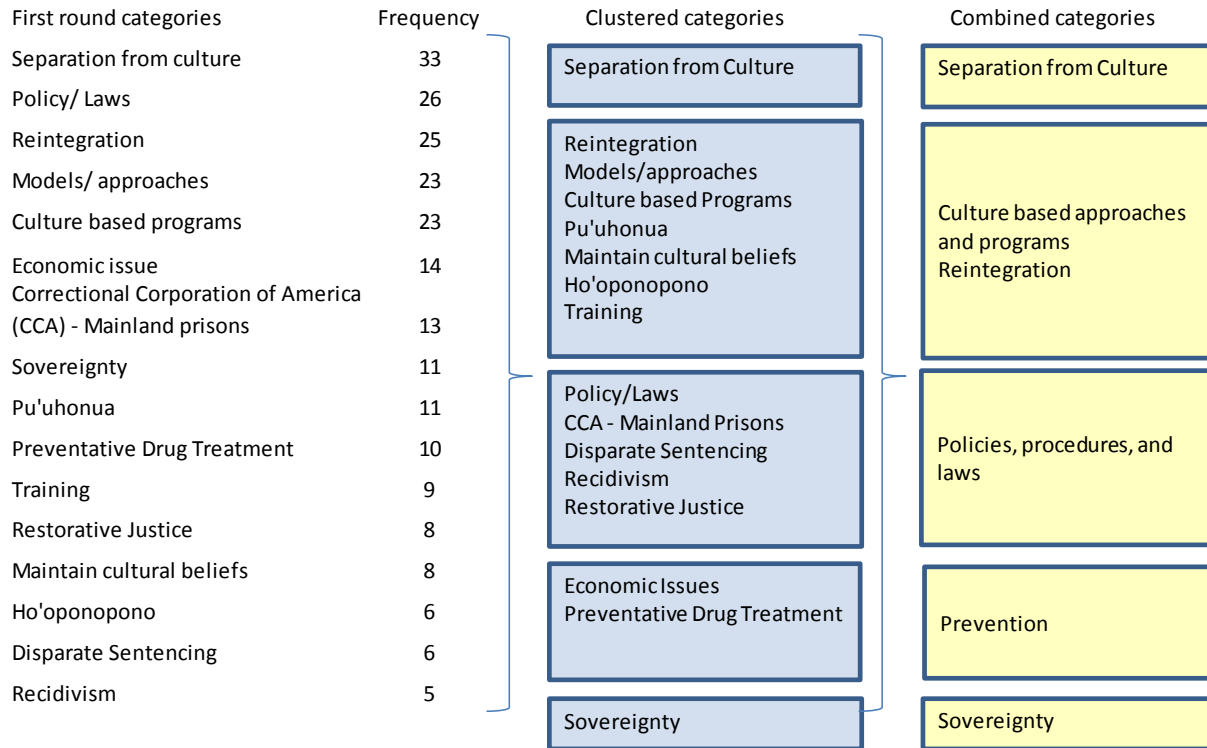
This report attempted to extract common themes from testimony data collected at the Native Hawaiian Justice Taskforce meetings. While there were many testimonies collected across the state, it is interesting that the identified causal factors and solutions were so similar. Culture, specifically the *loss of* and the *re-connection to*, was identified as the most critical element to understanding the problem and how to "fix-it." The importance of a continuum of service approach by implementing culture based programs that include education and meaningful skill building both during an individual's incarceration and post-incarceration was articulated across



testimonies. This continuum of service approach was viewed as a critical component to ensuring successful reintegration into the community. The figures depicted in this report attempted to visually describe the major relationships expressed by participants.

It should be noted that a limitation of the data is the extent to which respondents are representative of their community and their respective role group. This being noted, the testimony data provided rich insight into the dynamic interplay between culture, individuals, families, communities, and other systems (e.g., judicial, corrections, etc.). Given more time, the data set could be further analyzed to determine specific suggestions by role group, gender, and/or location.

## Appendix A Initial coding categories



Appendix B  
Programs Identified by Testifiers

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BEST program	Maui Economic Opportunity, Inc.	Former inmates	Maui	Strengthens the community while helping people in need restore their hope, reach their potential and enrich their lives
Family Support Hawaii	Family Support Hawaii	Neglected and abused children	Hawai'i	Supports families and communities in providing love and care for our children.
Free to Grow (Head Start)	Maui Economic Opportunity, Inc.	Children and families	Maui	Strengthens families by embedding substance abuse programming in Head Start and building community resilience against substance abuse.
Ho'ola Lahui Hawai'i	Kaua'i Community Health Center	Servicing the needs of Native Hawaiians and their families	Kaua'i	Enhance the wellness of our community with an emphasis on culturally appropriate services for Native Hawaiians
Ho'omau Ke Ola	Ho'omau Ke Ola	Substance abuse patients	O'ahu	Provides treatment that promotes healing in an environment that integrates best practices with Hawaiian spiritual values.
Hui Malama	Hui Malama Learning Center	Youth	Maui	To inspire, nurture, and empower students to pursue careers that bolster our islands' economy, increase self-reliance, and provide for future generations.
Ka Hale Ho'ala Hou No Na Wahine	TJ Mahoney and Associates	Formerly incarcerated women	O'ahu	Helps women to transition from prison to the community using comprehensive re-entry services.

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Ke Alaula - WCCC	Hina Mauka	Homeless people and incarcerated women	O'ahu, Kaua'i	Offers treatment for adults through several levels of care including Residential Treatment, Day Treatment, Outpatient Treatment and Aftercare.
Maui Family Peace Center	PACT Parents And Children Together	Victims and survivors of domestic violence (Men, Women and Teen offenders)	O'ahu, Maui, Kaua'i, Hawai'i	Promotes and supports healthy individuals, families and communities by creating opportunities for them to identify and address their own strengths needs and concerns and successfully realize their potential.
Men of PA'A (AKA Positive Action Alliance)	Men of PA'A (AKA Positive Action Alliance)	Community	Hawai'i	Not available
MST - Multi-systemic Therapy	State	Juvenile offenders	Statewide	Provides intensive family- and community-based treatment program focusing on environmental systems that impact chronic and violent juvenile offenders.
Native Hawaiian Health Consortium	I Ola Lahui	Native Hawaiian community	O'ahu	Designed to serve Native Hawaiians and other medically underserved groups through specialized training in Hawai'i's Native Hawaiian Health Care System.

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Positive Optimism Helps all of Kauai Unite (P.O.H.A.K.U.)	Kauai County	Adult and juvenile male and female offenders who are at the arraignment and plea stage in court	Kauai	Diversionary program that uses restorative justice, cultural based community services, and Hawaiian values to ensure that the offender understands their responsibility and the consequences of their action.
Second Chance Mentorship Program	Hope Service Hawaii	Homeless and those returning from incarceration	Hawai'i	Helps homeless families and individuals attain the skills needed to maximize their potential, succeed in permanent housing and achieve self-sufficiency.
Supporting Families Affected by Incarceration (SFAI)	Keiki O Ka 'Aina Family Learning Centers	Children, caregivers of children with incarcerated parent(s)	O'ahu	Supports children by offering services that take place within the prison and supports caregivers of children with incarcerated parents.
The Neighborhood Place	Neighborhood Place of Wailuku	Children and families	Maui	Prevents child abuse & neglect by building strong roots in the 'ohana and in the community by promoting safe and nurturing environments for children and families.
Transcendental Meditation	Transcendental Meditation™ Program - Hawaii	Correctional officers, prison staff, inmates	O'ahu	The program reduces stress and increases resiliency.

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Women Helping Women	Women Helping Women	Women and children of domestic violence	Maui	Works to end domestic violence through advocacy, education and prevention; and to offer safety, support and empowerment to women and children, victims of domestic violence.
Women's Way	Salvation Army	Adult and adolescent women and their infants and toddlers	O'ahu	Provides a variety of services such as therapeutic milieu, psychiatric services, alcohol and drug evaluation, parenting and respite child care, 12-step program participation, health education and outpatient treatment.
WorkNet	WorkNet, Inc.	Individuals emerging from long term incarceration, substance abuse treatment, welfare assistance, temporary disability, homelessness, and economic hardship	Statewide	To produce productive people, capable of sustaining a pro-social, self-sufficient lifestyle through specialized services that promote independent living, meeting basic needs and enhancing personal growth.

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Ho'ola Lahui Hawai'i	Kaua'i Community Health Center	Servicing the needs of Native Hawaiians and their families	Kaua'i	Enhance the wellness of our community with an emphasis on culturally appropriate services for Native Hawaiians
Ho'omau Ke Ola	Ho'omau Ke Ola	Substance abuse patients	O'ahu	Provides treatment that promotes healing in an environment that integrates best practices with Hawaiian spiritual values.
Hui Malama	Hui Malama Learning Center	Youth	Maui	To inspire, nurture, and empower students to pursue careers that bolster our islands' economy, increase self-reliance, and provide for future generations.
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