

Incarcerated youth present with a complex and distinct set of social and educational needs. Past participation in school has not been associated with success, and often youngsters' histories reflect brief stints in many different public schools.

Working with the knowledge that many students incarcerated at the RITS experience serious emotional disturbances and transition from the RITS to their home communities within approximately 9 months, Mr. Yattaw worked closely with the local arts community to reduce recidivism through the highly empowering and transforming experiences of the arts by creating a culturally relevant arts and humanities program .

Demian has mobilized the best of what Rhode Island has to offer - an unmatched artistic community and a rich tapestry of cultural traditions - to help those most in need of cultural and community supports. Demian's program enhances the youths' cognitive, linguistic, social and civic development, emphasizing critical thinking and productive experiences in teamwork. This most original and unique program further explores the nature of violence and attempts to sublimate aggressive tendencies through metaphorical language. At its core, it derives its strength as a program by incorporating the symbols of past histories which involve violence, conflict and emotional vulnerability, and ultimately results in a stress on process in art as opposed to product.

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