Title: The Prison Inmate Networks Study (PINS): Using Social Network Analysis to Understand the Incarceration and Reentry Experience

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Abstract: The Prison Inmate Network Study (PINS) is a longitudinal study of inmates in a medium security prison in Pennsylvania. PINS participants completed traditional surveys with interviewers and a global network survey about their connections to other inmates. The reentry portion of the PINS study (R-PINS) includes interviews with PINS participants just prior to release and two follow-ups in the community; both sets of interviews include social network components. We describe the contribution of social network analysis to the study of incarceration and reentry experiences using preliminary results from the PINS. In so doing, we address the following: 1) challenges to social network data collection in a prison context, 2) incorporating SNA into mixed method designs, and 3) the utility of SNA for answering theoretical and empirical questions about the conditions of confinement and successful prisoner reentry.