

## **WGTE PUBLIC MEDIA LAUNCHING RETHINKING JAILS + JUSTICE PODCAST SERIES**

*The “Rethinking Jails + Justice” project is in collaboration with The Board of Lucas County Commissioners and the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation Safety + Justice Challenge*

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**TOLEDO, OHIO – August 29, 2024** – WGTE Public Media’s “Rethinking Jails + Justice”, in collaboration with The Board of Lucas County Commissioners and the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation Safety + Justice Challenge, is set to launch the latest phase of the project on Tuesday, September 3. This 10-episode podcast series hosted by Jason Hibbs explores the past, present and future state of Lucas County’s criminal justice reform. Episodes will be published weekly on Tuesdays, beginning on September 3. These episodes will be available online at [www.wgte.org/rjipod](http://www.wgte.org/rjipod) and on major audio streaming services.

"This has been an eye-opening experience for me. I've learned that for criminal justice reform to work, efforts have to go beyond county commission meetings. It is a community effort that in many ways is underway across Lucas County right now. Things aren't perfect, but we have a lot of really good people working hard to improve our communities. I am inspired to be a more engaged community member myself," said host and producer Jason Hibbs.

Since 2014, Lucas County has been working to reduce jail time and increase equity for all while ensuring public safety through the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation's Safety + Justice Challenge. “Rethinking Jails + Justice” explores the grant's impact, the future of reform, and features insights from law enforcement, legal

professionals, mental health experts, researchers, and community leaders, plus advice for those concerned about themselves or loved ones.

Hibbs said, "My goal was to go beyond just reporting the grant details and delve into the real work happening on the ground. Throughout the series, guests also offer insights for those directly impacted by the criminal justice system or who have concerns for a loved one."

**Podcast Episode Topics:**

1. Grant Origins and Overview: Who is in the jail and why?
2. First contact - law enforcement
3. Predicting behavior pretrial and an explanation of the steps in the criminal justice process
4. Saving our kids
5. Opportunities from behind bars
6. The intersection of behavioral health and criminal justice
7. Racial Realities
8. Community Organizations
9. After release: reducing repeat visitors
10. The future of criminal justice reform

The "Rethinking Jails + Justice" project launched in January 2024 to examine and challenge conventional thinking about over-incarceration that adversely and disproportionately affects racial and ethnic minorities.

It kicked off with a live, public town hall event at the downtown Main Branch Library where over 100 community members attended to listen and contribute to the conversation. Audience and viewer questions were collected during the discussion and those that were not able to be answered that evening are catalysts for the chosen radio series topics. A recording of the livestreamed town hall event is available at [wgte.org/rjj](http://wgte.org/rjj).

In April, hosted by Jerry Anderson, WGTE launched the "Rethinking Jails + Justice Radio Series" on FM 91. This 5-part radio series discusses the community's most pressing questions from the Rethinking Jails + Justice live Town Hall event held in January 2024. Each episode launched on the last Tuesday of each month, April through August. Each episode can be listened to online at [wgte.org/rjj](http://wgte.org/rjj).

Visit [www.wgte.org/rjj](http://www.wgte.org/rjj) for more information on WGTE's "Rethinking Jails + Justice."

For more information on the Lucas County Safety + Justice Challenge, visit [www.lucascountycjcc.org/SJC](http://www.lucascountycjcc.org/SJC)

Project and event video promo: [youtu.be/mGF38JkOWYw](https://youtu.be/mGF38JkOWYw)

Rethinking Jails + Justice Town Hall Livestream: [www.wgte.org/rji](http://www.wgte.org/rji)

## **About WGTE**

WGTE Public Media, licensed and operated by The Public Broadcasting Foundation of Northwest Ohio, is a non-profit, noncommercial, educational TV and radio broadcaster and center of learning for northwest Ohio and Southeast Michigan. WGTE is proud to be a PBS and NPR member station. It was founded as a low-power educational television broadcaster in 1953. Education remains at the heart of what we do every day. From our entertaining, informative and educational programs that air on WGTE TV, FM 91, and [www.knowledgestream.org](http://www.knowledgestream.org) to our professional development opportunities for K-12 teachers and preschool daycare providers and community engagement activities, WGTE makes northwest Ohio and southeast Michigan a better place to live. For more information, visit [www.wgte.org](http://www.wgte.org).

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