Rock and Roll Academy (RRA) is a researched-based, social emotional music program designed to develop communication and relationship skills and to facilitate a community of cultural and social acceptance. Often afflicted with substance-use disorders, justice-involved youth benefit from music activities, which allow adolescents and young adults to develop a positive, healthy attitude toward themselves and their recovery process. Bolstering the intrapersonal acumen of incarcerated-youth results in improved employability skills upon reentry, thus decreasing the risk of recidivism.

The Challenge
High recidivism rates in the United States remain a challenging and costly proposition for states. The average cost to house an inmate in Texas prisons is $47.50 per day, according to Michelle Lyons, spokeswoman for the Texas Department of Criminal Justice. The basic cost to house an inmate for a year is approximately $17,340, with a 40-year incarceration period costing a staggering $693,500, or $81 billion as a national average. The National Institute of Justice also reports that within five years of release, about three-quarters of released prisoners were rearrested. Of those prisoners who were rearrested, more than half were arrested by the end of the first year.

Music as a Positive Outlet for Emotions
Aligned to recommended goals of the American Music Therapy Association for individuals in correctional and forensic settings, “Music is a form of sensory stimulation, which provokes responses due to the familiarity, predictability, and feelings of security associated with it” (“Music Therapy For Persons In Correctional and Forensic Settings”, 2006). RRA creates a social-musical learning environment that provides a positive outlet for managing emotions, particularly with youth who have substance-use disorders. Music has a powerful influence on behavior, moods, and human emotions (Hallam & MacDonald, 2009). This medium provides effective and various means to “express and evoke emotions...reduce stress, and regulate one’s mood and motivation...” (Karreman, Laceulle, Hanser, & Vingerhosts, 2017).
References

https://cte.ed.gov/initiatives/employability-skills-framework
https://www.musictherapy.org/assets/1/7/MT_Forensics_2006.pdf