



NRFC WEBINAR

Working with Fathers after Incarceration: Tips from Research and Practice

1:00pm EDT | February 6th, 2019





National Responsible Fatherhood Clearinghouse



DHHS/ACF Office of Family Assistance funded national resource to support fathers and families.

Resources are available for dads, fatherhood programs, researchers, and policy makers.



Contact

Visit the NRFC: www.fatherhood.gov.

- www.fatherhood.gov/toolkit for *Responsible Fatherhood Toolkit*.
- www.fatherhood.gov/webinars for archives of all our webinars.

Contact us: Help@FatherhoodGov.info

Encourage fathers or practitioners to contact our national call center toll-free at:
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Save The Date



ADMINISTRATION FOR
CHILDREN & FAMILIES
Office of Family Assistance



National Responsible
Fatherhood Clearinghouse

The US Department of Health and Human Services'
Administration for Children and Families Announces:

A National Fatherhood Conference to Support the
Responsible Fatherhood Field and Strengthen the
Efforts of a Broadening Community of Stakeholders

JUNE 4-6, 2019

GAYLORD OPRYLAND HOTEL

Nashville, Tennessee

Registration and more information will be available
in February 2019.



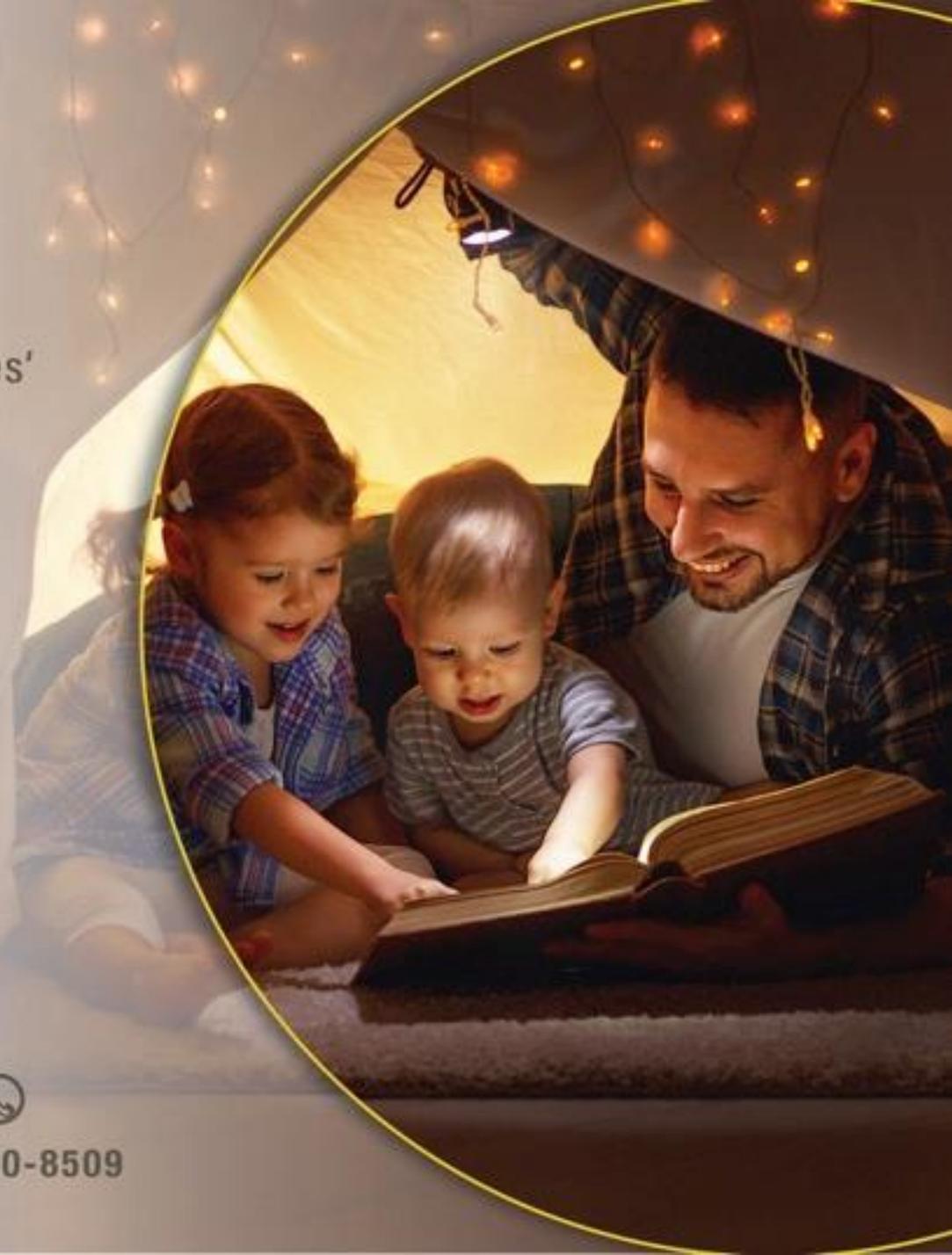
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770-290-8509





Today's Webinar Will Provide

- Overview of lessons learned from work with fathers after incarceration and a list of helpful resources.
- Information and tips from:
 - **Jocelyn Fontaine**
Urban Institute, Washington D.C.
 - **Darin Goff**
Strength in Families, Department of Corrections, WA
 - **Dae McKnight**
Family Reentry, Bridgeport, CT
- Discussion session/Q&A with presenters and two program participants:
 - **Geraldo Hernandez**, Family Reentry
 - **Robert Duggins**, Strength in Families



Working with Fathers after Incarceration: Tips from Research and Practice



Jocelyn Fontaine, Ph.D.

Senior Fellow
Urban Institute

February 6, 2019





Background

- A growing body of research* supports the **importance of family-focused practices** for incarcerated fathers – **during incarceration and following release.**

*See “Urban Institute Research Reports.”



Background

- However, implementing family-focused practices in correctional settings and community settings can be **challenging** and there is limited research on best practices – **but plenty of lessons on promising approaches.**





Parental Incarceration: Far-reaching impacts

- Approximately, **2.7 million** children have a parent currently serving time in a correctional facility.
- More than **5 million** children have experienced parental incarceration in their lifetime.
- Parental incarceration:
 - Has disproportionate impact on children in families with lower incomes and minorities.
 - Is stressful and traumatic for minor children.
 - Can create or contribute to economic, residential, and social disruptions for children.



Parental Incarceration: Far-reaching impacts

Incarceration inhibits parents' abilities to fulfill familial responsibilities

- Father-child and father-family communication/contact is challenging during incarceration for several reasons:
 - Correctional policies and practices that govern contact and communication.
 - Distance of facilities from where minor children (and their families/caregivers) live.
 - Phone calls and in-person visits to facilities, which can be cost prohibitive for families.
 - Feelings of fear and shame among incarcerated parents, children, and their caregivers.
 - Feelings of frustration, confusion, and anxiety navigating correctional institutions and their policies.



Hidden Victims: Children and families

- Parental incarceration can:
 - Have adverse impact on families.
 - Challenge healthy family functioning.
 - Cause loss of emotional/financial support for intimate partners, co-parents, caregivers, other family members.
- Interventions/practices have the potential to:
 - Repair and strengthen the relationship between children/families and incarcerated individuals.
 - Mitigate the potentially harmful consequences of incarceration on families and children.
 - Facilitate successful reentry for formerly incarcerated fathers.



Work with Families as Partners

- Family engagement/partnerships vary:
 - Incarcerated fathers may not have family support or want to engage with their children or families.
 - Children and families may not be ready to engage.
- Important to be realistic and thoughtful about engaging and partnering with families.
 - Engage families in program planning process.
 - Allow family members to participate in some program activities.
 - Leverage family support for reentering fathers.
 - Encourage families as allies to program staff.

Return to Community



- Family members do often provide significant support.
 - Particularly in immediate post-release months.
 - Despite their own resource limitations and service needs.
- Returning fathers have range of needs:
 - Housing, employment, education, skill building.
 - Mental health and substance abuse treatment.
 - Identification (e.g., driver's license, birth certificate), transportation, clothing, food.
- Service needs are related to reentry success.
- Family support pre-release and post-release is associated with reentry success.



Promising Practices

to support families and improve parent-child contact

- Coached telephone calls
- Contact visits
- Parenting and relationship curricula
- Family activity days
- Childcare services
- Assistance with child support modifications
- Family-focused case management services
- Support groups
- Employment supports



Consider

- Lack of evidence re. which program practices lead to meaningful impacts.
- Practices may not be equally beneficial for children, families, justice-involved individuals.
- Families are complex.
- Implementation of promising practices requires adequate space, resources, and funding.
- Some staff may be resistant to change.
- Implementation in pre-release and post-release settings present different advantages/drawbacks.



Other Considerations

Programs should

- Be flexible.
- Adapt to changing needs of participants and family.
- Respond to changes in policy and context.
- Meet families where they are.
- Build effective partnerships.
- Leverage opportunities in institutional and community environments.
- Work collaboratively with community partners.
 - Be willing to make mid-course corrections.



Contact Information

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Working with Fathers after Incarceration: Tips from Research and Practice



Darin Goff

Program Manager

Strength in Families

Washington State Department of Corrections

February 6, 2019





Strength in Families Program

- Office of Family Assistance grantee since October 2015.
- Community-centered, skill-based, pre- and post-release supportive services for reentering fathers.
 - Strengthen positive father-child engagement.
 - Support healthy partner relationships.
 - Enhance education and employment opportunities.
- Vision - children will be:
 - Living safely at home.
 - Enjoying positive relationships with parents and care-providers.
 - Supported by families who have necessary skills and access to resources and services needed to thrive.



Program Structure

Pre-release (up to 9 months)

- Skill-building classes focused on **parenting, healthy relationships, employment and/or education** readiness.
- Transition planning with Instructors, Case Managers, Education/Employment Navigators.
- Intensive, solution-focused counseling with willing family members and participants to support successful transition.
- Video visits with partners and/or children on approved visit list.



Program Structure

Post-release

(up to 6+ months)

- Case Managers and Navigators help build skills learned pre-release.
- Ongoing case management.
 - Primary areas of focus:
 - Access to key services and resources.
 - Job search assistance.
 - Family reintegration when possible (counseling available).
 - Development of long-term plan for participant/family success and ongoing community support system.



Curricula

Offered 3-9 months pre-release

Parenting Inside Out®

- Evidence-based parenting skills training program developed for criminal justice involved parents.
- 8 sections/28 modules – 15 weeks/60 hours.
 - Communication and Problem Solving
 - Parenting Children as Individuals
 - Parenting Through Family Challenges
 - Transitioning to the Community

Walking the Line

- Research-based curriculum from PREP, Inc. – 20 hours.
- Focus on improving relationships prior to release and managing expectations/employing effective strategies after release.
 - Understand how your experiences/issues can fuel conflict.
 - Recognize communication danger signs, handle anger & stress.
 - Gain skills needed to navigate reentry into society successfully.



Job Readiness

Examples of topics covered

Job Seeking Skills

- Resumes, Cover Letters
- Find your strengths, skills, abilities
- Labor market information, job search strategy
- Interview skills
- How to keep your job

Other Workshop Topics

- Handling money, budgeting
- Pre-apprenticeship/apprenticeship programs
- WorkSource offerings
- Reentry “myth busters”
- Education options/career planning



Case Management

Pre- and post-release

Role of Case Managers



- Develop family transition plans with fathers, including goals and milestones.
 - “Walk alongside” to develop “participant-driven,” strength-based plans.
- Build relationships with community service providers.
- Help fathers and families access resources and services in the community.
- Conduct in-person meetings pre- and post-release.
- Follow a family-focused approach – work with fathers and their families.
- Celebrate successes with fathers and their families!



Role of Education and Employment Navigators

- Lead individual/group meetings focused on education, training, and job goals.
- Work with prison facility staff to register participants for *Job Seeking Skills* class (and *College Readiness*, if interested).
- Help fathers identify skills, abilities, strengths, areas to improve, and employment barriers.
- Participate in Transitional Planning and Case Management meetings with other *Strength in Families* program staff, participants, facility staff, and/or family.



Role of Education and Employment Navigators



- Support fathers post-release to help them understand systems, access resources and services.
- Develop community partnerships to support access to necessary reentry services.
 - WorkSource programs, Vocational Rehabilitation services.
 - Job readiness/Job retention, Money Management workshops.
 - College application, enrollment, financial assistance.



Contact Information

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Dae Muhammad McKnight

Program Manager
Family Reentry

February 6, 2019





Agency History

Family Reentry began in 1984 as a reentry support group for men at the Isaiah House in Bridgeport.

- The agency now provides intervention, reentry, and family and children programs in:
 - 8 municipal regions/judicial geographic areas
 - 2 parole districts
 - 5 prisons





Four Keys for Successful Returning Citizens

- 1** Early (pre-trial) and long-term engagement with offenders creates a strong bond.
- 2** Creative employment solutions help find jobs (which are essential for survival).
- 3** Mentoring support from successful ex-offenders amplifies success and breaks the cycle.
- 4** Involvement of the entire family heals, inspires, and sustains change.



Young Fathers Reentry Program

The Power of Peer Mentoring

Second Chance Mentoring grant (2015-2018)

- Fatherhood services.
- Comprehensive reentry case management services.
- Peer mentoring with successful ex-offenders in community.

Goals

- Strengthen families.
- Enhance quality of life for children of incarcerated parents.
- Reduce recidivism.

Program Manager: Dae Muhammad McKnight

Fatherhood Facilitator: Salah Hanaif

Case Manager: Ebony Epps



Client Engagement Pre-Release

- Clients are matched with successful ex-offenders 6+ months prior to release.
- Intake and criminogenic needs assessment (LSI-R).



- Fatherhood/reentry groups.
 - Inside Out Dad + hybrid of various curricula.
 - Perpetual group cycle until released into the community.
- Client File transferred to Case Manager for development of Reentry Plan.

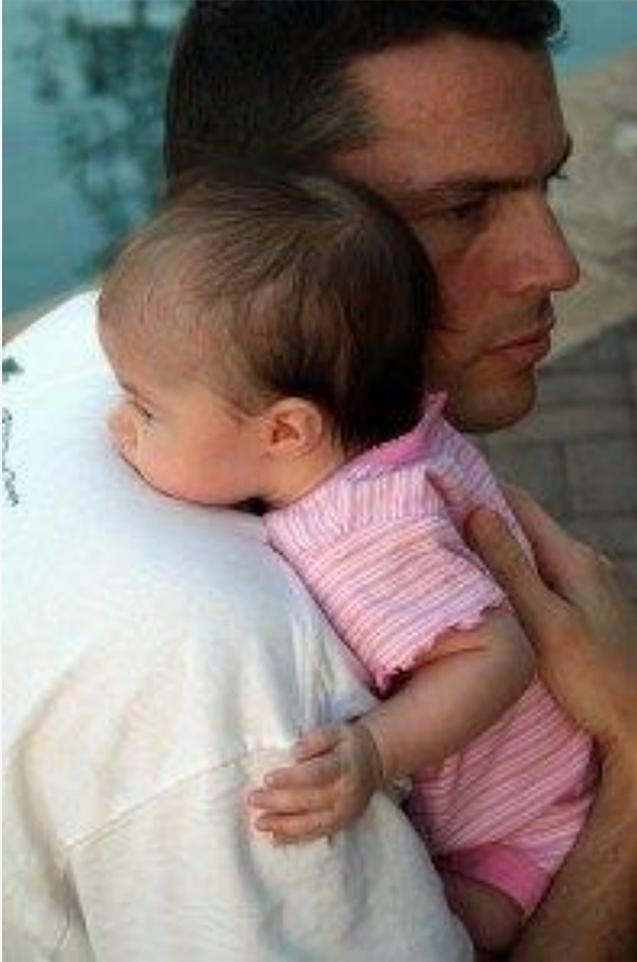


Client Engagement Post-Release

- Resume preparation/pre-employment skills.
- Employment referrals through private sector.
- Focus on basic needs:
 - ID's
 - Birth certificate, Social Security card
 - Job search attire
 - Driver's license
 - Occupational Safety Health Administration (OSHA) training
 - Referrals for Workforce Investment Act (WIA) services
 - Registration for Selective Service
 - Referrals for Adult Education
 - Diaper bank for children



Client Engagement Post-Release



- Peer mentor assistance to help clients navigate successful community reintegration.
- Social services referrals for co-parent or primary caregiver.
- Family participation in community cultural enrichment events for dads and families.
- Client and co-parent participation in post-release fatherhood survey.



Contact Information

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Q&A

Please submit your questions in the Q&A box at the bottom-right of your screen.



PRESENTERS

- Jocelyn Fontaine - Urban Institute
- Darin Goff - Strength in Families
- Dae McKnight - Family Reentry

FATHERS

- Geraldo Hernandez - Family Reentry
- Robert Duggins - Strength in Families



Today's Presenters



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Contact Us

National Responsible Fatherhood Clearinghouse

- Help@FatherhoodGov.info
- Comments, questions, suggestions for future webinar topics, information or resources that you recommend.

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