

Parenting Programs in State Correctional Facilities



The incarceration of a parent can produce negative outcomes for children's well-being. For incarcerated mothers and fathers, separation from their children often interferes with their ability to maintain a strong parent-child relationship. A variety of parenting programs in correctional facilities aim to help parents improve their parenting skills and strengthen their bonds with their children.

Research connects positive family relationships to reduced recidivism, making parenting programs a strategy that prison systems often support.¹ About half of U.S. states offer parenting classes at one or more correctional facilities.² The table below highlights some state approaches.

State	Programs	Learn More
Alabama	Family reintegration module offered as part of institutional pre-release/reentry program and transitional services.	http://www.doc.state.al.us/ReentryOverview
Idaho	Six family reunification and parenting programs are offered, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inside Out Dads • Partners in Parenting 	https://www.idoc.idaho.gov/content/document/program_descriptions
Kansas	Offers parenting classes for offenders, play and learn groups, services for the non-incarcerated caregivers, and workshops and transitional supports for families.	https://www.doc.ks.gov//reentry/family-services/department-based-resources
New Jersey	Offers Helping Offenders Parent Effectively (HOPE), a 10-week parenting class, and Family Reunification and Transition (FRAT), support for offenders in developing plans to rebuild family relationships.	http://www.state.nj.us/corrections/SubSites/OTS/OTS_CORE.html

¹ Visher, C. A., & Travis, J. (2003). Transitions from prison to community: Understanding individual pathways. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 29, 89-113.

² Osborne, C., Michelsen, A., & Bobbitt, K. (2017). *Fatherhood EFFECT Evaluation Final Report: A Comprehensive Plan for Supporting Texas Fathers and Families*. Austin, TX: Child and Family Research Partnership. Retrieved from https://childandfamilyresearch.utexas.edu/sites/default/files/CFRPREport_R0140817_FatherhoodEFFECT.pdf.

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State	Programs	Learn More
New Hampshire	New Hampshire offers one of the most comprehensive arrays of parenting-focused services through its Family Connection Centers. The centers offer parenting classes, support groups, video and virtual visiting, parenting libraries, the opportunity for inmates to record CDs of themselves reading to their child, and a variety of seminars and classes.	https://www.nh.gov/nhdoc/fcc/programs.html
North Dakota	Offers three different positive parenting options.	http://www.nd.gov/docr/adult/programs/tu_programs.html
Pennsylvania	Offers the Inside Out Dad Parenting Program	http://www.cor.pa.gov/Inmates/Pages/Treatment-Programs.aspx#.WOIs4fnyupo
Rhode Island	The Books Beyond program helps strengthen the bond between inmates and their children through books. Volunteers help inmates choose new, age-appropriate books for their children. Inmates read and record the books onto audiotape or CD. The tapes or CDs are mailed home for the children to keep.	http://www.doc.ri.gov/rehabilitative/prisonerreentry/Books%20Beyond.php
Washington	Offers Parenting Inside Out in conjunction with employment and education services and case management.	http://www.doc.wa.gov/docs/publications/400-BR001.pdf

