

Contact information

FTIO Program Coordinator

Rebecca Hutchinson

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Family Ties Project Director

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Family Connections Center

Family support program in NH State Prisons

FCC.Concord@doc.nh.gov

For a **NH family resource center** near you:

www.FSNH.org

The Waypoint **Family Support Warm Line** can be reached at **1-800-640-6486** Monday through Friday from 8:30-4:30 pm. It is not a crisis line but a resource and referral line for Waypoint programs as well as community supports.

www.waypointnh.org

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INSIDE OUT



Supports NH children and their caregivers during parental incarceration while reducing recidivism and promoting successful reentry

a partnership between

**Waypoint, NH Family Resource Centers
Family Connections Center-NHDOC,
& NH Jails**

PROBLEM

1 in 28 children in the US has at least one parent who is incarcerated. The Annie E. Casey Foundation estimates that over 15,000 children in New Hampshire have an incarcerated parent. These children and their families face a lot of challenges, from the loss of income and the need for emotional and physical support, to unwarranted stigma and shame.

IMPACT

The impact of parental incarceration on children can be challenging:

- Increased risk of depression or anxiety
- Increased risk of delinquency
- Substance use
- School difficulty
- Cognitive delays
- Social stigma
- Risk for insecure attachment, poor developmental outcomes
- Impaired ability to cope with future stress and trauma (toxic stress)

SOLUTION

Such devastation is not inevitable. Research suggests that parenting programs in prison reduce recidivism and improve the chances of successful reentry as caregivers and community members. Decades of research show that family support is a primary protective factor for children exposed to traumatic events. Most often, preserving a child's relationship with a parent during incarceration benefits both parties, reducing children's mental health issues and anxiety, while lowering recidivism and facilitating parents' successful return to their communities.

The Annie E. Casey Foundation's 2016 Policy Report first recommends to "ensure children are supported while parents are incarcerated and after they return." The aim of FTIO is to do just that. Children in NH and their caregivers will receive support from family service organizations in their community, and family counseling from mental health professionals if needed. Waypoint has partnered with the following organizations to create this coordinated system of support.

FAMILY TIES INSIDE OUT

Jails & State Prisons

When a person becomes incarcerated in any New Hampshire jail or state prison, they will be asked if they have minor children. They will be given a Family Ties Inside Out (FTIO) brochure and a release of information (ROI) to be filled out. The ROI will then be given to the (FTIO) program coordinator who will reach out to the family to explain the program. They will ask the family if it is ok for their local Family Resource Center to contact them to see if they need any help or support. The families will also be informed of the various support groups for kids and caregivers.

Family Resource Centers

Family Resource Centers (FRC)s working with FTIO are located throughout NH. Each FRC is unique and meets the needs of their local community. FRC's will be facilitating the groups for caregivers and kids who have parents who are incarcerated. Groups are organized by age so kids can talk freely amongst their peers and maybe for the first time realize they are not the only ones in a situation such as they are going through.

These families may also apply for Family Ties counseling sessions. Family Ties is designed to build resilience in children by: (1) increasing communication between the child and the child's parent/caregivers, and (2) teaching skills to caretakers and the child to assist with the symptoms of distress or other feelings. Community therapists and the University of New Hampshire Marriage & Family Therapy Center will work with these families.

Incarcerated parents who are active members of the Family Connections Center of the NH State Prisons may join Family Ties sessions remotely.

Family Connections Center

Parents of minor children in the NHDOC's State Prisons may apply to participate in the FCC's programs. FCC offers parenting education and support, creates/maintains healthy connections between parents & their kids via video visits, recording audiobooks, summer camp, family counseling and family reentry planning sessions with the caregivers of the children.