



**Children with  
Incarcerated  
Parents**







## Children with Incarcerated Parents

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Our goal is to mitigate the trauma caused by prison separation. We coordinate wraparound services, conduct Bonding Visits, and advocate for stronger policies to strengthen the bond between children and incarcerated parent(s). ”

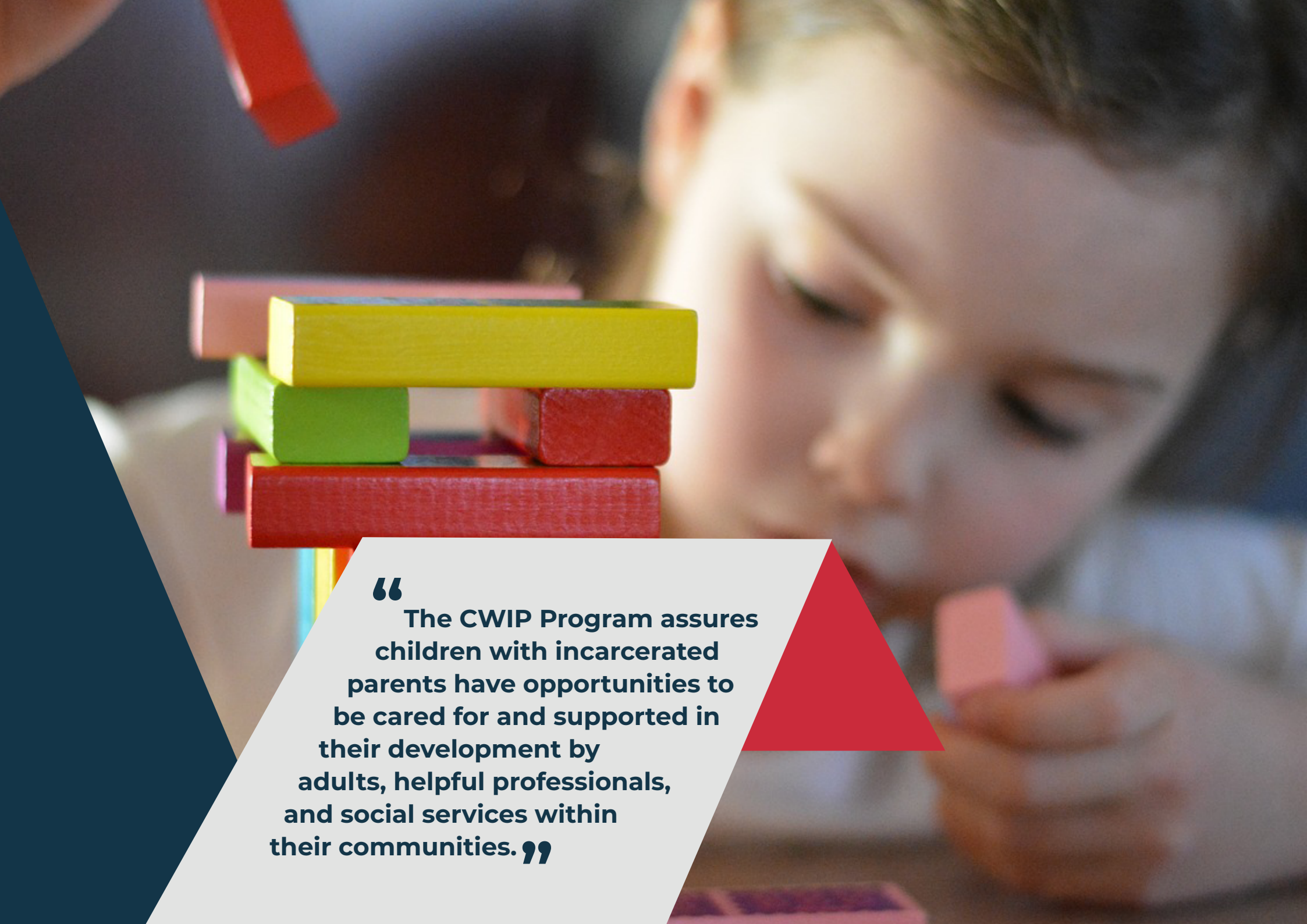
# Overview



**FREE is dedicated to working with and improving the lives of the 1 in 28 children with an incarcerated parent. Our focus is raising children to be happy, healthy and productive citizens. FREE along with a network of faith-based, secular and professional organizations re-introduce children to their incarcerated parents, create positive memories and moments, and facilitate lasting bonds between children and parent which lasts a lifetime.**

**FREE works directly with the state's Department of Corrections to determine which individuals under supervision would best benefit from parental mentoring and bonding visits during their rehabilitation process. Once these individuals are identified by the DOC, we then reach out to the family and their children to inform them about the CWIP program.**





**“ The CWIP Program assures children with incarcerated parents have opportunities to be cared for and supported in their development by adults, helpful professionals, and social services within their communities. ”**

# Who benefits?

## The Community

- **Communities with a large portion of incarcerated members cause a strain on social services and resources. When a parent and child share a bond throughout the incarceration process, that parent is less likely to experience recidivism and become more active participants within their neighborhood, while providing the child with a stable and more positive home.**

## The Children

- **Many children of incarcerated parents have experienced trauma related to their parent's arrest, social stigma, isolation, and much more. FREE will help create more positive memories and anxiety free parent child meetings. CWIP focuses on decreasing depression and parent separation anxiety, improving emotional development, stopping delinquent juvenile behaviors.**

## The Parent

- **Besides lowering recidivism among incarcerated parents, there is evidence that maintaining the child/parent relationship while a parent is incarcerated improves a child's emotional response to the incarceration.**

## The Economy

- **Children who have an incarcerated parent may experience financial hardship from the loss of that parent's income. Further, some incarcerated parents face termination of parental rights because their children have been in the foster care system beyond the time allowed by law. These children require support from local, state, and federal systems to serve their needs.**

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More than half of incarcerated parents in state prisons and almost half of parents in federal prisons have never had a personal visit from their children. ”

- Source: Sentence Project



**VISITOR PASS**

850


4/7/04

# CWIP Team

**CWIP is comprised of social workers, researchers, pastors, criminal justice professionals, educators, journalists, and technology specialists. In addition, directors, staff, and volunteers are racially, ethnically, religiously and demographically reflective of the communities we serve and the population of our children and their incarcerated parents.**

**We accomplish this through a multi-skilled, multidisciplinary team approach:**

- identify the children of inmates in need of support and link them with appropriate helping organizations and services**
- Strengthen bonds between children and their caregivers**
- Mitigate childhood trauma caused by the arrest of parents by engaging law enforcement, social services, and the public needs of children.**
- To increase the likelihood of successful reunification with incarcerated parents**
- To raise community awareness and knowledge through advocacy for children of inmates and their need**



**“ Children of incarcerated parents are a subset of American children at risk. Almost 3 million American children have an incarcerated parent. Among black children the rate is 1 in 9, Hispanics 1 in 28 and white 1 in 57. ”**

- Sources: Pew Charitable Trusts, 2010,  
Pew Research Center's Economic Mobility Project



**Children involved in the CWIP program enjoy the following:**

## **DROP-IN CENTERS**

**Our drop-in centers are the staging grounds for the community children that participate in FREE's Children with Incarcerated Parents Program. They will be a unique space where a child can come after school hours and during the summer to take part in events, play video games, get help with homework, bond with a mentor, grab a snack, speak with a counselor, hang-out in a safe environment and meet for weekly bonding visits with the parents or family member.**

**Our Drop-in Centers are more than just a place to hang out!**

### **Coding:**

**We will also operate as a coding center. Computer science opens more doors for students than any other discipline in today's world. Learning even the basics will help students in virtually any career—from architecture to zoology. Just as we teach students how to dissect a frog, or how electricity works, it's important for every 21st century student to have a chance to “dissect an app,” or learn how the Internet works.**

## **MUSIC, DANCE, AND EXPRESSION**

**Music is so important as to how children develop cognitively, that it must occupy a large piece of our programming. Here are just a few of the items that we will incorporate into our drop-in centers:**

- Recording studio rooms with microphones, computers, recording programs, protocols, logic and waves**
- Engineering courses**
- Vocal technique classes**
- Performance fear coaching**
- Acting classes/rooms**
- Rehearsal/Dance room w/mirrors & wood floors & bar for ballet**
- Live rehearsal room for band or live recording of instruments**
- Instrument lessons**
- Music Mentorship program**
- Mini movie theater for screenings**
- Film editing room**
- Film classes**

## **ARTS AND CRAFTS**

**We will also offer an Art Education program to enrich the daily lives of children and access inner thoughts and feelings through the use of art mediums. Art is known to assist in integration and identifying a sense of self, and allows students to define experiences and increase self-esteem along with building a strong capacity to focus in other areas of their lives. Art based curriculum and content can teach students about contemporary artists and their process in art as well as their stories around their own self expressions.**

**The master artists will also be introduced and the students are taught about the history of art and its role in society. Art content will include lessons about the elements of art, Line, Color, Texture, Shape, Space and Value. Viewing life through an artist's perspective will enhance and broaden the student's perspective for years to come!**

## **BONDING VISITS**

**Many children of inmates are unable to visit their incarcerated parents because of transportation and financial limitations. In response, FREE provides free quarterly Bonding Visits for children and their caregivers from the Chicago, Los Angeles and Manhattan areas. We also offer video-conference visitations for our families and their loved ones in jail or correctional institution where permissible.**

**At each three to four-hour Bonding Visit, children and their incarcerated parents sit around tables in secure rooms and read books, put together puzzles, do arts and crafts projects, and play board games- activities structured to encourage conversations, laughter, and hugs. Play mats have been introduced to allow little children to crawl, roll and giggle with their parents. The families also enjoy a family meal and take part in a civics educational activity to, again, create bonding and learning.**

**Following each visit, our children find stuffed animals awaiting them on the bus. And rather than going straight home, they detour to either a bowling alley or skating rink as a way to ease anxieties from separating again from their incarcerated parents as well as to build community ties with other children in their situations. Trained counselors accompany the children and are available throughout the trips for guidance and support.**





## **CONTACT ADDRESS**

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