

# Family Preservation Project Report

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## Oregon Criminal Justice Commission

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Executive Director

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The mission of the Oregon Criminal Justice Commission is to improve the legitimacy, efficiency, and effectiveness of state and local criminal justice systems.

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## 1. Background

During the 2021 Legislative Session, Senate Bill 720<sup>1</sup> was introduced and assigned to the Senate Judiciary and Ballot Measure 110 Committee. The bill sought to fund the Family Preservation Project (FPP), which is administered by the YWCA of Greater Portland, through a grant administered by the Oregon Criminal Justice Commission (CJC). In brief, the FPP is a program operating inside the Coffee Creek Correctional Facility in Wilsonville, Oregon, which seeks to promote “individual and system level change to reduce collateral consequences of parental incarceration on children, families and the community.”<sup>2</sup> SB 720 sought to fund the FPP in the amount of \$650,000 for the 2021-2023 biennium and laid out the services to be provided as well as a structure for assessing the success of the program, which was to be coordinated by the CJC in partnership with the FPP and the Oregon Department of Corrections (DOC).

A public hearing and work session were held for SB 720 in March 2021 and the bill was referred to the Joint Committee on Ways and Means on March 23, 2021. After this referral, SB 720 did not progress any further in the legislative process; however, the funding for the FPP that was contemplated in SB 720 was included in House Bill 5006§8.<sup>3</sup> In HB 5006§8, the Legislature provided the CJC with \$650,000 for the FPP operated by the YWCA of Greater Portland. Along with HB 5006, a budget note was included, which stated the following:

The Family Preservation Project strengthens family ties by providing services and supports to incarcerated parents and their minor children. The program operates at the Coffee Creek Correctional Facility in Wilsonville and is provided by the YWCA of Greater Portland. The Criminal Justice Commission (CJC) is directed to work with the Department of Corrections (DOC) and the YWCA of Greater Portland to track the program’s outcomes for incarcerated adults and their minor children, its effect on successful parent re-entry into society upon release from prison, its effect on reducing recidivism, and any other pro-social program outcomes as determined by DOC, CJC, and the YWCA of Greater Portland. CJC shall report to the Legislature on Family Preservation Program outcomes at least annually during a legislative session.<sup>4</sup>

This report contains current information regarding the funding of the FPP by CJC and is intended to satisfy the reporting requirement described above. It is important to note, however, that the work supported by the funding provided by CJC to FPP remains in early stages. More time is needed to report program outcomes and recidivism measures. As such, this report will provide a description of the FPP, services provided, and reported participation for July 2021-June 2022. Details regarding the contracting process and a description of future evaluations CJC will be conducting in partnership with FPP staff and the DOC are included as well.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://olis.leg.state.or.us/liz/2021R1/Downloads/MeasureDocument/SB720>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.ywcapdx.org/what-we-do/family-preservation-project/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://olis.leg.state.or.us/liz/2021R1/Downloads/MeasureDocument/HB5006>

<sup>4</sup> <https://olis.leg.state.or.us/liz/2021R1/Downloads/CommitteeMeetingDocument/246418>

## 2. The Family Preservation Project

Over the past 30 years, incarceration rates for women in the US have steadily increased, which impacts not only the women who are incarcerated, but their families as well, and especially their children. It is estimated that 64% to 84% (state/federal prison rates) of incarcerated women are mothers to school-aged children who resided with their children prior to incarceration and will likely resume parenting roles once released.<sup>5</sup> According to an Annie E. Casey Report, more than 68,000 Oregon children have had a parent in prison.<sup>6</sup>

Children who are impacted by maternal incarceration are at risk for a number of interpersonal and developmental challenges such as: stigma, shame, low academic performance, increased poverty, attachment and insecurity issues, anxiety, depression, aggression, delinquency, feelings of confusion, fear of abandonment, and vivid memories associated with their mother's incarceration. Children of incarcerated mothers experience a disproportionate amount of disrupted home and school placements, as they were primarily in the physical care and custody of their mother prior to her incarceration. Further, criminological research demonstrates that close parental bonds with children are one of the chief protective factors that prevent children from engaging in delinquent and criminal behaviors.<sup>7</sup>

The Family Preservation Project began its work in the Coffee Creek Correctional Facility in 2010, taking over responsibility for reentry work that had previously been done by Portland Community College. The mission of the FPP is to “interrupt the intergenerational cycle of criminal involvement, poverty, and addiction” found among female adults in custody by mitigating the negative effects of parental separation that occurs during incarceration, supporting successful reentry for parents exiting DOC institutions, and repairing/sustaining the parent-child bond in an effort to reduce recidivism as well as the chances for future criminal justice system involvement by the children of incarcerated mothers. Since March 8, 2020, all services have been adapted to accommodate the need for remote service delivery.

To accomplish these ends, the FPP provides three tiers of programming. The first tier is FPP's Intensive Family Reunification Program, which is designed for families with a child facing educational and/or emotional barriers. FPP assists participants in this program by coordinating between mothers, children, caregivers, and family members through engaging in therapeutic visitations, intensive transition planning, caregiver support, and interventions based on bio-psychological assessments. FPP services in this tier reach approximately 15 incarcerated mothers, 30 children, and 20 caregivers annually. Children of program participants are able to have parental involvement in essential school related functions and decision making, including parent/teacher and IEP meetings, as well as enrichment activities. Caregivers participate in a bimonthly support group, receive support in navigating available community and government

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<sup>5</sup> <http://aspe.hhs.gov/basic-report/effects-parental-incarceration-young-children>

<sup>6</sup> <https://assets.aecf.org/m/resourcedoc/aecf-asharedsentence-2016.pdf#page=7>

<sup>7</sup> Costello, Barbara J., and John H. Laub. 2020. “Social Control Theory: The Legacy of Travis Hirschi's *Causes of Delinquency*.” *Annual Review of Criminology* 3:21-41.

resources, are provided respite opportunities, and are supported during facilitated family meetings with the incarcerated mother.

Services for the incarcerated mothers participating in the Intensive Family Reunification Program are based upon a bio-psychosocial assessment given to participants upon acceptance into the program. This assessment is designed to identify and assist participants with goal setting and forms the basis of weekly meetings where participants are connected with services through FPP and Coffee Creek that are designed to repair family relationships, address histories of trauma, and address histories of substance abuse or dependence. Services received by program participants also include bimonthly therapeutic visits between the mothers and their children, twice-weekly parenting support and education, and weekly intensive transition/reentry planning.

The second tier of programming offered by FPP is its Family Resource Center, which serves approximately 300 women per year and consistently has a long wait list of a few hundred hopeful participants. The Family Resource Center provides several services, including support and education groups; facilitated contact between program participants and family members, children, lawyers, and community agencies; pro-bono legal support and representation for family law and juvenile law issues; civil legal support; case management for participants with open DHS cases or other non-DHS issues; and weekly individual coaching sessions and group parenting from prison classes. It is estimated that these services impact approximately 600 children and 300 caregivers in addition to the program participants.

Finally, the third tier of programming includes other support services. For instance, within this tier is the Speaker Series, which brings speakers monthly into Coffee Creek to present on self-identified topics provided by community partners as well as formerly incarcerated women. There is also an alumni association that provides peer support and guidance along with providing post-release support to program participants.

### **3. Funding and Grant Reporting**

The CJC distributed \$650,000 to the YWCA of Greater Portland for the Family Preservation Project. The first distribution of \$325,000 was disbursed in December 2021, and the final installment was issued prior to July 31, 2022.

The finalized contract includes progress and financial report requirements to the CJC. YWCA of Greater Portland is scheduled to submit progress and financial reports every 6 months during the project period. The first progress and financial report was submitted on January 25th, 2022. The final report for the biennium is due on January 25<sup>th</sup>, 2023.

### **4. Outcomes Measurement, Metrics, and Tracking**

It is important to note that the work supported by this funding is still in early stages, and it remains too soon to report on certain program measures and outcomes. The YWCA, CJC, and DOC will continue to collaborate on collecting performance measures and post-release outcomes, including recidivism, to measure program performance. This will include program participation data with demographic and criminal history information for incarcerated women

who participate. Post-release outcomes will include criminal recidivism and family reunification measures. This report includes program participation data from July 2021 to June 2022. Future reports will include participation data and, as the needed follow-up time of at least a year allows, will also include criminal recidivism outcome measures.

The following table shows the estimated biennium program participation by the specific program areas and types of participants: incarcerated women, children of incarcerated women, and families or caregivers. The Intensive Family Reunification program is estimated to serve 15 incarcerated women, 30 children, and 20 families or caregivers. The Family Resource Center is estimated to serve 300 incarcerated women, 600 children, and 300 families or caregivers. Based on information provided by the YWCA for July 2021- June 2022, the Family Preservation Project is on track to serve the estimated number of participants during this biennium.

**Table 4.1**  
*Estimated FPP Participation for Biennium*

	<b>Incarcerated Women</b>	<b>Children of Incarcerated Women</b>	<b>Families or Caregivers</b>
Intensive Family Reunification	15	30	20
Family Resource Center	300	600	300
<b>Total</b>	<b>315</b>	<b>630</b>	<b>320</b>

The duration of the Intensive Family Reunification Program lasts between 18-36 months, depending on the sentence length of the incarcerated mother. Throughout the reporting period of July 2021- December 2021, the Intensive Family Reunification served 5 incarcerated mothers, 11 children, and 7 caregivers. During the subsequent reporting period of January 2022- June 2022, the Intensive Family Reunification served 5 incarcerated mothers, 13 children, and 6 caregivers. Additionally, the Family Resource Center served an average of 90 incarcerated mothers and 201 children per month for the reported year. Participant demographics are detailed in the appendix.

The following data points are collected for incarcerated women and mothers who participate in the FPP: length of program participation, race/ethnicity, age, county, number of minor children including DHS and OYA involvement, and number of caregivers. For children of incarcerated mothers who participate in the FPP, the following data points are collected: age, race/ethnicity, county, special needs, primary caregiver prior to mother’s incarceration, primary caregiver during mother’s incarceration, and type of placement (foster, post-adoptive, court-order guardianship, information guardianship, other custodial parent). In addition to post-release recidivism outcomes, family reunification measures are planned to evaluate changes in the following: contact with children and families, engagement with DHS child welfare, involvement with schools, contact with service providers, confidence in parenting skills, and social support measures.

The YWCA will continue to provide program participant information to CJC for future analysis. CJC can provide ancillary demographic and criminal history information, in addition to criminal

recidivism outcomes. This information will be provided in a later report to allow for the needed follow-up time of at least one year of post-release criminal recidivism measures.

## Appendix

**Table A.1**

*Intensive Family Reunification Participants*

<b>Total receiving services</b>	<b>July 2021- December 2022</b>	<b>January 2022- June 2022</b>
Incarcerated Mothers	5	5
Children of Incarcerated Mothers	11	13
Caregivers	7	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>

**Table A.2**

*Family Resource Center Participants-Mothers*

<b>Demographics of Incarcerated Mothers</b>	Jul 21	Aug 21	Sep 21	Oct 21	Nov 21	Dec 21	Jan 22	Feb 22	Mar 22	Apr 22	May 22	Jun 22	AVG /MO
Total Receiving Services	81	86	87	85	87	86	86	89	96	96	101	99	90
New by Month	9	8	4	9	8	1	7	13	12	6	10	4	8
Unique Participants	81	86	87	85	87	86	86	89	96	96	101	99	90
<b>Length of Participation</b>													
0-1 year	50	55	54	55	57	56	59	61	70	70	74	70	61
1-2 years	26	24	24	21	20	21	19	20	19	21	21	22	22
2-3 years	4	6	7	7	8	7	6	6	6	5	6	7	6
3+ years	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	0	0	0	1
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>													
White	49	49	49	48	49	49	50	51	56	57	61	60	52
Black	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	1
Asian Native	1	1	1	2	2	2	3	4	4	4	4	3	3
American/Indigenous	5	7	8	9	9	8	10	11	12	12	14	14	10
Mixed / Multiple	2	3	3	2	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	2
Identify as H/L (any race)	21	23	23	24	24	24	21	20	21	20	19	19	21
Unknown	3	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
<b>Age</b>													
18-25	4	4	4	6	6	6	5	5	5	5	5	3	5
26-35	30	32	32	34	37	35	36	37	39	41	40	43	36
36-45	36	39	40	38	37	38	38	43	48	46	49	46	42
46+	8	8	8	7	7	7	7	4	4	4	7	7	7
Unknown	3	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1

**Table A.3**  
*Family Resource Center Participants-Children*

<b>Children of Incarcerated Mothers</b>	Jul 21	Aug 21	Sep 21	Oct 21	Nov 21	Dec 21	Jan 22	Feb 22	Mar 22	Apr 22	May 22	Jun 22	AVG /MO
Total Receiving Services	150	163	172	185	188	187	208	216	226	230	245	242	201
Total Minor Children OYA involved	131	143	150	159	162	161	179	190	201	205	214	215	176
	2	2	2	2	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	1	1
<b>Age</b>													
0-5	15	15	16	20	25	25	27	29	31	32	35	34	25
6-10	47	45	46	49	48	47	54	59	65	71	74	76	57
11-15	48	55	59	58	59	61	70	72	73	71	74	74	65
16-18	21	28	29	32	30	28	28	30	32	31	31	31	29
Over 18	19	20	22	26	26	26	29	26	25	25	31	27	25
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>													
White	58	62	68	68	72	75	87	78	79	87	90	88	76
Black	0	0	0	0	2	2	2	6	6	6	7	7	3
Asian	1	1	1	1	1	1	4	5	5	6	6	6	3
Native American/Indigenous	5	9	12	11	11	11	18	19	22	24	28	27	16
Mixed / Multiple	9	8	8	16	18	18	8	12	15	15	15	11	13
Identify as H/L (any race)	51	61	61	73	71	71	81	88	93	85	91	99	77
Unknown	26	22	22	16	13	9	8	8	6	7	8	4	12