



Just Beginning

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The Need for Family Involvement

- «b Approximately 1 in 9 Black children and 1 in 28 Hispanic children have an incarcerated parent, and 30% of incarcerated teen males are fathers. (Pew Charitable Trusts, 2010; Nurse, 2002; Hughes, 1998).
- «b Children with incarcerated parents are one of the most underserved and vulnerable populations. These children are more likely to have mental health problems, demonstrate anti-social behaviors, abuse drugs, and struggle academically, emotionally and financially. (Murray, 2005; Trice and Brewster 2004)
- «b Children who maintain contact with their parent during incarceration have overall improved outcomes and exhibit fewer behavioral problems compared to children without contact. (Edin, Nelson, Paranal, 2004; Klein, Bartholomew and Hibbert 2002)
- «b When biological fathers remain in contact with their children from birth to 3 years, regardless of whether the fathers are resident in the home or not, children show lower levels of aggressive behavior and better emotion regulation. (Vogel, Bradley, Raikes, Boller, & Shears, 2006).
- «b Maintaining parental contact improves parents' behavior while in custody, reduces recidivism and is an important component of successful reentry. (Hairston, 2002; Klein et al. 2002 Edin et al. 2004).

Just Beginning Addresses the Needs of Parents and Children

Incarcerated teen parents rarely visit with their infants or receive parenting education despite the long lasting benefits experienced by children of incarcerated parents who maintain a healthy relationship with their parent and the impact this relationship has on reducing recidivism for the parent.

Just Beginnings is a parenting initiative which addresses this issue by:

- «b Teaching youth how to interact effectively with their child through research-based parenting instruction;
- «b Facilitating weekly structured visits in a child-friendly environment specifically designed for positive parental interaction; and
- «b Providing a strong support system for the parent and child as the youth reintegrates into society.

Just Beginning not only improves the life of the child, the project also benefits young parents and society as a whole by reducing recidivism, improving behavior while in custody and encouraging successful reentry.