

CHILDREN OF INCARCERATED PARENTS (CIP) PROGRAM

OFFICE OF THE SAN FRANCISCO PUBLIC DEFENDER

An Evaluation of the period from October 2006 through December 2007

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This evaluation of the Children of Incarcerated Parents (CIP) Program consists of two components: an evaluation of program *processes* that analyzes how the program is currently operating, and an evaluation of program *outcomes* that describes program results to date and provides a framework for how program objectives can be measured in the future.

We base this evaluation on data collected from the hard copy files maintained by the CIP social worker and from interviews with community and agency stakeholders, former clients and their families, deputy public defenders, and CIP Program staff. We use these data sources to present a picture of the CIP Program structure, reveal the characteristics of the population served by the program, and evaluate the provision of services to clients and their children. Our findings suggest that the CIP Program has positively impacted many clients and their children.

Key Findings from the Process Evaluation

- In collaboration with the Sheriff's Department, the CIP staff has achieved key changes in jail practices, resulting in the availability of breast milk to infants and expansion of access to visitation for incarcerated parents and their children.
- The majority of deputy public defenders handling felony cases requested CIP services for one or more clients during the study period.
- The CIP staff responds to the majority of service requests in less than one week.
- Case management improvements include increased emphasis on documentation of social worker activities, improvements in data collection tools, and increased training for CIP staff and advocacy on behalf of families.

"The CIP Social Worker would come and visit me when I was locked up. She did a lot of work for me. She would mediate between my children and CPS. She put me through on three-way calls so I could talk to my family out of state. She helped me get a DNA test to establish my paternity. She was my only way of communicating with the outside world. She helped me out a lot--I'd have been lost

Key Findings from the Outcomes Evaluation

- The CIP Program served 148 CIP clients during the study period (October 2006-December 2007), and provided over 178 distinct units of service to these clients.
- The largest share of service requests were for visits with children, followed by requests for housing, assistance with family court and assistance with legal paperwork.
- Over one-half of clients requested visits, but only one-third actually received visits due, in part, to barriers to visitation.
- Overall, the social worker attempted over 81 percent of services requests and provided over 64 percent of service requests to clients and their families.
- CIP clients are more likely to be men (72 percent) than women (28 percent).
- The average age of clients is 32, the average age of children is 5.8, and the average number of children is 1.7.
- The majority of CIP clients are African American (68 percent), while Latinos and Caucasians each make up 10 percent of the population.
- 51 percent of incarcerated parents have a need for Drug and/or Alcohol treatment. Within this group, 73 percent of mothers need treatment, compared to 43 percent of fathers who need treatment.
- One quarter of CIP clients are married and nearly one-half are primary caregivers.
- The majority of incarcerated fathers have children in the care of another parent (62 percent), while the majority of incarcerated mothers have children in the care of relatives (53 percent).

The CIP Program received the "Program of the Year Award" in 2008 by the California Public Defender's Association

For full report go to: <http://sfpublicdefender.org>