



**Kids-A-Part Parenting Program  
House Corrections & Institutions  
Committee Testimony  
1.22.25**

# Mission

Lund helps children thrive by empowering families to break cycles of poverty, addiction and abuse. Lund offers hope and opportunity to families through education, treatment, family support and adoption.



**Kids-A-Part  
Parenting Program**  
seeks to reduce the  
traumatic impact of  
parental incarceration on  
children and families.

# The Scope of the Issue in Vermont

*Findings from the VT Inmate Family Survey Project*

- **6,000 children in Vermont** have an incarcerated parent annually (1 in 17)
- **Vermont houses more parents than the national average**
  - 64.1% of incarcerated Vermonters have children (compared to 52% annually)
- Among incarcerated parents: 53% of men and 64% of women have minor children
- **81.6% of parents** lived with or frequently visited their children before incarceration
- Only **1/3 of children with incarcerated parents visit them**



## **Kids-A-Part Parenting Program (KAPPP)**

is a partnership between Lund and DOC providing parenting and family support services for mothers incarcerated at the Chittenden Regional Correctional Facility (CRCF). KAPPP works with corrections-connected children and their families throughout Vermont communities.



**KAPPP is the only program of its kind in Vermont**



## The Kids-A-Part Parenting Program specifically seeks to:

- Increase incarcerated **parent's knowledge** and skills around the specific needs of her children
- Increase incarcerated **parent's capacity and resources to nurture** their children and engage in planning and communication strategies with their children and their caretakers that reflect their needs
- Provide a **child-friendly visitation space** for in-person visits as well as virtual visits between parent and child (at no cost to the incarcerated mother)
- Provide **outreach to children and caregivers** during the parent's incarceration and links to appropriate services
- **Prepare parents** to return to the community
- Improve **cross-system coordination and collaboration** to deliver services to families



## **Kids-A-Part Parenting Program Services within CRCF**

- Emergency/Initial Planning
- Program Orientation
- KAPPP Intake and Assessment
- Case Coordination (internal and external providers)
- Connection to Family Court
- Develop Family Service Plan
- Parent Child Contact
- Parent Education
- Permanency Support
- Support for Pregnant Mothers
- Trainings for Correctional Staff

## **Kids-A-Part Parenting Program Services provided in the Community**

- Case Management Support for Caregivers
- Communication About Facility Policies
- Developing Family Centered Teams
- School-based Consulting
- Deepening Community Awareness of the Issues
- Training for Community Partners: DCF, P&P, Head Start, GALs, PCC, Etc.
- Influencing Policy



## **FY26 Legislative Ask: Funding to Expand Lund's Kids-A-Part Parenting Program into Men's Facility**

Lund is **seeking legislative support for a bill that would secure funding to expand the Kids-A-Part Parenting Program (KAPPP) into the Northern State Correctional Facility (NSCF).**

This initiative aims to provide parenting services for incarcerated fathers, addressing the trauma experienced by children as a result of paternal incarceration.

Lund is requesting an additional **\$276,207.22 be added to the FY26 DOC budget** to support the implementation of a Kids-A-Part Parenting Program expansion pilot at Northern State Correctional Facility.

The DOC contract amount for KAPPP is \$161,337.84. Lund is requesting an additional **\$114,869.38** to make the current Kids-A-Part Parenting Program at the Chittenden Regional Correctional Facility fiscally whole.





## **KAPPP Expansion Would Include The Following:**

1. **Orientation and Intake** for fathers upon incarceration, identifying those who wish to participate.
2. **Case Management** inside the facility for fathers to support parenting and family engagement.
3. **Community Case Management** for the caregivers of children with incarcerated fathers, ensuring continuity of care and support.
4. Creation and utilization of a **Family-Friendly Visitation** space to encourage healthy father-child interactions.
5. Facilitation of **Parent Education Groups** for fathers to learn effective parenting skills.
6. Group offerings to help engage fathers with their children, such as **Dad's Mail, Storybook, and Preparation for In-person Visits.**
7. **Virtual Visits** between incarcerated fathers and their children, facilitating communication.
8. Development of **Safety Protocols and Procedures** for children visiting incarcerated fathers to ensure their well-being.
9. **Collaboration** with community partners both within and outside the facility (DCF, Schools, Courts, VT Network,



# Incarcerated Fathers Survey

Conducted at Northern State 12/10/2024

414

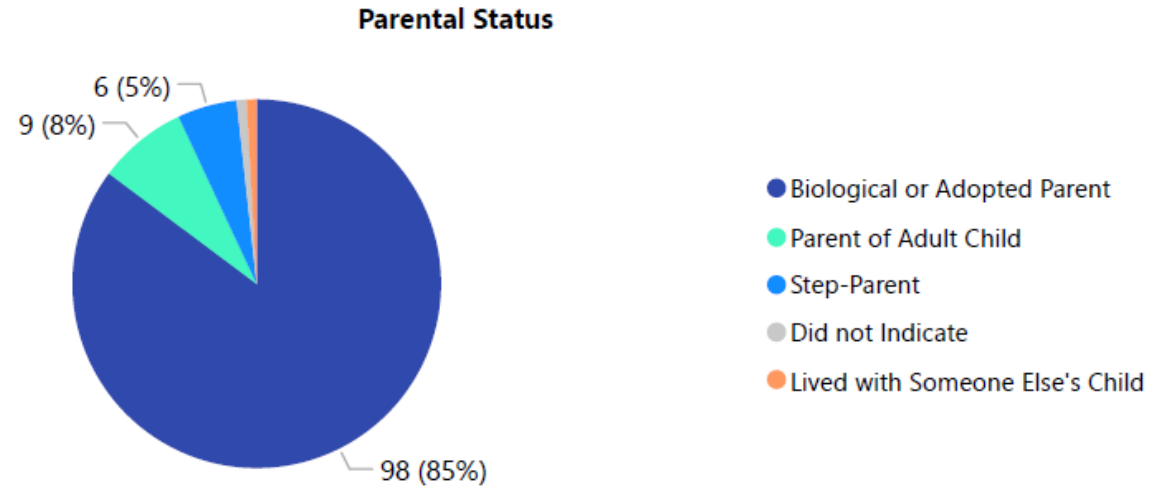
12/10 NSCF  
Population Count

115

Respondents

98

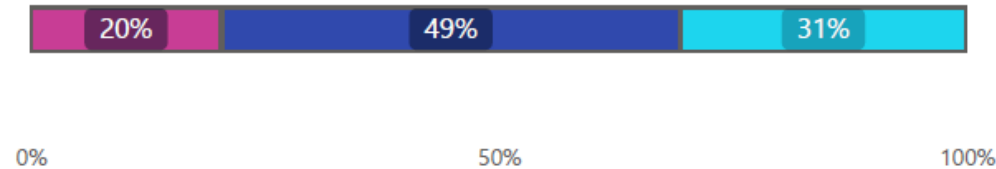
Biological or Adopted  
Parents of Minor Children



## For the 98 Biological or Adopted Parents of Minor Children:

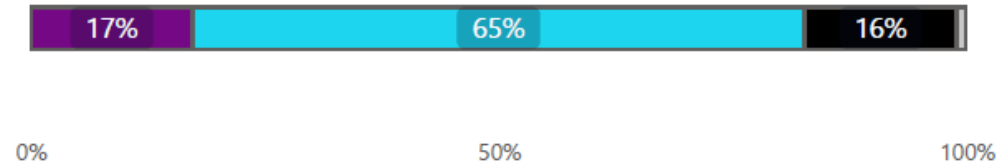
Before going to jail, were you living with your child?

● No ● Yes, all of the time ● Yes, some of the time

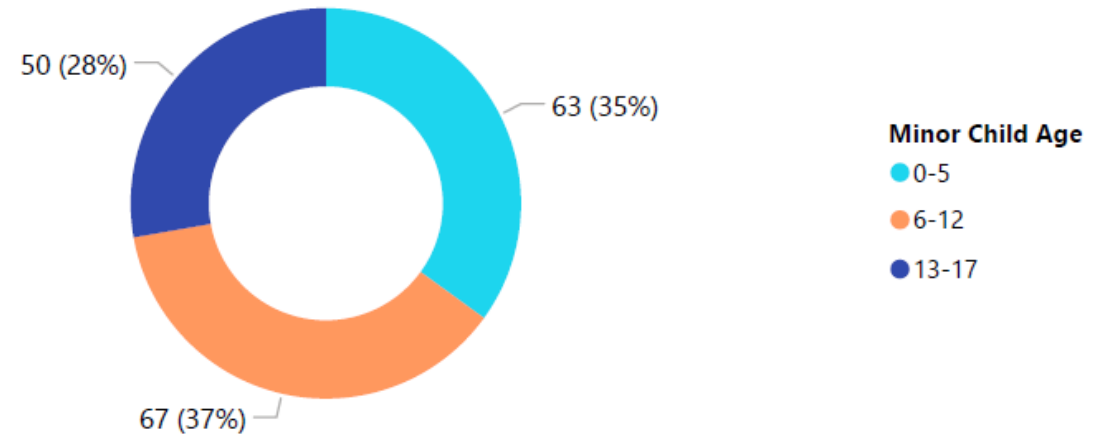


Do you have full custody or shared custody?

● Full Custody ● Shared Custody ● I don't Know ● Did not answer



Parents with Minor Children by Age

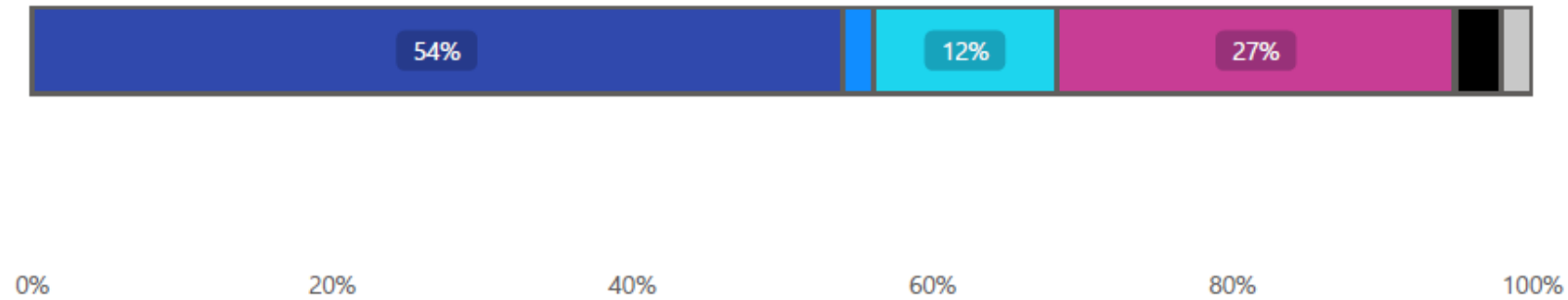


Note: Due to errors in how the question was answered by respondents, this visual only shows the number of incarcerated parents who have children within each age range and not how many children then have within each age range. Participants could select all that apply.

## Is your child on your Approved Calling List?

● Yes, weekly calls ● Yes, monthly calls ● Yes, occasional calls ● No ● I don't know ● Did not answer

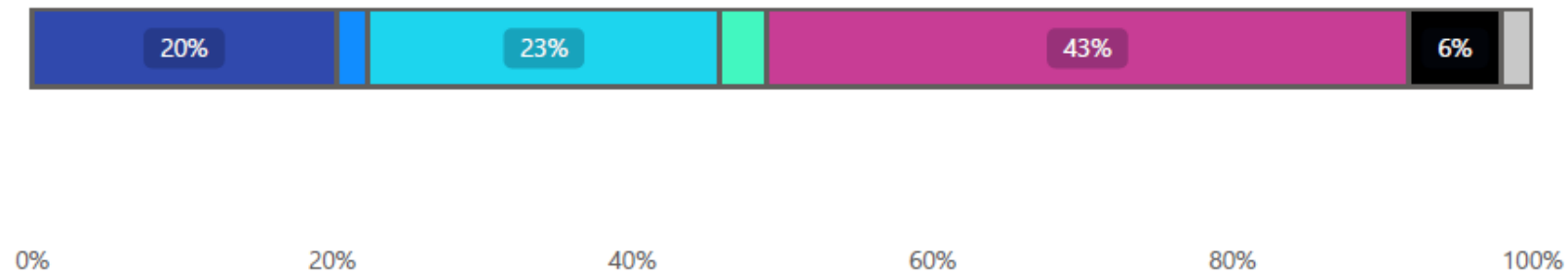
**68% said Yes**



## Is your child on your Approved Visiting List?

● Yes, weekly visits ● Yes, monthly visits ● Yes, occasional visits ● Yes, never visits ● No ● I don't know ● Did not answer

**48% said Yes**



## Prior to Incarceration:

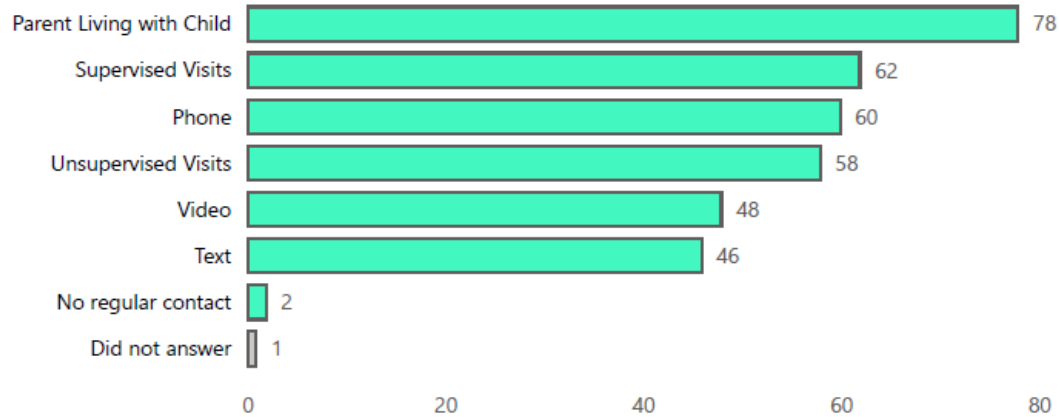
How often did you contact your child before going to jail?

● Daily ● Weekly ● Monthly ● No Regular Contact ● Did not answer

**88% had some contact**



### Type of Pre-Incarceration Visits



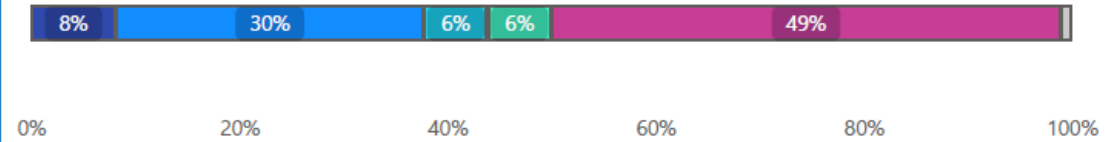
Note: Parent living with child was filled in by DOC based on prior response to *Before going to jail, were you living with your child?* and write-in responses by participants. Participants could select all that apply.

## Post Incarceration:

How often do you have VIDEO visits with your child?

● Daily ● Sometimes ● Monthly ● Less than Monthly ● Never ● Did not answer

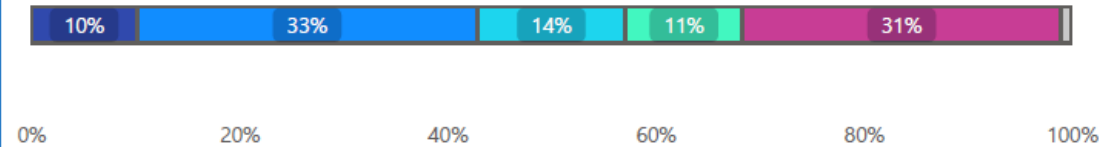
**50% have VIDEO visits**



How often do you WRITE to your child?

● Daily ● Sometimes ● Monthly ● Less than Monthly ● Never ● Did not answer

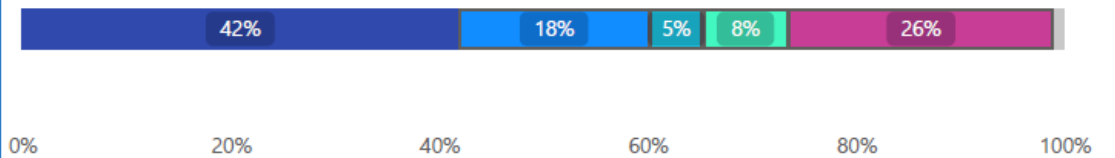
**68% WRITE to their child**



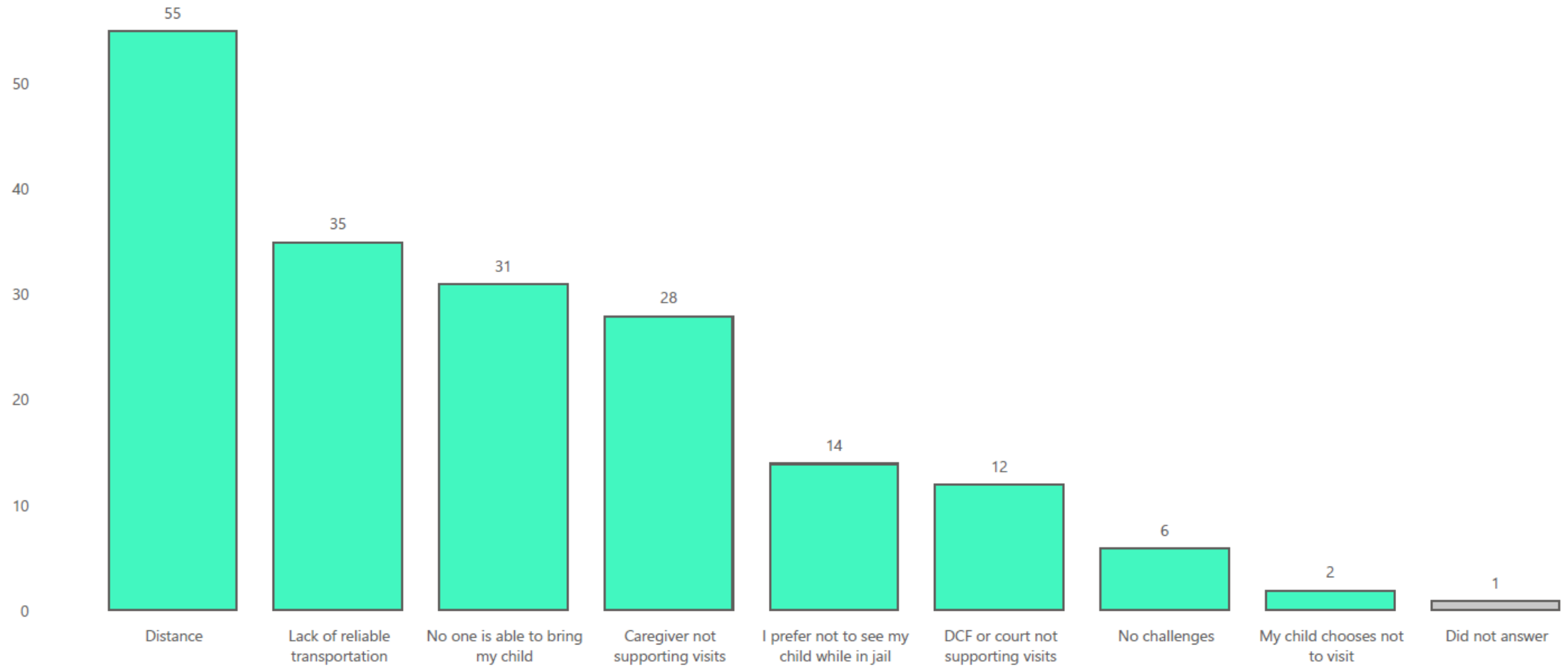
How often do you check in with your child's CAREGIVER?

● Daily ● Sometimes ● Monthly ● Less than Monthly ● Never ● Did not answer

**73% check-in with their child's CAREGIVER**

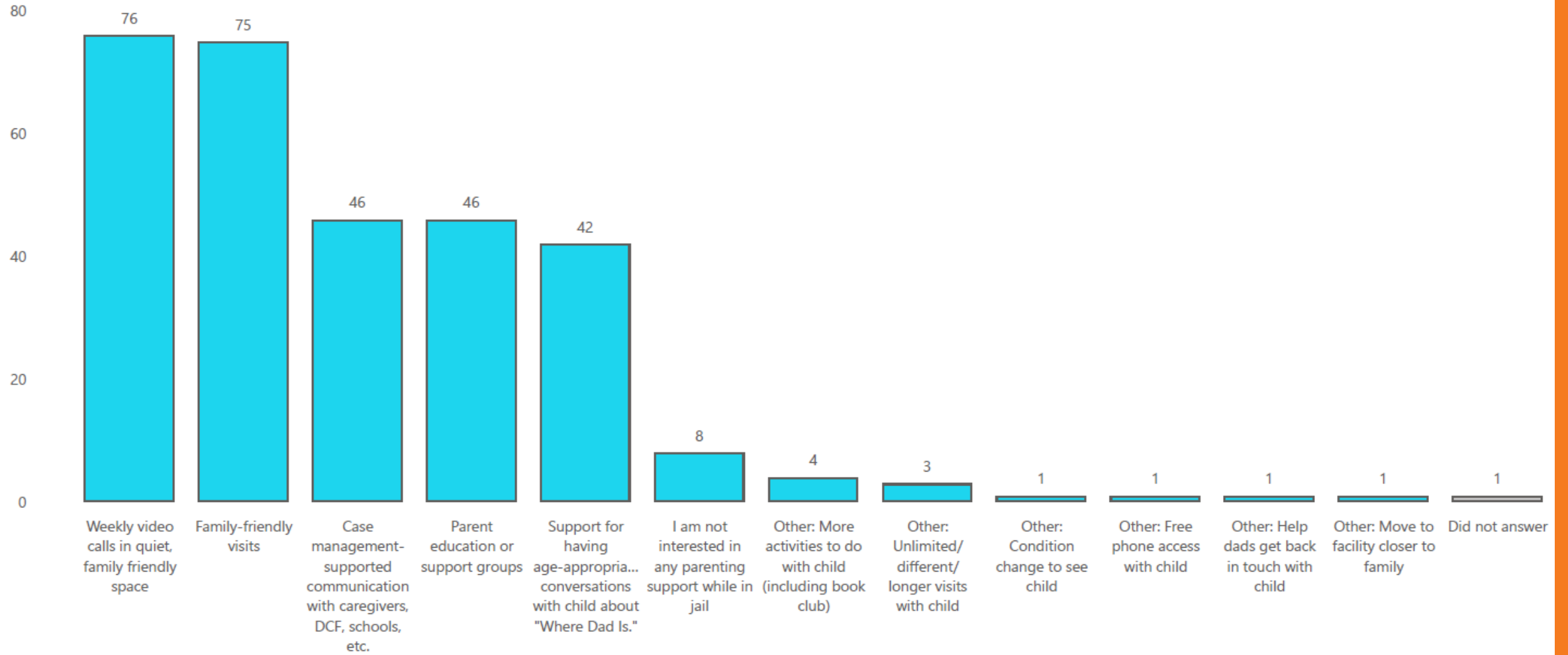


## Challenges to Child Visiting



Note: Participants could select all that apply.

## Parenting Support Interests



Note: Many selected everything indicating high interest in any activity offered. *Other*: indicates a write-in field. Participants could select all that apply.

# Family Visits And Parenting Programs Can Lead to Better Outcomes

**For the Family:** Research suggests that intervening in the lives of incarcerated parents and their children to preserve and strengthen positive family connections can yield positive societal benefits in the form of **reduced recidivism, less intergenerational criminal justice system involvement, and promotion of healthy child development** (Christian, S. 2009).

**For Fathers:** Research has found that father-child visitation and the education coupled with it is associated with a **decrease in violence and over-aggressive behaviors, successful reintegration, and a decrease in the chance of recidivism** (EDRG, 2011).

**For Children:** A review of prison-based parenting programs conducted by Purvis [83] found that, for children, parenting programs were associated with **improved self-esteem, mental health, wellbeing, and academic performance** and **decreased truancy and delinquency**. (Dargis et al., 2021)

Christian, S. (2009). Children of incarcerated parents. National Conference of State Legislatures. Retrieved from <http://www.ncsl.org/documents/cyf/childrenofincarceratedparents.pdf>.

EDRG. (2011). Retrieved from [http://cdn2.hubspot.net/hub/135704/file-561437088pdf/Research\\_Eval\\_Files/368\\_IoDEvalRpt\\_NREPP\\_120712.pdf](http://cdn2.hubspot.net/hub/135704/file-561437088pdf/Research_Eval_Files/368_IoDEvalRpt_NREPP_120712.pdf)

Dargis M, Mitchell-Somoza A. Challenges Associated with Parenting While Incarcerated: A Review. Int J Environ Res Public Health. 2021 Sep 21;18(18):9927. doi: 10.3390/ijerph18189927. PMID: 34574849; PMCID: PMC8469117



# How to Measure Success of a KAPPP Pilot Expansion in a Men's Facility

- **Intake pre survey to incarcerated fathers to gauge baseline connection to their child(ren)**
  - How often do you connect with your child
  - Question about communication frequency with caregiver or DCF
  - Inquire about current readiness to discuss their incarceration with their child(ren) and caregivers
- **Incremental ongoing surveying of fathers**
  - How they feel their parenting skill are and their connection to their children has benefitted from accessing KAPPP
- **Track number of participates who enroll in KAPPP and stay engaged**
- **Caregiver intake survey after initial home visit/connection, to gauge their responses on:**
  - Understanding the range of KAPPP supports offered
  - Feel better prepared to engage with child(ren) and discuss parental incarceration appropriate to the child's age
  - Knows how to access resources
- **Caregiver exit survey**
  - Measure the length of contact/engagement with KAPPP
  - Caregiver's response to feeling like they were supported to care for their child(ren)



# Questions?





**We thank you for your continued support.**

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