
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO INCARCERATED PARENTS.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that during the 1990s,
2 the number of incarcerated parents in the United States grew by
3 approximately fifty-nine per cent. The legislature further
4 finds that currently there is no means of determining the exact
5 number of incarcerated individuals with minor children in Hawaii
6 because no procedure is in place for collecting this data.
7 However, it is estimated that there are approximately three
8 thousand one hundred sixty three parents of six thousand six
9 hundred sixty five children in Hawaii's prison system.

10 An increased focus needs to be placed on the children of
11 incarcerated individuals to maintain the parent-child bond.
12 Intervention is also needed to strengthen parent-child
13 relationships in the non-incarcerated offender population.
14 Studies indicate that the children of incarcerated individuals
15 suffer from a multitude of adverse consequences, including
16 possible displacement from their home and separation from their
17 primary or secondary caregiver. As a result, these children



1 experience strong emotional reactions to the incarceration and
2 disruption in their home life, leading to a significant
3 increase, up to six times more likely, of becoming involved in
4 the criminal justice system themselves.

5 State policies contribute to the breakdown of the family by
6 failing to facilitate the continued relationship between
7 incarcerated individuals and their children when the
8 relationship is in the best interests of the child. Denial of
9 visitation is a means of punishment or discipline of the
10 incarcerated individuals, but those who truly suffer are the
11 children. The strengthening of family relationships has a
12 positive effect on recidivism as studies have shown it lessens
13 the possibility of future incarceration after an inmate's
14 release from a correctional facility. Studies have also shown
15 that therapeutic involvement with families during incarceration
16 builds better and stronger relationships between the
17 incarcerated parent's children and the incarcerated parent once
18 the parent is released.

19 A successful model has already been developed and
20 implemented in the state: the Strengthening Keiki of
21 Incarcerated Parents (SKIP) Project aims to strengthen families,
22 decrease abuse and neglect of children of incarcerated parents,



1 and decrease the occurrence of repeat incarceration. The SKIP
2 program works with incarcerated fathers at Waiawa correctional
3 facility and has been a model for projects in correctional
4 facilities for both male and female inmates and institutions
5 servicing other offender populations, such as No Na Kamalii and
6 Ohana Strengthening at the Maui community correctional center
7 and Makua Keiki at the Kauai community correctional center. A
8 partnership is currently underway to replicate the program in
9 the Hawaii community correctional center, as well. All of the
10 related SKIP programs have formed a coalition known as the SKIP
11 Partnership.

12 In addition to providing an educational playgroup, the
13 program also enrolls the incarcerated parents in parenting
14 programs, such as Nurturing Fathers and Supporting Parents as
15 First Teachers, to help them reflect and heal from their
16 neglectful and abusive childhoods, begin to learn how to nurture
17 themselves and others, and develop good parenting skills. The
18 combination of education, play and learn groups, and support
19 groups is aimed at increasing an incarcerated parent's ability
20 to provide a safe and nurturing environment for young children.

21 The legislature determines that the State should take an
22 active role in aiding these families through the provision of



1 incarcerated parent-child interaction programs, such as the SKIP
2 program, to ensure that these children can build and maintain
3 strong relationships with their parents and grow into well-
4 adjusted, contributing members of the community.

5 The purpose of this Act is to support the continuation and
6 expansion of parent-child interaction programs, such as the SKIP
7 program, at other state correctional facilities and institutions
8 servicing other offender populations to facilitate appropriate
9 interactions and bonding between offender parents and their
10 children.

11 SECTION 2. Parent-child interaction programs. (a) Within
12 the department of public safety, incarcerated parent-child
13 interaction programs, such as the SKIP program, shall be
14 developed for both male and female offenders incarcerated at
15 state correctional facilities, or for other offender populations
16 that receive services from institutions and agencies that are
17 not part of the state correctional system. Funding may be used
18 for:

- 19 (1) The purchasing, development, and implementation of
20 parent-child interaction programs that meet security
21 requirements, such as the SKIP program, throughout the



1 state correctional system and for institutions and
2 agencies serving other offender populations;

3 (2) The collection of best available demographic data on
4 the children of incarcerated parents, including:

5 (A) The number of children of each incarcerated
6 parent;

7 (B) The children's ages, resident addresses, and
8 schools;

9 (C) Custody and caregiving arrangements; and
10 (D) Services needed by the children;

11 provided that such data is to remain confidential and
12 made available for the sole use of government agencies
13 and government-contracted service providers and for
14 the sole purpose of providing services to these
15 children; and

16 (3) An independent review of the programs by researchers
17 such as those at the public policy center at the
18 University of Hawaii at Manoa.

19 (b) Funding may also be used for:

20 (1) The training of public safety personnel on the merits
21 of the programs; and



1 (2) The hiring of additional public safety personnel to
2 facilitate the implementation of the programs.

3 (c) The independent reviewer contracted by the director of
4 public safety shall submit a report, including its findings,
5 recommendations, and any proposed legislation, to the
6 legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of
7 the regular session of 2008.

8 (d) The department of public safety shall take steps to
9 implement incarcerated parent-child interaction programs such as
10 the SKIP program. The department shall contract with nonprofit
11 health and human services and other relevant agencies or
12 organizations to develop and implement the recommended programs
13 or services. The contract shall be executed in accordance with
14 chapter 103F, Hawaii Revised Statutes.

15 SECTION 3. There is appropriated out of the general
16 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$, or so
17 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2007-2008, and
18 the same sum, or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal
19 year 2008-2009, for incarcerated parent-child interaction
20 programs at state correctional facilities and institutions and
21 agencies serving other offender populations.

1 The sums appropriated shall be expended by the department
2 of public safety for the purposes of this Act.

3 SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2020.



Report Title:

Incarcerated Parents

Description:

Appropriates funds for the expansion of incarcerated parent-child interaction programs, such as the Strengthening Keiki of Incarcerated Parents Project, at state correctional facilities and institutions servicing other offender populations. (SB1174 HD1)

