

**CT CHILDREN WITH
INCARCERATED PARENTS
INITIATIVE**

**ACTIVITIES
REPORT
2025**



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What is CTCIP?

The **CT Children with Incarcerated Parents (CTCIP)** Initiative is dedicated to improving the quality of support for children with incarcerated parents (CIP) through data analysis, rigorous research, strategic partnerships with community organizations and government agencies, and the creation of valuable resources.

CTCIP operates out of the Institute for Municipal and Regional Policy (IMRP) located at the University of Connecticut's School of Public Policy in Hartford, CT.

CTCIP is Connecticut's primary resource center for information on and for children affected by familial incarceration. We serve as the state's think-tank for policy and practice recommendations involving and impacting CIP.



CTCIP GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- I. Practices should be designed specifically with CIP needs in mind
- II. Include CIP and their families in the process of program development, implementation, and evaluation
- III. The relationship between the child and the incarcerated parent should be supported
- IV. Programs should reach children and families to get “self-referrals”
- V. Stigma and isolation associated with incarceration should be reduced
- VI. Emphasis on connections, collaborations and coordination among agencies and community partners
- VII. Evaluation and accurate data are critical for identifying evidence-supported practices

Fostering Family Connections: Child-Friendly Areas & Events



Winter Family Celebration

The CTCIP team partnered with York Correctional Institution to host a Winter Family Celebration reuniting more than 30 children with their incarcerated mothers for a day of **connection, joy, and meaningful engagement**. Moms and their children had an event filled with laughter and activities including arts and crafts, games, a photo booth, and a shared pizza lunch. Toys and books were distributed, ensuring each child received multiple age-appropriate gifts. The celebration **strengthened family bonds**, supported positive parent-child interaction, and demonstrated the impact of creating welcoming, trauma-informed spaces for CIPs. Read more about the event [here](#).



Holiday Toy Drive

To support the family holiday event at York Correctional Institution, CTCIP organized an Amazon Wishlist-based toy drive that resulted in the donation of more than **200 toys and books** for **35 children** with incarcerated parents. Children ranging from newborns to age 17 received multiple age-appropriate gifts during the celebration. CTCIP is **grateful** to the many **community partners** along with community members whose generosity made it possible to bring joy, dignity, and a meaningful holiday experience to children and families impacted by incarceration.



Building a Community of Support



Visiting Areas

CTCIP continues to partner with CTDOC to advance **family-friendly visiting** spaces at Osborn Correctional Institution, Carl Robinson Correctional Institution, Corrigan Correctional Center, and Manson Youth Institution (MYI). Improvements included painting and the purchase of new furniture, books, toys, and other child-centered activities designed to support **positive parent-child interaction** and reduce stress during visits. By enhancing visiting spaces with age-appropriate furnishings and activities, this work strengthened opportunities for meaningful, positive family engagement during an otherwise challenging period.



CREC Back to School Fair

In August, the CTCIP Team tabled in Hartford to distribute **school supplies** and CTCIP informational resources to CREC Magnet School children and families. Attendees received **take-home materials** and engaged with staff to learn more about the impact of parental incarceration and available supports for children and families.



Hygiene Drive

In partnership with **The Alliance for Incarcerated Women**, CTCIP hosted a hygiene drive at the UConn Hartford campus to collect hygiene products for incarcerated women such as bar soap, shampoo and conditioner, toothpaste, toothbrushes, menstrual pads, and deodorant. The team is grateful for community members who donated necessary items to the drive. These donations helped **support incarcerated women's** dignity and **health** with ensuring they had clean hygiene items to use.



Celebrating the 20th Anniversary of the CIP Bill of Rights

The CIP Bill of Rights was created to ensure the voices of Children with Incarcerated Parents were heard and their needs were considered during legislature. The 20th Anniversary of the Bill of Rights was the theme of Parental Incarceration Awareness Month this past year.

CHILDREN OF INCARCERATED PARENTS' BILL OF RIGHTS*



I HAVE THE RIGHT...

- 1** to be kept safe and informed at the time of my parent's arrest.
- 2** to be heard when decisions are made about me.
- 3** to be considered when decisions are made about my parent.
- 4** to be well cared for in my parent's absence.
- 5** to speak with, see, and touch my parent.
- 6** to support as I face my parent's incarceration.
- 7** not to be judged, blamed, or labeled because my parent is incarcerated.
- 8** to a lifelong relationship with my parent.

*The Bill of Rights was created by the San Francisco Children of Incarcerated Parents Partnership in 2005.

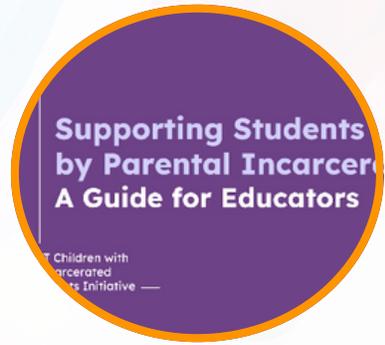
#SeeUsSupportUs

This graphic was created by the See Us Support Us program hosted by the Osborne Association's New York Initiative for Children with Incarcerated Parents.

This year we...

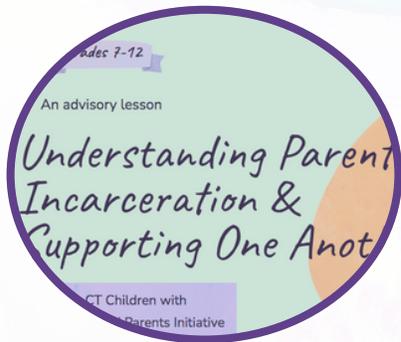
TRAINED

We developed a **Training for Educators** to equip teachers, administrators, social workers, and other educational staff members with **greater awareness** of parental incarceration as well as **strategies** to best support students with incarcerated parents. In an asynchronous online video format, attendees reflected on their own understanding of parental incarceration and then explored methods to best support students in their classrooms and their families. Students impacted by parental incarceration will have teachers more knowledgeable about CIP.



EDUCATED

We created and distributed a **secondary advisory lesson** for grades 7-12 to encourage schools to bring awareness to parental incarceration. The objectives of the advisory lesson were related to identifying coping strategies to heightened emotions, understanding the **prevalence** of parental incarceration, and reflecting on how best to support CIP. Children that engaged with this advisory lesson at school were able to discuss parental incarceration and **emotional regulation** topics in manageable age-appropriate ways.



COLLABORATED

We partnered with many **Connecticut libraries** to distribute CTCIP resources in their community spaces. Using our library and general resources, many libraries created **displays** to honor Parental Incarceration Awareness Month. For example, pictured right is Terryville Public Library who created this display to highlight books and resources they promote all year long to support families in their community.



TESTIFIED

In 2025, CTCIP started to raise their presence in the **Connecticut legislature**. We met with lawmakers about problems impacting CIP in the state. We also testified in front of the Committee on Children in favor of two bills, SB 461 and HB 6182, that would improve **higher education access** to those in foster and kinship care.



RESEARCHED

Our new Statewide Action Plan, created with The Council of State Government's Justice Center and Rutgers University-Camden, offers **evidence-based strategies for states**. It includes creating **child-friendly visiting** spaces, expanding **parenting programs**, and enhancing **communication** between children and parents. This plan provides policymakers with actionable steps to reduce trauma, strengthen family connections, and improve long-term outcomes.



To honor Parental Incarceration Awareness Month, we created a **social media campaign** to highlight resources for children, caregivers, and professionals impacted by parental incarceration. Each day, infographics, resource descriptions, and links were posted on the CTCIP Facebook page. The campaign culminated with an October Newsletter that provided an overview of **resources** for community stakeholders to better support CIP.

SPREAD AWARENESS

AWARDED

We awarded **scholarships** to two UConn Hartford students who have been personally impacted by having a family member incarcerated. These scholarships provide **financial assistance** to help alleviate the burden of educational expenses, empowering recipients to focus on their academic goals and personal growth. During **UConn Gives**, CTCIP raised **\$1,800** from 28 donors for the CIP Scholarship fund. We ranked 29th out of 1,500+ UConn funds for total donors, showing strong community support.



In March, CTCIP was invited to and attended a convening hosted by Opportunity Labs and Arnold Ventures. The goal of the event was to **build connections** between **researchers, policymakers, and practitioners**, in the greater New York metropolitan area and across the country. We represented Connecticut perspectives and explored new research and funding opportunities.

EXPLORED

Programs & Resources

The CIP Initiative is dedicated to providing information and resources that may be helpful to those with a loved one in a Connecticut correctional facility.

CHILDREN WITH INCARCERATED PARENTS INITIATIVE

FREQUENTLY
ASKED
QUESTIONS

FAQ Booklet

CIP Children Website



CIP Scholarship

CTCIP Intern Spotlight

Alexis Rodriguez

Alexis worked with the CTCIP team at the conclusion of her senior year at Capital Preparatory Magnet School in Hartford. She joined the team because of her “positive experience working with Irvine during my senior capstone project. ... I saw [the internship] as a great opportunity to gain **hands-on experience** and to work with an organization that supports many parents and children who are in the same position I once was in. This made the opportunity very **meaningful to me.**” Alexis partnered with the CTCIP team and shared out her capstone findings. Three words that she would use to describe CTCIP are **empowering, impactful, and dedicated.**



Ariana Azerrad Zevallos

Ariana is a current Masters student in UConn’s School of Public Policy. She joined the team because she “was drawn to CTCIP's mission of **improving supports and policies** for children in these circumstances. I saw this internship as an opportunity not only to learn more about the real challenges these children face but also to be part of **meaningful work.**” Arianna has enjoyed being able to learn new things and collaborate with the CTCIP team. Three words that she would use to describe CTCIP are **impactful, compassionate, and supportive.**



What We Do

CTCIP strives to do the very important work of identifying, developing and implementing policies, services and resources for children affected by familial incarceration. We collaborate with our state and national partners to expand the scope of resources and services.

We provide awareness and outreach across the state in order to de-stigmatize parental incarceration and to provide better supports and networks for CIP and families.

We create resources aimed to support children, families, caregivers, and professionals impacted by parental incarceration.

What You Can Do

- **DONATE** to UConn Gives and the 2026 CTCIP Scholarship to support UConn Hartford students impacted by familial incarceration
- **SPREAD AWARENESS** about parental incarceration by sharing information, reposting social media, and talking about our resources with others
- **LEARN** more about supporting CIP on our website: ctcip.org
- **FOLLOW** us on social media: @CTCIPInitiative
- **CONNECT** with us: ctcip@uconn.edu

WWW.CTCIP.ORG

Looking Ahead to 2026

This year, CTCIP is excited to continue partnership with community stakeholders including but not limited to: Connecticut DOC, legislators, schools, libraries, healthcare workers, and families impacted by parental incarceration.

The team is excited for the CTCIP scholarship application to open for the 2026-2027 school year, begin reviewing applications, and awarding scholarships to deserving candidates.

The CTCIP team is brainstorming to host an event this year which will honor our scholarship recipients and community partners.

Scan to Donate:

