



The New York State Prison Visiting Bus

A Public Safety Resource that Benefits Children and Families

Report prepared for the New York State Assembly,
Committee on Codes

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Overview

Research shows that prison visitation is integral to managing incarcerated people's behavior, reducing recidivism, facilitating reentry, and promoting positive parent-child relationships.ⁱ By promoting better outcomes for incarcerated parents, visitation can help reduce the negative effects of imprisonment and the stigma experienced by children of having an incarcerated parent. This in turn can reduce children's risks of homelessness and of involvement in the child welfare system.ⁱⁱ Families, however, often face multiple barriers to visiting their loved ones, including prohibitive costs and significant distances. From 1973 to 2011, the New York State Department of Corrections and Community Supervision (DOCCS) provided free transportation to its prisons to help families stay connected. This service, unmatched by any other state corrections department, was relied on by families that were often far from the prison they visited and lacked the financial means to make such trips on their own.ⁱⁱⁱ In early 2011, the program was terminated because of budget constraints precluding thousands of people from visiting loved ones in New York state prisons.

With support from the Sills Family Foundation, the Vera Institute of Justice (Vera) provides in this brief report information on the bus program to the New York State Assembly, Committee on Codes. Below is a summary of the research about prison visitation, a brief history of the "Free Bus Program," and recommendations for a restored program.

Benefits of Prison Visitation

Prison visitation has proven benefits for incarcerated people and their families, as well as for facility safety and reentry outcomes. For corrections staff, family visits contribute to facility safety because they motivate prisoners to complete programs and follow facility rules. The Washington State Department of Corrections found that incarcerated people who receive regular visits from family were *six times less likely* to commit a violation in prison.^{iv} Data collected by the Minnesota Department of Corrections found that those who receive visits—especially visits from siblings, in-laws, fathers, and clergy—reduce their chances of committing a subsequent crime resulting in incarceration by as much as 13 percent.^v Such visits also facilitate prison reentry because families are often the primary source of support for housing, clothes, food, and other necessities. The impact of visitation on recidivism reduction has significant cost implications given the average annual prison cost in New York is \$60,076 per person.^{vi} By focusing on ways to increase visiting, DOCCS can better leverage the positive benefits of visiting to the incarcerated populations.

For children with incarcerated parents, in-person visits have a positive impact on their emotional well-being and future educational and other life outcomes. The U.S. Department of Justice's Bureau of Justice Statistics estimates that, nationally, 52 percent of state prisoners are parents to children under age 18.^{vii} While 78 percent of those parents had contact with their children (letter, phone, visits) since they had been admitted to prison, only 42 percent of parents had a visit with their children over that same timeframe.^{viii} The percentage of New York's prisoners who are parents is higher than the national figure. In 2011, DOCCS reported that 72 percent of women and 62 percent of men in prison were parents.^{ix} This suggests the impact of their incarceration is felt by a significant number of children. For children, visits with their incarcerated parents have proven beneficial on a number of levels including being associated with higher self-esteem, improved non-verbal IQ scores, better adjustment to school

and foster care, and fewer behavioral problems.^x Absent these opportunities, children may end up struggling with truancy, juvenile justice involvement, foster care, or homelessness—systems with significant financial and emotional costs.^{xi} For example, the annual cost of placing a youth with the New York State Office of Children and Family Services is \$268,000.^{xii} Avoiding that cost through increasing contact between parents and children may have upfront costs, such as the bus program, but doing so offers long-term benefits to the state and to families.

Barriers to Visiting

Even though visitation has been proven to have multiple benefits for public safety, families and friends encounter multiple barriers to visiting their loved ones. Chief among these are financial costs and distance. The following sections further describe these challenges.

Financial Barriers

The financial cost of incarceration is significant for prisoners' families and may include the following: private legal defense, child care, lost wages and future earnings, lost fringe benefits on lost wages and future earnings, lost household productivity, and pain and suffering of family members.^{xiii} In addition to such measurable costs, some studies include costs such as family housing, foster care, and familial support for a prisoner during incarceration, which can be more difficult to quantify.^{xiv}

Cost of Staying in Contact. Families experience many costs related to staying in touch with an incarcerated loved one, such as depositing money in a prison commissary account, purchasing stamps to write letters, sending packages, incurring travel expenses, and paying for collect phone calls. One study of visits by New York City residents to family members in New York State prisons found that each visitor spent at least \$80 per visit for costs such as a private bus ticket, food and drink en route, prison vending machine items, and packages of food or clothes for their loved one.^{xv}

Bus travel is desirable, in part, because of the high cost of flying or taking commuter trains and need for taxis from the airports or train station to reach the prison. Some research has found that the costs for a parent and child to take a commuter train—including food before and after the visit, packaged items, and photos at the prison—range from \$175 to \$312 for New York City residents to visit Sing Sing Correctional Facility (Ossining, NY) or Mohawk Correctional Facility (Rome, NY) respectively.^{xvi} Research has also found that family members often place as much as \$25 to \$30 on prison commissary accounts weekly or biweekly.^{xvii} While prison phone call costs can be significant (each call in New York has a \$1.28 connection fee, for example), DOCCS has demonstrated leadership in this area by lowering the long-distance phone call rates several times and the connection fee has been reduced from \$3.00 in 2003.^{xviii}

Additional Costs. These costs are in addition to childcare costs and costs associated with missing work to attend visits. For many families, these expenses limit their ability to visit and may lead to financial difficulties.

The reality is that expending money on maintaining social ties with an incarcerated family member is only problematic if these expenditures prevent the family from meeting other financial needs such as paying mortgage/rent, food, utility bills, phone bills, health care, child care, transportation, and building up savings to cushion against...difficult [economic] times which the majority of low-income households face.^{xix}

For many years, the DOCCS bus program reduced a major financial burden for families seeking to maintain contact with their loved ones.

Distance as a Barrier to Visiting

In New York, as in many states, the costs of visits are compounded by the significant distances families must travel to prisons. Many families and individuals who wish to visit loved ones in prison do not own cars, and for those who own or have direct access to a car, transportation costs can be prohibitive.^{xx} Many prisons in New York State are set in isolated rural communities inaccessible by direct bus or train routes, and travelling to them often requires a combination of public transportation and taxis.

The figure below (Figure 1) illustrates the distance traveled by prisoners’ families when visiting loved ones in DOCCS facilities.^{xxi} To estimate these distance, Vera calculated the distance between a “county of commitment” (*i.e.*, the county in which a person was convicted) and the prisons where people from that county were incarcerated. For this inquiry, Vera assumed that most people commit their crime near where their families live. Thus, a family would be traveling from a county of commitment when it visits a prison.

Figure 1: Distances Families Would Need to Travel to Visit People in Prison

Distance from County of Commitment to Prison (in miles)	Number of Incarcerated Individuals	Percentage of DOCCS Population
0 - 50	5,086	11%
51 - 100	10,379	19%
101 - 200	11,261	21%
201 - 300	11,652	22%
300+	14,478	27%
Total	53,576	100%

The vast majority (70 percent) of people in DOCCS facilities are incarcerated over 100 miles from their home county while almost half (49 percent) are incarcerated over 200 miles from home. This can be attributed, at least in part, to the 31,773 people originating from New York City as well as Nassau, Suffolk, Rockland, and Westchester Counties. Sixty-one percent of these people are incarcerated at least 200 miles from home with 38 percent at least 300 miles away. There is little variation in distance from home for those originating in the five boroughs of New York City and those originating in the surrounding suburbs, as at least 58 percent of people from the New York metropolitan area are incarcerated over 200 miles from their county of commitment. Nonetheless, the families of the 25,573 people from New York City are likely disproportionately affected by the lack of direct public transportation to rural communities. More than half of all City residents do not own a car, a proportion that is likely higher among lower income residents.^{xxii}

Unfortunately, the families of prisoners originating from downstate counties are not alone in travelling long distances to visit loved ones in prison. Of the 9,028 prisoners from rural upstate counties, 68 percent (6,147) are incarcerated at least 100 miles from home. Although this is slightly below the rate for the prison population as a whole, it is notable because many of these people originate from counties where DOCCS facilities are located. For example, 75 percent of prisoners originating in Greene County, which has within its boundaries two DOCCS facilities, are incarcerated at least 100 miles from their county of commitment. Similarly, 59 percent of individuals originating in Cayuga County, which also has two DOCCS facilities, are incarcerated between 100 and 300 miles from their homes. While the prisons within those counties may not be appropriate for all people who committed crimes in those counties, given different security requirements or programming needs, it is possible that they could be suitable for some of the individuals from Greene and Cayuga Counties respectively.

History of the Family Visiting Program

In 1973, New York State recognized that strong family and community ties during imprisonment are vital to the successful rehabilitation of prisoners. In order to maintain these relationships, the State instituted the Family Visiting Program, also known as the “Free Bus Program,” which provided transportation at no cost to prison facilities across the state for family members and loved ones. The program was housed within the Division of Ministerial, Family, and Volunteer Services (MFVS) in DOCCS.

The goal of the Free Bus Program was to “preserve, enhance, and strengthen relationships between incarcerated individuals and their family and friends.”^{xxiii} It also met a more basic need: the program provided transportation to those who could not otherwise afford to make the expensive and often lengthy trips on their own. The buses, contracted by DOCCS, departed from New York City, Syracuse, Rochester, and Albany, traveling to every facility outside New York City except the Willard Drug Treatment Campus and Lakeview Shock facilities.

Figure 2: Cost and Usage of the Bus Program for Select Years

	2002-2003	2009-2010	2010-2011
Annual Cost of Bus Contracts	\$809,540	\$1,521,000	\$1,500,000
Estimated Cost per Trip*	\$ 1,551	\$ 2,975	Unavailable^
Estimated Number of Trips*	521	511	234^
Total Riders	26,094	25,560	11,749^
New York City Riders	Data not available	74% (18,890)	38% (4,469)^
Central and Western NY Riders	Data not available	26% (6,670)	62% (7,280)^
DOCCS Prison Population^{xxiv}	67,534	60,347	58,687

*Estimates assume each bus carried 50 passengers.

^Because the program ended in early 2011, the ridership numbers are not from a full year so appropriate cost comparisons are not available.

In order to utilize the free bus, prisoners would fill out an application which would be sent to DOCCS for approval. Once approved, MFVS would send a letter to the potential visitor, with a general limit of four visitors per prisoner, notifying them of the approval. The visitor had to be on the individual prisoner’s approved list of visitors. The recipient of the letter would then call MFVS for a confirmation number and seat reservation for the next available trip. Each departure location was staffed by a DOCCS coordinator who would confirm reservations and assist those with questions.

In 2002, the Free Bus Program served 26,094 visitors and cost \$809,540 (approximately \$1,551 per trip assuming each bus was full).^{xxv} At that time, the program was funded through the Family Benefit Fund—developed with commissions from prison phone calls.^{xxvi} More recently, DOCCS reported a decrease in usage of the program. Anecdotal evidence from people who rode the bus and people who work with families who rode the bus suggests that this may not reflect a lack of desire to visit prisons, but may be related to riders having a negative experience on the bus or simply, by insufficient publicity around the program. During a 2008 survey of prisoners at the Fishkill Correctional Facility and Bedford Hills Correctional Facility, 67 percent of respondents were aware of the bus program, but only 20 percent indicated their family members had ridden the bus.^{xxvii} It is unknown how these rates compare to upstate facilities, but they do suggest there may be families that simply did not know the program was available to them and other families who chose not to use the bus.

In fiscal year 2009-2010, DOCCS allocated \$1,521,000 for the Bus Program (see Figure 2). The program served 25,560 visitors at a cost of approximately \$2,975 per trip. The last year of the program (2010-2011) DOCCS allocated \$1,500,000, but canceled the program in early 2011 because of budget constraints. Since the program ended, prisons have reported a drop in visiting rates. Without this

service, many incarcerated people will no longer receive visits—or may receive less frequent visits—from loved ones nor the support and encouragement these visits bring.

Envisioning a Restored Bus Program

The Free Bus Program provided a needed service. A restored bus program would not only serve this same function for families and their loved ones in prison, but also provide benefits to correctional facility environments, public safety, and the well-being of children and families. Below are a series of components that could make for a more cost-efficient and better utilized program.

Recommended Components for a Restored Visiting Bus Program

Based on interviews with DOCCS staff, regular riders of the former bus service, organizations that serve families with incarcerated loved ones, and organizations that ran similar transportation programs to prisons, a restored visiting bus program should incorporate the following components:

Frequency. Because the visiting bus program is the only viable mode of transportation for many, the buses should run monthly to each prison to provide visitors regular access to prison facilities. DOCCS found success in running buses that stopped at multiple prisons within one hub so a monthly trip does not necessarily require a separate bus to each prison.

Providing a High Quality Service. The trips to these facilities can be lengthy and exhausting. In order to facilitate a safe, clean, and incident-free bus ride and visit, providing an atmosphere of competence, comfort, and ease is crucial. For some guests, these visits can be emotionally taxing. Providing training to drivers to address visitors' concerns and make sure drivers are respectful towards the riders can alleviate some of the stress associated with the trip. There are several benefits to contracting with well-run bus companies rather than providing the service directly. Namely, bus companies have professional and licensed drivers, have maintenance schedules for their fleet, and they have liability insurance. With buses that arrive at the pick-up locations on time, fueled, and ready to depart, the program can reduce unnecessary stops en route to the prisons and minimize the already lengthy travel time.

Getting the Word Out. As mentioned earlier, DOCCS noticed a decrease in ridership during the last few years of the program. Marketing the program on the DOCCS website, within prisons, and to organizations that serve people who have been incarcerated or their families could increase the general awareness of the bus program and increase its usage. The state of California funds a program similar to the Free Bus Program, called the Chowchilla Family Express, that transports visitors to two women's prisons.^{xxviii} As part of the contract for managing the bus program, organizations must create outreach materials as well as provide and regularly update a website with information on the bus schedule. Similar promotional efforts are important to include in a restored bus program.

Reserving a Seat. Another key feature to implement is an easily accessible reservation system that holds its guests accountable. A phone system to reserve seats provides a more easily manageable and cost-effective system than a paper-ticketing system. It also reduces the risk of a paper ticket being

misplaced. Guests would reserve a seat on the bus over the phone and receive a reminder call the day before. If a person with a reservation does not show up without canceling prior to the trip, they would not be given priority for the next visit and may be placed on a standby or waitlist.

Easing the Process of Getting on and off the Bus. As with the previous bus program, a coordinator should be placed at each point of departure to confirm reservations and answer questions from visitors. To avoid issues during visitor processing, a basic checklist based on the DOCCS visitor guidelines should be distributed to each guest, either when confirming a reservation or boarding the bus. The bus program organizers should also provide a list of confirmed visitors to DOCCS for approval prior to the trip to avoid people being turned away at the facility.

To further avoid confusion, having a volunteer or staff person sit on the bus and help visitors with issues at arrival (*i.e.*, speak to corrections officers on behalf of visitors if needed) would be beneficial. This volunteer could also act as a chaperone, assuming a background check was completed, to youth traveling alone to visit parents in prison and provide them with supplies during the trip. If providing training or guidance to drivers is not possible, these volunteers can also provide a cost-effective way to ensure a quality ride.

Options for Structuring this Vital Service

The original Free Bus Program was staffed and managed by DOCCS. In exploring options for restoring the program, there are two obvious models to consider: a state-run program managed by DOCCS or a program that is largely contracted out to nonprofit organizations that specialize in serving families impacted by incarceration. Beyond those approaches, there are several other options that would yield some of the same benefits. Given limited resources, the state could target the buses to prisons that receive the fewest visitors, have seen the greatest drop in visitation since the buses were eliminated, or that are furthest from where the majority of the people plan to return home. Another option would be for DOCCS to provide a free shuttle service to and from the most accessible public transit site (MetroNorth station, bus stop, or Amtrak station) to the prison gates. Many facilities have vans already so this option would make use of existing resources.

A state-run program

Were the state to restore the original Visiting Bus Program and have DOCCS manage it, there are several benefits:

- DOCCS has experience running the program and working with various bus companies to provide the service.
- With the DOCCS-run program, the notifications about the program and the ticketing information were all routed through the prisons so that the incarcerated individuals shared relevant information with their family members. With that program design, it is important that family information be handled with sensitivity which DOCCS was able to provide.
- Corrections staff at the various prisons may be more comfortable working with fellow DOCCS staff, than with outside organizations, when coordinating visit logistics, verifying approved visitors, and tracking actual visitors.

Subcontract to nonprofits

As mentioned earlier, the state of California funds a program similar to the Free Bus Program, called the Chowchilla Family Express (CFE).^{xxix} Structurally, CFE differs from the Free Bus Program in that it is managed by a nonprofit organization that bids on the contract and provides the service with state funds. Given the primary departure locations for the New York buses, it would be ideal to have a contract with organizations based in Buffalo, Albany, and New York City. There are several benefits to this program structure:

- By having the option to work with smaller bus companies, nonprofits may be able to negotiate lower rates and address issues with drivers professionalism, training, and attitudes more quickly. For example, one nonprofit secured a contract with a bus company for \$2,566 for a trip from Buffalo to Bedford Hills Correctional Facility that included stops in Syracuse and Rochester. This is less than the estimated average cost of the DOCCS bus (\$2,975 in 2009).
- When the nonprofit manages the reservations and creates a process with the prison to verify the visit list, it reduces the administrative burden on the corrections department.
- With less traditional office hours, nonprofits may be better positioned to answer bus riders' questions and concerns than an office with regular nine-to-five hours (some corrections staff often maintain earlier hours, ending their shift at three or four in the afternoon).
- Nonprofits may have resources to assist riders with getting prepared to visit by addressing questions about proper identification, providing clothing that is in keeping with facility rules if needed, and helping riders manage expectations around the visiting process and understanding facility rules.
- Nonprofits that already serve families can easily promote the bus program to their clients as well as identify new clients who may benefit from their services. They can identify when buses are not fully booked and work to fill them so resources are not wasted. They can also track reasons for people not showing up when they have a reservation and work with individual families to address these patterns. Nonprofits may also have the trust and relationships with families that can serve to surface any concerns or problems in advance.
- In the event of interruptions in the state contract, nonprofits may be better able to maintain a reduced level of service so that families are still able to visit without the burden of the transportation costs. They may also be able to modify the size of the vehicle—for example, from a bus to a van—for trips with fewer riders or to increase the number of buses that travel on particularly popular days.

Conclusion

New York has demonstrated tremendous leadership and vision in helping families stay connected during a period of incarceration, thereby not only promoting public safety and safer correctional environments, but also the well-being of New York's children and families. The Free Visiting Bus Program is a vital service for thousands of people wishing to visit their loved ones. By reinstating the bus program and increasing its usage, New York can make better use of public resources while reaffirming its commitment to successful prisoner reentry and long-term public safety.

ⁱ Damian J. Martinez and Johnna Christian, “The Familial Relationships of Former Prisoners: Examining the Link Between Residence and Informal Support Mechanisms,” *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography* 38, no. 2 (2009): 201-24; Creasie Finney Hairston, “Prisoners and Their Families: Parenting Issues During Incarceration,” (paper presented at From Prison to Home: The Effect of Incarceration and Reentry on Children, Families and Communities, a conference hosted by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and Urban Institute, Washington DC, January 30-31, 2002); Rebecca Naser and Christy Visher, “Family Members’ Experiences with Incarceration and Reentry,” *Western Criminology Review* 7, no. 2 (2006): 20-31.

ⁱⁱ Christopher Wildeman and Bruce Western, “Incarceration in Fragile Families,” *Future of Children*, 20(2) (2010): 168.

ⁱⁱⁱ As is discussed later in the report, the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation contracts for a bus program to service two women’s prisons. The New York program was more extensive as far as the number of prisons it serviced and its long history of operation.

^{iv} Margaret diZerega and Jules Verdone, *Setting an Agenda for Family-Focused Justice Reform*, (New York: Vera Institute of Justice, 2011), 7.

^v Minnesota Department of Corrections, “The Effects of Prison on Offender Recidivism, November 2011” http://www.doc.state.mn.us/publications/documents/11-11PrisonVisitationResearchinBrief_Final.pdf (accessed January 13, 2012).

^{vi} This figure is the cost to taxpayers and includes costs beyond those incurred by DOCCS. Christian Henrichson and Ruth Delaney, *The Price of Prisons: What Incarceration Costs Taxpayers*, (New York: Vera Institute of Justice, 2012) 10.

^{vii} Lauren E. Glaze and Laura M. Maruschak, *Parents in Prison and Their Minor Children* (Washington, DC: Bureau of Justice Statistics, U.S. Department of Justice, 2008) 6.

^{viii} Glaze and Maruschak, 2008, p. 6.

^{ix} State of New York Department of Corrections and Community Supervision, “Under Custody Report: Profile of Inmate Population Under Custody on January 1, 2011,”

http://www.doccs.ny.gov/Research/Reports/2011/UnderCustody_Report.pdf (accessed February 1, 2012), p. 7.

^x Venezia Michalsen, Jeanne Flavin, and Tanya Krupat, “More than Visiting Hours: Maintaining Ties Between Incarcerated Mothers and their Children,” *Sociology Compass* 4/8 (2010): 580.

^{xi} Wildeman and Western, 2010, p. 168.

^{xii} Vincent Shiraldi, “New York City Department of Probation Testimony to the New York City Council Committees on Juvenile Justice and General Welfare on January 26, 2011,”

<http://www.nylj.com/nylawyer/adgifs/decisions/020111schiralditestimony.pdf> (accessed March 5, 2012), p. 9.

^{xiii} Thomas Lengyel and Marilyn Brown, “Everyone Pays: A Social Cost Analysis of Incarcerating Parents for Drug Offenses in Hawai’i,” 2009, http://register.alliance1.org/Research/materials/EveryonePays_Full.pdf (accessed November 7, 2011), p 53.

^{xiv} Lengyel and Brown, 2009, p. 53.

^{xv} Johnna Christian, “Riding the Bus: Barriers to Prison Visitation and Family Management Strategies,” *Journal of Contemporary Criminal Justice*, Vol. 21 No. 1 (2005): 31-48.

^{xvi} Tanya Krupat, Will Norris and Dana M. Lemaster, “Far From Home: A Preliminary Cost-Analysis of Visiting an Incarcerated Parent in New York State,” (New York: Osborne Association, *forthcoming*, 2010).

^{xvii} Johnna Christian, Jeff Mellow, and Shenique Thomas, “Social and Economic Implications of Family Connections to Prisoners,” *Journal of Criminal Justice* 34 (2006): 449.

^{xviii} New York State Department of Correctional Services, “Inmate pay phone access fosters family ties, enhances security for all,” 2003. <http://www.doccs.ny.gov/PressRel/2003/phoneinfo.pdf> (accessed February 6, 2012) p. 5. See also “Inmate collect call phone rates reduced again,” Dec. 13, 2007. <http://www.doccs.ny.gov/PressRel/2007/phoneratereduction.html> (accessed February 5, 2012).

^{xix} Christian, Mellow, and Thomas, 2006, p. 449.

^{xx} Krupat, Norris, and Lemaster, *forthcoming*.

^{xxi} DOCCS data from October 29, 2011 depicting the original “county of commitment” (*i.e.*, the New York county which an individual was convicted in) was used to determine the distance which families from across New York State must travel to visit loved ones in prison. New York’s county courts were used as the starting point from which families would theoretically depart to visit their loved one, as this is where most felony trials in New York are held. First, the driving distance between the county court and each correctional facility was determined and these distances were given a numerical code 0 – 4. The codes were then linked to the number of individuals within each facility and the numbers were totaled. Facilities slated to close under the State’s 2012 budget were omitted, as was the Edgecombe Reentry Center (population 17) which serves only people returning to New York City. Last, people designated under the term “All Special Housing Units” or “No Code” were not counted as it would be impossible to determine where they are currently incarcerated.

^{xxii} Carfree Census Database, “Most Carfree Households, 2000,” http://www.bikesatwork.com/carfree/census-lookup.php?state_select=ALL_STATES&lower_pop=1000&upper_pop=99999999&sort_num=5&show_rows=25&first_row=0 (accessed February 23, 2012).

^{xxiii} New York State Department of Corrections and Community Services, “Family Visiting (Free Bus) Program” <http://www.doccs.ny.gov/ProgramServices/ministerial.html> (accessed January 27, 2012).

^{xxiv} Figures reported by the U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics for December 2001, 2008, and 2009.

^{xxv} New York State Department of Correctional Services, “Inmate pay phone access fosters family ties, enhances security for all,” 2003. <http://www.doccs.ny.gov/PressRel/2003/phoneinfo.pdf> (accessed February 6, 2012) p. 4.

^{xxvi} *Ibid*, p. 4.

^{xxvii} Venezia Michalsen, Jenn Onofrio, Tanya Krupat, and Will Norris, “Families Count: New Findings about Incarcerated Parents and their Children, Results from a Survey in Two New York State Prisons,” (New York: The Osborne Association, *forthcoming*, 2010).

^{xxviii} For more on the Chowchilla Family Express, see <http://familyexpress.us/index.php> (accessed February 3, 2012).

^{xxix} For more on the Chowchilla Family Express and to see examples of the resources the nonprofit provides families, see <http://familyexpress.us/index.php> (accessed February 3, 2012). The 2009 solicitation for CFE required 48 trips per year to two women’s prisons located in close proximity to one another. The contracted provider was required to have a specific staffing structure (3 FTE). The total cost of the contract was \$832,000 for 25 months, or roughly \$8,320 per bus trip.