

## New York Initiative for Children of Incarcerated Parents a special project of the Osborne Association

### about the New York Initiative & why it's important

- The **New York Initiative for Children of Incarcerated Parents** was established by the Osborne Association in 2006 to work in partnership with government agencies and community and faith-based organizations to achieve policies and practices that **meet the needs and respect the rights of children whose parents are in the criminal justice system.**
- **Our vision is to realize a world in which children whose parents are involved in the criminal justice system are considered, supported, accepted for who *they* are (not their parent's choices), and their needs met.**
- Following the creation of the ***Children of Incarcerated Parents Bill of Rights*** by a San Francisco group in 2005, the Osborne Association decided to undertake the task of ensuring this *Bill of Rights* becomes a reality for children in NY State.



- These rights offer ***organizing principles and a framework for reform in New York***, where numerous policies, practices, and public attitudes must change in order to meet the needs of these children.
- The New York Initiative coordinates collaborative partner convenings, bringing together an esteemed coalition of public agencies and community organizations that serve children or their currently or formerly incarcerated parents, in order to provide critical information, research and updates; facilitate interagency and interdisciplinary discussion; and implement the roadmap for reform that was outlined in the New York Initiative's recently released report, ***A Call to Action: Safeguarding New York's Children of Incarcerated Parents.***

### role & impact of the New York Initiative

- In November 2010, the New York Initiative hosted an unprecedented statewide summit—***A Call to Action: NY Summit on Children of Incarcerated Parents.*** The Summit brought together over 240 diverse stakeholders, including representatives from government, the community, criminal justice system agencies, child welfare professionals, legal experts, educators and individuals affected by parental incarceration. The Summit generated a series of comprehensive recommendations that are the basis for the report issued in 2011.



- The New York Initiative's comprehensive report was released in May 2011. ***A Call to Action: Safeguarding New York's Children of Incarcerated Parents*** outlines a detailed and ambitious reform action plan, which grew out of the Summit, as well as years of collaborative work with and among government agencies, including corrections, probation, parole, child welfare, and health, mental health, education and other agencies, as well as community-based organizations. The report has been delivered to numerous elected officials at the state and local level, in order to **inform public policy, guide programmatic decisions, and provide a clear direction for New York State.**

**The New York Initiative also:**

- Serves as a tri-chair to the statewide **Coordinating Council on Children of Incarcerated Parents** (slated to launch in October 2011) in order to continue and build upon the work of the discontinued Governor’s Children’s Cabinet’s Subcommittee on Children with Incarcerated Parents.
- Runs a program for youth empowerment and leadership for youth with incarcerated parents. Participants develop their leadership and public speaking skills *and* advocate for reform, while also tapping their overall strengths, goals and talents.
- Hosts events, participates in conferences, and spotlights the voices of children and families at various forums.

**New York Initiative partners**

**Community-Based Partners**

Advocates for Children of New York  
 Agenda for Children Tomorrow  
 Applied Research Center  
 Bronx Defenders  
 Center for Family Representation  
 Center for the Study of Social Policy  
 Children’s Defense Fund  
 Children’s Project Fund  
 Children of Promise-New York City  
 Community Service Society  
 Hour Children  
 Imagine Me Leadership Academy  
 Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA)  
 Project Family Connect  
 Edwin Gould Services

Families, Fathers & Children  
 Fostering Change for Children  
 (formerly CT Wocat)  
 Graham Windham  
 Hostos Lincoln Academy  
 Jewish Board of Family and  
 Children’s Services  
 Kerwin Phillips Foundation’s  
 Prison Brake Network  
 Legal Aid Society Juvenile Rights Division  
 Legal Information for Families Today (LIFT)  
 MercyFirst  
 Weissberg Foundation  
 Permanent Judicial Commission on Justice  
 for Children

**CHILDREN OF INCARCERATED PARENTS’ A BILL OF RIGHTS**

1. I have the right **TO BE KEPT SAFE AND INFORMED AT THE TIME OF MY PARENT’S ARREST.**
2. I have the right **TO BE HEARD WHEN DECISIONS ARE MADE ABOUT ME.**
3. I have the right **TO BE CONSIDERED WHEN DECISIONS ARE MADE ABOUT MY PARENT.**
4. I have the right **TO BE WELL CARED FOR IN MY PARENT’S ABSENCE.**
5. I have the right **TO SPEAK WITH, SEE AND TOUCH MY PARENT.**
6. I have the right **TO SUPPORT AS I STRUGGLE WITH MY PARENT’S INCARCERATION.**
7. I have the right **NOT TO BE JUDGED, BLAMED OR LABELED BECAUSE OF MY PARENT’S INCARCERATION.**
8. I have the right **TO A LIFELONG RELATIONSHIP WITH MY PARENT.**

The *Children of Incarcerated Parents Bill of Rights* was developed by the San Francisco Children of Incarcerated Parents Partnership in 2005. For more info, go to [www.sfcipp.org](http://www.sfcipp.org).

Police Athletic League  
 Safe Horizon Brooklyn Mediation  
 Sills Family Foundation  
 United Way  
 United We Stand of NY  
 Vera Institute of Justice  
 Women’s Prison Association

**Government Partners**

Council on Children and Families  
 Kings County District Attorney’s Office  
 NYC Administration for Children’s Services (ACS)  
 NYC Department of Correction (DOC)  
 NYC Department of Education (DOE)  
 NYC Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD)  
 NYC Department for the Aging (DFTA)  
 NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene  
 NYC Human Resources Administration’s (HRA)  
 Office of Child Support Enforcement (OCSE)

NYC Mayor’s Office of the Family Services Coordinator  
 NYC Mayor’s Office Fatherhood Initiative  
 NY State Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS)  
 NY State Dept. of Corrections and Community Services (DOCS)  
 NY State Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS)  
 NY State Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services (OASAS)  
 NY State Education Department (SED)  
 NY State Center on School Safety  
 Unified Court System’s Court Improvement Project  
 Several of New York City’s Family Court Judges

**contact us/support children of incarcerated parents**



To learn more or to get involved, email the New York Initiative at [NYInitiative@osborneny.org](mailto:NYInitiative@osborneny.org) or call us at 718/ 637-6595 or x 6597 or visit [www.osborneny.org](http://www.osborneny.org).

If you have a family member or loved one who is incarcerated, please call Osborne’s Family Resource Hotline at **1-800-344-3314** for information, support, and resources, or attend the weekly Sharing Our Strengths support group in Osborne’s Brooklyn office at 175 Remsen Street (8th Floor) on Wednesdays at 5:30 pm.