

See Us,
Support Us

See Us, Support Us Guiding Principles

1 in 14 children experience parental incarceration.



Children and parents need support during and after a parent's incarceration.

Children of Incarcerated Parents' Bill of Rights*

2. I have the right to be heard when decisions are made about me.



* Developed by the San Francisco Children of Incarcerated Parents Partnership in 2009



See Us, Support Us (SUSU) is a national awareness raising initiative about and an affirming community for children and young adults affected by parental incarceration. SUSU is guided by the following principles which were co-created with those whose parents are involved in the criminal legal system and SUSU Partners.

- ▶ The criminal legal system should balance accountability and healing, while averting or minimizing family separation.
- ▶ Oppression and dehumanization of Black, Indigenous and people of color is perpetuated by the criminal legal system. Policies and practices must be examined and new approaches rooted in healing and restoration enacted to achieve just treatment, equitable possibilities, and liberation.
- ▶ Young people's needs should be considered throughout the duration of their parents' involvement in the criminal legal system, from arrest to reentry.
- ▶ Young people should be free of the stigma and stereotypes that limit their future prospects and well-being. They should have access to affirming, inclusive spaces that create a sense of belonging.
- ▶ Persistent patterns of oppression, racism, trauma, and poverty may result in the incarceration of family members across generations. We refrain from speaking about "breaking the cycle of intergenerational incarceration" because this narrative does not acknowledge these persistent patterns and largely places blame on families.
- ▶ Approach young people with empathy and compassion, not judgment and pity. Recognizing the emotional challenges they may be experiencing due to their parent's incarceration shows our capacity for understanding and providing support.
- ▶ Young people must have accessible and cost-free ways to maintain contact with their incarcerated parents. Contact visits, phone calls, packages, letters, email, and video conferencing, can promote young people's well-being, and support active parenting and successful reentry.
- ▶ Young people must be co-creators in developing programs, policies, and practices that affect them.
- ▶ Young people thrive and succeed despite challenges when provided with support and opportunities.

Join the **SUSU Network** to receive updates throughout the year. Visit www.susu-osborne.org to access resources, celebrate young people, and engage in calls to action year-round.