

# Improving Public Safety by Positively Changing Lives

## Strength in Families

Fact Sheet  
October 2024



### Individuals Impacted\*:

Fathers: 966

Spouses/Co-Parents: 1,555

Children: 3,120

### SIF Program Completions:

579

### Parent Related Outcomes\*\*:

71% of the respondents reported that they work better together as parents with at least one of their child(ren)'s mothers.

85% of the respondents reported that they feel more confident about their ability to stay connected with their child(ren).

94% of the respondents reported that they feel more confident that they have the skills necessary to be an effective parent.

\*Data period of 2015-October 2024

\*\*Data period of 2015-August 2024

### Our Mission

To partner with reentering parents in the development of skills and knowledge that focus on positive parenting and healthy relationships to create safe, stable, and nurturing environments for children and families.

### Our Vision

We envision children living in safe homes, having a positive relationship with parents and their care providers, and being supported by families who have the skills and access to the resources and services needed to thrive.

### Our History

Like national trends, individuals incarcerated within Washington DOC facilities often face a range of complex and interrelated challenges. Most incarcerated men (and women) are also parents, with the responsibility to support and care for their children. Recognizing that fathers and fatherhood figures experience stigmas and inequities, DOC applied for and received a five-year Responsible Fatherhood grant from the Administration for Children and Families in 2015.

The Strength in Families (SIF) program initially targeted rural counties with disproportionate rates of poverty and incarceration but has expanded to incorporate both rural and urban counties, which include the state's largest and most diverse counties.


The program, now funded in the department's budget, has made exceptional strides in implementation and continuous quality improvement. Elements of the program are currently being evaluated for change for alignment with other reentry and family programs.

### Eligibility

- A father or "father figure" of a child ages birth to 18 years.
- Approximately 24-36 months before release from a total confinement facility (applications are accepted for review up to 48 months from Earned Release Date or transfer to partial confinement).
- The program screening process considers criminal history, family and community safety, and prison behavior.
- The SIF program is offered at Washington Corrections Center Stafford Creek Corrections Center, Cedar Creek Corrections Center, Reynolds Reentry Center, Olympia Reentry Center, and Peninsula Reentry Center.
- Parenting Inside Out is currently being offered at WCCW as a pilot program, targeting incarcerated individuals with dependency cases.

### Program Structure

The Strength in Families program focuses on building skills and knowledge in healthy



relationships with partners and co-parents, responsible and positive parenting, and healthy communication skills. Participants will complete Parenting Inside Out and Walking the Line prior to release.

**Parenting Inside Out (PIO):** This curriculum taught by SIF Instructors is approximately 60 hours in length. PIO is an evidence-based program developed specifically for incarcerated and criminal justice-involved parents. The program builds skills and strengths in parents based on cognitive behavioral and social learning theories with proven methodologies for creating positive change within incarcerated parents. PIO includes topics such as communication skills, problem-solving skills, anger management, family dynamics, giving effective directions, discipline techniques, and using positive reinforcement.

**Walking the Line (WTL):** This curriculum taught by SIF Instructors is approximately 28 hours in length. This individually-based curriculum focuses on the development of a considered approach to relationships and life through discussions of families of origin, individual characteristics, values, perceived roles as a partner and a father, and the development of skills in interpersonal communication, emotion and stress regulation, and conflict management.

### **Case Management Services**

Each participant is assigned to a case manager who will begin partnering with them and their families approximately 24 months prior to release. Assigned case managers will provide case management services up to six months post-release for participants releasing to King, Pierce, Kitsap, Mason, Grays Harbor, Thurston, Lewis, Skamania, Clark, Cowlitz, Wahkiakum, and Pacific Counties.

Case managers will work with the participant to identify their personal and family strengths and challenges. SIF Case Managers also provide the following for participants:

- Strength-based, trauma-informed, and culturally sensitive case management
- Coach fathers through the reintegration into their communities
- Provide tools and resources to support children and families
- Bridge the communication gap for fathers with active dependency cases
- Support participants with dependency cases through the dependency process
- Provide connections to community-based resources based on Individual needs

*“This is a life-changing program. The children, families, and our community will benefit from fathers like me who will use the tools learned from Strength in Families. This would not be possible without the amazing staff, and coaches who dedicate their life and heart to this cause.” – Past SIF Participant*

**For more information:**

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