



# Parenting from Prison:

## Promising Practices for Strengthening Families and Fatherhood by Keeping Incarcerated Fathers Active in Their Child's Education

April 25, 2024

Thank you for coming!



THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF  
PHILADELPHIA

2024 Family Engagement Symposium

# SPEAKER

The School District of Philadelphia  
**Office of Family & Community Engagement**



**Jenna Monley**  
Deputy Chief

# WHO WE ARE

THE OFFICE OF FAMILY & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

## Our Mission

The Office of Family and Community Engagement will **build capacity** and develop programs and strategies to support meaningful district-wide engagement and **partnership** among schools, families, and communities that results in **shared responsibility** in the creation of thriving schools where every child succeeds.

# FACE's Programs & Initiatives

## BUILDING FAMILIES' ABILITY TO SUPPORT LEARNING AT HOME



### FACE Outreach Team

School-level supports for families:  
- Family Engagement Liaisons  
- Bilingual Counseling Assistants



### Family Academy: Courses & Training

Offers free workshops to families to support individual & student learning



### Focus on FACE Newsletter

Provides resources, tools, and best practice stories for families to learn how to partner with schools



### Parent & Family Portal

Allows guardians to view students' academic history, attendance, & more



### Pregnant & Parenting Teen Services

Offers case management and supportive services to expecting or parenting teens

## DEVELOPING STAFF MEMBERS' FAMILY ENGAGEMENT CAPACITY



### Tune-Up Tuesday

Equips teachers with tools & strategies for effectively partnering with families



### Principal Professional Development

Provides information and resources to principals to support family partnership at their schools



### New Teacher Induction / Hire

Gives new teachers an introduction to family engagement in Philadelphia



### Welcoming Schools Training

Provides training to staff District-wide on creating safe and friendly spaces for immigrants, refugees, & asylum seekers



### Family Engagement Action Group

Allows District staff to engage with family leaders and obtain feedback from them on a variety of topics

## SUPPORTING FAMILY-COMMUNITY-SCHOOL PARTNERSHIPS



### School Advisory Councils

Brings all school stakeholders together to improve learning outcomes & school communities



### Volunteer Support

Assists stakeholders with preparing to volunteer in our schools



### Customer Support Team

Fields constituent concerns and questions over the phone and in-person



### Translation & Interpretation

Provides language access to District information, services, and programs to non-English speaking communities

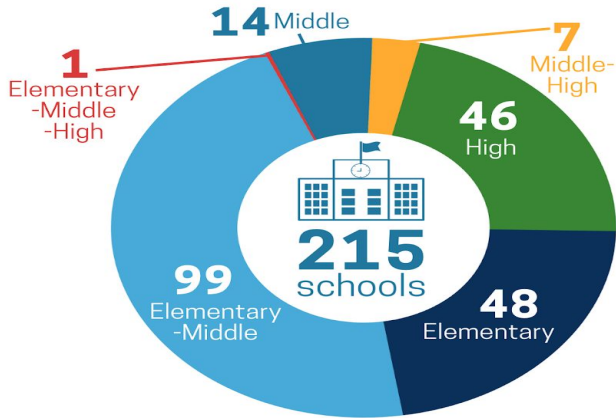


### Special Events

- Back to School Event
- Roadmap to Navigating the District Family Engagement Conference
- End-of-Year Celebration

Who is

# THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF PHILADELPHIA?

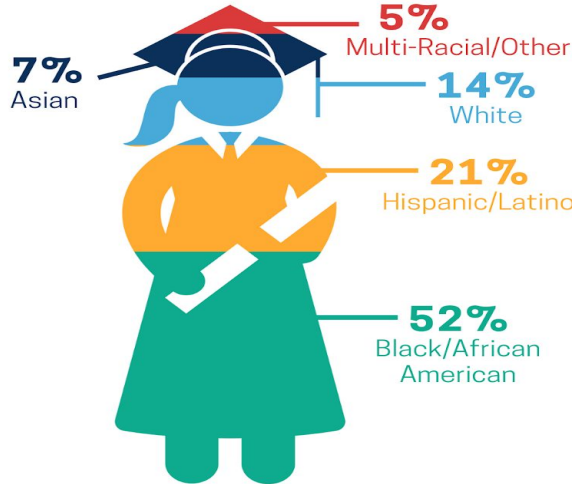


119,492  
Total Enrollment



Students & Families come from

- 130+ countries and speak 160+ languages!
- Khmer
  - French
  - Bengali
  - Uzbek
  - Albanian
  - Nepali
  - Portuguese
  - Mandarin
  - Arabic
  - Spanish
  - Pashto
  - Malayalam
  - Ukrainian
  - Tajik
  - Mandingo
  - Swahili
  - Vietnamese
  - Haitian Creole
  - Russian



THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF PHILADELPHIA



# 10 Minute Conversation Club:

## Introductions- Who's in the room

Let's start by getting to know one another!



- Organization / School District
- Which of the following populations do you work with?
  - Incarcerated parents
  - Children of incarcerated parents
  - Caregivers of the children

*At your tables, discuss the following:*

- 1) ***How does your organization / school district address working with parents who are incarcerated?***
- 2) ***What is one thing you want to know or be able to do following this presentation?***

# OBJECTIVES



**Assess and identify personal biases that may serve as a challenge to engaging incarcerated parents**



**Gain a greater understanding of the background of parental incarceration**

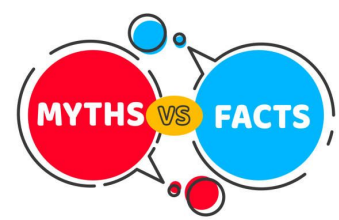


**Reflect on existing practices and explore a creative model that support students impacted by parental incarceration**



# **Busting the Myths: Separate Fact from Fiction**





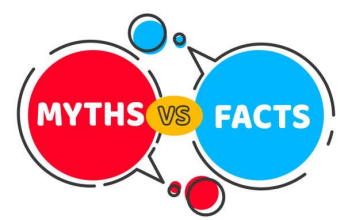
**Vote with your feet!**

**Question 1:** Children of incarcerated parents are no more likely to go to prison than their peers.

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**FALSE**

- There is no research to support this proposition
- Research does support other negative outcomes such as risk for juvenile delinquency, behavior and school problems



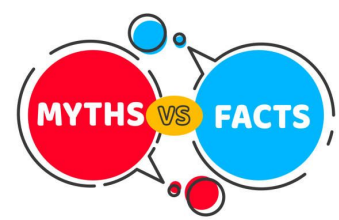
**Vote with your feet!**

**Question 2:** Most incarcerated parents play an active role in their child's life prior to their incarceration

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**TRUE**

- Almost half of all incarcerated parents lived with their children prior to their arrest
  - 64% of mothers
  - 47% of fathers



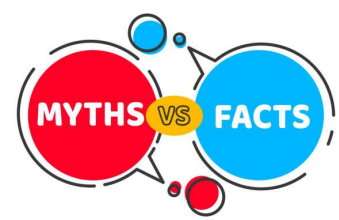
**Vote with your feet!**

**Question 3:** Prison Visitation is Damaging to Children.  
Contact should be limited.

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**FALSE**

- Children of incarcerated parents experience trauma and loss characterized by feelings of grief, shame and isolation
- Visitation can help a child's emotional adjustment and behavior



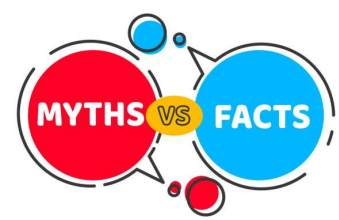
**Vote with your feet!**

**Question 4:** Most incarcerated parents are non-violent offenders

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**TRUE**

- A very small minority of parents are incarcerated for crimes against children
- Most parents are incarcerated for non-violent crimes
  - 71% of mothers are nonviolent offenders
  - 52% of fathers are nonviolent offenders



## Vote with your feet!

**Question 5:** Incarcerated parents can play an important role in making decisions about their child's life, regardless of where they reside.

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**TRUE**

- Incarcerated parents have the same rights as those parents who are not incarcerated.
- Incarcerated parents continue to have the right to access education records of their child, make medical and therapeutic decisions for their child.
- Rights continue to be maintained unless there is a court order, or other legal document, terminating parental rights, or indicating they no longer have rights.

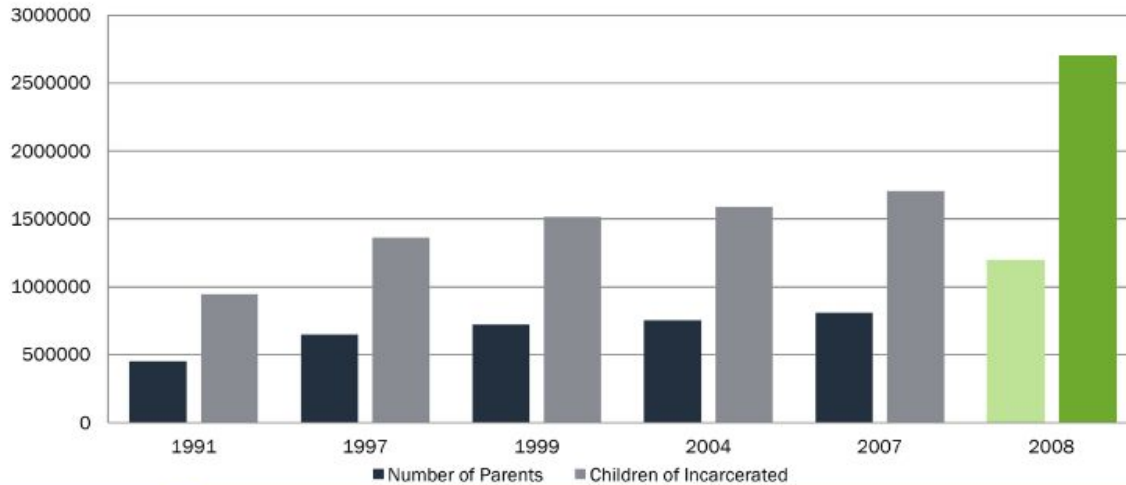


# Impact of Parental Incarceration

# Children With Parents in Prison

**As many as 2.7 million children have a parent behind bars.**

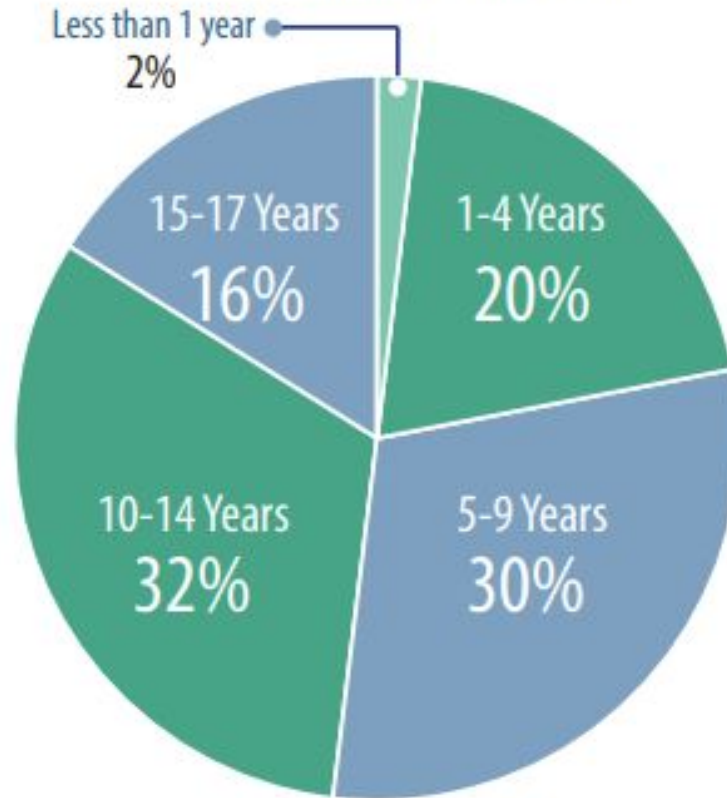
Estimated number of parents in state and federal prison and jail and their minor children



- In 2008, 47% of people in state prisons and 57% in federal prisons were parents of minor children.
- Most parents in prison are fathers
- In 2008, 2.7 million children had a parent in prison on any given day.
- Black children are 7.5 times more likely and Hispanic children are 2.6 times more likely than are white children to have a parent in prison.

# Ages of Children Who have a Incarcerated Parent

**Over 50% of children who have an incarcerated parent are age 9 or younger**





# How Are Children With An Incarcerated Parent Impacted?

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## ACADEMICALLY

- ★ Attention
- ★ Concentration
- ★ Learning Issues
- ★ Poor Grades



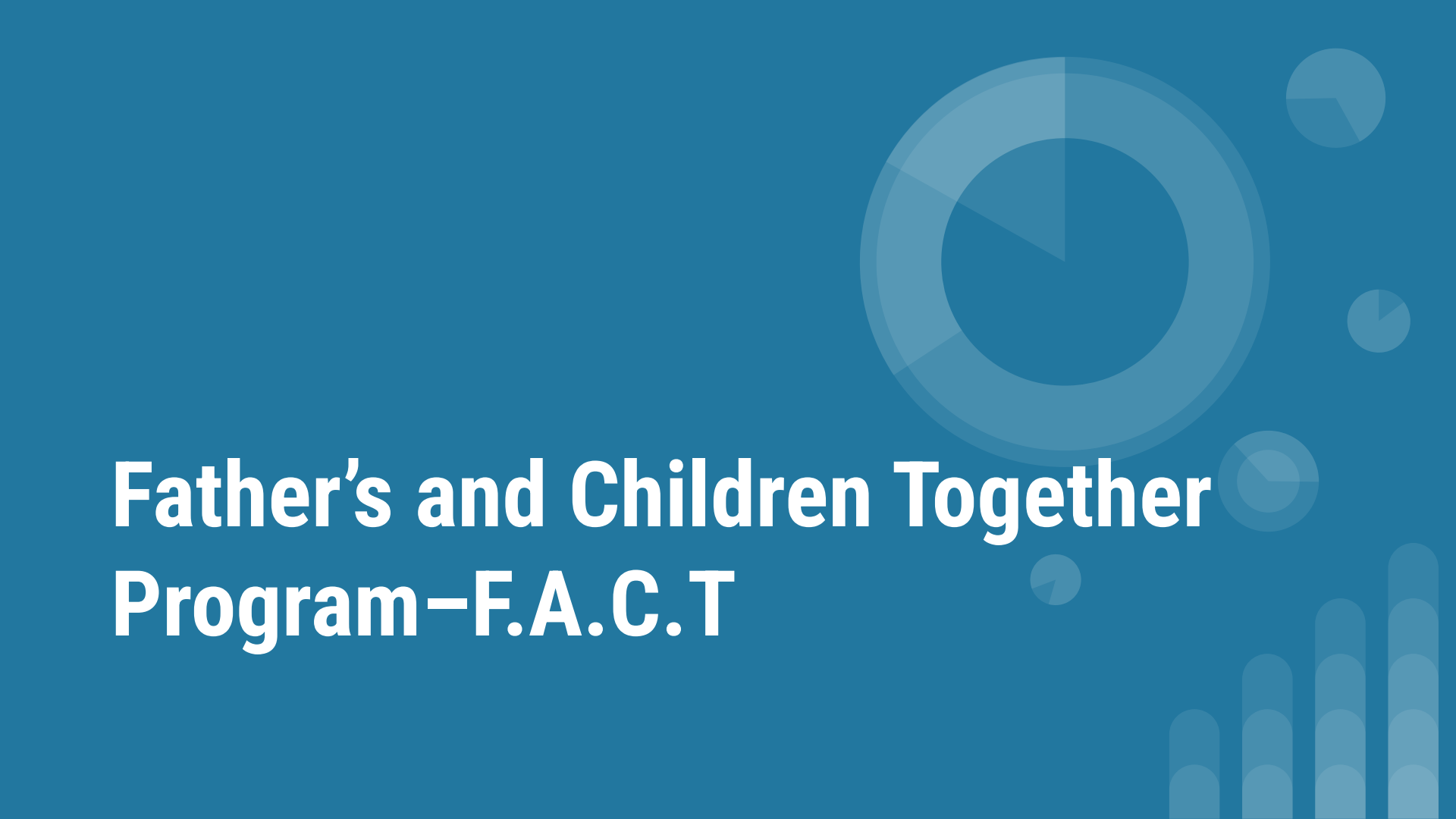
## SOCIALLY

- ★ Acting out behaviors
- ★ Friendship problems
- ★ Communication



## EMOTIONALLY

- ★ Depression
- ★ Anger
- ★ Confusion
- ★ Feelings of Abandonment



# Father's and Children Together Program—F.A.C.T

## Fathers and Children Together (FACT)

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*“Its innovative approach didn’t come out of white papers or spring from political working groups; F.A.C.T. was created by incarcerated fathers, for incarcerated fathers.”*

📷 FACT board member Dawan Williams supports fellow program graduates to keep them out of trouble.  
(Kimberly Paynter/WHYY)

# F.A.C.T. Experience



## Objectives of F.A.C.T.

- Reconnecting fathers into the lives of their children
- Educating mothers about trauma and the importance of co-parenting
- Making communities safer by getting fathers involved in their children's lives



## Requirements

- Children ages 7-17 with supportive outside caregiver
- Limited to those with no offenses against children or sexual offenses
- For six weeks straight, all participating fathers/grandfathers are required to attend mandatory educational parenting sessions.

# F.A.C.T Model

## Phase One– fathers/grandfathers

**Each of the following sessions consist of two classes per week:**

**(Session 1)** The Cause & Effects of a Fatherless Household

**(Session 2)** Responsibility/Accountability

**(Session 3)** Bonding

**(Session 4)** Importance of your Child's Education

**(Session 5)** Positive & Negative Reinforcement

**(Session 6)** Self-Love/Self-Worth

## Phase Two– children

**For six weeks, the children participate in one-on-one visitation session:**

**(Week 1)** Learning Likes & Dislikes

**(Week 2)** Arts & Crafts Activities

**(Week 3)** Air-It-Out

**(Week 4)** Civic Engagement

**(Week 5)** Arts & Crafts Activities

**(Week 6)** Air-It-Out

## Additional Supports:

During all sessions, a clinical psychologist/therapist is available to address any sensitive issues that may arise. Each week, while the children/grandchildren are with their fathers/grandfathers the caregivers participate in sessions separately off-site. After the completion of phase two, a commencement ceremony is held.

The background is a solid blue color. It features several decorative elements: a large, semi-transparent pie chart in the upper right quadrant; several smaller, semi-transparent pie charts scattered around; and a bar chart in the bottom right corner with four vertical bars of increasing height from left to right.

# **FACE Office Collaboration with F.A.C.T**

# Supporting Incarcerated Families

Support families, advocate, elevate, & empower children with incarcerated parents and loved ones through their educational journey.

## The District's Goals are to:

- ❑ Create opportunities to involve incarcerated parents in their child's educational journey while at SDP
- ❑ Ensure SDP policies and practices are supportive, understanding and in the best interest to support students impacted by familial incarceration
- ❑ Educate key district personnel on the impact of mass incarceration and the impact on school communities and SDP students



# FACE Supports for F.A.C.T.

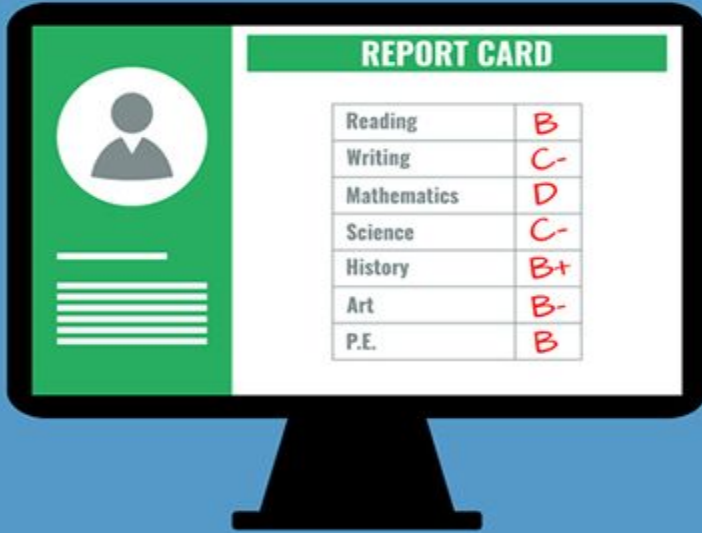


## Components of Support

- ❑ Access to grades and report cards
- ❑ Workshops four times a year
- ❑ Free take home materials
- ❑ Back to school supply drive
- ❑ Provide Transportation
- ❑ Provide Meals



# Access to grades and report cards



**STUDENT RECORDS:** The School District will only release transcripts, grades, report cards, interim reports, disciplinary records, and school attendance (education records).

**REPORT CARD CONFERENCES:** The School District will schedule conferences twice during the school year (Fall/Spring) to give fathers the opportunity to speak with their child's teacher or the school principal about the child's progress and education program.

# Crayola STEAM Workshop



GRADES 3-5

STEAM FOR 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY LEARNERS™  
CREATE-TO-LEARN FAMILY PROJECTS™

## Design Challenges

These videos accompany the projects in the Crayola Create-to-Learn Family Projects™ kits.

**video** To watch the videos you can use a QR reader, click the QR code, or go to the URL.

### Parks and Playgrounds

**ENGLISH VIDEO**  
<https://qr.co.de/parks-and-playgrounds>

**SPANISH VIDEO**  
<https://qr.co.de/parks-and-playgrounds-spanish>

15: 3rd - 5th grade students

25: 6th - 8th grade students

GRADES 6-8

STEAM FOR 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY LEARNERS™  
CREATE-TO-LEARN FAMILY PROJECTS™

## Collaborative Careers

These videos accompany the projects in the Crayola Create-to-Learn Family Projects™ kits.

**video** To watch the videos you can use a QR reader, click the QR code, or go to the URL.

**Steps to Success**

**ENGLISH VIDEO**

**SPANISH VIDEO**

# Resources



## Office of Family and Community Engagement

School District of Philadelphia  
440 North Broad Street, Suite 114  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19130

Mission: The Office of Family and Community Engagement (FACE) will build capacity and develop programs and strategies to support meaningful district-wide engagement and partnerships among schools, families, and communities that result in shared responsibility in the creation of thriving schools where every child succeeds.

### Verification of Paternity to Release Child's Education Records Non-Consenting Guardian Process

#### Program Overview

The School District of Philadelphia (school district) is excited to partner with the Father's and Children Together (FACT) program to provide fathers at SCI Phoenix the opportunity to remain active in their child's education. Programs like FACT that engage families in supporting their children's learning are linked to improved student achievement. The school district will release student education information in connection with father's participation in the FACT Program. This partnership program provides a unique opportunity for fathers to meet their child's teacher, discuss issues and opportunities, receive student educational records, and to be supportive in their child's growth.

#### Parental Rights

As a parent of a student enrolled in the school district, incarcerated fathers continue to have the right to access education records of their child. The school district must provide access upon request, unless there is a court order, or other legal document, terminating parental rights, or indicating they no longer have educational rights.

#### Proof of Paternity

Paternity is the legal determination of fatherhood. The school district will provide education records upon the father's request and without the consent of the other parent/guardian, as long as the incarcerated parent can prove their legal right through appropriate documentation. The easiest way to prove paternity is to provide one of the following documents:

- Custody order
- Birth certificate
- Support order
- Baptism record
- Paternity test

After the father's paternity has been verified, the school district will release transcripts, grades, report cards, interim reports, disciplinary records, and school attendance (education records), and schedule conferences twice during the school year (Fall/Spring) to allow fathers the opportunity to speak with their child's teacher about their child's progress and education program.

#### Required Documentation

In order for fathers to receive their child's education records and participate in program activities, they must 1) complete and sign the **Consent to Release Student Information** form, and 2) submit proof of paternity. All documentation must be submitted to the Connections Activities Specialist at SCI Phoenix.



## CONSENT TO RELEASE STUDENT INFORMATION

STUDENT NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE OF BIRTH: \_\_\_\_\_

SCHOOL: \_\_\_\_\_ STUDENT ID NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_

**PURPOSE:** Academic achievement increases when parents are involved in their children's education. The School District of Philadelphia will release student information in connection with student's and their primary caregiver's participation in the Father's and Children Together (FACT) Program.

**CONSENT OVERVIEW:** The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) requires the School District of Philadelphia (the School District) to obtain parent/guardian written consent prior to disclosing information from their child's education records, with certain exceptions. As a parent/guardian you have the right to choose whether to give permission for the School District to release your child's education records to the below-named recipients. However, both parents have a right to access education records of their child, so in the case of an incarcerated parent, the School District must provide access upon request, unless there is a court order, or other legal document, terminating parental rights, or indicating they no longer have educational rights. *If an incarcerated parent is able to prove their legal right through appropriate documentation, the School District will provide education records upon their request and without your consent.*

**RECIPIENT:** I agree to allow the School District to engage in verbal and/or written communication with and release education records concerning my child to the person and institution listed below:

To: \_\_\_\_\_ and SCI Phoenix (institution where the individual is located).  
(Name of father/person)

I understand that all communications to and from the facility are subject to monitoring as required by the institution's security and operation procedures, which may include monitoring telephone and virtual conversations, and opening and examining all incoming mail.

**STUDENT RECORDS:** Under this consent, the School District will only release transcripts, grades, report cards, interim reports, disciplinary records, and school attendance (education records). *Note: This consent does not cover medical records held solely by Student Health Services or counseling records.*

- YES, I CONSENT** to the release of my child's education records. If I ask, the School District will provide me with a copy of the records disclosed.
- NO, I DO NOT** give permission to the release of my child's education records.

**REPORT CARD CONFERENCES:** Under this consent, the School District will schedule conferences twice during the school year (Fall/Spring) to give the recipients named above the opportunity to speak with your child's teacher or the school principal about your child's progress and education program.

- YES, I CONSENT** to the recipient's participation in report card conferences.
- NO, I DO NOT** give permission to the recipient's participation in report card conferences.

I understand that my consent for the release of information is voluntary, and I can withdraw my consent at any time by providing written notice to the Office of Family and Community Engagement at [monrey@philad.org](mailto:monrey@philad.org). I further understand that until this request is made, this consent will remain in effect and the education records will continue to be provided to the recipient listed above upon their request.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to Student: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_



## Office of Family and Community Engagement

School District of Philadelphia  
440 North Broad Street, Suite 114  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19130

Mission: The Office of Family and Community Engagement (FACE) will build capacity and develop programs and strategies to support meaningful district-wide engagement and partnerships among schools, families, and communities that result in shared responsibility in the creation of thriving schools where every child succeeds.

(Date)

Dear (Name of Parent/Guardian),

We are excited to announce that the School District of Philadelphia's Office of Family and Community Engagement (FACE) has partnered with the Fathers and Children's Together (F.A.C.T.) program at SCI Phoenix to provide incarcerated fathers the ability to still play a role in their child's education. Programs that engage families in supporting their children's learning are linked to improved student achievement. This program provides a unique opportunity for fathers to meet their child's teacher, discuss issues and opportunities with the teacher, receive student educational records, and to be supportive of their child's growth.

As the parent/guardian of **Student's Name**, you are receiving this notice because his/her father, **of Father's Name**, has expressed interest in participating with the program, to receive school records and attend virtual parent/teacher conferences throughout the school year. In order for him to participate in activities and have access to information, you must give your permission. If you agree to this participation, please read the enclosed consent form for more details, sign and return the form to the District by **Date**. A consent form with your original signature must be on file at the District for participation, unless your child's father is able to prove their legal right through appropriate documentation, the District will provide education records and schedule conferences upon their request and without your consent.

#### Consent Submission

There are two ways to submit the consent form:

- **Option 1:** Take a picture or scan your signed document and email to [monrey@philad.org](mailto:monrey@philad.org).
- **Option 2:** Mail the signed document using the enclosed prepaid self-addressed envelope to:  
School District of Philadelphia  
Office of Family and Community Engagement  
Attn: Jerina Manly  
440 N. Broad Street, Suite 114  
Philadelphia, PA 19130

Thank you in advance for your support. If you have any questions, please contact us by emailing [monrey@philad.org](mailto:monrey@philad.org) or calling (215) 400-5744.

Sincerely,  
Office of Family and Community Engagement

[Verification of Paternity to Release Child's Education Records—Non-Consenting Guardian Process](#)

[FERPA-Consent-to-Release-Student-Information](#)

[Record Access Letter to Parent/Guardians](#)

# Initial Challenges



- Working with different organizations and changing points of contacts
- Incomplete data on the students who have a family member who is incarcerated
- Connecting with the caregiver on the outside
- Overcoming stereotypes about incarcerated parents- inaccurate beliefs
- Obtaining permission to do trainings within the facilities and accessing technology
- Creating documents and process without a guide to follow

# Tools for Educators

- Parent teacher conference prep- Supporting children of incarcerated parents

- 

- Bill of Rights- Children of Incarcerated Parents

- Helpful Resources

- Language Tools for Educators

- See Us Support Us



THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF PHILADELPHIA

Have you or do you currently care for a child that has experienced the incarceration of a loved one?

Join us for a feedback session to help us gather information on how we can best support the educational journey of children experiencing parental or familial incarceration.

**Three Opportunities to Participate on Zoom:**

Wednesday	Tuesday	Wednesday
April 12, 2023	April 18, 2023	April 26, 2023
9-10:30 a.m.	12-1:30 p.m.	3:30-4:30 p.m.

Hosted by the School District of Philadelphia's Steering Committee on Student and Family Support for Those Impacted by the Incarceration of Loved Ones

Register at [tinyurl.com/CIPfeedbackSDP](https://tinyurl.com/CIPfeedbackSDP)

### Say This... Not that!!

Together we can change the narrative.

TIPS ON PHRASES TO USE WITH CHILDREN OF INCARCERATED PARENTS

How might a child feel when their parent is called a "villain?"

#WordsMatter focuses on supporting children who are struggling with their parent's incarceration by creating safe spaces.

Creating safe spaces for children of incarcerated parents can reduce stigma and negative effects of separation from a parent.

Join us in using thoughtful language when speaking of and with people with criminal justice involvement and their families.

<b>Avoid</b>	<b>Say</b>
Ex-offender; They; Criminal; Ex-convict; Ex-delin; Ex-con; Inmate; Offender; Felon	Justice-involved individual, parent, mom or someone; Formerly incarcerated individual or person; Returning citizen
<b>Avoid</b>	<b>Say</b>
Convict; Inmate; Offender; Felon	Person who is/was incarcerated

-#wordsmatter

### #WordsMatter

People talk about our parents in ways we wouldn't even talk about them. They do not stop being people or parents, when they go to prison or jail, and neither should we stop treating them as such.

—Melissa Tavis, daughter of an incarcerated parent

Instead of "inmates" or "offenders" say...

- Parent
- People who are incarcerated
- People who have been in conflict with the law

Instead of "felons" or "ex-cons" say...

- Formerly Incarcerated Person
- Returning Citizen
- People with prior criminal justice involvement

Join us in changing the narrative—by listening to the children who are directly affected, celebrating their resilience, and using humanizing language when referring to people who are incarcerated.

Find more resources at: [www.asidiversity.org/Goats](http://www.asidiversity.org/Goats)

### FROM RIGHTS TO REALITIES— AN AGENDA FOR ACTION

1. Have the right to be kept safe and informed at the time of my parent's arrest.
2. Have the right to be heard when decisions are made about me.
3. Have the right to be considered when decisions are made about my parent.
4. Have the right to speak with, see and touch my parent.
5. Have the right to support and have my parent's incarceration.
6. Have the right to support as I face my parent's incarceration.

### CHILDREN OF INCARCERATED PARENTS

#### A BILL OF RIGHTS

1. Have the right to be kept safe and informed at the time of my parent's arrest.
2. Have the right to be heard when decisions are made about me.
3. Have the right to be considered when decisions are made about my parent.
4. Have the right to speak with, see and touch my parent.
5. Have the right to support and have my parent's incarceration.
6. Have the right to support as I face my parent's incarceration.



Questions  
FROM THE  
Floor



# The Impact of F.A.C.T.

## HIS STORY

Dawan Williams





THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF  
PHILADELPHIA



[www.philasd.org](http://www.philasd.org)



[www.facebook.com/PhillySchools](https://www.facebook.com/PhillySchools)



[@PHLschools](https://twitter.com/PHLschools)



[@philly\\_schools](https://www.instagram.com/philly_schools)