



**COUNCIL ON THE CHILDREN OF INCARCERATED PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS**

April 1, 2021

10:00a.m.

Via Videoconference

**Members in Attendance:**

Robresha Anderson  
Ashley Bourgeois  
Aishala Burgess  
Hezekiah Carter  
Leslie Chambers  
Dr. Dana Foster

Troynyah Hankton  
Dominque Jones-Johnson  
Ivy Mathis  
Richard Pittman  
Dr. Kelli Peterson  
Kim Robinson

William A. Sommers

**Guests in Attendance:**

Dr. Tewabetch Negatu  
Dr. Adren Wilson  
Jarwanda Harris

**Call to Order:**

Dominque Jones-Johnson called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m.

**COMMITTEES**

The following individuals agreed to serve as chair for the below committees

**Youth Voices:** Aishala Burgess, Robresha Anderson

**Caregivers:** Jarwanda Harris

**Data/Research:** Dominque Jones-Johnson, Richard Pittman

Members of the council were asked to provide input as to what the specific charge of the committees should be.

**Youth Voices:** Identify youth in different regions of the state who can weigh in on how mass incarceration impacts their lives, their schooling and their academic studies. Additionally, members of this committee will seek to understand how mass incarceration intersects with the juvenile justice system. The committee will create focus groups in different cities with a variety of children participants and will work closely with the data and research committee. Youth participants will include children between the ages of 14 to 25 years old. Formerly incarcerated juveniles can also be involved in this process, in addition to currently incarcerated youth.

**Caregivers:** This committee will determine how costly it is to care for a person when their loved one is incarcerated and determine the impacts mass incarceration can have on families' mental health. The effects of child trauma and the impacts it has on caregivers will also be documented. The committee's goal will be to ensure that caregivers are

supported especially when it comes to a grandparent raising an adolescent. Resources will be mapped throughout the state for caregivers to utilize and income streams will be identified in order to support caregivers of these children. The number of kinship care givers will also be identified. The committee will discuss visitation and the financial burdens placed on families to maintain the relationship between incarcerated individuals and their children (i.e. phone calls). Additionally, the committee will find better ways to support the caregivers with communication, visitation and maintaining relationships between the incarcerated parent and their child. Committee members will work to identify individuals who are currently incarcerated to join the committee.

**Data Research:** Daughters beyond Incarceration has applied for a grant with Tulane, and if awarded, they would like to partner with the council to get the research done and complete the research. The committee would provide public data on the percentage of children who are impacted by mass incarceration in the state of Louisiana. It will also identify children's demographics as well as the schools they are attending in order to provide resources to those institutions upon a child's enrollment. Committee members will try to ensure that schools already offering therapeutic services are also able to identify services and health care professionals who are aware of the needs of the specific needs of children who have incarcerated family members. The committee will aim to incorporate trauma informed professionals in schools. Additionally, the committee will compile and report on truancy numbers of children that may have been a result of their parents being incarcerated, as well as identify children in Louisiana who may be struggling or who are in the foster care system. The committee will conduct focus groups throughout the state with children between the ages of 14-25 who are currently incarcerated, or children of parents or caregivers incarcerated.

Members were asked to send Dr. Negatu their recommendations by April 9<sup>th</sup>.

Ms. Jones-Johnson advocated for having organizations to come and present to the council, with the intention of including them on the report. She also asked the committee focus on restorative healing and stated that the council undertake listening sessions.

Chairs and Co-chairs agreed to schedule at least one meeting with their committees prior to the full council meeting on May 6, 2021.

#### **Public Comments**

Dr. Wilson celebrated Daughters beyond Incarceration and the leadership of Ms. Dominique Jones-Johnson and Ms. Robresha Anderson, who received recognition in the news on their work.

#### **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:58 a.m.