



Uniting children with their mothers and fathers in prison.





Letter from the Executive Director and Board President

In 1999, our founder, Sr. Suzanne Jabro CSJ, recognized the power contained in one very simple idea: children of parents who are incarcerated need in-person contact with their mothers and fathers. This basic human need inspired Sr. Suzanne to establish Get On The Bus, a program uniting children with their parents in prison.

Over the last fourteen years, we've witnessed the power of Get On The Bus. We've seen visits ease the heartache suffered by children separated from their parents. We've confirmed that keeping families intact can sustain critical relationships during long separations. Time after time, we've celebrated the magic that happens when children and parents come together and visitation rooms become child-friendly environments.

Now we can share truly good news. Through the dedication and hard work of our outstanding Get On The Bus donors and volunteers, this year more than 1,000 children gained access to in-person visits with their parents. And for the first time, we are proud to report Get On The Bus events have expanded beyond the original May/June calendar to include trips in September, November and December. In addition, for the first time, GOTB increased outreach to include the new women's prison at Folsom and the Federal women's prison at Dublin.

Research—and our own experience—tell us that giving children this face-time with their parents requires overcoming three big hurdles that stand in the way of visits: securing clearance from prisons, distance and costs. Our volunteers and staff work year-round to obtain visitation clearances for children and their caregivers. (Typically, more than half of our participating families do not have clearance before Get On The Bus steps in.)

Sr. Suzanne envisioned the power behind a universal concept: When children and parents long separated are brought together, when they exchange words and hugs and precious time face-to-face – strengthened bonds sustain relationships and transform lives. We know it's worth the effort. We've seen it firsthand. And it's made us determined to work that much harder.

Thank you for all that you do to support Get On The Bus. We couldn't do this vital work without you.

Katherine Culpepper
Executive Director

Tom Clough
Board President

*“Get On The Bus
has brought
much joy to many
here today.”*

*- Kevin Chappell, Warden,
San Quentin State Prison*



Get On The Bus...Endorsed by Wardens

When we see a daughter embrace her mom for the first time in a year, when we see a dad hold his infant son in his arms for the very first time, we know that every one of the months spent planning and organizing Get On The Bus has been worthwhile. When top prison administrators in the field recognize it, too, we feel particularly gratified.

This year, wardens at several facilities asked us to bring Get On The Bus to their institutions. Some had heard about the program while others had served at participating facilities. All of them understood that GOTB benefits not only the children but also the mothers and fathers serving sentences on the inside.

Prison administrators understand that maintaining strong relationships within the family can significantly reduce recidivism by breaking the cycle of reoffending and returning to prison. At Get On The Bus, we know that reduced recidivism helps kids, too. When a parent comes home and stays home, the child has a much greater chance at a better life, economically, educationally and emotionally.

In a recent interview with KION News, warden

Randy Grounds of the Salinas Valley State Prison asserted, “the visits are imperative because inmates without visits are more likely to reoffend.” Warden Grounds believes inmates deserve to celebrate Father’s Day with their kids “because they are still fathers. Just because they are incarcerated doesn’t stop them from being dads.”

Kevin Chappell, warden at San Quentin State Prison, agrees. “Get On The Bus is a very special day for the men,” Chappell related to San Quentin News. “And reunifying families that have been disconnected brings good morale, which helps the men stay within the rules. Get on the Bus has brought much joy to many here.”

Creating a meaningful, memorable event at all the facilities we serve depends on the coordination and cooperation of so many groups and individuals – including prison officials. On behalf of the families that we serve, we express our sincere appreciation to all the prison administrators and staff who help coordinate Get On The Bus day at the institutions GOTB reaches throughout the state of California.

“The kids could not wait for this day and they already want to go back! It was all so amazing.”

- GOTB caregiver



When Christine’s grandchildren needed her, she didn’t hesitate.

Six years ago, Christine’s daughter began serving a sentence at Chowchilla, leaving her six young children in the loving care of their grandmother. The youngest child was just two years old and the eldest was nine. But at the age of 61, Christine remained undaunted and took on the care of her grandchildren. She kept the family together and made certain the children maintained close contact with their mother.

Christine isn’t alone in her devotion. Typically, incarcerated mothers are the primary support for their families. When they must leave their children for a prison term, 53% of families are held together—and kids are kept out of the foster care system—by maternal grandmothers like Christine, who are often elderly, sometimes in poor health and struggling financially.

For six years, Christine accompanied her grandchildren on the annual Get On The Bus visit to see their mother, a visit that the family looked forward to all year. Christine understood how important it was to maintain a strong relationship between her

grandchildren and their mother – how significant those visits would be for the entire family once her daughter left prison to return home.

This year, Christine’s daughter was transferred from Chowchilla to another facility, but Christine decided to make the annual Mother’s Day visit anyway – this time, as a new volunteer with the organization. For Christine, taking on this new role served as a way to give back to the program that has meant so much to her and her own family.

“She is so dedicated.” says her team leader, Patti. “To her daughter. To her grandchildren. And to her Get On The Bus family.”

Get On The Bus is proud to support the extraordinary efforts of grandmothers and caregivers like Christine who bear so much of the burden brought on by a parent’s incarceration. We are grateful for Christine’s enthusiasm in working with other Get On The Bus families, and we welcome her to our network of volunteers!

Kids Serve Time Too

Any child whose mom or dad is serving a prison sentence is a child serving in another kind of prison. According to the Department of Justice, more than 1.7 million children in the U.S. have at least one incarcerated parent, a statistic representing 2.3 percent of all children under age 18. Sadly, 25 percent of these children are under the age of 5, a time when forging a cohesive family bond is critical in child development. Why is the relationship between child and parent so important? Without a strong relationship with their parents, these kids are at much greater risk than their peers for:

- Depression
- Anxiety
- Sleeping disorders
- Eating disorders
- Difficulty concentrating in school
- Feelings of stigma or being different from their peers

In addition to worrying about their incarcerated parents, children may also have misconceptions about their parents' arrest, what life is like in prison and when their parents might return home.

How Parent Visitation Helps Kids

For the child, visiting a parent in prison can:

- Create or heal a parent-child relationship;
- Help dissolve fears or fantasies about prison by seeing it first hand;
- Decrease a child's feelings of loss and separation;
- Reveal that there are other children like them, with a parent in prison;
- Allow children and parents to talk face to face about the situation;
- Prepare children for life after a parent's release;
- Help keep the family together by reducing the likelihood that parents will return to prison.



The Children of Incarcerated Parents Bill of Rights

I have the right to be kept safe and informed at the time of my parent's arrest

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

I have the right to be considered when decisions are being made about my parent

I have the right to be well-cared for in my parent's absence

I have the right to speak with, see, and touch my parent

I have the right to support as I face my parent's incarceration

I have the right not to be judged, blamed or labeled because my parent is incarcerated

I have the right to a life-long relationship with my parent.

Developed by the San Francisco Partnership for Incarcerated Parents.

*The Minnesota Department of Corrections recently completed a five-year study that revealed that **offenders who were visited in prison were significantly less likely to return to prison**, with a 13% decrease in felony reconvictions and a 25% decrease in reincarceration on technical violations. The study notes that visits from children, family members, mentors, clergy and friends all help to lower the recidivism rate.*

Financial Report

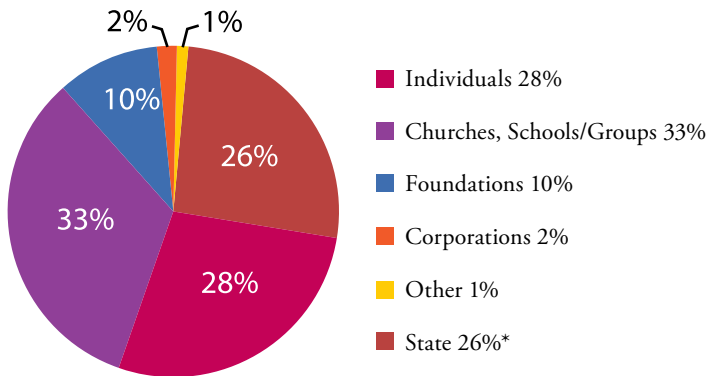
Get On The Bus is grateful for the generosity of every person, church, school, business and foundation that generously supported the mission this year. Because of you, Get On The Bus was able to unite 1051 children with their parents serving time in 11 prisons throughout the state. GOTB visits in 2013 reached 7 men's prisons and 4 women's facilities, including our newest prison partnership, Folsom Women's Facility. With the program launch at Dublin Women's Prison on December 7th, 2013, Get On The Bus expands to the Federal Prison system.

In 2013, Get On The Bus increased the number of families participating at 60% of our prisons for the second year in a row. The Get On The Bus Mother's Day visit at Central California Women's Facility in Chowchilla set records for family participation and attendance – plus, two prisons doubled the size of their events.

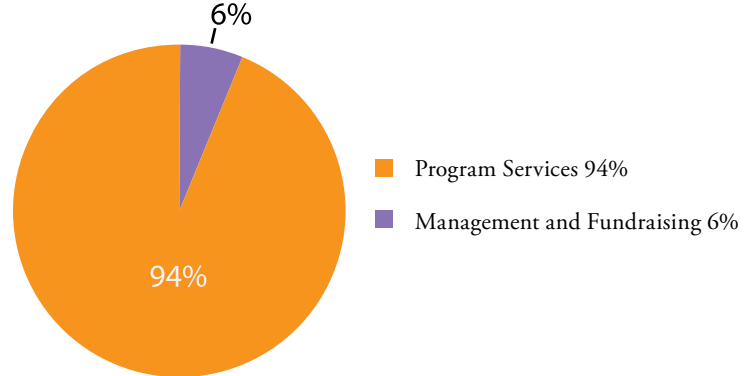
	Children	Parents	Caregivers	Volunteers
Mother's Day Totals	498	230	208	97
Father's Day Totals	553	277	228	144
TOTALS	1,051	507	436	241

Get On The Bus is a program of the **Center for Restorative Justice Works (CRJW)**, an organization dedicated to uniting children, families and communities separated by crime and the criminal justice system. The other programs of CRJW include the **Chowchilla Family Express**, a state contract to provide transportation to unite families with women serving sentences at women's prisons in Chowchilla, and **Cross-Over**, a program providing women serving sentences at the California Institution for Women in Corona with personal and spiritual development opportunities in collaboration with volunteers from the outside.

Sources of CRJW Revenue



Distribution of CRJW Expenditures



* 1) The revenue received from the state funds the state contracted program, the Chowchilla Family Express. Get On The Bus does not receive any state funding.

2) Independently reviewed financial statements will be available as of December 16 and can be requested by e-mail: mari@crjw.us or by phone at (818) 980-7714, ext. 10

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"There are no words to tell you how happy you made us! Thank you!"

- GOTB family



"The best part is when you get off the bus and see your mom."

- GOTB child

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*"The best part of Get On The Bus...
"is seeing my mom cry because
she was so happy to see my
pops. We love my dad and we
need him home."* - GOTB child

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 Marcus & Catherin Kelso
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 Stacey Kerr
 Shahnaz Khan
 Kimberly & Mary Kilgore
 Marcella Kindred-Dolhun
 Knights of Columbus Council No. 1465
 Knights of Columbus, Francis Matthews
 Council No. 3589
 Rose & Michael Knisely
 Jean Kohnle
 Jean Kohnle

"I love taking the trip to see my mom. I'm leaving for college in 3 months and it makes my visit extra special." - GOTB teenager

A.H. & R.B Kozlowski
 Elizabeth Krell
 Darlene Krouse
 Laura Krueger
 Robert Kruger
 Doreen & Tetsuo Kumagai
 Ohan & Asdghig Kurkeyerian
 Cecilia & John Kwolek
 David & Cecilia La Branch
 Mary Lackey
 Bernice Lacks

Marilyn Laird
 Jean & Richard Lalor
 Paul & Karen Lamas
 Robert Lamb
 Deborah & Ricardo Landaburu
 Dennis Landin
 Thomas & Eva Latham
 Robert Latta
 Leo & Stella Laurel
 Sara Law
 Pamela & Michael Lawler
 Kevin & Evelyn Leahy
 Brandon & Veronica Lee
 Cary Leibowitz
 Steven & Teresa Lemire
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 Arline Lloyd
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 Dianne Long
 W.D. Longyear
 Maria & Gil Lopez
 Grace Lopez
 Gil Lopez
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 Loyola High School
 Christina & Richard Lucey
 Joselito Lugue
 Casey Lund
 John Lydon
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 C.W. Maassen
 Yvonne Macias
 Amy MacPherson
 Magdala Catholic Community
 Josephine & James Mahoney
 James Maloney
 Herbert & Suzanne Marbach
 James Marca & Brooke Tomblin

Mayfield Senior School
 Ramona & H.W. Mc Cann
 A.A. & Jean Closkey
 Barbara Mc Ginnis
 Lori McCallum
 Rita McCarthy
 Joann McCracken
 Michael McDonald
 Ronald & Christine McEvoy
 Greg McGiff
 Maureen McGlynn
 Martha McGowan
 Charles McGrath
 Candice McHenry
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 Marilyn McInerney
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 Louise McNeil
 Charlotte & Edward McNeill
 Nancy McNulty
 Pete Meade
 Georganne & Kenneth Mendonca
 Cynthia & Kevin Mendonsa
 Valerie & Steven Menker
 Rose Mercer
 Carol & Edward Mercer
 Kelly & Thomas Merlo
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 Carol Michael
 Michael & Judy Michalek
 N. Michiels
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 R. Mintarish
 Miramar Kitchen & Bath
 E Mirasol
 Kimberly Mishkind
 Fred & Stephanie Mispagel
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 Church
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 Rick Nahmias
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 Christine Navarro & Robert Navarro



We Need YOU!

The high-quality experience enjoyed by the children and families participating in Get On The Bus is a direct result of the care, dedication and generosity of the GOTB Bus Teams that coordinate the experience. Local Bus Teams are committed to social justice and understand that they are ambassadors helping their communities to recognize the plight of children with a parent in prison. Get On The Bus offers a meaningful opportunity for service that you will never forget. Does this sound like something you or your church, temple or organization would like to experience? Call us today at (818) 980-7714 or click on the “Get Involved” tab at the top of our webpage, www.getonthebus.us.

It is with deep gratitude that we recognize the efforts of all of the Get On The Bus Team Leaders. We couldn't do it without you!

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Diana Sipes
Blessed Junipero Serra
St. Mary's Catholic Church

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Victor Lostaunau
Marty Steinman
First Congregational Church of Bakersfield
Kern County Bar Association
St. Francis of Assisi Church

Fresno

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Nikki Williamson
Diocese of Fresno – Offices of Detention
Ministry and Social Justice
Redeemer Lutheran Church

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St. Dominic Savio Church
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Faithful Central Bible Church
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*“The best part is
when you get off
the bus and see
your mom.”*

- GOTB child

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