



Resources Compliments of Family Restoration and Healing Center, Inc.

Our Mission: Family Restoration and Healing Center, Inc. (FRHC) is a tax-exempt community health organization. We restore families – mind, body and spirit through emotional, nutritional, and spiritual counseling and community health outreach. Please visit us at www.360wholeness.org or email info@360wholeness.org.

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10 Steps To Success While Your Family Member Is Inside

Source: <http://www.centerforce.org/families/successSteps.cfm>

1. Seek Support

- From family members, friends, church, community agency or government service agencies ... anyone!
- If you have the time and energy, create a support group with other visiting families. Network! Since they are in the same situation you are in, they are the best resource for support (from emotional support to carpooling).
- Keep a journal.
- Don't isolate yourself!

2. Be Real About Visiting

- Visiting costs time, money, childcare, emotions, patience... Don't beat yourself up if you can't make it this time around. There's always another time to visit.

3. When You Visit, Be Prepared

- Make sure you are an approved visitor (you are on the visiting list) BEFORE you make the trip.
- Know the days and hours of visiting.
- Make sure you are aware of possible lockdowns before you leave for the visit. This can be done with a quick phone call to the prison.
- Make sure you have everything you need for the visit.
- Make sure you don't have anything that is prohibited - read the rules and regulations ahead of time. Don't try to sneak anything in - you may lose your visiting privileges this time and in the future.
- Prepare emotionally. Visiting a loved one inside can be emotional - before, during, and most especially after the visit.
- Talk to your children ahead of time about the visiting process and check in with them after the visit is done. If it's a lot for you - think what it's like for them.

4. Budget Your Money

- If you are accepting collect calls from your family member who is incarcerated, expect higher phone bills and budget accordingly.

- Visiting is also an added expense - keep in mind the transportation costs, time factor (if you have to take the day off), childcare costs, lodging, etc.
- Know your limits and don't overstep them. Negotiate with your family member inside, and come up with a plan to stay connected without putting you in debt (from number of visits, number of phone calls you can accept, to sending him/her money).

5. Find Creative Ways to Save Money

- Try carpooling, through agencies or with other visitors, to visit a family member - this will save a lot.
- Stay with friends or relatives who live nearby.
- If you are in need of extra funds, find out if you qualify for any type of public assistance (i.e. food stamps, WIC, section 8, etc.) and use it.

6. Find Out What Resources Are Available To You

- Who are your visiting resources? For example: local community agencies, church groups, support groups.
- Call your phone company, or shop around for ways to get your phone bill down.
- Check out community agencies that are specifically geared for inmate families - they may have a list of resources for your area.

7. Stay Connected

- Remember that visiting is just one way to stay connected; phone calls and letters can be just as beneficial.
- Get involved. Participate in social institutions, the workforce, families, communities, schools and religious institutions.

8. Be Honest With Your Kids

- Tell your kids the truth about their mother, father, sister, brother, etc. being in prison or jail. Many times, they know what is going on, and by being truthful, you provide them an opportunity to open up their feelings.

9. Stay Positive

- Try to keep a positive attitude by not dwelling on negative thoughts.
- When visiting, remember that the whole visiting process can be a trying and emotional process. Try to keep things positive and make the best out of the visit.
- Stay optimistic! It will make the entire process a bit easier to handle.

10. Stay Focused

- Don't lose sight of yourself, your family, and your goals.
- Remember you have a life to maintain outside RIGHT NOW - your job, your children, your home, and most of all - yourself.