



# NATIONAL FATHERHOOD INITIATIVE InsideOut Dad™ Program Evaluation Report

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## INTRODUCTION

The social, economic, and emotional impacts of parents who are incarcerated are clearly suffered by the children of these parents. The National Institute of Corrections noted that, “Parental arrest and confinement lead to stress, trauma, stigmatization, and separation problems for the children. These problems are coupled with existing troubles that include poverty, violence, parental substance abuse, high crime environments, intra-family abuse, abuse and neglect, multiple care givers, or prior separations. As a result, these children often exhibit a broad variety of behavioral, emotional, health, and educational problems that are compounded by the pain of separation” (LIS, Inc. for NIC, 2002, p.1). In addition, children of incarcerated parents are six times more likely than other children to be incarcerated at some point in their lives (Departments of Commerce, Justice, and State, the Judiciary, and Related Agencies Appropriation Bill, Senate Report 106-404, 2001). These parents also feel the strain of separation from their families. There are many benefits to keeping the families intact even though a parent is incarcerated. Less strain and stress for both children and parents have been noted, and parents who are incarcerated can still be involved in their children’s lives in a positive way. Parental contact can build supportive and healthy relationships that help both the parents and children especially upon the offender’s reentry back into the community.

How widespread is the problem of incarcerated parents with minor children? In the most recent national survey of incarcerated parents conducted by the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) and released as a *Special Report: Incarcerated Parents and Their Children* (Mumola, 2000), parents held in U. S. prisons had an estimated 1,498,800 minor children in 1999. Between 1991 and 1999, which represents an eight year span, an increase of over 500,000 minors with parents in prison occurred. With the prison population continuing to increase (Harrison and Beck, 2006) and another eight year span approaching since the BJS survey on incarcerated parents, we can only surmise that we have at least another 500,000 children to add to the statistics cited from the 1999 survey bringing the estimated total to 2,000,000 minor children with parents in prison. The Center for Children of Incarcerated Parents estimates there are 2.8 million minor children with incarcerated parents in prisons and jails (2006).

Not much is being done in the prisons to address this widespread problem. Although more than half of the state prisoners and close to two-thirds of federal prisoners had at least one minor child, a majority of both fathers and mothers reported never having a personal visit with their children since admission (Mumola, 2000, p.5). Almost three-fourths of the fathers (and more than 50% of the mothers) were serving sentences of more than five years (Ibid. p.6). This means that many of these minor children will lose contact with their incarcerated parent for long periods of time and in some cases permanently.

Many states have inadequate resources for programs that provide services to families. Moreover, the limited programs currently found in prisons that address family reunification or parenting are more likely found in prisons for women rather than for men (LIS, Inc. for NIC, 2002, p.6). While these programs are essential for both parents, they are especially lacking for fathers in prison. National Fatherhood Initiative® (NFI) designed the InsideOut Dad™ Program to address the specific needs of incarcerated fathers by bridging the gap between the inmate father and his children (NFI, 2005). The following section provides a brief overview of the InsideOut Dad™ Program.

## Brief Overview of the InsideOut Dad™ Program

The InsideOut Dad™ Program curriculum includes 12 one-hour core sessions and 24 optional sessions that coordinate with the core topic areas (NFI, 2005). The curriculum for the core sessions includes: (1) Ground Rules, (2) About Me (Self Awareness), (3) Being a Man, (4) Spirituality, (5) Handling Emotions, (6) Relationships, (7) Fathering, (8) Parenting, (9) Child Development, (10) Discipline, (11) Fathering from the Inside, and (12) Closing. The optional sessions allow facilitators the flexibility to add to the program based on the needs of the fathers served. The availability of these extra sessions makes the program ideal for use in short and long-stay facilities. The program is designed to increase knowledge and change attitudes about fathering and parenting. In addition, the program expects that the type and number of contacts between incarcerated fathers and their child(ren) will improve during and after participation in the program.

The InsideOut Dad™ Program was implemented in the Maryland Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services (DPSCS), Division of Correction (DOC), beginning in the summer of 2007. Screening criteria was done in collaboration with the DOC to ensure that the appropriate target population was selected for participation in the InsideOut Dad™ Program. NFI staff trained DOC staff to facilitate the program.

## Purpose of the Evaluation

National Fatherhood Initiative requested an objective, third-party evaluation of the InsideOut Dad™ Program. The purpose of the evaluation was to see how well incarcerated fathers responded, through increased knowledge and shifts in attitude, to the program and whether or not participation in the program improved contact between these fathers and their children.

## Methodology

The evaluation of the InsideOut Dad™ Program used a pre and post survey administered to the program participants to assess program impact. The DOC staff also gave the pre and post surveys to a comparison group of inmates who did not participate in the program even though the comparison group, when selected, was not matched on any demographic or criminogenic variables<sup>1</sup>.

## InsideOut Dad™ Pre and Post Survey Measure

The pre surveys were given at the beginning of the first session and the post surveys were given at the end of the 12<sup>th</sup> session. The survey had a total of 65 questions and covered five areas:

- Part A - About You and Your Family (Demographics)
- Part B - About Being a Father and Your Relationships
- Part C - About Your Fathering Knowledge
- Part D - How You Father Today
- Part E - Your Thoughts on Fathering

Results from the surveys were provided to the evaluator as raw data (the actual surveys). The responses to the survey questions were set up in a database using SPSSpc along with the demographic variables collected from the survey for both the participants and the comparison group. Various analyses were conducted from the survey responses.

## Findings

The findings from the evaluation of the InsideOut Dad™ program were based only on the responses of the program participants and the comparison group to the InsideOut Dad™ survey. First, we provide a breakdown by institution of the InsideOut Dad™ program classes held in the Maryland Division of Correction. Next, we present the demographic and family background data (Part A of the survey) for the study population (program participants and the comparison group). We compare the two groups on the demographic and family background data to see if the two groups are equivalent, and we also test the

<sup>1</sup> Since an experimental design was not possible, the evaluator recommended matching the participant group and the comparison group on several relevant variables such as age, race, marital status, age of children, educational level, and prior criminal history.

equivalence of the two groups on their attitudes about fathering and the state of their family relationships (Part B of the survey). We provide the findings from the responses to these sections of the survey.

Next, we present the findings from the responses for knowledge about fathering (Part C of the survey) comparing the pre and post survey responses for the program participants. We also compare the post survey responses of the program participants with the comparison group. We make the same comparisons for Part D and E of the survey and provide these results.

## Study Population

Although the target for the number of fathers served during the evaluation period was 120, there were actually 89 program participants and 13 comparison group members (see Table 1).<sup>2</sup> The program had originally planned to use two Maryland correctional institutions for program delivery however, as shown in Table 1, the InsideOut Dad™ program classes were held in seven (7) Maryland correctional institutions. A total of nine (9) InsideOut Dad™ program classes were held during the study period.

**Table 1. InsideOut Dad™ Program Participants by Maryland Division of Correction’s Institution**

Baltimore City Correctional Center	9.8% (N=10)
Roxbury Correctional Institution	11.8% (N=12)
Eastern Correctional Institution	13.7% (N=14)
Eastern Correctional Institution - #2	10.8% (N=11)
Eastern Correctional Institution - #3	4.9% (N=5)
Eastern Correctional Institution - Comparison Group	12.7% (N=13)
Western Correctional Institution - Shelton	9.8% (N=10)
Jessup Correctional Institution	8.8% (N=9)
Metropolitan Transition Center	9.8% (N=10)
Maryland Correctional Institution - Jessup	7.8% (N=8)
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0% (N=102)</b>

The demographics presented in Table 2 (Responses to Part A of the survey – “About You and Your Family”) for the program participants and the comparison group show that the two groups were similar in age with a mean age of 33.26 for the program participants and 33.62 for the comparison group. The marital status of the two groups was also similar. Slightly more of the comparison group members were married or divorced while slightly more of the program participants were single, separated, living with a partner, or widowed but the differences were not significant.

Examining the racial composition for the two groups we find that slightly more of the program participants were white while slightly more comparison group members were classified as “other.” About the same percentage of blacks (76.40 percent for the program participants and 76.92 percent for the comparison group) were represented in each group. The slight differences in racial composition for the two groups were not statistically significant.

Both groups also had comparable educational levels (11.61 for the program participants and 11.92 for the comparison group) and each group had on average two (2) children. Overall, for key demographic variables, the two groups were not significantly different based on the t-tests results. Although no attempt was made to match the program participants and the comparison group on the demographic variables, the two groups ended up being quite similar.

<sup>2</sup> See “Study Limitations” for more information.

**Table 2. Part A – “About You and Your Family” – Demographics  
NFI Program Participants/Comparison Group Post Survey Responses<sup>1</sup>**

	Program Participants	Comparison Group
<b>Age (in years, mean)</b>	33.26 (N=89)	33.62 (N=13)
<b>Marital Status</b>		
Married	14.61% (N=13)	23.08% (N=3)
Single	59.55% (N=53)	53.85% (N=7)
Divorced	10.11% (N=9)	15.38% (N=2)
Separated	1.12% (N=1)	0.00% (N=0)
Living with Partner	7.87% (N=7)	7.69% (N=1)
Widower	2.25% (N=2)	0.00% (N=0)
Other	4.49% (N=4)	0.00% (N=0)
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.00% (N=89)</b>	<b>100.00% (N=13)</b>
<b>Race</b>		
White	14.61% (N=13)	7.69% (N=1)
Black	76.40% (N=68)	76.92% (N=10)
Other	8.99% (N=8)	15.38% (N=2)
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.00% (N=89)</b>	<b>100.00% (N=13)</b>
<b>Education (in grades, mean)</b>	11.61 (N=89)	11.92 (N=13)
<b>Number of Children (mean)</b>	2.39 (N=89)	2.15 (N=13)

<sup>1</sup> Two-tailed t-tests of mean differences between the NFI program participants and comparison group members on post survey responses.  
\* p ≤ 0.05, \*\* p ≤ 0.01, \*\*\* p ≤ 0.001

In Table 3 (Responses to Part A of the survey - “About You and Your Family”), we find that the program participants and the comparison group members had very few significant differences for family background information. Members in both groups were equally likely to be raised by both parents or by their mother. However, comparison group members were significantly more likely to report being raised by only their father, although this difference is driven by the much smaller size of the comparison group. Approximately five (5) percent of the program participants reported that they were raised by non-family members (foster parents or adoptive parents) while there were no comparison group members who were raised by non-family members.

Table 3 also shows that the majority of both groups had a good or very good relationship with their mothers with a mean of 4.16 for program participants and 4.31 for the comparison group (1=very bad, 2=bad, 3=okay, 4=good, 5=very good). These means fall into the good to very good range. None of the members of either group reported having a very bad relationship with their mother and only 6.82 percent of the program participants reported having a bad relationship (none of the comparison group members reported having either a bad or very bad relationship with their mother). For both groups the relationships with their father were not as good (see Table 3). More than one-fourth of the program participants (27.90 percent) and 25 percent of the comparison group members stated that they had a bad or very bad relationship with their father. The mean for the relationship with their father was 3.22 for the program participants and 3.50 for the comparison group (these means fall into the okay to good range).

**Table 3. Part A – “About You and Your Family”**  
**NFI Program Participants/Comparison Group Post Survey Responses**

	Program Participants	Comparison Group
<b>Who raised you as a child?</b>		
Mother and Father	43.82% (N=39)	38.46% (N=5)
Mother only	35.96% (N=32)	38.46% (N=5)
Father only	1.12% (N=1)**	15.38% (N=2)
Grandparents	12.36% (N=11)	7.69% (N=1)
Other Relatives	1.12% (N=1)	0.00% (N=0)
Foster Parents	2.25% (N=2)	0.00% (N=0)
Adoptive Parents	2.25% (N=2)	0.00% (N=0)
Other	1.12% (N=1)	0.00% (N=0)
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.00% (N=89)</b>	<b>100.00% (N=13)</b>
<b>Relationship with Mother</b>		
Very Bad	0.00% (N=0)	0.00% (N=0)
Bad	6.82% (N=6)	0.00% (N=0)
Okay	21.59% (N=19)	23.08% (N=3)
Good	20.45% (N=18)	23.08% (N=3)
Very Good	51.14% (N=45)	53.85% (N=7)
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.00% (N=89)</b>	<b>100.00% (N=13)</b>
<b>Mean</b>	<b>4.16 (N=89)</b>	<b>4.31 (N=13)</b>
<b>Relationship with Father</b>		
Very Bad	13.95% (N=12)	16.67% (N=2)
Bad	13.95% (N=12)	8.33% (N=1)
Okay	25.58% (N=22)	16.67% (N=2)
Good	29.07% (N=25)	25.00% (N=3)
Very Good	17.44% (N=15)	33.33% (N=4)
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.00% (N=89)</b>	<b>100.00% (N=13)</b>
<b>Mean</b>	<b>3.22 (N=89)</b>	<b>3.50 (N=13)</b>

<sup>1</sup> Two-tailed t-tests of mean differences between the NFI program participants and comparison group members on post survey responses.  
 \*  $p \leq 0.05$ , \*\*  $p \leq 0.01$ , \*\*\*  $p \leq 0.001$

In Table 4 (Responses to Part B of the survey – “About Being a Father and Family Relationships”), we see that the majority of both program participants and the comparison group members felt very happy about being a father and felt good or very good about their relationship with their children. The majority of both groups would still be a parent if they could do it again (91.95 percent of program participants and 84.62 percent of the comparison group). The relationship with the mother(s) of their children was more difficult for both groups. Eighteen (18) percent of the program participants and 38.46 percent of the comparison group had a bad or very bad relationship with the mother(s) of their children. Less than half of both groups had a good or very good relationship with the mother(s) of their children. The responses to these questions were not significantly different when comparing the two groups.

**Table 4. Part B – “About Being a Father and Family Relationships”  
NFI Program Participants/Comparison Group Post Survey Responses<sup>1</sup>**

	Program Participants	Comparison Group
<b>Happiness Being a Father</b>		
Very Bad	1.12 (N=1)	0.00 (N=0)
Bad	1.12 (N=1)	0.00 (N=0)
Okay	10.11 (N=9)	7.69 (N=1)
Good	12.36 (N=11)	23.08 (N=3)
Very Good	75.28 (N=67)	69.23 (N=9)
<b>Mean</b>	4.60 (N=89)	4.62 (N=13)
<b>Relationship Quality with Children (mean)</b>	4.33 (N=89)	4.01 (N=13)
<b>Relationship Quality with Mother(s) of Children (mean)</b>		
Very Bad	7.95 (N=7)	23.08 (N=3)
Bad	10.23 (N=9)	15.38 (N=2)
Okay	36.36 (N=32)	23.08 (N=3)
Good	31.82 (N=28)	23.08 (N=3)
Very Good	13.64 (N=12)	15.38 (N=2)
<b>Mean</b>	3.33 (N=88)	2.92 (N=13)
<b>Would You Still Be a Parent if You Could Do It Again? (1=yes)</b>	91.95 (N=87)	84.62 (N=13)

<sup>1</sup> Two-tailed t-tests of mean differences between the NFI program participants and comparison group members on post survey responses.  
\*  $p \leq 0.05$ , \*\*  $p \leq 0.01$ , \*\*\*  $p \leq 0.001$

In Table 5 we see that there was a statistically significant difference between the program participants’ Part C pre survey and post survey scores (“About Your Fathering Knowledge”). The program participants showed statistically significant gains in knowledge after participation in the InsideOut Dad™ Program classes compared to their knowledge before beginning the classes.

**Table 5. Part C Score – “About Your Fathering Knowledge”  
NFI Program Participants’ Pre/Post Survey Responses (N=89)<sup>1</sup>**

	Mean
Pre Survey	19.69
Post Survey	22.19***

<sup>1</sup> Two-tailed t-tests of mean differences between the NFI program participants and comparison group members on post survey responses.  
\*  $p \leq 0.05$ , \*\*  $p \leq 0.01$ , \*\*\*  $p \leq 0.001$

In Table 6 we see that the Part C pre survey scores were similar between the program participants and the comparison group. For the post survey scores, there was a statistically significant difference between the program participants and the comparison group with the program participants showing greater gains in knowledge.

**Table 6. Part C Score – “About Your Fathering Knowledge”  
NFI Program Participants/Comparison Group Pre/Post Survey Responses<sup>1</sup>**

	Program Participants	Comparison Group
Pre Survey	19.69 (N=89)	19.85 (N=13)
Post Survey	22.19 (N=89)***	20.23 (N=13)

<sup>1</sup> Two-tailed t-tests of mean differences between the NFI program participants and comparison group members on post survey responses.  
\*  $p \leq 0.05$ , \*\*  $p \leq 0.01$ , \*\*\*  $p \leq 0.001$

Reports of the frequency of calls, writing or visits with their children did not significantly differ between the pre survey responses and the post survey responses for the program participants (see Table 7 – “How You Father Today”). However, post survey responses from program participants showed slightly higher frequencies of writing to their children and visits with their children but slightly lower frequencies of calls to their children. One hundred percent of the program participants reported telling their children that they loved them in their pre survey responses and this did not change with the post survey responses. Post survey program participants were slightly more likely to report knowing how their children were doing in school and slightly less likely to report knowing with whom their children spend time compared to pre survey program participants, but neither difference is significant.

**Table 7. Part D – “How You Father Today”  
NFI Program Participants’ Pre/Post Survey Responses**

	Pre Survey	Post Survey
<b>Frequency of Calls to Children</b>		
Never	17.50 (N=14)	9.64 (N=8)
Less than Once a Month	2.50 (N=2)	10.84 (N=9)
Once a Month	15.00 (N=12)	20.48 (N=17)
Once a Week	31.25 (N=25)	30.12 (N=25)
More than Once a Week	33.75 (N=27)	28.92 (N=24)
<b>Mean</b>	3.61 (N=80)	3.58 (N=83)
<b>Frequency of Writing to Children</b>		
Never	5.95 (N=5)	3.61 (N=3)
Less than Once a Month	10.71 (N=9)	14.46 (N=12)
Once a Month	39.29 (N=33)	31.33 (N=26)
Once a Week	28.57 (N=24)	30.12 (N=25)
More than Once a Week	15.48 (N=13)	20.48 (N=17)
<b>Mean</b>	3.37 (N=84)	3.49 (N=83)
<b>Frequency of Visits with Children</b>		
Never	28.77 (N=21)	28.57 (N=20)
Less than Once a Month	21.92 (N=16)	20.00 (N=14)
Once a Month	31.51 (N=23)	32.86 (N=23)
Once a Week	10.96 (N=8)	11.43 (N=8)
More than Once a Week	6.85 (N=5)	7.14 (N=5)
<b>Mean</b>	2.45 (N=73)	2.49 (N=70)
<b>Have Told Children I Love Them (1=yes)</b>	100.00 (N=89)	100.00 (N=88)
<b>Know How Children Do in School (1=yes)</b>	86.75 (N=83)	90.00 (N=80)
<b>Know Who Children Spend Time With (1=yes)</b>	67.86 (N=84)	67.44 (N=86)

<sup>1</sup> Two-tailed t-tests of mean differences between the NFI program participants and comparison group members on post survey responses.  
\*  $p \leq 0.05$ , \*\*  $p \leq 0.01$ , \*\*\*  $p \leq 0.001$

Reports of the frequency of calls, writing, or visits with their children did not significantly differ between the program participants and the comparison group members (see Table 8 – “How You Father Today”). However, program participants showed slightly higher frequencies of calling, writing, and visiting with their children than the frequencies of the comparison group. One hundred percent of both program participants and the comparison group members reported telling their children that they loved them. Program participants were more likely to report knowing how their children were doing in school and knowing with whom their children spend time than did the comparison group. These differences were not significant.

**Table 8. Part D – “How You Father Today”  
NFI Program Participants/Comparison Group Post Survey Responses**

	Program Participants	Comparison Group
<b>Frequency of Calls to Children</b>		
Never	9.64 (N=8)	25.00 (N=3)
Less than Once a Month	10.84 (N=9)	0.00 (N=0)
Once a Month	20.48 (N=17)	16.67 (N=2)
Once a Week	30.12 (N=25)	33.33 (N=4)
More than Once a Week	28.92 (N=24)	25.00 (N=3)
<b>Mean</b>	3.58 (N=83)	3.33 (N=12)
<b>Frequency of Writing to Children</b>		
Never	3.61 (N=3)	8.33 (N=1)
Less than Once a Month	14.46 (N=12)	25.00 (N=3)
Once a Month	31.33 (N=26)	16.67 (N=2)
Once a Week	30.12 (N=25)	41.67 (N=5)
More than Once a Week	20.48 (N=17)	8.33 (N=1)
<b>Mean</b>	3.49 (N=83)	3.17 (N=12)
<b>Frequency of Visits with Children</b>		
Never	28.57 (N=20)	45.45 (N=5)
Less than Once a Month	20.00 (N=14)	27.27 (N=3)
Once a Month	32.86 (N=23)	9.09 (N=1)
Once a Week	11.43 (N=8)	18.18 (N=2)
More than Once a Week	7.14 (N=5)	0.00 (N=0)
<b>Mean</b>	2.49 (N=70)	2.00 (N=11)
<b>Have Told Children I Love Them (1=yes)</b>	100.00 (N=88)	100.00 (N=13)
<b>Know How Children Do in School (1=yes)</b>	90.00 (N=80)	83.33 (N=12)
<b>Know Who Children Spend Time With (1=yes)</b>	67.44 (N=86)	45.45 (N=11)

<sup>1</sup>Two-tailed t-tests of mean differences between the NFI program participants and comparison group members on post survey responses.  
\* p ≤ 0.05, \*\* p ≤ 0.01, \*\*\* p ≤ 0.001

Nearly half of the items from Part E “Your Thoughts on Fathering” showed statistically significant improvements from the pre survey to the post survey for program participants (see Table 9). For the post survey response means, program participants agreed more strongly with the following five statements: “the more a dad knows about himself, the more he can control his own behavior,” “children learn about relationships from their parents’ relationship,” “there are good and bad ways to show your anger,” “the self aware man takes responsibility for his own behavior,” and “the view we have of ourselves comes



from our past, even as far back as childhood.” In addition, program participants disagreed more strongly in the post survey responses with the following three statements: “religion and spirituality are the same thing,” “a good father knows that discipline is used to punish children instead of to teach and guide,” and “a dad can’t help his children to take care of their physical health while he’s locked up.”

**Table 9. Part E - Fatherhood Attitudinal Items<sup>1</sup>  
NFI Program Participants’ Pre/Post Survey Responses**

	Pre Survey	Post Survey <sup>2</sup>
"The more a dad knows about himself, the more he can control his own behavior."	1.53 (N=88)	1.26 (N=88)**
"A dad can't be a role model to his children while he's locked up."	3.88 (N=88)	4.15 (N=88)
"It is not vital for the well being of your child to respect his/her mother."	4.32 (N=88)	4.33 (N=89)
"Good discipline focuses on the actor not the action."	2.90 (N=88)	3.11 (N=89)
"Children learn about relationships from their parents' relationship."	1.90 (N=89)	1.65 (N=89)*
"There are good and bad ways to show your anger."	1.88 (N=89)	1.62 (N=89)*
"It is just as vital for a dad to show his daughter what a good man looks like as it is for him to show his son what a good man looks like."	1.76 (N=89)	1.64 (N=89)
"The way a father shows his anger does not affect how his children show their anger."	4.26 (N=89)	4.22 (N=89)
"Religion and spirituality are the same thing."	3.52 (N=89)	3.85 (N=89)**
"When you bury your feelings of hurt it only builds up more anger inside of you."	1.60 (N=89)	1.56 (N=89)
"Understanding the past does not help you better prepare for the future."	4.20 (N=89)	4.38 (N=89)
"The self aware man takes responsibility for his own behavior."	1.67 (N=89)	1.44 (N=89)**
"When a dad wants to know if his child is developing the right way, he should compare them to other children of the same age."	3.94 (N=89)	3.82 (N=89)
"The view we have of ourselves comes from our past, even as far back as childhood."	2.30 (N=89)	1.89 (N=89)***
"A good father doesn't need to respect the mother of his children."	4.43 (N=89)	4.52 (N=89)
"Fathering is the same as mothering."	3.33 (N=89)	3.39 (N=89)
"When family spirituality is present, family members are more likely to cooperate, love, and respect each other."	2.07 (N=89)	1.88 (N=89)
"Self worth is how a man values himself."	1.82 (N=89)	1.62 (N=89)
"A good father knows that discipline is used to punish children instead of to teach and guide."	4.01 (N=89)	4.25 (N=89)*
"A dad can't help his children to take care of their physical health while he's locked up."	3.71 (N=89)	4.01 (N=89)*

<sup>1</sup> All items are coded such that 1 indicates “strongly agree,” 2 indicates “agree,” 3 is “uncertain,” 4 is “disagree,” and 5 is “strongly disagree.”

<sup>2</sup> Two-tailed t-tests of mean differences between the pre surveys and post surveys for the program participants.

\* p ≤ 0.05, \*\* p ≤ 0.01, \*\*\* p ≤ 0.001

In Table 10, we show the post survey response means for both the program participants and the comparison group for Part E (“Thoughts on Fathering”) of the survey. For all questions about thoughts on fathering, the program participants and the comparison group members had similar responses with very little difference for any of the questions. There was no statistically significant difference for any of the responses to the questions when comparing the two groups. Answers from both groups were considered appropriate responses to the questions.

**Table 10. Part E –“Thoughts on Fathering”  
NFI Program Participants/Comparison Group Post Survey Responses**

	Program Participants	Comparison Group
"The more a dad knows about himself, the more he can control his own behavior."	1.26 (N=88)	1.23 (N=13)
"A dad can't be a role model to his children while he's locked up."	4.15 (N=88)	4.58 (N=12)
"It is not vital for the well being of your child to respect his/her mother."	4.33 (N=89)	4.54 (N=13)
"Good discipline focuses on the actor not the action."	3.11 (N=89)	2.85 (N=13)
"Children learn about relationships from their parents' relationship."	1.65 (N=89)	1.62 (N=13)
"There are good and bad ways to show your anger."	1.62 (N=89)	1.62 (N=13)
"It is just as vital for a dad to show his daughter what a good man looks like as it is for him to show his son what a good man looks like."	1.64 (N=89)	1.54 (N=13)
"The way a father shows his anger does not affect how his children show their."	4.22 (N=89)	4.23 (N=13)
"Religion and spirituality are the same thing."	3.85 (N=89)	3.38 (N=13)
"When you bury your feelings of hurt it only builds up more anger inside of you."	1.56 (N=89)	1.54 (N=13)
"Understanding the past does not help you better prepare for the future."	4.38 (N=89)	4.08 (N=13)
"The self aware man takes responsibility for his own behavior."	1.44 (N=89)	1.62 (N=13)
"When a dad wants to know if his child is developing the right way, he should compare them to other children of the same age."	3.82 (N=89)	4.15 (N=13)
"The view we have of ourselves comes from our past, even as far back as childhood."	1.89 (N=89)	2.15 (N=13)
"A good father doesn't need to respect the mother of his children."	4.52 (N=89)	4.62 (N=13)
"Fathering is the same as mothering."	3.39 (N=89)	2.92 (N=13)
"When family spirituality is present, family members are more likely to cooperate, love, and respect each other."	1.88 (N=89)	2.00 (N=13)
"Self worth is how a man values himself."	1.62 (N=89)	1.54 (N=13)
"A good father knows that discipline is used to punish children instead of to teach and guide."	4.25 (N=89)	4.62 (N=13)
"A dad can't help his children to take care of their physical health while he's locked up."	4.01 (N=89)	3.54 (N=13)

<sup>1</sup> All items are coded such that 1 indicates “strongly agree,” 2 indicates “agree,” 3 is “uncertain,” 4 is “disagree,” and 5 is “strongly disagree.”

<sup>2</sup> Two-tailed t-tests of mean differences between the pre surveys and post surveys for the program participants.

\* p ≤ 0.05, \*\* p ≤ 0.01, \*\*\* p ≤ 0.001

## Study Limitations

This evaluation of the InsideOut Dad™ Program had some study limitations. First, the evaluation did not include a process evaluation plan prior to the outcome evaluation. Process evaluations are critically important with the start-up of any new program and should be conducted before the outcome evaluation (Smith and Potter, 2006).

Second, the current plan for evaluating the InsideOut Dad™ Program was limited because of time and budget constraints and the need for immediate feedback on program performance. Changes in the Maryland DOC administration at the top level created start-up problems and set the program back a few months. Consequently, NFI was not able to reach their goal of 120 program participants in the designated time period of one year.

Third, these same start-up problems and time constraints prevented NFI from using two of the three measures initially created to assess program outcomes. Although the pre and post survey instruments completed by the program participants were collected, the program participant child contact information form and the program session comment forms from the facilitators were not administered as intended in the original program plan. Had NFI been able to use the latter two forms, it would have enriched the findings. The changes in DOC administration at the outset of the evaluation also prevented NFI staff from collecting evaluation data as originally planned. Had NFI staff been able to collect evaluation data, they would have ensured that program participants and facilitators completed the latter two forms respectively.

The participant child contact information form was designed to evaluate the type and number of contacts between the incarcerated fathers and their child(ren) during the program. The form was originally scheduled to be filled out by the program participants after each session (12 sessions total) and collected by the program facilitators. The evaluator expected 12 participant child contact forms from each program participant (1,068 forms were projected from the 89 participants). However, only five viable forms were collected. Therefore, with only five participant child contact information forms completed by the participants in the program versus an expected 1,068 forms, we could not use this measure. As a result, we could not track an improvement in parent child contacts as measured by this form.

The program session comment form (session log) was created to assess the facilitator's view of each session's content and delivery. Questions for this form were in an open-ended format. These forms were to be completed by the facilitator after each session with the expectation that 108 forms (9 classes times 12 sessions) would be available for analysis. By not collecting the facilitator data after each of the 12 sessions, the history of the program from the perspective of the facilitator was not recorded and information was lost.

Because the program participant child contact information forms and the program session comment forms could not be collected, the evaluation used two measures from only the survey to assess the program's impact on the incarcerated fathers who participated in the InsideOut Dad™ Program. These two measures from the survey focused on knowledge gained and shifts in attitudes about fathering. Gains in knowledge and attitudinal changes are designed to measure intermediate outcomes rather than long-term outcomes. Consequently, there were no measures for long-term outcomes included in the current evaluation.

In summary, the evaluation report does not include process evaluation data nor does it include long-term outcome measures. The report only presents data from the assessment of two intermediate outcomes from the pre and post survey responses collected by the program facilitators. The study limitations outlined prevented a full assessment of the impact of the InsideOut Dad™ Program and reduced the methodological rigor of the evaluation. Nonetheless, the findings from the pre and post surveys provide important feedback about the impact of the program on fathers' knowledge and attitudes about fathering—an impact that is critical to affecting fathering behavior over the long-term. The findings also showed promise for positive effects on fathering behavior as evidenced by increased frequency of contacts with children.

## Conclusion

The evaluation of the InsideOut Dad™ Program looked at gains in knowledge about fathering and shifts to more positive attitudes about fathering as the two intermediate outcomes for the study. In assessing gains in knowledge, the survey scores for Part C (which covers fathering knowledge) of the survey showed successful results when comparing the pre and post survey scores of the program participants. These results showed that for the post survey responses, program participants had statistically significant gains in knowledge about fathering compared to the pre survey responses for those who participated in the InsideOut Dad™ Program. When measuring the difference between the program participants and the comparison group's post survey responses on fathering knowledge, the program participants showed statistically significant increases in knowledge about fathering in the post survey responses.

We also found promising results when we examined the attitudes of program participants about “thoughts on fathering” and “fathering today.” Although not statistically significant, the program participants showed greater frequencies of calls, writing, and visits with children than those of the comparison group members.<sup>3</sup> When examining the program participants’ “thoughts on fathering” (Part E of the survey), nearly half of the items showed statistically significant improvements from the pre survey to the post survey responses.

The evaluation results strongly support the notion that the InsideOut Dad™ program curriculum increases knowledge and improves the attitudes of program participants about fathering. Focusing on these two intermediate objectives of the program, the results show that this is a program worthy of consideration for correctional settings. The literature discussed earlier also supports the need for a program focusing on incarcerated fathers. The InsideOut Dad™ Program can serve as a model for other states that would like to address the needs of incarcerated fathers. Indeed, as of this writing, 10 state DOCs have standardized the curriculum across their male facilities.

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<sup>3</sup> Additional comparisons are available for review upon requests.

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