RESEARCH REPORT

An Evaluation of the Osborne Association's Harlem FamilyWorks Program

Services Supporting Families Impacted by Incarceration

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Executive Summary

Established in 2014, the Manhattan District Attorney's Office's (DANY's) Criminal Justice Investment Initiative (CJII) aims to invest in projects that will improve public safety, prevent crime, and promote a fair, efficient justice system in New York City. Through its Family and Youth Development initiative, CJII provides funding to organizations creating and enhancing programs for youth and families impacted by incarceration. In January 2018, with CJII funding, the Osborne Association (Osborne) launched the Harlem FamilyWorks (HFW) program, an intergenerational enrichment, leadership, and healthy-relationship-building program that served young people, adults, and families who had been impacted by the criminal legal system and who resided in one of the five boroughs of New York City (with a focus on the Central and West Harlem neighborhoods in Manhattan). The program's staff strove to build participants' self-efficacy and self-esteem and promote healthy relationships between them and their families and communities.

The program had two tracks: Youth Experience Success (YES) for young people ages 13 to 21,[*] and Healthy Relationship (HR) for parents and caregivers. Both tracks included eight weeks of workshops. The YES curriculum helped young people develop leadership and communication skills, explore college and career opportunities, and exercise advocacy skills to influence change in their communities. The HR curriculum helped adults and caregivers develop healthy communication skills and build relationships and provided them financial-literacy tips and career advice geared toward people impacted by incarceration.

An Overview of Urban's Evaluation

Through CJII, DANY contracted with the Urban Institute in 2019 to conduct a multimethod process evaluation of the HFW program in partnership with Osborne. Broadly, the evaluation aimed to document HFW's implementation and identify its strengths, barriers to success, and best practices. The objectives for the evaluation were to document program operations, describe stakeholders' and

[*] Osborne used "young people" to refer to HFW participants ages 13 to 21, who were eligible to participate in YES. We therefore use young people to capture the range of people served by the YES track. We also sometimes use "youth" to refer to people in the same age range.

participants' perspectives of the program, understand the characteristics of participants the program served, and develop recommendations for strengthening the program.

Urban's evaluation drew on the following data collection activities:

- review of program materials including recruitment flyers, workshop presentations, and activity calendars
- observations of YES and HR workshops
- semistructured interviews with staff who managed and facilitated the program
- semistructured interviews with community partners who offered supplementary services and resources to HFW participants
- interviews and a focus group with HFW participants
- analysis of program data collected by HFW staff

Key Findings

Drawing on the information collected through the above activities from April 2019 through April 2021, Urban researchers identified the following findings.

Participant Characteristics

Harlem FamilyWorks recruited and enrolled participants in the eligible age range from the borough of focus, and it upheld CJII's vision to address factors at the neighborhood level. Most YES participants (47.7 percent) were ages 18 to 21, and most HR participants (30.4 percent) were 50 to 59. Most participants resided in Manhattan (77.6 percent) and more specifically in Central/West Harlem (51.5 percent). Fifty percent of participants were female, 49 percent were male, and 1 percent were gender nonconforming.[†] Half of participants were Black or African American, and around one-third were Hispanic and/or Latinx.

[†] When reporting demographic data in this report, we use the language used on Osborne's participant intake form. We recognize that these terms are not necessarily mutually exclusive and that they do not reflect the universe of terms with which people may identify.

Fifty-three participants (30 YES and 23 HR), or 21.5 percent, stated their mother or father had been or currently was incarcerated. Among those who did not report that their mother or father had been incarcerated, 52 (27 YES and 25 HR), or 21.1 percent, reported that another loved one, such as a sibling or partner, had been incarcerated. Additionally, 81 participants (6 YES and 75 HR), or 32.9 percent, reported having been incarcerated themselves.[1] These statistics likely underestimate the number of HFW participants impacted by incarceration as there are a lot of missing or "not reported" data on sensitive topics. Measuring the number of families affected by incarceration may be complicated by HFW's broad definition of family, which included extended relatives and close friends; the different types of relationships may not have been collected in the data management system.

Recruitment and Enrollment

Recruiting and enrolling participants, especially from the same family, for Osborne's first program in Harlem was challenging because there were few community partners and recruitment mechanisms at program startup. In line with the program model, HFW aimed to enroll members of the same families, particularly parents and their children. From February 2018 to March 2021, HFW served 246 participants, all of whom engaged in at least one programming activity, workshop, or service.[2] Adding an outreach specialist helped Osborne develop partnerships and increase referrals of individuals and families to HFW. In addition, expanding the program's catchment area to include all five boroughs boosted enrollment.

Osborne's partners cited recruitment as a challenge. Some partners explained that it was difficult to recruit participants for HFW and their own services and that even when they had participants engaged initially, retaining them was challenging. Partners explained that better understanding Osborne's referral expectations and processes and how the partners' services complemented HFW would have helped them overcome this.

In addition to bolstering partnerships, word of mouth and referrals from Osborne programs remained effective recruitment sources. Although recruitment was a consistent challenge, program staff noted that participants sharing information with friends and relatives and receiving referrals from Osborne programs such as the West Harlem Community Restoration and Reentry Project were effective ways to get participants in the program.

Program Operations

Osborne aimed to hire staff with lived experience who participants could relate to. In interviews, program staff said a person was considered to have lived experience if they had lived in Harlem; had made a positive impact in the community; had critical partnerships or connections in Harlem; had been impacted by the criminal legal system; and/or represented the racial, ethnic, and gender identities of the program's population of focus. All program staff found that shared backgrounds helped them foster trust and build relationships with participants. Participants appreciated the staff members' different perspectives and lived experiences they shared in the workshops.

Staffing shortages and turnover caused staff to take on different roles and responsibilities. Because HFW was designed to be staffed by a small number of people and staff turned over frequently, staff often had to fill multiple roles simultaneously. Although staff reported that this made them feel overwhelmed at times, they also came together as a team to identify ways to reallocate responsibilities and support each other.

New partnerships with community organizations helped Osborne recruit and holistically serve participants. The wide range of partnerships Osborne developed with schools, financial institutions, health and wellness initiatives, arts programs, churches, and community-based organizations helped the program recruit participants, meet participants' different needs, and deliver supplemental workshops and services.

Overall, partners viewed the HFW program positively and appreciated partnering with Osborne. Although recruitment was a challenge, all the partners appreciated Osborne's willingness to participate and invest in planning a partnership. Partners explained it was easy for their organizations and Osborne to reach a mutual understanding of the goals of the partnership so they could together provide services that met the participants' needs.

COVID-19 presented many challenges, and program partners cited Osborne's adaptability as a strength. The pandemic required Osborne and its partners to constantly change and adapt the program, and the partners appreciated Osborne's flexibility and continued willingness to identify and implement solutions.

Program Attendance and Engagement

Youth Experience Success participants attended an average of 6.2 core workshop sessions and Healthy Relationship participants attended an average of 5.8, meaning they attended almost all of

the core programming (eight workshop sessions). Of the 246 participants served by the program, 173 participants (70 percent) successfully completed, meaning they attended at least six of the eight workshop sessions.

Osborne shortened the duration of its original FamilyWorks model to increase attendance at HFW workshops. Although HFW was based on Osborne's original FamilyWorks model, which consisted of 14 HR and 30 YES sessions, Osborne revised the model to consist of eight weekly workshop sessions. This enabled cohorts to meet more frequently and made workshops more accessible and less daunting to participants, and on average, participants completed almost all the core sessions. Although the shorter workshop schedules appeared to increase attendance according to staff, participants reported the HFW program felt too short.

Ambiguity around HR eligibility and enrollment led to some challenges with implementing the workshops as intended. First, some couples who enrolled at the same time were in the same HR cohorts, which program staff found to present challenges during workshops when a couple disagreed or one participant did not feel comfortable voicing their perspective. Our understanding is that program staff did not intend to enroll couples in the same group and staff explained this could have been mitigated if family dynamics had been considered more during intake. Second, allowing older young adults (who were sometimes parents) to join the HR workshops presented challenges involving wide age ranges in the workshops, and staff raised questions about whether the content was appropriate for older young adults.

Stipends encouraged workshop attendance. Program staff explained that the stipends (a $100 gift card for attending all eight core workshops, or $300 for families with multiple participants) supported participants who attended workshops, especially because some may have been unemployed or had other demands on their time.

Some participants experienced barriers to engagement because of competing priorities and obligations. According to program staff, competing demands included court hearings, school, afterschool activities, or jobs that limited their availability to attend the workshops. Staff also reported that some participants experienced barriers because of legal system involvement or proximity to the legal system. For example, one staff member shared that at least two participants from the first cohort had been arrested or court involved, which caused them to drop out of the program.

Program Perceptions and Experiences

Participants enjoyed the workshops, found them to be a safe space, and felt comfortable sharing their experiences and challenges with incarceration, employment, and financial security. Participants felt supported by their peers and HFW staff when opening up about the trauma and stigma they felt. They appreciated the workshop content, especially the sessions on incarceration, domestic violence, job readiness, and financial preparedness.

The program helped participants strengthen their family relationships. Participants explained the program helped them strengthen their relationships with family members, including children. Participants learned they did not have to feel ashamed of their legal system involvement, which helped them open up to their families.

Peer and staff support helped participants open up about their incarceration histories. Program staff explained that participants were willing to talk about the trauma of incarceration and the stigma they felt. Participants reported they became friends with the other participants in their cohorts and felt the staff kept them motivated toward their goals, such as finishing school.

Even in a virtual setting, participants appeared engaged in program activities. Most participants commented that the virtual workshop setting was more comfortable than in-person sessions, and they were still able to engage in the discussions.

Outside of the workshops, participants appreciated the program staff's outreach and referrals to services. Staff found that texting was an effective strategy for communicating with participants between workshops and after the eight-week series concluded. In addition, staff said they connected participants to services available at Osborne, such as therapy and counseling, and supports in the community, such as behavioral health services, housing supports, substance abuse treatment, and unemployment services. Participants commented that they appreciated these referrals.

Impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic

Program staff innovatively adapted how the program operated and the types of services offered, as well as the mode and content of the core HFW workshops. At the onset of the pandemic, Osborne closed its offices and required all its staff to work remotely, meaning in-person programming and services were paused. Program staff identified how they would operate and the types of virtual services they would offer participants. The outreach specialist started hosting virtual "meet and greet" events with program partners to ensure their support for the program and identify additional ways to partner.

Staff enrolled participants remotely by conducting the intake process by phone and/or email using electronic forms. After enrolling participants, staff sent them a welcome letter with instructions on how to join the virtual activities, the workshop structure, and the activity calendar. Staff also contacted participants one to two times a week to ensure they had the supports they needed. Staff routinely shared COVID-related resources and guides with participants over email. Staff also began facilitating the workshops virtually using Google Meet and added supplemental activities. Participants had access to virtual yoga and weekly mindful-moment workshops that gave them an outlet for processing emotions and difficult feelings, which was especially important during the pandemic.

While modifying to virtual means, program staff and participants faced issues with accessing and using technology. Osborne opted to use Google Meet to keep the workshops private. Staff had to learn how to use Google Meet, and participants had to have internet access and certain devices. Some participants were unhoused and/or living in shelters without internet, internet-enabled devices, or enough data coverage on their phones. Also, some participants needed to share devices with other family members, limiting their access to the workshops. To mitigate these challenges, Osborne attempted to find ways to connect participants to the internet and devices or add data coverage to their phones or devices. This included referring participants to cash assistance and microgrants, and receiving technology donations from local community organizations.

Participant engagement was extremely difficult during the pandemic. At the beginning of the pandemic, participant engagement declined and HFW staff lost contact with participants, particularly those who were unhoused or living in unstable situations (e.g., people living in shelters). Program staff explained that HFW was not a first (or even second) priority for many families struggling with the pandemic's impacts, such as loss of income or jobs, trouble getting groceries, and lack of phone and internet access. Although engagement was initially challenging during the pandemic, program staff "hit their stride" with virtual service delivery.

Program partners also experienced disruptions because of COVID-19, which hindered the recruitment of and provision of services to HFW participants. Program staff explained that the pandemic had impacted the operations of their partners and subsequently affected Osborne's recruitment efforts and the availability of services for participants. Program staff and staff at partner organizations noted it was important to understand how the organizations worked together to avoid overlapping or duplicate services and remain flexible with making changes because of the fluctuating operations of the partnering organizations.

Considering the COVID-related challenges, program staff learned lessons and planned to retain virtual elements. Staff reported that doing their work virtually helped them become more accessible to participants. Because of this, staff and participants were interested in retaining the option of virtual workshops.

Recommendations

Based on our findings, we provide recommendations Osborne staff can consider when implementing future iterations of the program and present implications for other family-focused programs serving people impacted by the legal system. These recommendations are informed by the program components Osborne implemented well and by implementation challenges, both of which we describe in this report. We group the recommendations into three categories: (1) **serving families affected by the criminal legal system or incarceration** (i.e., strategies for how programs can effectively meet the needs of families impacted by incarceration and the legal system), (2) **increasing participant engagement** (i.e., ways programs can increase participant engagement and uptake of services), and (3) **improving program operations** (i.e., ways organizations can improve program functions and service delivery).

Recommendations for Serving Families Affected by the Criminal Legal System or Incarceration

Understand the unique needs of families impacted by the legal system and provide supports to meet all family members' needs. To respond to the unique needs of families impacted by the legal system, it is helpful to develop and provide supports such as parent-child visits with incarcerated parents; family reunification services; counseling; assistance navigating systems such as child support or family services; and reentry supports, including housing and employment.

Implement age-based cohorts and consider participants' developmental needs. It is important to carefully think through and define the age criteria for programs and program components. Stakeholders designing program workshops and curricula should consider age-specific and developmental needs to ensure they are appropriate for and beneficial to participants.

Provide participants trauma-informed services to meet their mental health needs. Interaction with the criminal legal system is traumatic and research demonstrates that legal system involvement harms individual, familial, and community health. Mental health conversations and, importantly, well-trained

staff and trauma-informed services, are integral to effective programming for people who have had contact with the criminal legal system.

Offer families employment and career services to facilitate reentry and stability. Families involved in the legal system are at elevated risk for financial burdens and economic instability; in addition, returning parents often face barriers finding employment opportunities. Providing employment readiness services or partnering with an employment services provider can help connect participants with job opportunities. Another way to help support families financially is to provide stipends (discussed in a subsequent recommendation). This is imperative to uplifting families impacted by the criminal legal system and starting them on a path to financial self-sufficiency.

Support participants and families by hiring and retaining staff with lived experience that complements the program. It is important to hire staff who can relate to participants, especially when serving families impacted by the criminal legal system. Harlem FamilyWorks participants noted this was a strength of the program and appreciated feeling they could relate to the staff.

Recommendations for Increasing Participant Engagement

Reduce barriers to participation. This could include using a flexible workshop schedule or offering supports that help people attend workshops, such as child care, transportation, or transit passes.

Reduce the length of time between participant enrollment and initial service engagement. It is easy to lose participants during the waiting period between intake and their cohorts' start dates if there are no mechanisms or activities to keep them engaged. Harlem FamilyWorks should consider offering some activities to or communicating with participants after they enroll and before their cohorts begin meeting.

Provide participants stipends proportionate to their involvement with the program and to the direct and indirect costs of participating. Depending on the program's resources, we recommend offering participants stipends or other incentives based on how long they attend workshops and on the costs they may bear to come to the program (e.g., using their own internet or phone minutes to participate virtually, travel time, transportation costs, and caregiving responsibilities). Such stipends or incentives help offset (but do not restore) the costs families incur to participate.

Sustain participant engagement after program workshops. Staff, community partners, and participants noted that HFW felt too short. It may be helpful to develop an extended version of the program (i.e., longer than eight weekly sessions but not as long as the original14-session HR and 30-session YES

models) or identify additional ways to engage with participants after they complete the program, even if such engagement is optional.

Recommendations for Improving Program Operations

Develop hybrid virtual and in-person programming. Offering the program virtually could make it more accessible for people who are chronically ill or disabled, supports people who are not comfortable engaging in person, and reduces the burden of finding child care and traveling to Osborne's offices. Although there are benefits to offering virtual programming, some HFW participants faced barriers to engaging with the program remotely. It may be helpful to offer virtual and in-person programming.

Partner with technology providers. If technology access is a significant barrier to virtual engagement, programs should look for ways to provide long-term or permanent support to participants experiencing that barrier. For example, programs can share resources about where and how to access technology and internet, offer computer lab space, and partner with providers to offer participants subsidized internet access and discounted or donated technology.

Staff the program appropriately. It is important that Osborne ensure HFW is staffed with enough specialists to cover recruitment in all boroughs, provide services in Osborne offices and at the locations of community partners such as Youth Action YouthBuild, and meet participants' needs. More broadly, programs should thoughtfully identify the appropriate number of staff to implement activities using criteria such as the sizes of their catchment areas, how many office locations they have, and how many participants they anticipate.

Conduct regular surveys to gather participant feedback. Having a system in place to consistently and accurately collect feedback from participants, regardless of whether they completed the program, is imperative for HFW. This will help staff identify gaps in services, address challenges, and build on strengths. It is helpful to solicit and incorporate participants' feedback into services.

Build community partnerships and encourage interagency collaboration. Partnerships are critical to effective program implementation. Harlem FamilyWorks staff should continue to foster their community partnerships and frequently communicate lessons learned, troubleshoot challenges, and help prevent partners from being siloed.

Solidify intake procedures. Though Osborne collected extensive data on HFW participants using a sophisticated database, many data were missing, likely because the intake form was administered, and responses entered, inconsistently. To improve data completeness, Osborne should ensure that the

appropriate intake fields are required and that all staff are trained to ask the intake questions and record participants' responses; these steps will help staff follow the established intake process.

Invest in the infrastructure used to collect and maintain data. It is critical for programs to invest in systems, staff, and ongoing training to ensure data are accurately and consistently collected, as Osborne does for HFW. Data enable programs to document implementation, assess outcomes and impacts, and assess their own effectiveness. Programs can improve data collection by developing or purchasing management information systems, providing staff training and technical assistance, hiring staff responsible for data entry, and partnering with external research or evaluation organizations to assist with data collection and monitoring.

An Evaluation of the Osborne Association's Harlem FamilyWorks Program

Millions of families are impacted by incarceration in the United States. A report by FWD.US (Elderbroom et al. 2018) estimates that nearly 50 percent of Americans have at least one immediate family member who has been incarcerated in jail or prison. Even brief periods of incarceration or pretrial detention can disrupt and damage the lives of those incarcerated, along with those of their family members and community members (Aiken 2017; Digard, and Swavola 2019). This reality is heightened for many low-income communities of color, especially low-income Black communities, which are adversely impacted by the "antiblack punitive tradition" that undergirds, and makes up the fabric of, the American criminal legal system (Hinton and Cook 2021). Relatedly, Black people are 50 percent more likely than white people to have a family member who has been incarcerated and three times more likely to have a family member who has been incarcerated for at least one year (Elderbroom et al. 2018). As the historic movement to defund and divest from traditional law enforcement responses has gained momentum and support, practitioners and communities have looked to limit police interactions and incarceration and invest directly in community-based resources, interventions, and services (Vera Institute of Justice 2020). Investing in community-based interventions, programming, and reentry services is imperative for mitigating the challenges so many Americans, and particularly people of color, experience after coming into contact with the legal system.

To further its goal of creating and enhancing programs for families impacted by incarceration, the Manhattan District Attorney's Office (DANY), through its Criminal Justice Investment Initiative (CJII), funded the Osborne Association (Osborne) to implement the Harlem FamilyWorks (HFW) program. Established in 2014, CJII aims to invest funds in projects that will improve public safety, develop broad crime-prevention efforts, and promote a fair, efficient justice system in New York City. DANY upholds three principles in funding projects through CJII: (1) commitment to data-driven decisionmaking; (2) commitment to effective, sustainable investments; and (3) collaboration across sectors. Osborne received funding through CJII's Family and Youth Development initiative, which supports organizations in developing and/or expanding their capacity to provide family and youth development programs for people at elevated risk of adverse life experiences (such as criminal legal system involvement) and to promote academic achievement, physical well-being, and prosocial behaviors. The programs funded

through the Family and Youth Development initiative are designed to support bonds within families and help youth cope with trauma and distressing circumstances, particularly through two-generation approaches to serving young people and their families.[3]

With funding from CJII, Osborne began implementing HFW in January 2018. The program, which drew on Osborne's preexisting FamilyWorks program model, was an eight-week intergenerational enrichment, leadership, and relationship-building program for individuals and their families residing in any of New York City's five boroughs (with a focus on the Central and West Harlem neighborhoods in Manhattan) who had been impacted by the criminal legal system. The program's goal was to build participants' self-efficacy and self-esteem and promote healthy relationships between them and their families and communities. It included an intervention called Youth Experience Success (YES) for young people designed to teach leadership and communication skills, expose them to college and career opportunities, and encourage advocacy skills to influence change. It also included a Healthy Relationship (HR) workshop series for parents, caregivers, and other adult family members focused on building communication skills and understanding healthy relationships. The program aimed to enroll and serve 125 families annually over the approximately three-and-a-half-year planning and implementation period captured by Urban's evaluation (January 2018 through April 2021). Although it launched and enrolled participants in 2018, Osborne and one of its community partners, Harlem Restoration Project, faced early implementation challenges (described in the Osborne Association's FamilyWorks Program section below) that caused the program to make substantial changes and relaunch in early 2019. Osborne made further adjustments to HFW in 2020 because of the COVID-19 pandemic. These challenges contributed to lower-than-expected program enrollment.

Through CJII, DANY contracted with the Urban Institute in 2019 to conduct a multimethod process evaluation of the HFW program in partnership with Osborne and the Institute for State and Local Governance (the CJII technical assistance provider). Through the evaluation, Urban aimed to identify HFW's strengths, barriers to success, and best practices. More specifically, Urban's objectives were to document program operations, describe stakeholders' and participants' perspectives of the program, identify the characteristics of program participants, and develop recommendations for improving and enhancing the program. As we explain in later in this report, start-up issues, combined with the COVID-19 pandemic, presented significant challenges to program implementation and the evaluation and caused Osborne and Urban to deviate from planned efforts (see the Osborne Association's FamilyWorks Program and Evaluation Methodology sections). As a result, Urban's findings are based on modified program-implementation and data collection activities. The rest of this report includes the following:

- a brief review of the literature on the impacts of incarceration on families and programming that aims to mitigate those impacts
- a description of the HFW program model as designed and as implemented, including recruitment mechanisms, services offered, and partnerships
- an overview of Urban's original and modified evaluation methodology, including data collection and data-analysis activities
- key findings based on the qualitative and quantitative information collected through the evaluation
- a series of recommendations for strengthening the HFW program
- a conclusion summarizing the evaluation and key findings

The Impacts of Incarceration on Families

Although incarceration rates have slowly declined in recent years, with 2.2 million people in prisons and jails, the United States continues to incarcerate more people than any other country (Wakefield and Uggen 2010).[4] In New York State, the incarceration rate is 376 per 100,000 people, compared with the nationwide rate of 664 per 100,000 people.[5] This statistic includes people in prisons, jails, immigration detention facilities, and juvenile correctional facilities. In 2020, 415 per 100,000 New York City residents were incarcerated (this includes jails and prisons for people ages 15 to 64).[6] To compare New York City with comparably sized counties like Los Angeles and Harris County, 838 per 100,000 Los Angeles County residents were incarcerated and 943 per 100,000 residents in Harris County, Texas were incarcerated (the county Houston is in).[7] Comparing neighborhoods in New York City, in 2010, state imprisonment rates were 848 per 100,000 in Central Harlem South, 522 per 100,000 in the Lower East Side, 1,056 per 100,000 in Brownsville, and 947 per 100,000 in Stuyvesant Heights.[8] Some neighborhoods, such as Central and East Harlem, Stuyvesant Heights, and East New York, have some of the highest incarceration rates of people in state prisons in the United States.[9]

Interacting with law enforcement and being incarcerated, even for brief periods, disrupts individual lives, family units, and communities and can have devastating impacts on caregivers and their families (Sewell and Jefferson 2016; Turney 2014; Vallas et al. 2015). The Annie E. Casey Foundation estimated that approximately 7 percent of children in the United States had experienced parental incarceration, but this varied widely from state to state. In New York State, 4 percent of children (148,000 total) had a parent or guardian who lived with them who had been incarcerated in jail or prison at some point during

their childhood (AECF 2016). These numbers are even more pronounced for children of color. Black children (1 in 9) and Latinx children (1 in 16) were disproportionately likely to experience parental incarceration compared with white children (1 in 17) (Murphey and Cooper 2015). Moreover, one study found that one in three (34 percent) young adults ages 18 to 29 had a parent who had been incarcerated (Enns et al. 2019).

Research indicates that parental incarceration can have negative impacts on dependent children, including feelings of stress and trauma, loss of financial and housing stability, and poor emotional and behavioral well-being (Allen and Daly 2007; Martin 2017; The National Child Traumatic Stress Network 2016; Wildeman, Goldman, and Turney 2018; Wildeman and Wang 2017). Parental incarceration exacerbates preexisting challenges, such as financial hardship. Over 50 percent of incarcerated parents are their families' primary financial providers (deVuono-powell et al. 2015), and their incarceration introduces even more strain and contributes to a compounding cycle of poverty (Harris 2016; Rabuy and Kopf 2016). The loss of income caused by incarceration disrupts family units and can destabilize families that can no longer meet their needs (Elderbroom et al. 2018). Furthermore, many parents face barriers to employment after returning home from incarceration (Naser and Visher 2006; Wakefield and Uggen 2010).

In addition, losing a parent to incarceration can cause children psychological and emotional trauma and disruption (Arditti 2012; NCTSN 2016), and children with parents involved with the criminal legal system are at increased risk of experiencing a variety of emotional and behavioral challenges (Davis and Shlafer 2017; Kampfner 1995; Lee, Fang, and Luo 2013), such as mental health disorders and major depression and attention disorders, without other support mechanisms in place (Phillips et al. 2002; Wright and Seymour 2000). In addition, children of incarcerated parents tend to show poorer academic performance and self-report lower levels of school engagement (defined by how much they report caring about doing well in class and how much they pay attention in class). They are at greater risk of experiencing disciplinary action at school than their peers (Shlafer, Reedy, and Davis 2017) and they are more likely to be failing classes or drop out of school (Trice and Brewster 2004).

Moreover, children of incarcerated parents are at increased risk of experiencing residential instability and being unhoused (Foster and Hagan 2007; Wildeman 2013). Approximately 40 percent of children who have a parent incarcerated lose a resident parent and 20 percent lose their primary caregiver (Glaze and Maruschak 2008; Walker 2003). As a result, children of incarcerated parents, particularly children of incarcerated mothers, are at heightened risk for residential instability, including placement in the foster care system and permanent separation from family members (Bendheim-

Thoman Center for Research on Child Wellbeing and Social Indicators Survey Center 2008; Brazzell 2008; Ehrensaft et al. 2003; Moses 2006).

Supports for Families and Children Impacted by Parental Incarceration

In response to the challenges related to parental incarceration, there has been increased attention among policymakers, practitioners, and funders on implementing interventions designed to support parents, children, and families impacted by the criminal legal system. Below, we highlight three areas in which efforts are being made to support the children of incarcerated parents: parent-child visits and communication, community-based responsible parenting programs, and two-generation interventions.

A burgeoning body of research is focusing on correctional policies and programs designed to reduce barriers to parent-child contact and communication for incarcerated parents. These policies and programs have involved, for instance, making visiting policies less restrictive, expanding opportunities for contact visits, making noncontact visits family-friendly, ensuring visiting lobbies and spaces are welcoming, offering family-focused programming to parents, and supporting more frequent communication between parents and children (Peterson et al. 2019).[10] Research has shown that policies and programs that provide incarcerated people opportunities to communicate and interact with their families improve their well-being and help them adjust to the correctional environment, including by reducing depressive symptoms (De Claire and Dixon 2017), and that increased communication and interaction with family members during incarceration helps lower recidivism rates for incarcerated people (Duwe and Clark 2013; Mitchell et al. 2016). In addition, children benefit from contact and communication with incarcerated parents, which evidence suggests can reduce their feelings of abandonment and anxiety, improve their self-esteem and well-being, and help parents and children establish and build relationships (Arditti 2008; Fraser 2011; Poehlmann et al. 2010).

Furthermore, many community-based organizations and programs support children and families impacted by incarceration. For instance, the Healthy Marriage and Responsible Fatherhood initiative funded by the US Department of Health and Human Services funds organizations to provide responsible-parenting, healthy-relationships, and economic-stability services to help people build stronger relationships and families. A subset of Healthy Marriage and Responsible Fatherhood programs helps fathers and parents involved with the criminal legal system overcome the challenges of reentry, including economic stability and family reunification. Research has documented that people

who have experienced system involvement face more barriers to employment and economic mobility than people who have not been system involved (Pager 2003; Pager, Western, and Sugie 2009; Seville 2008) and experience other challenges related to housing, family stability, health, and overall well-being. Moreover, these needs are inextricable, which may make it difficult for programs to comprehensively respond to parents' needs. In a 2017 Urban report on six Fatherhood Reentry programs funded by the US Department of Health and Human Services, Fontaine and coauthors recommended that programs remain flexible and continually adapt and add services to better meet parents' varying needs. They also found that it is important to recognize that not all families may be ready to engage in services, and programs should "meet families where they are." It was critical for the Fatherhood Reentry programs to build partnerships that offered additional supportive services to participants.

Lastly, two-generation programs are programs that work simultaneously with children and parents (Ascend 2020). Two-generation approaches are not limited to a particular age range and are built on six core components: (1) postsecondary education and employment pathways; (2) K-12 readiness and engagement; (3) early childhood education and development; (4) economic assets; (5) health and well-being; and (6) social capital (Ascend 2020). The foundation of two-generation approaches is the recognition of intergenerational links and impact—the lives of a parent and child are inextricable, and one often impacts the other directly and indirectly (Ascend 2016; McCann 2018; Mosle, Patel, and Stedron 2014). Thus, the consequences of incarceration are often felt and experienced not only by incarcerated people but by their families and children. Vallas and coauthors, for instance, argue that "parental criminal records significantly exacerbate existing challenges among low-income parents and their families," supporting the argument for taking a two-generation approach to help parents and promote overall well-being for their children (2015, 1-2). Family-focused interventions, including two-generation ones, must be contextualized within the larger historical and political landscape in which institutions have purposely and forcefully removed incarcerated people from their families and kinship ties (Inwood and Maxwell-Stewart 2015). Moreover, fragmented programming that fails to account for unique family structures or addresses the needs of each family member separately lessens the chances of successful outcomes for entire family units (Mosle, Patel, and Stedron 2014).

The Osborne Association's FamilyWorks Program

Based on this evidence, DANY sought to fund two-generation approaches in its CJII Family and Youth Development portfolio. Although organizations did not have to explicitly propose two-generation

programs, their proposals did have to provide family-focused services and supports to young people *and* their families.[11] In response to the guidance in DANY's funding opportunity, Osborne proposed to implement its FamilyWorks program in Harlem, focusing specifically on families affected by incarceration.

Program Background and History

The Osborne Association, a community-based nonprofit organization in New York City which operates offices in the Bronx, Brooklyn, Buffalo, Manhattan (Harlem), and Newburgh, has for nearly 90 years created and implemented programs to help people impacted by the criminal legal system. It has long provided programming and services to reduce the harms incarceration does to families, including treatment, education, and vocational services for parents and children in New York City and State. To address the most serious risks faced by children and families affected by parental incarceration, it developed the FamilyWorks program more than 20 years ago using its Healthy Relationship curriculum, which included 14 one-hour sessions on parenting, coparenting, child development, and communication and relationship-building skills. It designed FamilyWorks to help incarcerated parents—primarily fathers—reflect on their own experiences growing up and on how those experiences have impacted their parenting styles. First implemented in prisons in New York State, the program expanded to include a community component and serve children of incarcerated parents by taking them to visit their parents in prisons and jails, offering families video visits, providing recreational programs and summer camps for children, and developing the Youth Action Council (an afterschool program for youth ages 15 to 18 who have been impacted by parental incarceration).[12] Furthermore, Osborne developed and implemented its community-based Youth Experience Success program for young people impacted by parental incarceration; Youth Experience Success was first implemented in Brooklyn and included 30 one-hour sessions. This suite of services—the Healthy Relationship parenting program for incarcerated parents and the Youth Experience Success program and supports for youth in the community—enabled Osborne to serve parents and their children simultaneously through the FamilyWorks program.[13]

With the CJII Family and Youth Development funding, Osborne adapted its FamilyWorks model and implemented it in the Harlem community. One way it adapted the model involved modifying the target population: rather than enrolling only incarcerated parents, the program began enrolling parents and young people living in the community who had been impacted by the legal system (i.e., those who had had contact with law enforcement, had been incarcerated, and/or had family members who had been involved with the system). It also reduced the number of HR and YES sessions from 14 and 30, respectively, to 8 sessions each. This made the program more accessible to young people and families

and provided Osborne an opportunity to pilot a new iteration of the program to reach people in the Harlem community. Osborne named the program Harlem FamilyWorks.[14]

Osborne initially partnered with the Harlem Restoration Project to jointly implement HFW starting in January 2018. Osborne proposed partnering with the Harlem Restoration Project for three key reasons. First, it was a well-known grassroots organization with a strong reputation and recognition in the Harlem community that would help Osborne recruit participants and connect participants with other service providers. Second, it provided housing to formerly incarcerated people, generating a pool of eligible people from which Osborne could recruit participants. Third, it was able to provide core staff (administrative staff and a youth development specialist) to operate HFW, as well as programming space in its apartment building in Harlem. Osborne and the Harlem Restoration Project aimed to serve 125 families a year for approximately three and a half years and began enrolling participants in February 2018.

Based on our interviews with HFW program staff and the Institute for State and Local Governance technical assistance team,[15] it is our understanding that the Harlem Restoration Project faced significant challenges preparing its space for HFW programming, recruiting participants, retaining staff, and expending resources without an executed agreement with Osborne. Because of these early implementation challenges, HFW program staff explained that the proposed partnership was not prepared to recruit participants and operate the program at the intended scale. Therefore, in mid-2018, the partnership with the Harlem Restoration Project was dissolved, and Osborne secured a new office space in Harlem and hired new staff members. With these modifications in place, Osborne relaunched HFW in early 2019 and resumed enrolling participants in March of that year.

Program Description

Harlem FamilyWorks was designed to build participants' self-efficacy and self-esteem and promote healthy relationships between them, their families, and communities. The program aimed to be a resource for families and strove to reunite families separated by incarceration, improve family members' relationships and communication, and strengthen their connections (table 1 depicts the HFW logic model). In addition, HFW was an opportunity to encourage young people to build their confidence, engage in advocacy, and have a voice in policy change. In the short term, the program set out to help participants build knowledge and skills for strengthening their relationships at the individual, familial, and community levels. In the long term, it aimed to do three things: help participants sustain healthy relationships and increase their feelings of satisfaction with their families and communities, encourage and help participants to be changemakers in their communities, and increase participants' capacity to achieve their long-term goals.

TABLE 1

Harlem FamilyWorks Logic Model

Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Short-term outcomes[a]	Long-term outcomes[b]
Partnerships with community-based organizations and government agencies Connections to other Osborne services Program staff: ▪ Program manager ▪ Youth development specialist ▪ Family services specialist ▪ Outreach coordinator ▪ Mentor Funding and resources Program materials and supplies (e.g., food, stipends, metro cards) Adult Healthy Relationship curriculum, youth workshop curriculum Participants: ▪ People residing in NYC and who have a family member (self, partner, parent, or other household/family member) who has been involved with criminal legal system ▪ Goal of serving young people and adults nested within family units ECM data collection system	Outreach and recruitment Intake and assessment YES workshops for youth and young adults and HR workshops for adults: ▪ Weekly 1-hour workshops for 8 weeks ▪ Weekly Mindful Moments workshops Enrichment activities (outside of the workshops): ▪ Carnegie Hall's Lullaby Project ▪ Chase Bank financial literacy workshops ▪ Family events (e.g., open mic night, paint night) ▪ Team-building exercises ▪ Visioning exercises ▪ Writing and advocacy workshops ▪ Community service projects ▪ Etiquette and Manners workshops ▪ Family recreational trips ▪ Group trips (e.g., college trips) ▪ Career day events ▪ Visual arts ▪ Spoken word ▪ Empowerment speaker series Referrals to support services	Number of community partnerships Number of direct outreach activities not through partnerships Number of referrals to Harlem FamilyWorks Number of participants enrolled Goal of enrolling 125 unique families per year Number of young people attending YES workshops and number of adults attending HR workshops ▪ Number/percentage of workshops attended by each participant who begins the program ▪ Number/percentage of participants who complete workshops Number of referrals made to support services	At the individual level: ▪ Learning of curriculum content ▪ Improved leadership, understanding of healthy relationships, communication, knowledge of college and career opportunities, knowledge of rights/risks in police interactions *Healthier relationship with self:* ▪ Increased self-esteem ▪ Improved accountability ▪ Improved ability to set and pursue plans for the future ▪ Increased school engagement/ attendance *Healthier relationship with family:* ▪ Increased empathy for family members ▪ Improved communication with family members ▪ Increased use of parenting skills *Healthier relationship with community:* ▪ Increased knowledge of and ability to access community resources ▪ Increased in peer support o Feeling supported by cohort members/cohort cohesion At the family level: ▪ Improved communication and conflict resolution skills ▪ Increased satisfaction with relationships within family At the program level: ▪ Increased coordination across partners	Sustained improvements in relationships with self/family/community Increased feelings of satisfaction with family and community life ▪ Improved relationships with parent/caregiver/ incarcerated family member (for youth) or partner/children (for adults) Increased ability to achieve long-term goals ▪ Avoiding arrest and incarceration ▪ Increasing educational attainment ▪ Reaching employment goals Engagement in community as change agents

Source: Urban Institute research team, drawing on the FamilyWorks logic model provided by the Osborne Association.

Notes: DANY = Manhattan District Attorney's Office. ECM is a Salesforce data system. [a] Short-term outcomes are those within one to six months. [b] Long-term outcomes are those beyond six months.

Initially, the target population for HFW comprised people ages 13 and older living in Central and West Harlem impacted by the criminal legal system. People eligible for the YES workshops (described below) were young people ages 13 to 19, and people eligible for the HR workshops were adults 20 or older. During the implementation period, however, the eligibility criteria were modified for both groups based on feedback from participants. The criteria were changed to enroll young people ages 13 to 21 in the YES workshops and adults 22 or older in the HR workshops. Osborne made this change to allow young adults to benefit from components geared toward young people (as opposed to adults) and to be surrounded by their peers. In addition, to increase enrollment, Osborne expanded eligibility to people residing in any of the five New York City boroughs, even though HFW continued to focus on recruiting people from Central and West Harlem. To be eligible, people had to have been impacted by the legal system (broadly defined as having had prior contact with law enforcement or having been incarcerated) and/or had to have a family member with prior legal system involvement. As proposed, HFW aimed to enroll members of the same families, specifically parent-child dyads (in other words, it proposed taking a two-generation approach). But Osborne allowed participants to define family, which could include extended relatives and close friends. While the enrollment target of 125 families a year remained the same throughout implementation, the program used a broad definition of family, adding flexibility to the eligibility criteria.

Program staff used three primary mechanisms to recruit prospective participants. First, staff received referrals from schools, churches, shelters, correctional facilities, government agencies, other community organizations (such as the Center for Alternative Sentencing and Employment Services), the New York City Health Justice Network, and Osborne programs including the West Harlem Community Restoration and Reentry Project. Second, participants heard about the program through word of mouth from family members and friends. Third, Osborne staff conducted outreach activities such as tabling at community events. After receiving a referral, the outreach coordinator or youth development specialist scheduled an intake appointment with the prospective participant within 48 hours to complete the intake paperwork and enroll them in the program.[16] For participants from the same family, program staff attempted to complete intake for the entire family at the same time to reduce the need to schedule separate appointments.

After completing the intake paperwork, participants were enrolled in either the YES or HR workshop series, both of which were cohort based. The YES workshops focused on teaching young people about social resilience, healthy relationships, and civic engagement; fostering their leadership and communication skills; exposing them to college and career opportunities; and ensuring they knew their rights and risks in police interactions. The HR workshop series focused on similar topics, especially

around building communication skills and fostering healthy relationships, and it included a workshop focused on intimate partner violence. The HR workshops also exposed participants to strategies for improving financial literacy and tips for job searching and career advice, such as how to prepare for a job interview.

Some crossover between the HR and YES groups occurred during the implementation period. Osborne recruited some young adults who were parents and interested in the HR workshops, and some people older than 21 were interested in the services offered through YES. Therefore, on a case-by-case basis, some participants selected which group (i.e., HR or YES) they wished to attend. As proposed and initially implemented, the YES workshops were held in two-hour sessions twice a week for eight weeks, and the HR workshops were held in two-hour sessions once a week for eight weeks. During the implementation period (by August 2020), Osborne modified the YES and HR workshops to offer them one day a week for one hour for eight weeks. The workshop schedule is illustrated in table 2. Ultimately, each workshop series totaled eight hours of core programming. Osborne offered the HR workshops in English and Spanish.

TABLE 2

Harlem FamilyWorks Workshop Schedule

Week	Healthy Relationship groups (one hour a week; offered separately in Spanish and English)	Youth Experience Success groups (one hour a week)	Mindful Moments (generally one hour a week)
Week 1	Respecting ourselves	What does racial equity look like?	Self-affirmations
Week 2	Courage to love myself	BLM and effect of COVID-19 on POC communities	Yoga
Week 3	Healthy relationships	My financial journey	Town hall
Week 4	Is my relationship healthy?	Creating your hustle	Letter to self
Week 5	Social resilience model	Self and social awareness	Scavenger hunt
Week 6	Social resilience model	How stress affects your body	Lullaby project
Week 7	Self-care ideas	Knowing your rights	Bucket list
Week 8	End-of-cycle celebration	End-of-cycle celebration	

Source: Harlem FamilyWorks activity calendar.
Notes: BLM = Black Lives Matter. POC = people of color. Mindful Moments was a workshop that Harlem FamilyWorks participants could join to supplement the other two workshop series.

In addition to the workshops, program staff provided participants case management and additional supports. Program staff frequently communicated with participants through phone calls, text messages, and emails to check on them and ask whether they were experiencing needs staff could assist with. Staff also referred participants to additional services in the community and supports provided by Osborne

(such as counseling) to help meet their needs. Furthermore, Osborne provided participants who attended all eight workshops gift cards of $100 at the conclusion of the workshop series. If two or more members of the same family participated, the family unit received $300 in gift cards. Participants who attended half the workshops received half the stipend amounts. Participants also received transportation cards for attending workshops and later started receiving $25 for referring prospective participants. Through HFW, participants could do video visits with their incarcerated loved ones from Osborne's Harlem office using its technology and receive assistance from Osborne staff during the visit.[17] Because of a slow ramp-up period for video visits and the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic, however, HFW participants had limited access to video visits.

Program Staffing and Operations

The HFW program was implemented by five staff members at Osborne's Harlem office: a program manager/site supervisor, a youth development specialist, a family services specialist, an outreach specialist, and a mentor. The program staff received support from Osborne's chief program officer/executive vice president and Osborne's impact and evaluation team. Osborne aimed to hire program staff who had experience engaging with families or working at nonprofit organizations and who had lived experience; according to program staff, lived experience meant a person had lived in Harlem; had made a positive impact in the community; had critical partnerships or connections in Harlem; had been impacted by the criminal legal system; and/or represented the racial, ethnic, and gender identities of the program's population of focus. All HFW staff came to Osborne with a combination of these backgrounds. As part of onboarding, HFW staff observed FamilyWorks staff in Osborne's Brooklyn office to see how they conducted the program and recruited participants. Osborne provided opportunities for cross-program and peer learning, bringing together all its youth programs monthly and providing self-care workshops led by the Osborne trauma services specialist. Also, Osborne provided a series of workshops on trauma, different forms of oppression, and social resilience. Program staff were encouraged to pursue trainings external to Osborne on topics such as trauma-informed care, peacemaking circles, or restorative justice.

To support program implementation and further serve participants, Osborne developed partnerships with local schools, churches, and community-based organizations such as Living Redemption Youth Opportunity Hub, Safe Horizon (a victim assistance organization), Bethel Gospel Assembly, Eagle Academy for Young Men of Harlem, New York-Presbyterian Hospital, the Bronx Defenders, Union Settlement, the Harlem Reentry Court, Children's Village, Areté Education, and We R.O.C.K. Some community partners offered supplementary services for HFW participants, while other

partners more meaningfully integrated their own programs with the HFW workshops. The following organizations partnered closely with Osborne:

- **Carnegie Hall's Lullaby Project**, a worldwide initiative that pairs parents with songwriters to write lullabies for their children, led songwriting sessions with HFW participants who expressed interest in the supplementary service. In virtual 90-minute songwriting sessions, participants journaled and worked one-on-one with artists to write lullabies for their children. These sessions were optional and occurred outside the HFW workshops. This partnership began in mid-September 2020.

- **Chase Bank**, a financial institution with strong ties to the Harlem community, developed and facilitated its financial literacy curriculum with HFW participants. It also hosted special events, such as "fireside chats" with financial experts that were open to HFW participants. Chase and Osborne began partnering in March 2019. Participation in the financial literacy workshops was optional, and the workshops were held separately from the HFW workshops.

- **Health Justice Network**, a New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene program, referred participants to HFW. The Health Justice Network is a pilot program offering wrap-around health and social services for HFW participants 18 or older who have reentered from jail or prison within the past three years. The Health Justice Network connected participants to services such as housing, primary care, mental health services, educational opportunities, and other reentry supports. This partnership began in December 2019.

- **Osborne's West Harlem Community Restoration and Reentry Project** referred participants to HFW. The West Harlem Community Restoration and Reentry Project is a comprehensive, neighborhood-based program that offers reentry and reintegration services to people returning from prison, resources for young people in the community, and restorative justice practices that serve all Harlem residents.

- **Youth Action YouthBuild (YAYB),** a community-based alternative school, served as a referral source for the HFW program. YAYB and Osborne also worked together to integrate the HFW workshops into YAYB's curriculum and class schedule so that students could easily attend the YES workshops. YAYB students were automatically enrolled in the YES program for a seamless integration of both programs so that students had an optimal opportunity to participate in the range of services, workshops, and activities offered by YAYB and HFW together. YAYB and Osborne began partnering in March 2019.

Implementation Modifications Made Because of the COVID-19 Pandemic

Starting in March 2020, Osborne experienced significant challenges implementing HFW because of the COVID-19 pandemic, including challenges related to *how* it offered its services as well as the *types* of services it offered. The pandemic forced Osborne to close all its offices, including the one in Harlem, and shift to remote work for all program staff; this prevented staff from facilitating in-person activities with participants. As a result, Osborne changed its mode of service delivery to consist of virtual workshops using Google Meet video conferencing software. Also, Osborne facilitated virtual, supplemental activities for participants and their families, such as paint night, open mic night, mindful moments and meditation, and yoga. The virtual nature of the work influenced how program staff interacted with participants and partners—namely, program staff adapted the intake process to occur electronically via email and telephone communication. In addition, the outreach coordinator designed and led virtual "meet and greet" sessions with program partners to sustain their support for the program and identify additional ways to collaborate. Furthermore, Osborne expanded its service offerings to meet families' needs during the pandemic, such as by offering groceries and cash assistance and finding ways to support participants' technology needs (e.g., access to electronic devices and internet). The impacts of the pandemic on implementation and the subsequent program modifications are discussed further in the Evaluation Findings section.

Evaluation Methodology

In 2019, Urban received funding from DANY's CJII to conduct a multimethod process evaluation in partnership with Osborne using an action research framework. Through an action research approach, researchers engage with program stakeholders during an evaluation and share interim findings with program staff to inform implementation decisions and refinements. Through this approach, Urban's evaluation aimed to document HFW operations, describe stakeholders' and participants' experiences with the program, describe the types of participants the program served and the services they received, and develop recommendations for strengthening the program. The following research questions guided Urban's evaluation:

- Recruitment and enrollment:
  - How are people identified and referred to HFW?
  - To what extent are participant characteristics related to program engagement and completion?

- Program operations and services:
  - What services are provided?
  - How closely do program services align with the program's logic model/theory of change?
  - What components are challenging to implement?
- Partnerships and collaboration:
  - To what extent does the program facilitate greater coordination among public and community-based agencies serving families impacted by incarceration?
  - To what extent does the program facilitate the development of comprehensive services for families impacted by incarceration?
- Program perceptions and experiences:
  - What are the barriers to participation?
  - What do participants like about the program and what would they change?
  - What do staff see as the program's strengths and weaknesses?
  - Do participants report improved outcomes and family functioning while engaged in the program (e.g., improved communication and conflict resolution skills, increased frequency of contact and communication with family members, improved relationship quality with family members, improved emotional and personal well-being)?

Urban initially planned to conduct an outcome evaluation of HFW in addition to the process evaluation. Through the outcome evaluation, Urban aimed to assess participants' outcomes and compare them with the outcomes of a group of similarly situated people who did not receive HFW services. But slow initial program enrollment and challenges with identifying and acquiring data for a potential comparison group made this design unfeasible.[18] At DANY's request, Urban revised its evaluation plan in February 2020, eliminating the outcome evaluation and focusing its resources on documenting HFW's operations. Therefore, this report includes findings from Urban's process evaluation, which captured program implementation from April 2019 through April 2021, starting with the relaunch of HFW in early 2019 and covering modifications made in response to COVID-19.

Evaluation Modifications Made Because of the COVID-19 Pandemic

Urban experienced challenges with executing the evaluation as envisioned because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Owing to Urban's mandatory remote work policy that went into effect in March 2020, its researchers were prohibited from traveling and conducting in-person site visits and data collection. Accordingly, the research team revised its design and protocols to allow for virtual data collection. In addition, some of the implementation challenges felt by Osborne, such as difficulty recruiting participants virtually, made it difficult to recruit participants for data collection (e.g., focus groups). Because of these challenges, Urban's research team deviated from its evaluation plan as of February 2020 in the following ways:

- **Most data collection occurred virtually rather than in person**. In addition to collecting data, in-person site visits provide opportunities for researchers to observe background and contextual factors essential for fully understanding a program. The value added from seeing the program "in action" and being in the program space is reduced when data are collected virtually.
- **Urban faced challenges with recruiting participants for virtual focus groups; in response, it added the option of virtual individual interviews with interested participants.** Though interviewed participants provided insightful information about their perceptions of HFW, facilitated group conversations provide benefits (e.g., the sharing of ideas, conversation among participants) that may be lacking from this evaluation, as Urban was only able to recruit participants for one focus group. This challenge meant we were limited by a small sample size of program participants (*n*=5) who attended the virtual focus groups and individual interviews (see Data Collection Activities below).
- **Because of Osborne's need to pivot to virtual service delivery, the program staff decided not to implement a survey with YES participants.** Before the pandemic, Osborne planned to administer a survey developed by Hello Insight to YES participants. The survey was designed to capture participants' perceptions of self-confidence, civic engagement, advocacy, education, and relationships with their communities. To supplement the process evaluation, Urban planned to collect YES participants' survey responses and analyze them to assess changes in their perceptions. This ended up not being possible because HFW staff felt it was inappropriate to launch the survey during the pandemic and Osborne therefore did not administer the survey.

Data Collection Activities

Having adapted to the above challenges, we conducted the following data collection activities from April 2019 through April 2021:

- **We collected and reviewed program materials.** These included recruitment materials, flyers, workshop schedules, blank intake forms, the FamilyWorks logic model, and workshop presentations. We reviewed these to consider HFW staff members' different methods of communication and outreach, as well as the topics they planned to cover in the YES and HR workshops.
- **We observed program activities, including the regular curriculum and special workshops.** We conducted two in-person and four virtual observations of YES and HR workshops, and we observed a virtual family event (paint night) to supplement our understanding of how participants heard about the program, the topics presented in the workshops, and the level of participant engagement in workshop sessions.
- **We conducted three waves of semistructured interviews with program staff.** These waves occurred in December 2019 (in person), June and July 2020 (virtually), and February through April 2021 (virtually). Across the three waves, we interviewed six relevant program staff members, including the HFW program manager/site supervisor, the youth development specialist, the family services specialist, and the outreach specialist, as well as Osborne's chief program officer/executive vice president and its director of impact and evaluation. Because of staff members' availability, we did not interview all six staff in every wave; rather, we interviewed four in wave one, five in wave two, and five in wave three, for a total of 14 interviews. The interviews focused on program operations, successes, and challenges, as well as the impacts of the pandemic and how the program modified its service offerings in response.
- **We conducted virtual interviews with stakeholders from community partner organizations.** In February 2021, we conducted virtual semistructured interviews with six stakeholders from four community partners that were integral to program operations, including participant recruitment and specialized service provision. These partners worked in different sectors, including financial health, reentry services, public health and treatment, and education (see Program Description for more on HFW partners).

- **We interviewed and held a focus group with program participants.** We conducted one focus group with three HR participants in March 2021 and semistructured one-on-one interviews with two participants in April 2021. The focus group and interviews lasted 30 to 45 minutes and participants were compensated for their time and expertise. The purpose of these activities was to gather participants' perspectives on program activities and their satisfaction with the program. The focus group and interviews helped us gain a deeper understanding of participants' perceptions of the workshops and the facilitators of and barriers to their successful engagement with the program, as well as the impacts of COVID-19 on service receipt and satisfaction. Table 3 presents the protocol domains and sample questions used for the focus group and interviews with participants and for the interviews with HFW staff and partners.
- **We analyzed program data.** We collected and analyzed individual-level program data in two waves. In October 2020, we conducted an interim analysis of these data. After receiving additional data in April 2021, we conducted a full analysis of the program data. The data were captured in Osborne's Salesforce database. Although Urban's process evaluation did not begin until 2019, the program data included demographic data and background information on participants enrolled in the program from February 2018 to March 2021, as well as their workshop attendance data (this means the program data included participants enrolled in the initial year of implementation not captured in Urban's process evaluation).

TABLE 3

Data Collection Activities, Protocol Domains, and Sample Questions Used for Urban's Process Evaluation of Harlem FamilyWorks

Data collection activity	Protocol domain	Sample questions
Program and partner staff interviews	Introduction	▪ Tell me about your role and involvement with HFW. ▪ How would you describe HFW? ▪ Tell me about HFW's goals.
	Program history	▪ Who was involved in developing HFW? ▪ What challenges did you face while developing the program? How did you overcome those challenges?
	Implementation	▪ What are the key programmatic components of HFW? ▪ Do you think HFW is being implemented as intended? ▪ Do you think HFW is a good match for the current population?
	Impacts of COVID-19	▪ How has COVID-19 impacted current program operations (e.g., recruitment and intake processes), service delivery, etcetera? ▪ How have participants engaged with the virtual services? ▪ How has COVID-19 impacted partnerships with the HFW program partners and other community-based organizations/partners?
	Staff training	▪ Were you required to attend any training/orientation prior to becoming involved with HFW? ▪ Tell me about any follow-up training sessions since you began.
	Collaboration and coordination	▪ Who are the necessary stakeholders for HFW to be successful? ▪ Tell me about the relationships you have with partners. ▪ *For partners*: How did you first develop the partnership with HFW? ▪ What services do you provide HFW participants?
	Challenges and effectiveness	▪ What would be the grounds for you to deem HFW a success? ▪ What challenges have you seen/encountered in effectively implementing HFW?
	Recommendations	▪ What recommendations do you have to strengthen or improve HFW?
Participant interviews and focus group	Recruitment methods	▪ How did you hear about HFW? ▪ Tell us about your first impressions of HFW.
	Program components	▪ Tell us about the YES and HR workshops. ▪ What other activities do you attend?
	Strengths and weaknesses of the program	▪ What are some program components you liked the most? Disliked? ▪ For participants with family members in HFW, do you think having your family members in the program helped you achieve outcomes (e.g., prosocial skills, mental health, civic engagement)? ▪ What aspects of HFW have been important and/or impactful?
	Recommendations	▪ What recommendations do you have to strengthen or improve HFW? ▪ What is your overall impression of HFW?
	Impacts of COVID-19	▪ How have the workshops changed due to COVID-19? Are they offered online? ▪ Are any services and activities available online due to COVID-19? If yes, what types of activities?

Source: Urban Institute.

Notes: HFW = Harlem FamilyWorks. HR = Healthy Relationship. YES = Youth Experience Success.

DATA LIMITATIONS

The Evaluation Findings section below presents findings gathered from the program data. But some challenges and limitations should be noted, including modifications made to the data collection and intake processes and the overall robustness of the dataset. First, we learned from interviews with HFW staff and data provided by Osborne's impact and evaluation team that staff did not uniformly record participants' responses to all the questions on the intake form. This could be because staff were focused on building relationships and rapport with participants during the intake process, which they may not have considered an appropriate opportunity to ask questions they felt were intrusive. Staff also modified the intake form during the implementation period, which may also have altered the way they asked questions and the way participants answered. Moreover, the pandemic required staff to conduct intake appointments virtually or over the phone, limiting face-to-face interactions and rapport building. Second, there are a lot of missing or "not reported" data in the dataset, particularly for variables on more sensitive topics, such as incarceration experiences, household income, and type of residence. Program staff said the intake questions about legal system involvement and incarceration experiences were particularly sensitive and difficult for participants to answer because of the feelings of shame and stigmatization they can produce. If program staff felt that participants seemed uncomfortable during the intake process, they sometimes skipped these questions. In addition, Osborne's broad definition of family (which included extended relatives and close friends) may have also added complexities to how these questions were asked and answered. Lastly, in some cases, if a participant did not select any of the available options for a question, it was marked as "not reported" even if the answer was "no" or "none" because of the design of Osborne's intake form and its data reporting style; this is indicated in the tables and figures below where applicable.

As described in earlier sections, Osborne aimed to take a two-generation programming approach by enrolling parent-child dyads in HFW concurrently (see the Supports for Families and Children Impacted by Parental Incarceration section above for a description of the components of two-generation programming). To simultaneously serve each family member, Osborne intended to enroll parents and caregivers in the HR workshops and their children in the YES workshops. Because of challenges during the implementation period, recruiting and enrolling parent-child dyads proved difficult; those challenges are reflected in the data shared below. Moreover, Osborne offered flexibility to some HFW participants to address their unique needs, meaning that although YES and HR cohorts were generally divided into age-based cohorts (21 or younger for YES and 22 or older for HR), in practice, participants could decide which track met their comfort levels and service needs on a case-by-case basis. For example, a young person eligible for YES may have had the opportunity to enroll in the

HR track instead. Therefore, although we refer to participants as having participated in one of two tracks (YES or HR) for data reporting, the distinction Osborne makes between the tracks is flexible.

These challenges limit the scope of analysis and make it difficult to identify trends or significant relationships in the data. We therefore share an overview of participant demographics and descriptive statistics. To mitigate these data challenges for the program and subsequent evaluations, we provide recommendations for strengthening data collection and ensuring intake questions are consistently asked and answers consistently recorded in Osborne's Salesforce database.

Evaluation Findings

Drawing on the data collected through the methods described above, Urban synthesized key takeaways related to core implementation elements, including recruitment and enrollment, participant characteristics, program operations, program attendance and engagement, program perceptions and experiences, and impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

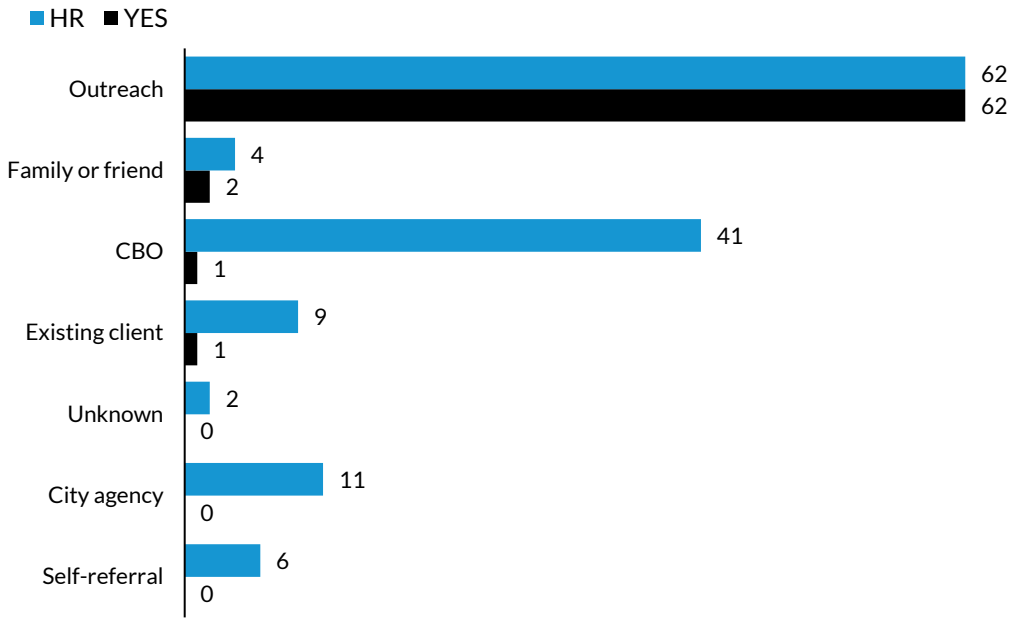
Recruitment and Enrollment

Harlem FamilyWorks served 246 participants from February 2018 to March 2021. Participants learned about the program in various ways, including via outreach from the Osborne team, referrals from family members and friends, and partnering agencies. Figure 1 depicts quarterly referral data collected and provided by Osborne's impact and evaluation team from Quarter 1 2018 through Quarter 4 2020. The majority of both HR and YES participants were referred to the program through Osborne's outreach efforts, such as tabling events and staff outreach activities.

FIGURE 1

Referrals Made to Harlem FamilyWorks by Referral Type

From February 2018 through December 2020



Source: Quarterly Osborne Association report submitted to the Institute for State and Local Governance.
Notes: CBO = community-based organization. HR = Healthy Relationship. YES = Youth Experience Success.

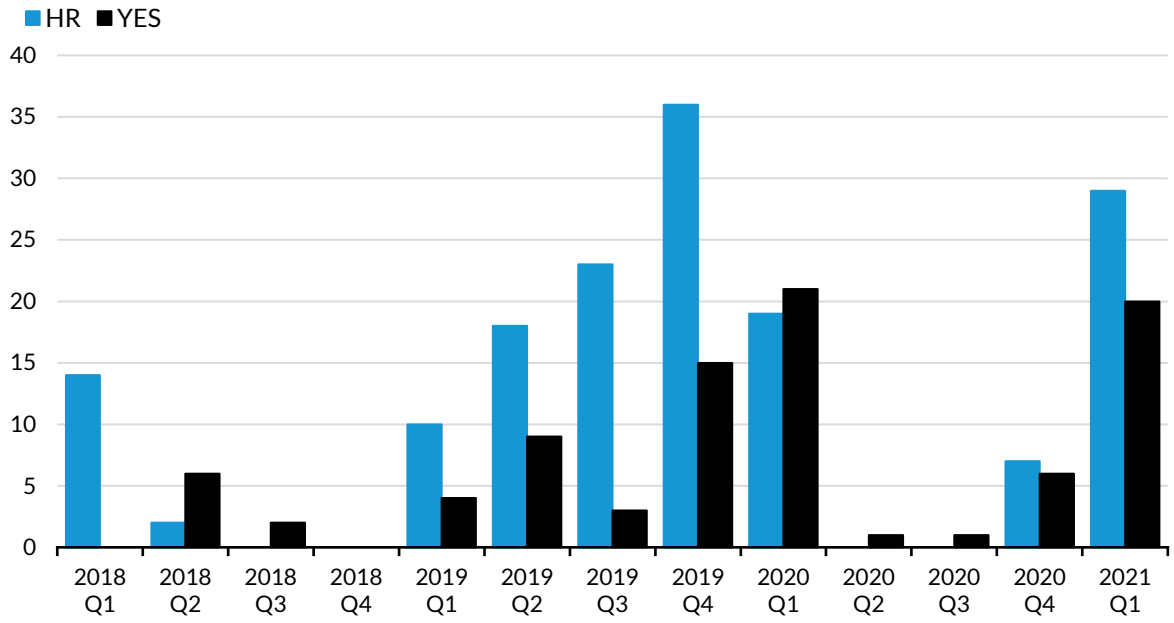
Figure 2 depicts quarterly enrollment for the HR and YES cohorts. It demonstrates two trends: program startup challenges significantly impacted recruitment efforts and enrollment in 2018, and the COVID-19 pandemic affected enrollment in 2020.

Recruiting and enrolling participants for a new program in Harlem was challenging because there were few community partners and recruitment mechanisms at program startup. Program staff attributed this to challenges with starting up the program with the Harlem Restoration Project, the lack of varied recruitment mechanisms, and the fact that partnerships take time to develop. Because of the challenges with the initial partnership with the Harlem Restoration Project and the fact that this was Osborne's first program in Harlem, staff found it difficult to recruit and enroll eligible and interested people. Although Osborne is well known in New York City, staff felt that making the Harlem community more aware of HFW would increase people's interest and attract prospective participants. But the program had too little staff capacity at startup to focus on boosting the program's reputation in Harlem. In addition, staff indicated that there were few recruitment mechanisms at the outset of the program, and staff relied on word of mouth as the primary means of recruitment. Lastly, relationships with recruitment and referral partners took time to foster.

FIGURE 2

Quarterly Enrollment in Harlem FamilyWorks

From Quarter 1 2018 through Quarter 1 2021



Source: Osborne quarterly report submitted to the Institute for State and Local Governance.
Notes: HR = Healthy Relationship. YES = Youth Experience Success.

Enrolling parents and children in the same families was also challenging. As HFW staff attempted to recruit families for the program, they found that parents and children from the same families did not tend to be mutually interested in the program. Staff explained that it was difficult to get entire families to buy in. They also reported that at times one member of a family would enroll in the program, find it beneficial, and then recruit one or more family members to participate. In addition, staff found that some families did not reflect traditional definitions of family and that some participants enrolled with extended relatives or close friends whom they identified as family. Because Osborne only collected data on certain types of relationships between pairs participating together, there may be more of these connections and relationships between participants than is known. Osborne observed this challenge early in the implementation period and, after conversations with DANY and subject matter experts, adopted a broad definition of family for HFW's eligibility criteria, viewing HFW as intergenerational or multigenerational rather than using a narrower two-generation model with exclusively parent-child dyads.

The addition of an outreach specialist helped Osborne develop partnerships, which led to more referrals. In late 2019, Osborne hired an outreach specialist for HFW who was responsible for community building and conducting outreach to partners. Program staff commented that the outreach

specialist was a big help to the program. This specialist identified and pursued opportunities to partner with other organizations in the Harlem community, including churches, schools, service providers, shelters, and other programs serving families impacted by incarceration. They built Osborne's reputation in the community, and program staff felt the community started to trust and receive the program more after they were hired. One of the main functions of the partnerships the outreach specialist made was recruiting people and referring them to HFW; partnering organizations that could refer entire groups of young people at the same time and/or entire families were especially beneficial.

Osborne's partners cited recruitment as a challenge. Some partners explained that it was difficult to recruit participants for HFW and for their own services and that even when they had participants engaged initially, retaining them was challenging. One partner explained that it would be helpful to better understand Osborne's referral expectations and processes and how the partners' services could complement the core HFW offerings (for instance, by becoming part of the HFW curriculum). Osborne noted that although all partners provided services to participants, not all of them referred participants to HFW, which would have helped increase enrollment.

In addition to bolstering partnerships, word of mouth and referrals from Osborne programs remained effective recruitment sources. Although recruitment was a consistent challenge in general, HFW staff noted that participants spreading information with friends and relatives was an effective way to recruit participants. Staff also noted that the ability to leverage staff and other Osborne programs (such as the West Harlem Community Restoration and Reentry Project) for referrals was helpful.

Osborne expanded its catchment area to boost enrollment. In October 2020, DANY approved Osborne's proposal to conduct outreach with partners in the other four boroughs in New York City and enroll participants residing in those boroughs. Staff said this made HFW better able to recruit and enroll participants.

Participant Characteristics

This section details demographic and other descriptive information about the 246 people who were served by HFW between February 2018 and March 2021.[19] This includes information about participants who attended at least one programming activity during the evaluation period (i.e., people who were considered "served" by the program).

PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHICS

Young people ages 13 to 21 made up 32.5 percent (*n*=80) of all program participants; the majority participated in the YES cohorts (*n*=74). Adults ages 22 and older made up the remaining 67.5 percent of participants (*n*=166), of which the majority participated in HR cohorts (*n*=152). Very few participants were 60 or older at the time of intake. Across all participants, 50.6 percent were female, 49.0 percent were male, and less than one percent (0.4) were gender nonconforming. Broken down by program track, 58.6 percent (*n*=51) of YES participants were male, 40.2 percent were female, and 1.0 percent were gender nonconforming. These proportions were nearly the opposite among HR participants, of whom 56.3 percent (*n*=89) were female and 43.7 percent (*n*=69) were male.

Race and ethnicity data were missing for slightly more than 20 percent of participants (*n*=56), as reflected in table 4, which shows full characteristics for HFW participants. Among participants for whom race and ethnicity was recorded, 50.5 percent (*n*=96) were Black or African American, 37.4 percent (*n*=71) were Hispanic and/or Latinx, 4.7 percent (*n*=9) were white, 3.7 percent (*n*=7) were multiracial, 1.6 percent (*n*=3) were American Indian or Alaska Native, and 0.5 percent (*n*=1) were Hawaiian Native or Pacific Islander; race and ethnicity was marked as not specified for 1.6 percent (*n*=3) of participants. Most participants' primary language was English (91.7 percent), followed by Spanish (7.5 percent) and other languages not specified (0.8 percent).

TABLE 4

Demographics of Harlem FamilyWorks Participants

	HR Participants		YES Participants		All Participants
	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)	Percentage (%)
Age					
17 and younger	2	1.3	32	36.4	13.8
18–21	4	2.6	42	47.7	18.7
22–29	20	12.7	14	15.9	13.8
30–39	33	20.9	0	0.0	13.4
40–49	37	23.4	0	0.0	15.0
50–59	48	30.4	0	0.0	19.5
60–69	12	7.6	0	0.0	4.9
70 and older	2	1.3	0	0.0	0.8
Total	158	100.0	88	100.0	100.0
Sex/gender identification					
Female	89	56.3	35	40.2	50.6
Male	69	43.7	51	58.6	49.0
Gender nonconforming	0	0.0	1	1.2	0.4
Missing	0	0.0	1	—	—
Total	158	100.0	88	100.0	100.0
Race and ethnicity					
American Indian or Alaskan Native	2	1.5	1	1.7	1.6
Black or African American	60	46.2	36	60.0	50.5
Hawaiian Native or Pacific Islander	1	0.8	0	0.0	0.5
Hispanic or Latinx	50	38.5	21	35.0	37.4
Multiracial	7	5.4	0	0.0	3.7
White	8	6.2	1	1.7	4.7
Not specified	2	1.5	1	1.7	1.6
Missing	28	—	28	—	—
Total	158	100.0	88	100.0	100.0
Primary Language					
English	135	88.2	85	97.7	91.7
Spanish	17	11.1	1	1.2	7.5
Other, not specified	1	0.7	1	1.2	0.8
Missing	5	—	1	—	—
Total	158	100.0	88	100.0	100.0

Source: Data collected through the Harlem FamilyWorks intake form on participants enrolled in the program from February 2018 to March 2021.

Notes: HR = Healthy Relationship. YES = Youth Experience Success. Percentage totals may not equal 100 because of rounding. Dashes indicate "not applicable."

WHERE PARTICIPANTS LIVE

Aligning with the CJII strategic plan,[20] Osborne emphasized recruiting from Manhattan neighborhoods and communities, specifically residents of Central and West Harlem, who experience high rates of financial instability, poor health outcomes, low educational attainment, and incarceration compared with other New York City neighborhoods. Borough of residence was not reported for 5 percent of participants (*n*=14), and community of residence was not reported for nearly 9 percent (*n*=21). Over 75 percent (*n*=180) of participants lived in Manhattan; participants were most concentrated in Central and West Harlem (51.5 percent), followed by East Harlem (27.5 percent), unspecified Manhattan communities (16.2 percent), the Lower East Side (2.4 percent), and Washington Heights (2.4 percent). As for other boroughs, 15.9 percent of HFW participants lived in the Bronx (South Bronx is just across the river from Manhattan), 3.0 percent lived in Brooklyn, and 1.3 percent lived in Queens. In addition, 2.2 percent of participants had residential homes outside New York City limits. Table 5 shows HFW residents' boroughs and communities of residence.

TABLE 5

Harlem FamilyWorks Participants' Boroughs and Communities of Residence

N=246

	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Borough		
The Bronx	37	15.9
Brooklyn	7	3.0
Manhattan	180	77.6
Central/West Harlem	86	51.5
East Harlem	46	27.5
Lower East Side	4	2.4
Washington Heights	4	2.4
Other, not specified	27	16.2
Missing	13	7.2
Queens	3	1.3
Not NYC	5	2.2
Missing	14	—

Source: Data collected through the Harlem FamilyWorks intake form on participants enrolled in the program from February 2018 to March 2021.

Notes: Percentage totals may not equal 100 because of rounding. The dash indicates not applicable. Missing data were not included in calculating the percentages

Lastly, HFW participants lived in a range of residence types. Type of residence was missing for around 18 percent of HFW participants (*n*=44). The majority of participants lived in rented housing/apartments (60.9 percent), followed by shelters (for unhoused participants) (25.7 percent), owned housing/apartments (5.0 percent), and other supportive, transitional, or residential housing (4.0

percent). Nearly 5.0 percent of participants (*n*=9) reported being unhoused and lacking shelter at the time of intake. Table 6 shows HFW participants' residence types.

TABLE 6

Harlem FamilyWorks Participants' Residence Types

	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Residence type		
Apartment or house, owned	10	5.0
Apartment or house, rented	123	60.9
Unhoused: in shelter	52	25.7
Unhoused: no shelter	9	4.5
Other[a]	8	4.0
Missing	44	—
Total	**246**	**100.0**

Source: Data collected through the Harlem FamilyWorks intake form on participants enrolled in the program from February 2018 to March 2021.

Notes: Percentage totals may not equal to 100 due to rounding. The dash indicates not applicable. "Missing" is not calculated in the percentage total.

[a] Other residence types included transitional housing (*n*=1), supportive housing (*n*=2), halfway housing (*n*=1), other group residential setting (*n*=1), substance abuse treatment facility (*n*=1), and not specified (*n*=2).

FAMILIES IMPACTED BY INCARCERATION

The HFW eligibility criteria required participants or family members (broadly defined to include extended relatives and close friends) to have been impacted by the criminal legal system or incarceration in some capacity. According to data from the HFW intake form, which asked whether young people had an incarcerated parent, 34.1 percent of YES participants reported having an incarcerated mother or father. Four YES participants stated their mother was or had been incarcerated, while 27 indicated their father was or had been incarcerated (1 participant reported that both were or had been incarcerated). Twenty-three HR participants reported having an incarcerated mother or father, with 4 reporting mother and 19 reporting father. Additionally, 32.9 percent of participants (*n*=81) reported having been incarcerated at some point, and this was heavily concentrated within the HR track (*n*=75). Table 7 provides a full description of HFW participants impacted by incarceration. These data likely underestimate the number of HFW participants impacted by incarceration as there are many missing or "not reported" data on this sensitive topic. Measuring the number of families affected by incarceration may be further complicated because of HFW's broad definition of family; the different types of relationships may not have been collected in the data management system. Lastly, while the aim of the program was to serve family units impacted by the legal system, the content of the workshops was transferrable outside of the family context and could promote growth and development for individuals impacted by the criminal legal system.

TABLE 7

Harlem FamilyWorks Participants' Experiences with Incarceration

	HR Participants		YES Participants		All Participants
	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)	Percentage (%)
Participant incarceration					
Formerly incarcerated	75	47.5	6	6.8	32.9
Not formerly incarcerated/not reported	83	52.5	82	93.2	67.1
Total	158	100.0	88	100.0	100.0
Guardian incarceration					
Mother had been incarcerated	4	2.5	4	4.5	3.3
Father had been incarcerated	19	12.0	27	30.7	18.7
None/not reported	135	85.4	58	65.9	78.5
Total	158	100.0	*88	100.0	100.0
Incarceration of other loved ones					
Other loved one had been incarcerated	25	15.8	27	30.7	21.1
None/Not reported	133	84.2	61	69.3	78.9
Total	158	100.0	88	100.0	100.0

Source: Data collected through the Harlem FamilyWorks intake form on participants enrolled in the program from February 2018 to March 2021.

Notes: HR = Healthy Relationship. YES = Youth Experience Success. One YES participant reported that their mother and father had been incarcerated. Other loved ones include extended kin and friends. Percentage totals may not equal 100 due to rounding.

Because Osborne adopted a broad definition of family whereby participants could define "family" for themselves, there was a deviation from the parent-child dyad model (table 8). This is relevant given multigenerational households have nearly quadrupled in the United States since 2011 and continue to become more common;[21] family units do not all reflect a nuclear family model. In the context of Harlem FamilyWorks, 50 percent of HR participants reported having children. Some of the remaining HR participants may have had different types of familial relationships with their YES counterparts (e.g., an aunt or uncle could be the main caregiver for a child), potentially accounting for a portion of the 50 percent who indicated not having a child. Furthermore, incarceration impacts each family and

community differently. Programming must therefore be sensitive to families' changing dynamics and participants' experiences.

TABLE 8

Number and Share of Harlem FamilyWorks HR Participants with Children

	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
HR participants		
Has children	78	50.6
Has children younger than 18	*53*	
Does not have children younger than 18	*25*	
No children/not reported	80	49.4
Total	158	100.00

Source: Data collected through the Harlem FamilyWorks intake form on participants enrolled in the program from February 2018 to March 2021.
Note: Percentage totals may not equal 100 due to rounding.

PARTICIPANTS' EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT, AND INCOME

Osborne collected key characteristics on participants' educational attainment, employment statuses, and income ranges. These elements are more applicable for the HR participants, whose characteristics we summarize in table 9. For full education, employment, and income data for all HFW participants, including YES participants, see table A.1 in the appendix.

Education data are missing for around 27 percent of HFW participants. Thirty-four percent of HR participants (*n*=36) had received their high school diploma or equivalent, 28.3 percent had completed some high school, 14.2 percent had completed 8th grade or less, 13.2 percent had completed some college, and 11 percent had received an associate's degree or higher.

Regarding employment, over 50 percent of HR participants (*n*=58) were unemployed, 28.4 percent (*n*=31) were not in the labor force, 11 percent (*n*=12) were employed full time, 3.7 percent (*n*=4) were employed part time, 2.8 percent (*n*=3) were self-employed, and 1 percent (*n*=1) were employed with temporary/seasonal work.

Lastly, employment data were missing for around 31 percent of HR participants and income data were missing for around 27 percent. Around 60 percent of HR participants (*n*=72) reported an annual income between $0 and $9,999, 19 percent (*n*=22) between $10,000 and $19,999, 9.5 percent (*n*=11) between $20,000 and $39,000, 5.2 percent (*n*=6) between $40,000 and $59,000, and 4.3 percent (*n*=5) $60,000 or more.

TABLE 9

Harlem FamilyWorks Participants' Educational Attainment, Employment Status, and Income Range

	HR Participants	
	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Educational attainment		
8th grade or less	15	14.2
Some high school	30	28.3
High school or equivalent	36	34.0
Some college	14	13.2
Associate degree	4	3.8
Bachelor's degree	5	4.7
Postgraduate school	2	1.9
Missing	52	—
Total	158	100.0
Employment status		
Full time (35+ hours/week)	12	11.0
Part time (less than 35 hours/week)	4	3.7
Unemployed	58	53.2
Self-employed	3	2.8
Temporary/seasonal	1	0.9
Not in the labor force	31	28.4
Missing	49	—
Total	158	100.0
Income range		
$0–$9,999	72	62.1
$10,000–$19,999	22	19.0
$20,000–$39,000	11	9.5
$40,000–$59,000	6	5.2
$60,000+	5	4.3
Missing	42	—
Total	158	100.0

Source: Data collected through the Harlem FamilyWorks intake form on participants enrolled in the program from February 2018 to March 2021.

Notes: HR = Healthy Relationship. Percentage totals may not equal 100 due to rounding. Dashes indicate not applicable. "Missing" is not calculated in the percentage total.

SERVICE NEEDS

During the intake process, Osborne gathered information on the types of social supports and services participants may have needed. Osborne has a catalogue of services it offers beyond HFW programming, and participants could receive these services and referrals to external partners. Table 10 shows the other services that HFW participants expressed interest in (there were many missing or unreported data for service needs, and the table only depicts information participants provided). Slightly more than 50 percent of all participants (*n*=58) expressed a need for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. Around a quarter of participants (*n*=21) expressed a need for mental health counseling services. Lastly, 17.2 percent of participants (n=20) expressed a need for housing assistance or otherwise indicated they had housing-related difficulties.

TABLE 10

Harlem FamilyWorks Participants' Reported Needs for Other Services

	HR Participants		YES Participants		All Participants
	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)	Percentage (%)
Need for SNAP					
Had need for SNAP	34	43.7	24	6.8	51.8
Had no need for SNAP	39	24.1	15	54.6	48.2
Total	73	100.0	39	100.0	100.0
Need for counseling					
Had need for mental health counseling	9	23.1	12	23.1	23.1
Had no need for mental health counseling	30	76.9	40	76.9	76.9
Total	39	100.0	52	100.0	100.0
Need for housing assistance					
Had need for housing assistance	16	26.7	4	7.1	17.2
Had no need for housing assistance	40	66.7	49	87.5	76.7
Did not know/was unsure	4	6.7	3	5.4	6.0
Total	60	100.0	56	100.0	100.0

Source: Data collected through the Harlem FamilyWorks intake form on participants enrolled in the program from February 2018 to March 2021.

Notes: HR = Healthy Relationship. SNAP = Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. YES = Youth Experience Success. Percentage totals may not equal 100 due to rounding.

Program Operations

This section details Harlem FamilyWorks' program operations, including staffing and partnerships.

STAFFING

Osborne aimed to hire staff with lived experience participants could relate to. Program staff reported that the people Osborne hired to staff the HFW program were incredibly important to its success. It was crucial to find people who were not only professional and passionate but could relate to and connect with participants and bring their lived experiences to those relationships. Osborne also found it was particularly beneficial to hire people who could speak both English and Spanish, who were from Harlem or had a connection to it, or who were male (so they could serve as role models for male participants).

Staffing shortages and turnover caused staff to take on different roles and responsibilities. Because HFW was designed to be staffed by only five people and staff turned over frequently, staff often had to perform multiple roles simultaneously. Although staff reported that this made them feel overwhelmed

at times, they also came together as a team to identify ways to reallocate responsibilities and support each other. For example, the outreach coordinator and the youth development specialist coordinated closely to recruit and enroll new participants and build partnerships with other organizations in the community. The outreach coordinator also stepped in to facilitate workshops when needed. According to program staff, this fostered a strong team approach between staff, enabling them to fill in and cover tasks whenever needed. Notably, program partners reported that the staffing changes sometimes made it unclear who was responsible for specific program activities and therefore who they should contact for certain requests.

PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATION

New partnerships with community organizations helped Osborne recruit and holistically serve participants. To build its reputation in the Harlem community, Osborne invested substantial time and resources into building partnerships with community organizations. Notably, program staff felt the outreach specialist position was critical because one person could focus on fostering partnerships, which staff cited as a main driver behind building Osborne's network of partners in Harlem. One of the strongest partnerships (as identified by program staff) was Osborne's close relationship with Youth Action YouthBuild, where the HFW program became fully incorporated in the organization's recruitment efforts, curriculum, and class schedule.

Overall, partners viewed the HFW program positively and appreciated partnering with Osborne. Partners appreciated Osborne's willingness to partner and its investment in planning partnerships, and they reported that Osborne clearly understood the parameters of partnerships and understood each partner's capabilities and strengths. It was therefore easy for partners and Osborne to reach mutual understandings of the goals of the partnerships so they could together provide services that met participants' needs.

COVID-19 presented many challenges, and program partners cited Osborne's adaptability as a strength. Osborne and its partners identified many challenges related to the COVID-19 pandemic (explained below), challenges that pertained largely to the need to shift to virtual operations and learn how to engage participants remotely and get them interested in doing activities virtually. Also, Osborne's partners experienced their own pandemic-related challenges, such as increased need for services and expanded caseloads. These challenges required Osborne and its partners to constantly change and adapt HFW; the partners appreciated Osborne's flexibility and continued willingness to identify and implement solutions to pandemic-related impacts. For example, one partner explained they were making changes almost weekly and appreciated Osborne's understanding and accommodations.

Program Attendance and Engagement

The 246 HFW participants served by HFW attended at least one program activity, workshop, or service. There were more HR cohorts (17) than YES cohorts (9). There are eight workshops in the core HFW program. On average, HR participants attended 5.8 core workshops and YES participants attended 6.2. Table 11 details aggregate-level program attendance of HFW participants.

TABLE 11

Number of Harlem FamilyWorks Cohorts between February 2018 and March 2021

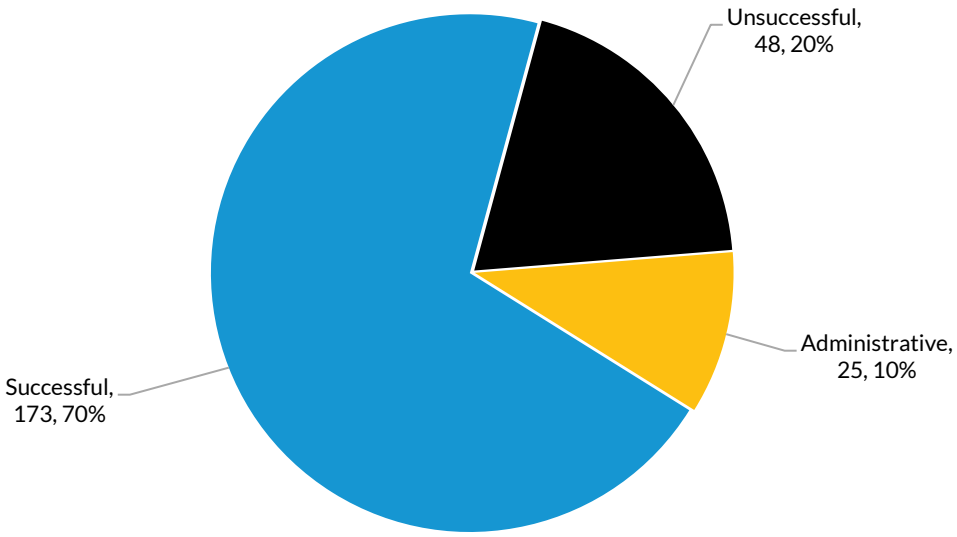
	HR Participants	YES Participants
Number of cohorts	17	9
Average number of sessions attended	5.8	6.2

Source: Data collected through the Harlem FamilyWorks program.
Notes: HR = Healthy Relationship. YES = Youth Experience Success.

Of the 246 HFW participants served, around 70 percent (*n*=173) successfully completed the program (figure 3). A participant was considered to have successfully completed HFW if they graduated from the program, meaning they attended at least six of the core HR or YES workshops. People who unsuccessfully exited did not meet the minimum attendance requirements (i.e., six or more core workshops) and therefore did not graduate. "Administrative exit" meant a participant could not complete the program because of extenuating circumstances, such as moving away or experiencing a death in the family. Of the HR participants, 115 successfully completed, 25 unsuccessfully exited, and 18 received an administrative exit. Of the YES participants, 58 successfully completed, 23 unsuccessfully exited, and 7 received an administrative exit.

FIGURE 3

Harlem FamilyWorks Participants' Exit Types



Source: Urban Institute, using data collected through the Harlem FamilyWorks program.
Notes: A successful exit is defined as graduating from the program (meeting the minimum program attendance requirements of six core workshops). An unsuccessful exit means someone did not meet the minimum attendance requirements and therefore did not graduate. An administrative exit meant someone could not complete the program because of extenuating circumstances, such as moving away or experiencing a death in the family.

Osborne shortened the duration of its original FamilyWorks model to increase attendance at HFW workshops. Harlem FamilyWorks was based on Osborne's FamilyWorks model consisting of 14 HR sessions and 30 YES sessions, which Osborne shortened to eight weekly sessions for HFW. This resulted in shorter, more frequent cohorts that were more accessible and less daunting to participants, and on average, participants completed almost all of the core sessions. Although the shorter cohorts appeared to increase attendance, participants reported the program felt too short.

Ambiguity around HR eligibility and enrollment led to some challenges implementing the workshops as intended. First, some couples who enrolled at the same time were in the same HR cohort, which program staff said presented challenges during workshops when a couple disagreed or one participant did not feel comfortable voicing their perspective. Urban's understanding is that enrolling couples in the same cohort was not intentional, and program staff explained this may have been mitigated if additional consideration were given to family dynamics at intake. Second, Osborne sometimes allowed older young adults to join the HR workshops if they were parents. Admitting older young adults presented

problems involving the wide age ranges in the HR workshops and raised questions about whether the HR content was appropriate for them.

Stipends encouraged workshop attendance. Program staff explained that the stipend (a $100 gift card for attending all eight core workshops, or $300 for families with multiple participants) supported participants who attended workshops, especially because some may have been unemployed or had other demands on their time. But staff noted that issuing the stipends as Target or Amazon gift cards was not ideal for participants because they may not have wanted to spend their money at those places.

Some participants experienced barriers to engagement because of competing priorities and obligations. For example, one staff member shared that at least two participants from the first cohort had been arrested or court-involved, which caused them to drop out of the program. Also, according to program staff, participants had competing demands on their time, such as court hearings, school, afterschool activities, or jobs that limited their availability to attend the workshops. Relatedly, program staff explained it was difficult to keep participants engaged in the program if they enrolled between cohorts and had to wait before beginning workshops. This may partly explain the disparity between the number of participants who were enrolled (*n*=282) and the number who attended one programming activity, workshop, or service (*n*=246).

Program Perceptions and Experiences

Participants enjoyed the workshops, found them to be a safe space, and felt comfortable sharing their experiences and challenges with incarceration, employment, and financial security. Participants reported they could freely share their experiences and relate to one another at the workshops. The workshops helped participants navigate reentry, especially when their family members may not have understood their experiences. One participant commented that the program supported her through the reentry process, which was stressful.

Participants appreciated the workshop content and topical areas. Topics they appreciated included incarceration, domestic violence, job readiness, and financial preparedness in particular. One participant specifically enjoyed the workshops on preparing for jobs and saving. Participants enjoyed the facilitators and said they kept the content engaging; they also appreciated the facilitators' different perspectives and lived experiences they shared in the workshops.

The program helped participants strengthen their family relationships. Participants learned they did not have to feel ashamed of their legal system involvement, which helped them open up to their families.

Peer and staff support helped participants open up about their incarceration histories. Program staff explained that participants were willing to talk about the trauma of incarceration and the stigma they felt. Participants reported that they became friends with the other participants in their cohorts and felt the staff kept them motivated toward their goals, such as finishing school. Participants also commented that they felt comfortable discussing sensitive topics with the program staff and with their peers in the workshops because of the safe spaces the staff fostered.

Even in a virtual setting, participants appeared engaged in program activities. Most participants commented that the virtual workshop setting was more comfortable than in-person sessions, and they were still able to engage in the discussions. Based on Urban's observations, participants appeared engaged during the virtual workshops, participated in the group discussions, and answered questions throughout the sessions. Program staff reported that participants also engaged in the family activities, which included open mic and game nights. Staff explained that participants appreciated and found an outlet to express themselves in Osborne's additional virtual activities, including yoga, telehealth, and counseling.

Outside of the workshops, participants appreciated the program staff's outreach and referrals to services. Staff found that texting was an effective strategy for communicating with participants in between workshops and after the eight-week series concluded. Staff sent participants motivational texts and images and reminded them they could contact staff if they needed assistance with anything. According to program staff, they also provided participants case management and connected them to services available at Osborne, such as therapy and counseling, and other supports in the community, such as behavioral health services, housing supports, substance abuse treatment, and unemployment services; participants commented that they appreciated these referrals.

Impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic prompted Osborne to pause HFW and posed significant implementation barriers. At the onset of the pandemic, Osborne closed its offices and required all its staff to work remotely. This meant in-person recruitment, outreach, and activities were paused. Program staff needed time to transition to a virtual platform, identify how they would operate, and determine the types of virtual services they would offer participants.

Osborne responded to COVID-19 with organization-wide policies and supported staff. In response to the pandemic, Osborne developed a COVID-19 safety plan that included procedures for ensuring social distancing, the use of personal protective equipment and hand sanitizer, and the implementation of a

health screen checklist for staff and participants who needed to go into Osborne's offices. In addition to the safety plan, Osborne offered supports for staff including access to a trauma specialist and social resilience sessions, lunch and "water cooler" virtual gatherings, and working groups to troubleshoot pandemic-related implementation challenges and brainstorm solutions.

Program staff innovatively adapted how the program operated and the types of services offered. Starting with recruitment, the outreach specialist started hosting virtual "meet and greet" events with program partners to ensure their support for the program and identify new or additional ways to partner. When enrolling participants, program staff conducted the intake process by phone and email using electronic forms. After enrolling participants, staff sent participants a welcome letter with instructions on how to join the virtual activities, the workshop structure, and the activity calendar. Program staff also contacted participants one to two times a week to make sure they had the supports they needed. Staff routinely shared pandemic-related resources and guides with participants over email.

Also, Osborne developed and launched a survey with participants to ask about their needs during the pandemic; it asked about participants' preferences for workshop times, current feelings, other interests, and what they hoped to gain from HFW. This survey informed the supports Osborne offered during the pandemic, including groceries, technology assistance (e.g., headphones for Youth Action YouthBuild students and resources on where to access the internet), and direct cash assistance through the Family Independence Initiative, whose funding Osborne used to provide families one-time $500 microgrants.

Program staff also modified the mode and content of the core HFW workshops. Staff began facilitating the workshops virtually, using Google Meet. Staff expressed that there was a learning curve to identify what worked best for conducting the sessions virtually and engaging with participants. Staff found it helpful to develop an activity calendar that followed five pillars of the two-generation approach (early childhood education, postsecondary and employment pathways, economic assets, health and well-being, and social capital).[22] In addition, Osborne added new supplemental activities to its offerings. Participants had access to virtual yoga and weekly mindful moment workshops to afford them outlets for processing emotions and difficult feelings, especially in light of the pandemic. Staff were also creative in designing special virtual events for participants and their families including open mic nights, game nights, a paint night, and cookie baking with Donuteers, a Young Entrepreneur Scholars organization. The staff tried to make the events enjoyable, provided participants any needed supplies in advance, and offered prizes for some of the events. At the conclusion of the workshop series, Osborne

provided participants Uber Eats gift cards so they could order food and enjoy a meal during the end-of-cohort celebration.

While modifying to virtual means, program staff and participants faced issues with accessing and using technology. Osborne opted to use Google Meet to keep the workshops private. Staff had to learn how to use Google Meet, and participants had to have internet access and certain devices. Some participants were unhoused and/or living in shelters without internet, internet-enabled devices, or enough data coverage on their phones. Also, some participants needed to share devices with family members, limiting their access to the workshops. To mitigate these challenges, Osborne attempted to find ways to connect participants to internet and devices or add data coverage to their phones/devices. This included referring participants to cash assistance and microgrants, and receiving technology donations from local community organizations. Young adults often received devices through their schools and used those to attend the HFW sessions. But staff noted that the youth participants experienced screen fatigue attending school virtually all day and then attending the virtual HFW workshops. In addition, staff found it difficult to facilitate the groups virtually because the workshops were not hands-on and sharing the presentations on the screen could be disconnecting. Though participants generally felt more comfortable with the virtual setting, they also faced increased distractions at home while attending the virtual workshops.

Participant engagement was extremely difficult during the pandemic. At the beginning of the pandemic, participant engagement declined and program staff lost contact with participants, particularly participants who were unhoused or living in unstable situations (e.g., people living in shelters). Staff explained that HFW was not a first (or even second) priority for many families struggling with the pandemic's impacts, such as the loss of income or jobs, trouble getting groceries, and lack of phone and internet access. Furthermore, participants were reckoning with the incredible loss of life in New York City resulting from the pandemic and the uncertainty of whether COVID-19 would impact their incarcerated loved ones. Moreover, participants, especially people of color, were being arrested for noncompliance with social distancing orders and involvement in protests against police brutality. Despite these challenges to participant engagement during the pandemic, program staff reportedly "hit their stride" with virtual service delivery.

Program partners also experienced disruptions from COVID-19, which hindered the recruitment of and the provision of services to HFW participants. For example, many partners also experienced issues with needing to learn to use new technology and virtual methods. Moreover, some partners reported that their enrollment and caseloads increased as people's needs increased because of the pandemic. This may have left partners with less bandwidth to devote to their partnerships with Osborne. Program

and partner staff noted it was important to understand how the organizations worked together so as not to overlap or duplicate services and to adjust to partnering organizations' fluctuating operations.

Considering the COVID-related challenges, program staff learned lessons and planned to retain virtual elements. Although Osborne reopened its offices for limited in-person activities, such as video visits, in mid-2020, Osborne staff were still working remotely and providing virtual services to participants as of this writing. Staff reported that the virtual nature of the work had helped them become more accessible to participants. Participants did not have to find transportation to Osborne's office, secure child care, or overcome other logistical barriers to attend workshops. Based on this, program staff and participants indicated strong interest in retaining the option of virtual workshops. Furthermore, program staff explained that participants continued to need—and benefit from—individual case management, even though it was being provided virtually. According to staff, this demonstrated the value of case management and that even virtual case management and services can benefit participants and help staff build relationships with them.

Recommendations

With the above challenges, successes, and adaptations in mind, we provide several recommendations Osborne staff can consider when implementing future iterations of the program and implications other practitioners can consider when implementing programs for families affected by the criminal legal system or incarceration. Although the recommendations are grounded in the implementation of the HFW program, including its strengths and barriers, they offer insights for other programs serving families impacted by the legal system. We group the recommendations into three categories: (1) **serving families affected by the criminal legal system or incarceration** (i.e., strategies for how programs can effectively meet the needs of families impacted by incarceration and the legal system), (2) **increasing participant engagement** (i.e., ways programs can increase participant engagement and uptake of services), and (3) **improving program operations** (i.e., ways organizations can improve program functions and service delivery).

Serving Families Impacted by the Criminal Legal System or Incarceration

Understand the unique needs of families impacted by the legal system. Families impacted by the criminal legal system face unique challenges, including the absence of loved ones, the loss of financial and residential stability, strain on relationships, and feelings of shame and stigma. As a practitioner, it is

important to know and understand these challenges when working with families affected by the legal system. Because of Osborne's extensive history of serving incarcerated parents and their children and families, HFW excelled at understanding and having empathy for families' needs, as evidenced by five participants' satisfaction and appreciation for the program's services and workshop content expressed to Urban during the focus group and one-on-one interviews.

Provide supports to meet all family members' needs. In response to the unique needs of families impacted by the legal system, it is helpful to consider developing and providing supports such as parent-child visits with incarcerated parents, family reunification services, counseling, assistance navigating systems such as child support or family services, and reentry supports. Relatedly, it is critical to offer services to and engage with all family members, as many of the challenges of legal system involvement affect entire family units, especially children. Osborne's expertise in this area created a foundation for providing such services to HFW participants. We recommend replicating and expanding these types of services to ensure families and children are supported.

Implement age-based cohorts and consider participants' developmental needs. Although the HFW program aimed to group participants based on age, this was difficult to implement with fidelity because of the diversity of participants' needs and interests. Based on this, we recommend that HFW divide age groups in a way that maximizes benefits for all participants and ensures everyone is engaged. For example, it may be beneficial to have two YES age groups (e.g., ages 10 to 15 and 16 to 21) to mitigate some of the challenges with tailoring content to specific groups. Similarly, creating an HR group specifically for younger adults who are parents (e.g., people ages 16 to 21) may help to address the range of ages in the adult groups. More generally, it is important to carefully think through and define the age criteria for programs and program components. Those designing workshop curriculums should consider age and developmental needs to ensure workshops are appropriate and beneficial to participants.

Provide participants trauma-informed services to meet their mental health needs. Interaction with the legal system is traumatic, and research demonstrates individual, familial, and community health suffers from incarceration experiences. Mental health conversations and, importantly, well-trained, trauma-informed practitioners, are integral to effective programming for people who have had legal system contact. Although HFW staff were trained on topics such as trauma, oppression, and resilience and were encouraged to pursue additional trainings, the HFW team did not include a mental health professional, nor did Osborne partner with a mental health provider to serve participants. These are two ways mental health supports for HFW participants could be strengthened.

Offer families employment and career services to facilitate reentry and stability. As reported by HFW staff, participants needed help finding and acquiring job and career opportunities, key barriers people returning from incarceration face. Building strong partnerships with employment services providers and finding ways to directly connect participants with job opportunities are imperative to providing opportunities to families impacted by the legal system and equipping them to make full use of the financial skills taught in the program. Another way to support families financially is to provide stipends (more below). This is imperative to uplifting families impacted by the legal system and starting them on a path to self-sufficiency.

Support participants and families by hiring and retaining staff with lived experience that complements the program. Harlem FamilyWorks staff uplifted and reinforced the need to continue hiring staff who can relate to program participants, especially when serving families impacted by the criminal legal system. Participants reported they found it easy to form relationships with the program staff because of their commonalities.

Increasing Participant Engagement

Reduce barriers to participation. Regardless of legal system involvement, families often face multiple hurdles to engaging in programs. It is critical to identify ways to reduce participants' barriers to program participation. This could include offering supports such as child care or transportation or transit passes, or using a flexible workshop schedule. Although HFW offered some of these, it may be helpful to expand them or offer them in a way that helps entire families engage (e.g., by partnering with a child care provider, continuing to offer virtual workshops, or offering makeup sessions).

Reduce the length of time between participant enrollment and initial service engagement. Harlem FamilyWorks staff noted the challenge of keeping prospective participants who enrolled between cohorts interested in the program; this may partially explain the difference in the numbers of participants enrolled and served. For example, participants who enrolled in the program after the second week of workshops had to wait until the next cohort began to start attending workshops. It is easy to lose participants during the waiting period between intake and the beginning of a cohort if there are no mechanisms or activities to keep them engaged. Programs (including HFW) should therefore consider offering some activities to or communicating with participants after they enroll but before the next cohort begins.

Provide participants stipends proportionate to their involvement with the program and to the direct and indirect costs of participating. Legal system–involved families are at elevated risk for financial

burdens and economic instability. To mitigate this risk, HFW provided participants a stipend for attending the workshops. But participation presented additional burdens, such as the need to use one's own internet or phone minutes to participate virtually, travel time, and transportation costs. The program should be sensitive to these needs, as the stipend offered may not fully cover the costs to participants of engaging with the program. Depending on the availability and level of a program's resources, it is helpful to consider offering participants a stipend or incentive based on the amount of time they attend the program and other costs they may bear to attend, in addition to the intangible costs that many families and individuals impacted by the criminal legal system may experience. It is also important to consider providing stipends in ways that are useful to participants; for example, gift cards to specific retailers limit where and how participants can use their stipends. Lastly, stipend amounts should be based on current costs of living and costs of things like transportation and internet so participants' expenses are adequately covered.

Sustain participant engagement after program workshops. Harlem FamilyWorks staff, community partners, and participants noted that the eight-week program felt too short. One participant noted the program ended abruptly and suggested that a way to stay connected with program staff would be valuable. It may be helpful to consider developing an extended version of the program (i.e., longer than eight weeks but not as long as the original 14-session HR and 30-session YES models) or identifying additional ways to engage with participants after the eight weeks conclude, even if such engagement is optional. One example staff suggested is to offer legacy projects such as an HFW advisory group of former participants to review program content and offer feedback on the program design and activities. Another legacy project could be an HFW media team made up of former participants who create public-facing content to inform the community about the program and recruit prospective participants. Lastly, program alumni could form an HFW wellness group to support each other in pursuing health and wellness goals. Continued support services and alumni services are helpful components for programs to consider.

Improving Program Operations

Develop hybrid virtual and in-person programming. The HFW team noted that several participants found the transition to virtual delivery in response to the COVID-19 pandemic beneficial. Offering the option of engaging virtually potentially makes Osborne more accessible to people who are chronically ill or disabled, supports people who are not comfortable engaging in person, and reduces the burden of finding child care and traveling to Osborne's Harlem office. It may be helpful for programs to offer both virtual and in-person programming to make services accessible to participants.

Partner with technology providers. When trying to engage with HFW virtually during the COVID-19 pandemic, participants often lacked consistent access to the internet, phone minutes, and other technology. If technology access is a significant barrier to participation, programs should seek ways to provide long-term or permanent support to participants experiencing that barrier. For example, programs can share resources about where and how to access technology and internet providers and services, offer computer lab space, and partner with providers to offer participants subsidized internet access and discounted or donated technology.

Staff the program appropriately. For HFW specifically, it is important to ensure the program is staffed with enough specialists to cover recruitment in all boroughs, provide services in Osborne offices and at community partners' locations (such as Youth Action YouthBuild), and meet participants' needs. Other programs should thoughtfully identify the appropriate number of staff to implement activities, based on criteria such as the sizes of their catchment areas, how many office locations they have, and how many participants they anticipate. Relatedly, HFW staff reported that Osborne promoted and supported people of color, and specifically Black staff, in leadership positions. Other organizations should do the same; intentionally supporting staff of color can improve staff morale and retention. It also speaks to an organization's commitment to serving its target populations when staff are representative of those populations.

Conduct regular surveys to gather participant feedback. Having a system in place to collect consistent and accurate feedback from participants, regardless of whether they complete the program, is imperative for HFW. This will help identify service gaps, address challenges, and build on strengths. Participants identified several needs over the implementation period, and having this feedback would enable the program to address these needs more quickly. This is an important lesson for other programs as well: it is helpful to solicit participants' feedback and incorporate it into service offerings.

Build community partnerships and encourage interagency collaboration. Partnerships are critical to effective program implementation. In particular, working in tandem with other programs (both internal and external to Osborne) that serve people impacted by the legal system can help it recruit participants and make resources more readily available to HFW participants. Staff should continue to foster HFW's community partnerships and aim to routinely communicate lessons learned and troubleshoot challenges to inform midcourse adjustments and help prevent partners from being siloed.

Solidify intake procedures. Though Osborne collected extensive data on HFW participants using a sophisticated database, there were many missing data, likely because the intake form questions were inconsistently asked and responses were inconsistently entered. To improve data completeness,

Osborne should confirm the appropriate intake fields are required and ensure all staff are trained to ask the intake questions and record participants' responses; these steps will help staff follow the established intake process.

Invest in the infrastructure to collect and maintain data. It is critical for programs to invest in systems, staff, and ongoing training to ensure data are accurately and consistently collected. Data enable programs to document implementation, assess outcomes and impacts, and assess their own effectiveness. Programs can improve data collection by developing or purchasing management information systems, providing staff training and technical assistance, hiring staff responsible for data entry, clarifying guidance for "no" and "nonresponse" options (e.g., by including an option for "none of the above" on intake items), and partnering with external research or evaluation organizations to assist with data collection and monitoring.

Conclusion

Leveraging Osborne's expertise serving families impacted by the legal system or incarceration, the Harlem FamilyWorks program set out to support young people and parents in Harlem and surrounding communities. Though the program met early implementation challenges related to partnerships, recruitment, and program design, staff continuously modified the program to serve people impacted by the legal system and in need of support. In addition, the COVID-19 pandemic presented several unanticipated challenges and required staff to pivot to delivering services virtually. Despite these challenges, program staff remained dedicated to the work and adapted the program to meet participants' ever-changing needs. Looking ahead to future iterations of the HFW program, we recommend Osborne learn from these challenges and firm up key components of the program (e.g., eligibility criteria, enrollment, and data collection) to strengthen implementation.

Appendix A. Full Educational Attainment, Employment Status, and Income Range Characteristics

Table A.1 presents the full summary of educational attainment, employment status, and income range characteristics for all HFW participants, including HR and YES participants. Education data are missing for around 27 percent of HFW participants. 56.8 percent of YES participants (*n*=42) had completed some high school, 21.6 percent had completed 8th grade or less, 20.3 percent had received a high school diploma or equivalent, and some 1.4 percent had completed some college.

TABLE A.1

Harlem FamilyWorks Participants' Educational Attainment, Employment Status, and Income Range

	HR Participants		YES Participants		All Participants
	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)	Percentage (%)
Educational attainment					
8th grade or less	15	14.2	16	21.6	17.2
Some high school	30	28.3	42	56.8	40
High school or equivalent	36	34	15	20.3	28.3
Some college	14	13.2	1	1.4	8.3
Associate degree	4	3.8	0	0.0	2.2
Bachelor's degree	5	4.7	0	0.0	2.8
Postgraduate school	2	1.9	0	0.0	1.1
Missing	52	—	14	—	—
Total	158	100.0	88	100.0	100.0
Employment status					
Full time (35+ hours/week)	12	11	5	8.1	9.9
Part time (less than 35 hours/week)	4	3.7	1	1.6	2.9
Unemployed	58	53.2	42	67.7	58.5
Self-employed	3	2.8	0	0	1.8
Temporary/seasonal	1	0.9	1	1.6	1.2
Not in the labor force	31	28.4	13	21.0	25.7
Missing	49	—	26	—	—
Total	158	100.0	88	100.0	100.0
Income range					
$0–$9,999	72	62.1	31	66.0	63.2
$10,000–$19,999	22	19	7	14.9	17.8
$20,000–$39,000	11	9.5	3	6.4	8.6
$40,000–$59,000	6	5.2	5	10.6	6.8
$60,000+	5	4.3	1	2.1	3.7
Missing	42	—	41	—	—

	HR Participants		YES Participants		All Participants
	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)	Percentage (%)
Total	158	100.0	88	100.0	100.0

Source: Data collected through the Harlem FamilyWorks intake form on participants enrolled in the program from February 2018 to March 2021. Dashes indicate not applicable. "Missing" is not calculated in the percentage total.

Notes: HR = Healthy Relationship. YES = Youth Experience Success. Percentage totals may not equal 100 due to rounding.

Notes

[1] There are a lot of missing or "not reported" data in the dataset, particularly for variables on more sensitive topics, such as incarceration experiences. In many cases, when a participant responded "no" the corresponding question was marked as "not reported" because of Osborne's data entry and reporting style.

[2] Harlem FamilyWorks enrolled 282 participants from February 2018 to March 2021; 36 did not engage in any program services.

[3] More detail on CJII can be found here: https://cjii.org/family-and-youth-development-programs/. More on the Family and Youth Development request for proposals can be found here: http://cjii.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/CJII_Family-and-Youth-Development-RFP_FINAL.pdf.

[4] "Criminal Justice Facts," The Sentencing Project, accessed December 23, 2021, https://www.sentencingproject.org/criminal-justice-facts/.

[5] Emily Widra and Tiana Herring, "States of Incarceration: The Global Context 2021," Prison Policy Initiative, September 2021, https://www.prisonpolicy.org/global/2021.html.

[6] "New York City, NY," Vera Institute of Justice, accessed March 08, 2022, https://trends.vera.org/state/NY/county/new_york_county.

[7] "Incarceration Trends," Vera Institute of Justice, accessed February 22, 2022, https://trends.vera.org/.

[8] "Number of people in prison in 2010 from each New York City Neighborhood Taubulation Area (NTA), as existed in 2019, with percent of youth with active asthma in 2018–19 school year," Prison Policy Initiative, accessed December 23, 2021, https://www.prisonpolicy.org/origin/ny/nta.html.

[9] Prison Policy Initiative and VOCAL-NY, "Mapping Disadvantage: The Geography of Incarceration in New York State," Prison Policy Initiative, February 19, 2020, https://www.prisonpolicy.org/origin/ny/report.html.

[10] Kierra B. Jones, Evelyn F. McCoy, and Janine M. Zweig, "How Women's Prisons Can Reduce Trauma for Parents and Pregnant People in Custody," *Urban Wire* (blog), Urban Institute, October 7, 2020, https://www.urban.org/urban-wire/how-womens-prisons-can-reduce-trauma-parents-and-pregnant-people-custody.

[11] The CJII Family and Youth Development request for proposals is available at http://cjii.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/CJII_Family-and-Youth-Development-RFP_FINAL.pdf.

[12] The Youth Action Council is an afterschool ambassador program for youth ages 15 to 18 who have been impacted by incarceration. The program fosters youth leadership and advocacy skills so youth can speak out to help shape policies that impact their everyday lives. For more information, see https://www.osborneny.org/our-services/young-adult-mentoring.

[13] Harlem FamilyWorks is not being implemented as of this writing, but Osborne is still offering HR and YES curriculums to participants in other boroughs in New York City. Although we present findings about HFW in the past tense because they apply to the now-concluded planning and implementation period, we present some findings about the HR and YES curriculums in the present tense where appropriate.

[14] During the early planning stage for the program, Osborne also called it FamilyWorks Harlem before deciding on Harlem FamilyWorks.

[15] As part of its process evaluation, Urban did not interview Harlem Restoration Project representatives. However, program staff and Institute for State and Local Governance team members discussed the program history in interviews with the Urban research team.

[16] Adult participants who could complete the intake form themselves did, while other participants were asked the intake questions in an interview style.

[17] Osborne also offered assistance with video visits at its offices in the Bronx and Brooklyn.

[18] The challenges with identifying a potential comparison group included broadly defined and fluid program eligibility criteria, uncertainty around how the program's outcomes were operationalized, and potentially limited data availability from sources that could generate a comparison group.

[19] The program enrolled 282 participants from February 2018 to March 2021; 246 participants were served, defined as participating in at least one programming activity or receiving services.

[20] Available at https://cjii.org/about/cjii-strategic-plan/.

[21] "Family Matters: Multigenerational Living Is on the Rise and Here to Stay," Generations United, accessed January 12, 2022, https://www.gu.org/resources/multigenerational-families/.

[22] "The 2Gen Approach," Aspen Institute, accessed January 12, 2021, https://ascend.aspeninstitute.org/two-generation/what-is-2gen/.

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