

Quarterly Report October - December 2007



“Uniting families with their loved ones in prison”



A program in support of family reunification funded by the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation

Quarterly Report To The
**California Department of
Corrections and Rehabilitation**

Contract Period:
October 1, 2007 -- December 31, 2007

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Table of Contents

Executive Summary	1
Program Updates and Issues	2
Comments from Family Members	4
Commendations.....	5
Transportation Services.....	6
Appendices.....	11

Executive Summary

The Chowchilla Family Express (CFE) provides free weekly bus transportation to families of women serving sentences at the Valley State Prison for Women and the Central California Women's Facility, both located at Chowchilla. CFE ran its first bus trip in March, 2007.

Our ongoing efforts to enhance the likelihood that female offenders will experience successful reintegration into society, as well as to decrease the negative impact of incarceration on children through the operation of a free bus transportation program have been met with a tremendous desire on the part of families for reunification. A concrete and heartfelt need has been met with a direct and personal solution. Families are increasingly accessing this service and filling the buses with great success.

Since the contract was approved:

- Over 3,200 visitors have registered for these services from the four regions in California from March 2007 through December 2007.
- The most prevalent group of visitors on the bus to date is the inmate's children (34%). This finding can be interpreted as a great success for the Chowchilla Family Express, as the main goal of the transportation services was to enhance visitation of children with their mothers.



- The majority of adult visitors were women (79%), including mothers and/or stepmothers of the inmate, followed by grandmothers, sisters, aunts, friends, and nieces.

- Nearly one-half (42%) of the visitors who registered for Chowchilla Family Express were African American, and approximately 33% were Hispanic/Latino. This finding can also be considered a success of the Chowchilla Family Express program as many minority women face transportation challenges which would exclude them from visiting incarcerated family members.

**Save the a Date:
March 16, 2008**



**for our One-Year
Anniversary!**

**Nearly 3,000 people will have
been on the Chowchilla
Family Express in the
first year of service!**



Program Issues and Updates

The leadership team of the Chowchilla Family Express had the pleasure of meeting with Wendy Still and the Female Offender Programming leadership and staff near the end of this quarter in December. We presented our program successes and challenges, opportunities and needs; and we listened to Wendy Still and her staff present their perspective on how we are doing and where this program is going. It is clear that this program is being well received by families, the Women's Advisory Council, prison staff and CDCR Leadership. To better meet our goals, address emerging needs and foresee future issues, we continue to have an ongoing conversation about how to continuously improve the Chowchilla Family Express.



Emerging Issues:



Lockers/Storage: Our families arrive at the prison, and like many other families, they need to have some place to put their valuables. They don't have a car, and sometimes they don't feel comfortable leaving their possessions on the bus, so we want to purchase a foot-locker for our use on Sundays and leave them in the visit-

ing rooms at both prisons to be used as needed during the week.



Documentation: Although we have a 98% success rate of getting people in to visit once we arrive at the prison, we want to minimize the number of people who are unable to enter the prison for one reason or another. To achieve this goal, the Female Offender Program has asked us to formally check everyone's documents prior to boarding the bus, and to not let people ride if they don't have what is required. We have implemented that new policy.



Processing Speed: We are very pleased by the response and concern of Lieutenant Herron at Valley State Prison and the leadership of the Female Offender Programming about speeding up processing at VSP. We are hopeful that this will be appropriately and effectively addressed in the near future.



Bus Routes: The CFE director will submit the schedule of bus trips to Wendy Still prior to publication in order to make sure that all input and concerns about routes are discussed. We will also call Wendy Still to get approval to cancel any trips.



Visiting Staff Trainings: Wendy Still has been very clear that people encounter the CDCR first and foremost at the visiting processing office. We all agree that the mission and vision of the CDCR needs to be positively experienced at the front desk by visiting families. To further the CDCR's vision, Wendy Still has stated she will develop a training for CDCR Visiting Room Staff. We fully support that and believe that developing a spirit of hospitality and sensitivity to families that have travelled since before dawn, made sacrifices to get there, and have often brought young children will only help further the goals of family reunification. Families come willingly, and in many ways are one of the CDCR's best resources to achieve its mission: one might even call them an ally or partner in the project of successful reunification and rehabilitation.



Notaries: Both CCWF and VSP have developed a protocol to bill us for the cost of notarizing documents necessary for CFE visits. We need clarity regarding how long the document is good for. We recommend that notarized letters indicate they are valid for the duration of incarceration.



Breakfasts: We continue to be grateful for the free breakfasts provided by the Grandmothers of the Light, Holy Name of Mary Church, the San Bruno Catholic Worker, the Coalition for Children of Incarcerated Parents, and others. It's exciting to see a variety of community groups generously organizing their resources to provide breakfast for the families. Perhaps the most positive consequences of these breakfasts is that the bus riders arrive at the prisons in great moods and ready for their visits, and an ever increasing circle of Californians are making common cause with family members of the incarcerated and learning their struggles and supporting them.



Re-Entry Fair: We continue to listen to the needs of the families we transport. On one trip, a group of riders asked why they always have to go to Chowchilla... "Why can't you bring them to us for once?" We talked about it and propose a special trip for women with limited time left on their sentences. We would bring them and corrections staff to a secure location for the day. Family members would be there, as well as key people from the community. It's like a job fair, only we call it a "re-entry fair." It would be a way to prepare the women for re-entry, to reconnect with family, and to meet community leaders, potential employers, religious leaders, social workers...all those people who have a stake in their suc-

cessful re-entry. The more we discuss this idea, the more it makes sense as an innovative and proactive way to begin the re-entry process.

Comments from Family Members

We continue to enjoy the time on the buses to visit with families and get a better sense of what they need. Most often, they are full of gratitude that this program is up and running. They always talk about how much it costs to drive, how much they spend on a hotel and food, and how physically and emotionally exhausting it was to go visit before the Chowchilla Family Express.



➤ “I wish you would run buses on Saturdays too. Thank you.”

➤ “I wouldn’t change a thing...Thank you for giving me the chance to see my sister. This means so much to me.”

➤ “I wish you would go on Christmas so we could visit then.”

➤ “The food prices at the prison need to be lower.”

➤ The only thing I can think of is for the program to expand. It is truly a very good program. I’m deeply grateful to the program and wonderful staff.”

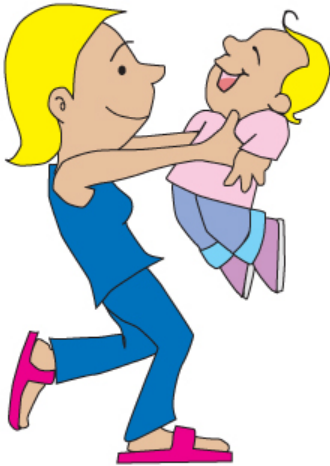
➤ “I had not communicated with my best friend in almost 20 years. The last time was when she was at CIW. I found out she was at CCWF and tried to find a ride because my car wouldn’t make such a long trip. My friend sent me a registration and my first trip was last month. This is my second trip, and I thank you very much for giving me the opportunity to physically spend time with my friend. I look forward to next year.”

➤ “I’m happy to visit my fiancé because we get to spend so much time together. We enjoy each other’s company. It makes



her week so much better, and mine too. I thank the Chowchilla Family Express for this trip. I know she is OK. Keep up the good work you are doing. Thank you.”

Commendations



We continue to be grateful for Wendy Still’s leadership and the Female Offender Services Program staff. So much gets done behind the scenes in their offices, and it is such a concrete help to the women in Chowchilla, their families and children.

We would like to recognize Officer Rodriguez at the visiting office at CCWF. He stands out as professional and competent. He is an example of our hope that visiting staff can carry out all policies and procedures and still be

friendly and hospitable to families. He smiles and jokes with families and staff, works quickly and efficiently, and leaves visitors with the sense they have been treated with dignity.

Our hope is that the spirit of hospitality is tangible in the visiting room. Families should not feel like intruders. Our experience of the families on our buses is that they have overcome obstacles, pursued education and career goals and make great sacrifices to keep the family together. They are one of the CDCR’s greatest allies and partners.



Wardens Patrick and Hornbeak and Captains Neeley and Salter at both facilities were very helpful in creating a protocol for the women to have documents notarized so their children could come visit. We thank them and both wardens for making it easier for families to reunite.

Transportation Services

The Chowchilla Family Express provides free weekly transportation for the families of women serving state prison sentences at two facilities in Chowchilla, California - Central California Women's Facility (CCWF) and Valley State Prison for Women (VSPW). Services are available for children, spouses, extended family, guardians, and foster families. The bus trips originate in Northern, Central, and Southern California cities. Transportation services began in March 25, 2007. To date, over 3,200 visitors have registered for these services and 2,162 family members have ridden the Chowchilla Family Express.

In the first reporting period (March 2007 - June 2007) 1,200 visitors had registered for these services. The majority of visitors registered from the following departure cities:

➤ Long Beach	11.5%
➤ Los Angeles	11.1%
➤ San Bernardino	10.1%
➤ Sacramento/Chico	09.7%
➤ San Fernando Valley/Antelope	08.6%
➤ San Gabriel Valley/Fresno	08.3%



Smaller percentages came from Orange/Visalia (6.5%), Stockton (6.4%), Oakland (6.3%), San Diego (6.3%), Oxnard/Bakersfield (5.7%), San Jose (3.0%), San Francisco (2.6%), Santa Rose (1.9%), Palmdale (1.4%), and Ventura/Santa Barbara (0.8%).

The second reporting period did not show much variation in the departing cities. From July 2007 through September 2007, 1,131 visitors registered for the Chowchilla Family Express services. The majority of visitors registered from the following departure cities:

➤ Los Angeles	20%
➤ Long Beach	13%
➤ San Bernardino	13%
➤ Sacramento/Chico	09%
➤ Oakland	07%



Smaller percentages came from Oxnard/Bakersfield (6%), San Diego (6%), San Fernando/Antelope Valley (5%), San Jose (5%), Perris (5%), Orange/Visalia (3%), Stockton (3%), San Francisco (3%), Santa Rosa (2%), Palmdale (0.8%), and Ventura/Santa Barbara (0.4%).



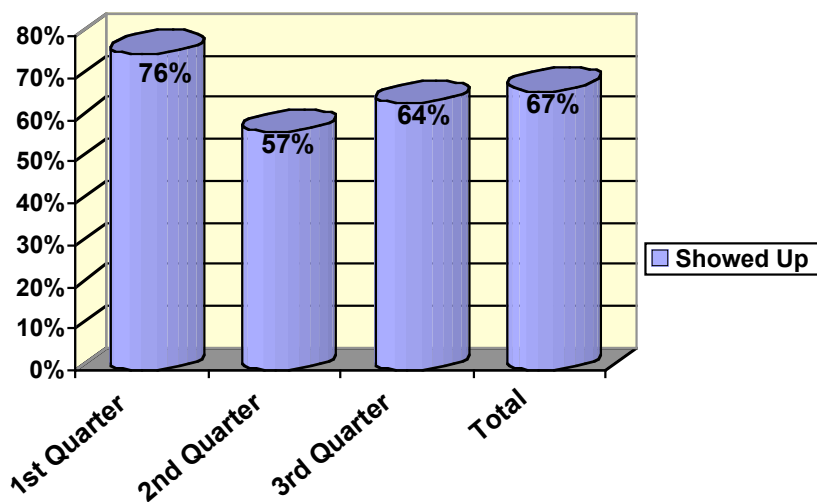
The third reporting period has not shown much variation in the departing cities. From October 2007 through December 2007, 868 visitors registered for the Chowchilla Family Express services. The majority of visitors registered from the following departure cities:

➤ Los Angeles	17%
➤ S. Los Angeles	15%
➤ Long Beach	13%
➤ San Bernardino	13%
➤ Perris	07%

Smaller percentages came from San Diego (5%), Sacramento (5%), Antelope Valley (4%), San Francisco (3%), Santa Clarita (3%), San Dimas (3%), Bakersfield (2%), and others.

People from all over California are pre-registering for the Family Express transportation services. To date, over 67% of the registered visitors (3,247) took the bus to either VSPW or CCWF. This percentage has increased since the previous reporting period, however percentages have not yet returned to those of the initial reporting period.

Table 1. Percentage of Registered Visitors Who “Showed Up” for Pick Up



Over 76% of the registered visitors took the bus to either VSPW or CCWF during the initial reporting period (March 25, 2007 - June 31, 2007). Fifty-seven percent of the registered visitors took the bus to either VSPW or CCWF during the second reporting period (July 2, 2007 - September 31, 2007) and 64% of the registered visitors took the bus during the current reporting period.

We are increasingly aware that the reason for “no shows” is directly related to the fact that these families are in crisis. They don't show up for a variety of reasons....the car broke down, the kids won't get up, a neighbor didn't show up to give them a ride to the departure location, someone is sick, and so on.... There is great desire, but also huge obstacles. We have begun to overbook the trips by 15% and have up to 20 people on stand-by. This new policy ensures that our buses are very nearly full for every trip.

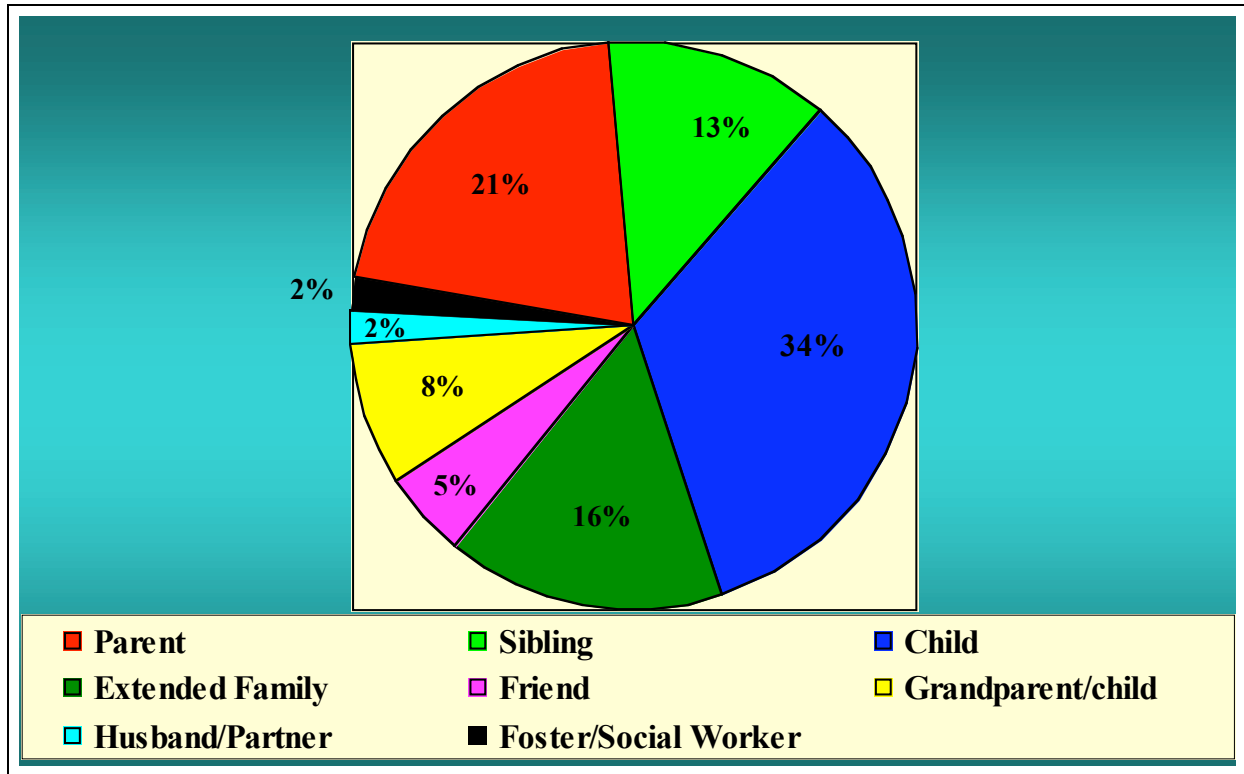


We are very pleased that ninety-eight percent of those who took the bus during this reporting period were admitted into the prison. That means that although some have not been admitted for a visit because of paperwork, the overwhelming majority have been.

Relationship to Inmate

Perhaps the most significant finding from our previous reports is the description of “who is visiting incarcerated women in California”? Consistently, the most prevalent group of visitors on the bus were the inmates' children (34% of total visitors to date). This finding can be interpreted as a great success for the Chowchilla Family Express, as the main goal of the transportation services was to enhance visitation of children with their mothers (see Figure 1 below for total percentages from March 2007 through December 2007). Separate percentages are shown for 3rd quarter data in Appendices (October 2007 - December 2007).

Figure I. Relationship of Visitor to Inmate to Date



- ^a 18% of the visiting parents were mothers or stepmothers (3% were fathers).
- ^b Visiting children were 10 years old on average (ranging from infants to 17 years).
- ^c Extended family includes aunts, uncles, cousins, nieces and nephews, and in-laws.

Visitor Characteristics

Table 2 shows the cumulative percentage of female and male visitors by age group (18 and over or minor child). Not surprisingly, the majority of adult visitors were women (79%), including mothers and/or stepmothers of the inmate, followed by grandmothers, sisters, aunts, and nieces. The children were also more likely to be girls, however, the children were more evenly distributed between girls and boys (56% and 44%) than the adult visitors.

These percentages are nearly identical for the first and second quarter data (1st quarter: adult women = 82%; and adult men = 19%; female children = 55%; and male children =

46%) (2nd quarter data: adult women = 78%; and adult men = 22%; female children = 55%; and male children = 45%).

Table 2. Gender of Visitors by Age Group (N=3,247)

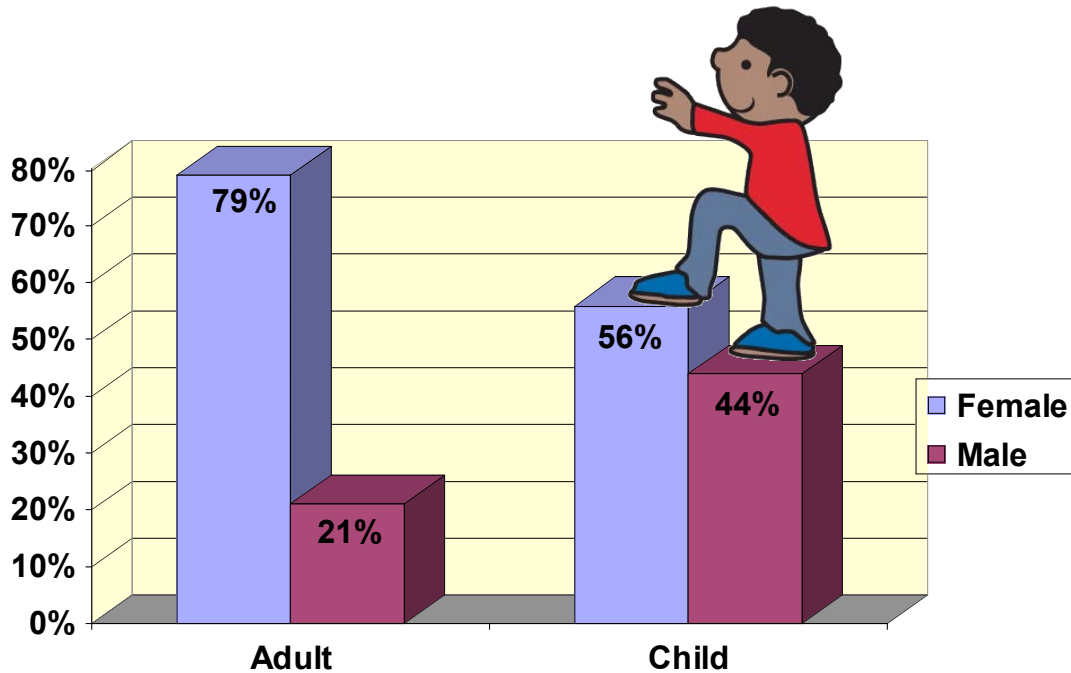
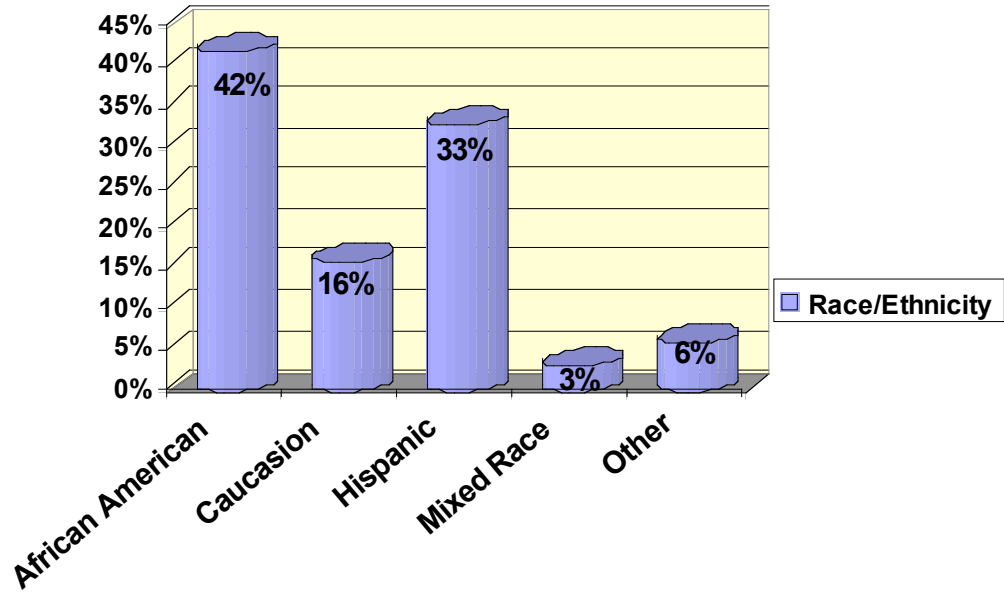


Table 3 shows the racial distribution of the visitors. Approximately 42% of the visitors who registered were African American and 33% were Hispanic/Latino. This finding can also be considered a success of the Chowchilla Family Express program as many minority women face transportation challenges which would exclude them from visiting incarcerated family members.

These percentages are nearly identical for the first and second quarter data (1st quarter: African American = 42%; Hispanic/Latino = 32%; Caucasian = 17%; Mixed Race = 4%; and Other = 6%) (2nd quarter data: African American = 42%; Hispanic/Latino = 34%; Caucasian = 15%; Mixed Race = 3%; and Other = 6%). Third quarter data are shown below.

Table 3. Race/Ethnicity of Visitors in 3rd Quarter



Appendices

- ▶ Appendix A: Frequency Table for Third Quarter.

Appendix A: Frequency Table for Third Quarter

PRISON RECODE

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	VSP	393	45.3	45.3	45.3
	CCWF	475	54.7	54.7	100.0
	Total	868	100.0	100.0	

DepartureCty2

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Long Beach	116	13.4	13.4	13.4
	San Diego	46	5.3	5.3	18.7
	San Bernardino	111	12.8	12.8	31.5
	San Francisco	22	2.5	2.5	34.0
	Stockton	11	1.3	1.3	35.3
	San Jose	11	1.3	1.3	36.5
	Santa Rosa	7	.8	.8	37.3
	Perris	58	6.7	6.7	44.0
	Bakersfield	21	2.4	2.4	46.4
	Chico	8	.9	.9	47.4
	Sacramento	43	5.0	5.0	52.3
	S. Los Angeles	130	15.0	15.0	67.3
	Fresno	9	1.0	1.0	68.3
	Antelope Valley	30	3.5	3.5	71.8
	Visalia	5	.6	.6	72.4
	Los Angeles	146	16.8	16.8	89.2
	San Dimas	22	2.5	2.5	91.7
	Santa Clarita	29	3.3	3.3	95.0
	West Covina	19	2.2	2.2	97.2
	Monterey Park	15	1.7	1.7	99.0
	Madera	1	.1	.1	99.1
	Visalia	5	.6	.6	99.7
	Claremont	1	.1	.1	99.8

Redding	2	.2	.2	100.0
Total	868	100.0	100.0	

RACE RECODE

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid african american	346	39.9	39.9	39.9
caucasian	143	16.5	16.5	56.3
hispanic/latino	304	35.0	35.0	91.4
mixed race	24	2.8	2.8	94.1
other	26	3.0	3.0	97.1
Asian	23	2.6	2.6	99.8
Native American	2	.2	.2	100.0
Total	868	100.0	100.0	

Gender Recode

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid female	602	69.4	69.4	69.4
male	266	30.6	30.6	100.0
Total	868	100.0	100.0	

Relationship Recode/Collapse

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Mother/Step	160	18.4	18.4	18.4
Father/Step	30	3.5	3.5	21.9
Friend	51	5.9	5.9	27.8
Husband/Partner	33	3.8	3.8	31.6
Child	242	27.9	27.9	59.4
In Laws	1	.1	.1	59.6
Aunt/Uncle/Cousins	70	8.1	8.1	67.6
Niece/Nephew	75	8.6	8.6	76.3
Sibling	133	15.3	15.3	91.6
Grandparent/Godparent	21	2.4	2.4	94.0
Grandchild	45	5.2	5.2	99.2
Foster Family	4	.5	.5	99.7
Guardian	1	.1	.1	99.8
stepchild	2	.2	.2	100.0
Total	868	100.0	100.0	

Visitor over 18 (yes/no)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	no	349	40.2	40.5	40.5
	yes	512	59.0	59.5	100.0
	Total	861	99.2	100.0	
Missing	System	7	.8		
Total		868	100.0		

Showed Up?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	No	309	35.6	35.6	35.6
	Yes	559	64.4	64.4	100.0
	Total	868	100.0	100.0	

Let In Prison

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	No	14	1.6	2.5	2.5
	Yes	545	62.8	97.5	100.0
	Total	559	64.4	100.0	
Missing	-9	309	35.6		
Total		868	100.0		

Frequency Table for First, Second, and Third Quarter Data Combined

PRISON RECODE

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	VSP	1581	48.7	49.0	49.0
	CIW	2	.1	.1	49.1
	CCWF	1641	50.5	50.9	100.0
	Total	3224	99.3	100.0	
Missing	System	23	.7		
Total		3247	100.0		

DEPARTURE CITY RECODE/COLLAPSE

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Bakersfield/Oxnard	131	4.0	4.0	4.0
	Chico/Sacramento	217	6.7	6.7	10.7
	Long Beach	430	13.2	13.2	24.0
	Los Angeles/South L.A.	495	15.2	15.2	39.2
	Orange Co./Visalia	81	2.5	2.5	41.7
	San Fernando Valley/ Antelope	108	3.3	3.3	45.0
	Oakland	161	5.0	5.0	50.0
	Palmdale	18	.6	.6	50.5
	San Diego	182	5.6	5.6	56.1
	San Bernardino	408	12.6	12.6	68.7
	San Francisco	103	3.2	3.2	71.9
	San Gabriel Valley/Fresno	103	3.2	3.2	75.1
	Stockton	92	2.8	2.8	77.9
	San Jose	11	.3	.3	78.2
	Santa Rosa	41	1.3	1.3	79.5
	Ventura/Santa Barbara	10	.3	.3	79.8
	Perris	170	5.2	5.2	85.0
	Bakersfield	21	.6	.6	85.7
	Chico	8	.2	.2	85.9
	Sacramento	43	1.3	1.3	87.2
	S. Los Angeles	130	4.0	4.0	91.3
	Fresno	9	.3	.3	91.5
	Antelope Valley	30	.9	.9	92.5
	Visalia	5	.2	.2	92.6
	Los Angeles	146	4.5	4.5	97.1
	San Dimas	22	.7	.7	97.8
	Santa Clarita	29	.9	.9	98.7
	West Covina	19	.6	.6	99.3
	Monterey Park	15	.5	.5	99.7
	Madera	1	.0	.0	99.8
	Visalia	5	.2	.2	99.9
	Claremont	1	.0	.0	99.9
	Redding	2	.1	.1	100.0
	Total	3247	100.0	100.0	

RACE RECODE

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
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Valid	african american	1340	41.3	41.7	41.7
	caucasian	519	16.0	16.2	57.9
	hispanic/latino	1065	32.8	33.2	91.1
	mixed race	96	3.0	3.0	94.1
	other	165	5.1	5.1	99.2
	Asian	23	.7	.7	99.9
	Native American	2	.1	.1	100.0
	Total	3210	98.9	100.0	
Missing	System	37	1.1		
Total		3247	100.0		

Gender Recode

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Female	2196	67.6	67.9	67.9
	Male	1040	32.0	32.1	100.0
	Total	3236	99.7	100.0	
Missing	System	11	.3		
Total		3247	100.0		

Relationship Recode/Collapse

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Mother/Step	577	17.8	18.1	18.1
	Father/Step	98	3.0	3.1	21.1
	Friend	164	5.1	5.1	26.3
	Husband/Partner	77	2.4	2.4	28.7
	Child	1082	33.3	33.9	62.6
	Social Worker/Volunteer	23	.7	.7	63.3
	In Laws	42	1.3	1.3	64.6
	Aunt/Uncle/Cousins	186	5.7	5.8	70.5
	Niece/Nephew	258	7.9	8.1	78.5
	Sibling	411	12.7	12.9	91.4
	Grandparent/Godparent	70	2.2	2.2	93.6
	Grandchild	182	5.6	5.7	99.3
	Foster Family	19	.6	.6	99.9
	Guardian	1	.0	.0	99.9
	stepchild	2	.1	.1	100.0
	Total	3192	98.3	100.0	
Missing	System	55	1.7		
Total		3247	100.0		

Visitor over 18 (yes/no)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	no	1489	45.9	47.2	47.2
	yes	1665	51.3	52.8	100.0
	Total	3154	97.1	100.0	
Missing	System	93	2.9		
Total		3247	100.0		

ShowedUp?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	No	1086	33.4	33.4	33.4
	Yes	2161	66.6	66.6	100.0
	Total	3247	100.0	100.0	

LET IN PRISON?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	No	28	.9	1.3	1.3
	Yes	2133	65.7	98.7	100.0
	Total	2161	66.6	100.0	
Missing	-9	1086	33.4		
Total		3247	100.0		