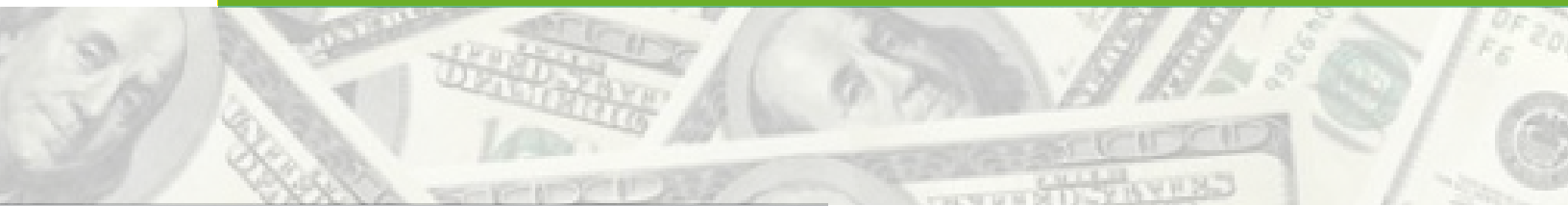




Socio-Economic Impact Report



Prepared by

saintwallstreet

Where Good Programs Become Great Investments

September 6, 2013

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The RIDGE Project: Socio-Economic Impact Report

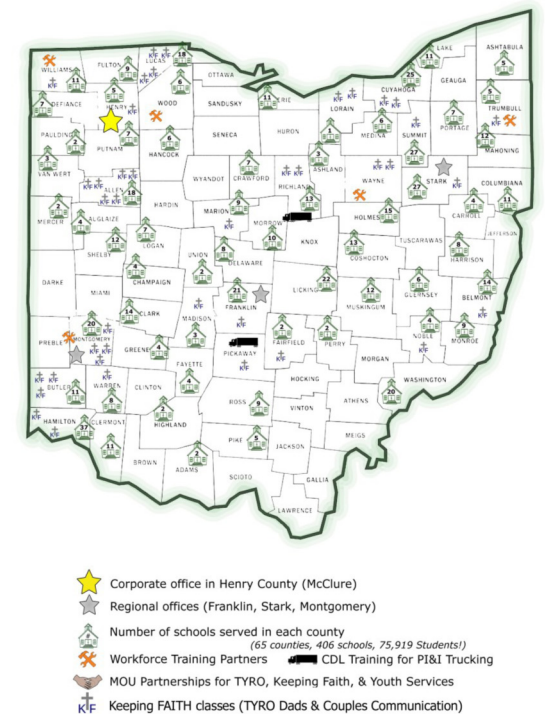
Introduction & Methodology

“Smart on Crime,” a 2010 report from the Buckeye Institute for Public Policy Solutions¹, states that Ohio taxpayers’ spending on corrections has grown five-fold since 1983, even after adjusting for inflation. Nearly all of this money is for prisons. The recent growth in Ohio’s prison population and costs is largely the result of an increasing number of nonviolent offenders being incarcerated for short periods of time, including 10,000 for an average of nine months. In 2008, almost half of those admitted to Ohio prisons were assessed as low risk and half received prison sentences of 12 months or less. Pursuant to these findings, the report asks: *Is this revolving door, where offenders may leave worse than they came in and with dimmed employment prospects, delivering a good public safety return on Ohioans’ tax dollars?*

The RIDGE Project reduces prison spending and increases public safety for Ohio by changing the socio-economic trajectory of disadvantaged and low-income families affected by incarceration. Established in 2000, the Ohio-based, Christian nonprofit 501(c) (3) organization provides comprehensive services that transform incarcerated fathers into responsible fathers, facilitate employment and self-sufficiency for families, and equip at-risk youth with pro-social behaviors to avoid crime and violence, unwed pregnancy, and generational social dependency. (Children of incarcerated parents are six times more likely than their peers to become criminally involved.²)

The RIDGE Project’s programs are at work statewide in 19 prisons, jails, and correctional facilities. Additionally, through administration of the Ohio Adolescent Health Centers, The RIDGE Project and its partners educate teens in over 200 Ohio school districts on how to build healthy relationships, avoid risky behaviors, and make pro-social, success-oriented life choices. In five school districts in Northwest Ohio and at two youth detention facilities, the organization’s Rites of Passage youth program further serves teens at risk.

Partners that expand capacity and cost-effectiveness include: the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction (ODRC); the Ohio Job Center; Harbor Behavioral Care and Career Connections; National Hispanic Family and Youth Outreach; domestic violence specialists; and local schools, churches, and faith-based and community organizations.



¹ “Smart on Crime,” Buckeye Institute for Public Policy Solutions 2010: [http://buckeyeinstitute.org/uploads/files/buckeye-smart on-crime\(1\).pdf](http://buckeyeinstitute.org/uploads/files/buckeye-smart on-crime(1).pdf)

² “Children of Incarcerated Parents,” Council on Crime and Justice, 2006: <http://www.crimeandjustice.org/researchReports/CCJ%20CIP%20FINAL%20REPORT%20updated%201.30.08.pdf>

While many programs offer responsible fatherhood, healthy marriage, and family-strengthening services for men who are or have been incarcerated, none in Ohio is reported to have achieved the reach, scope, or measure of success attained by The RIDGE Project. The organization is borne of the real-life experiences of Ron and Cathy Tijerina, who kept their family intact throughout Ron's 15 years of incarceration in Ohio. Their protracted personal struggle afforded unique insight into the core attitudes, beliefs and practices that inhibit successful reintegration. So that other Ohio families affected by incarceration might rise above these pitfalls, the Tijerinas launched The RIDGE Project in 2000.

This report documents key socio-economic impacts resulting from previously evaluated work of The RIDGE Project. Impact valuation was performed by Saint Wall Street LLC, the author of this report. Pursuant to funding from the Office of Family Assistance, a division of the US Department of Health and Human Services' Administration for Children and Families, Saint Wall Street LLC is the sole-source provider of training and services for federal grantees on Program Return On Investment™ (PROI) impact valuation. PROI valuation assigns dollar values to the behavioral changes prompted by effective human services. Depending upon the rigor of evaluation, these values are articulated as either projected or actual gains and savings for government, taxpayers and/or businesses. Calculations are based upon applicable costs and probability analyses reported in the body of research drawn from federal, state and reputable private publications.

In 2009, The RIDGE Project became the first nonprofit organization and federal grantee to incorporate PROI, thereby embracing value-driven approaches to the delivery and evaluation of its human services. PROI impact valuation conducted for the organization includes actual and projected values. Actual values are assigned

to program outcomes evidenced by evaluation over the time periods indicated. Where program outcomes have not yet been measured or validated over time, projected values have been calculated, based on available data and applicable research. Indirect costs not accounted for in traditional financial statements may be included in some calculations. Cost-benefits are measured against related costs borne by government, businesses, and/or taxpayers. Return-on-investment values are derived by measuring cost-benefits against the overall operating costs for The RIDGE Project's programs.

Saint Wall Street acknowledges that impact valuation for nonprofit health and human services is a new science. The PROI impacts provided herein are the best efforts of professional data analysts experienced in government and nonprofit program research and analysis. Valuation is limited to program outcomes yielded by previous evaluations not inclusive of indicators that would unveil all of the impacts likely to result for an organization with The RIDGE Project's scope, type and duration of services. Saint Wall Street considers its efforts a starting point of expertise in the new area of impact valuation and thus subject to further scientific review and modification as the practice of impact valuation progresses.

A brief, personal introduction to The RIDGE Project by its co-founders and co-directors, Ron and Cathy Tijerina, provides background for this report. An overview of the organization's intervention, redirection, and prevention services follows and includes the outcomes data used for impact valuation. Recommendations for creating and demonstrating greater impacts in the future close this report.

Saint Wall Street is pleased to have been chosen to prepare this socio-economic impact report for The RIDGE Project. We have learned much and are confident that all who read it will do likewise.

Bernice Sanders Smoot

Bernice Sanders Smoot, President
Saint Wall Street LLC

Personal Letter From The Co-Founders Of The Ridge Project

In 1991 our family was faced with something that shook us to our core, and changed our future forever. It was in that year that Ron was sentenced to 14-25 years for a crime he did not commit. Through this impossible situation, and despite 15 years of missed birthdays, holidays and anniversaries, our family grew stronger. Through our challenges, we committed to keeping our family intact - no matter what obstacles came before us. We focused our energy on building a resilient family because we had to - and our family became strong. We prioritized being good spouses and parents, in spite of the distance - and our relationships thrived. In the process, we found that there were many families out there whose relationships were frayed and distressed - we could relate. More than relate, through our experiences, we knew that we could help others navigate, repair and restore their families.

What began as an effort in survival for our family became a pathway of healing for others. Our experiences led us to found The RIDGE Project in the year 2000. The RIDGE Project is an organization dedicated to empowering youth and families so they can climb up from every valley and conquer life's ridges together. We believe that strong families produce strong children, who will pass on that legacy of strength for generations. The information on the following pages highlight our successes as well as our ongoing work to stabilize, heal, and strengthen vulnerable youth and families. We hope that you find it informative and inspiring.

Sincerely,

Ron Tijerina Cathy Tijerina

RIDGE | The Ridge Project
Building a Legacy of Strong Families



*The RIDGE Project Co-Founders and Co-Directors
Ron and Catherine Tijerina*

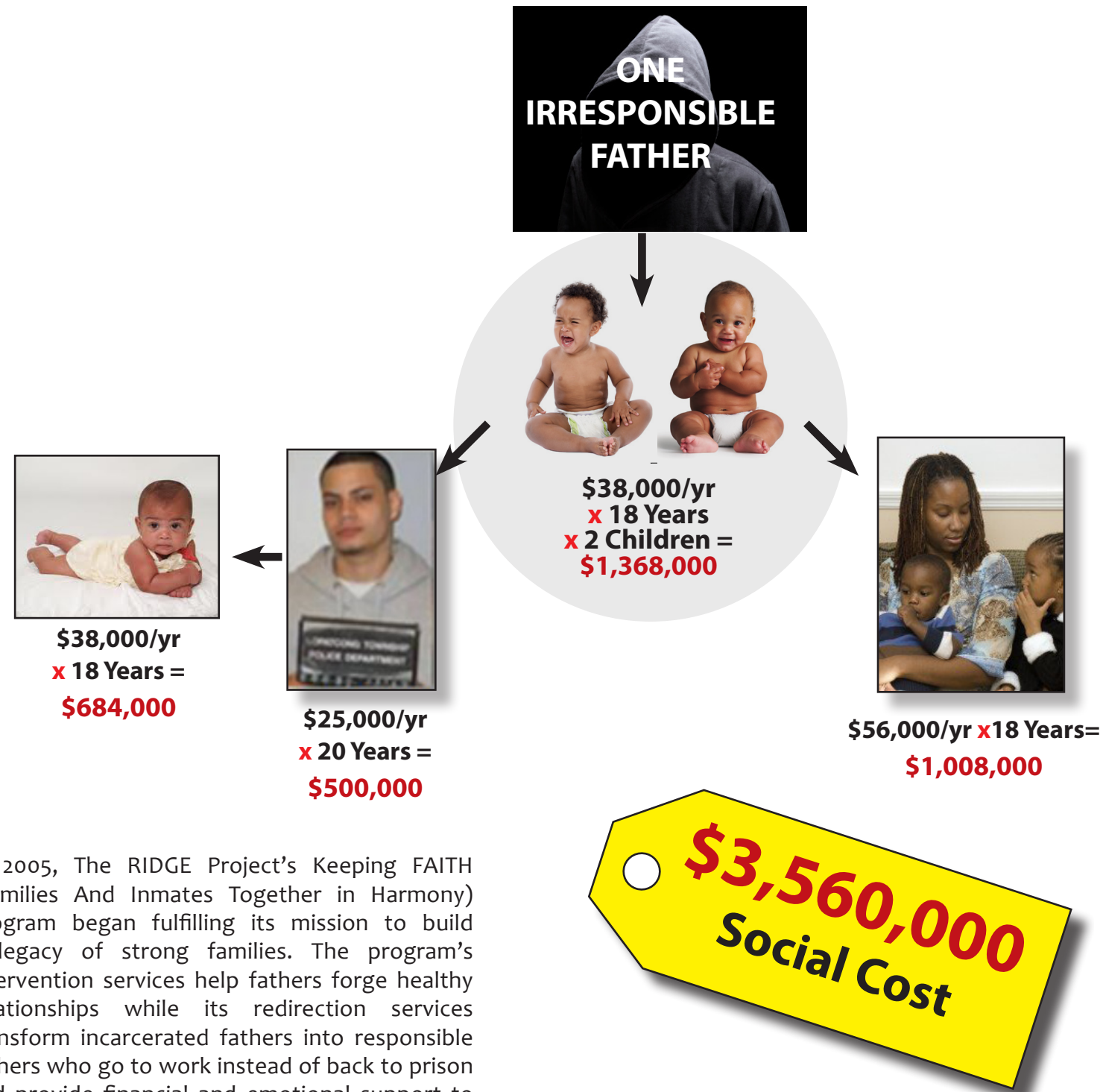
The RIDGE Project: Intervention and Redirection Services

According to the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction (ODRC), more than 51,000 adults are incarcerated within the state.¹ At a cost of about \$25,000 per year, per inmate, Ohio spends upward of \$1.2 billion annually for their care. Nearly 95% of the inmates are male. In a 2004 ODRC survey sampling of one facility, 51.6% of the incarcerated males had at least one child less than 18 years of age; 26.3% of all minor children were under 5 years of age.² Prior to their father's admission to prison, 46.7% of the children lived in the same household as their father. Many of these children count among the 641,000 under age 18 living in poverty.³ Ohio's annual expenditure on children growing up in poverty in 2006 was \$19.2 billion.⁴

Pursuant to the 2010 "Smart on Crime" report⁵, more nonviolent offenders are being incarcerated in Ohio for short periods of time (often less than a year). Few men upon release embrace the responsibilities of fatherhood. Even fewer find and keep jobs. As a result, more children face growing up fatherless and in protracted, if not generational poverty.

Based upon findings in "The One Hundred Billion Dollar Man Report," published by the National Fatherhood Initiative⁶, this graph provides a glimpse into the public cost of an irresponsible father's human legacy. His two children each grow up in poverty at a cost of \$38,000 per year for 18 years. As adults, one becomes an unwed father of a son incarcerated for 20 years at \$25,000 per year (Ohio's rate), and the other becomes a single mother with two children in poverty. The report's aggregate data reveals that, for just two generations of the irresponsible father's legacy, social costs exceeds \$3.5 million. This amount does not include other related costs, such as adjudication, victims' compensation, insurance impacts, and the greater likelihood that the father's grandchildren also will be in poverty and/or incarcerated.

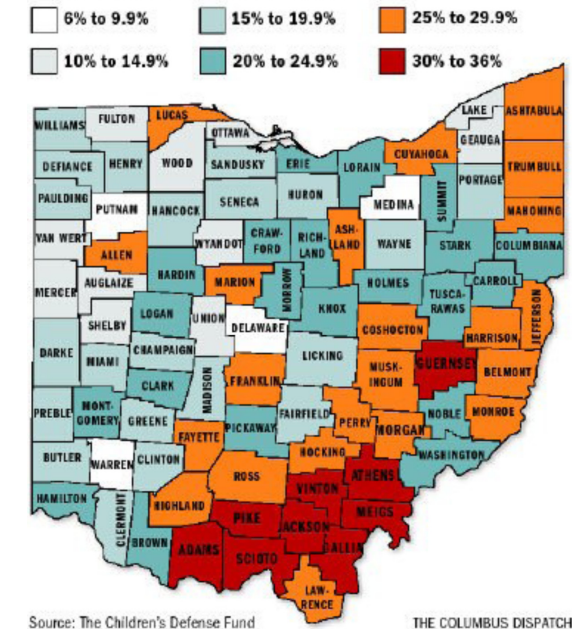
SAMPLE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF FATHER ABSENCE OVER TWO GENERATIONS



In 2005, The RIDGE Project's Keeping FAITH (Families And Inmates Together in Harmony) program began fulfilling its mission to build a legacy of strong families. The program's intervention services help fathers forge healthy relationships while its redirection services transform incarcerated fathers into responsible fathers who go to work instead of back to prison and provide financial and emotional support to their children and their children's mother(s).

Children living in poverty

The Children's Defense Fund-Ohio says the number of Ohio counties with at least 25 percent of children living in poverty doubled from 15 to 31 between 2008 and 2009.



Source: The Children's Defense Fund THE COLUMBUS DISPATCH

2013 POVERTY GUIDELINES FOR THE 48 CONTIGUOUS STATES AND THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Persons in Family/ Household	Poverty Guideline
1	\$11,490
2	\$15,510
3	\$19,530
4	\$23,550
5	\$27,570
6	\$31,590
7	\$35,610
8	\$39,630

Families/ household with more than 8 persons, add \$4020 for each additional person.

Source: US Department of Health & Human Services

¹ Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction, 2011 Annual Report: <http://www.drc.ohio.gov/web/Reports/reports.htm>

² ODRC 2004 Report: Incarcerated Fathers: A Statistical Profile: <http://www.drc.ohio.gov/web/reports/IncarceratedFathers.pdf>

³ Ohio Association of Community Action Agencies, State of Poverty (2012), p.38, at http://issuu.com/oacaa/docs/state_of_poverty_2012_final?e=6471529/1368308

⁴ Human Services Policy Center, University of Washington, "The Cost of Child Poverty by State": http://www.2020wi.org/pdf/poverty_statecosts.pdf

⁵ "Smart on Crime" Buckeye Institute for Public Policy Solutions 2010: [http://buckeyeinstitute.org/uploads/files/buckeye-smart-on-crime\(1\).pdf](http://buckeyeinstitute.org/uploads/files/buckeye-smart-on-crime(1).pdf)

⁶ "The One Hundred Billion Dollar Man Report," National Fatherhood Initiative (2008): <http://www.fatherhood.org/Document.Doc?id=136>

Intervention



Ron Tijerina with new TYRO Dads members at Ohio's Mansfield Correctional Institute

According to the report, “Taxpayer Cost of Divorce and Unwed Childbirth¹,” divorce costs taxpayers considerably. The State of Ohio rates fourth in the nation for divorce, incurring \$2.7 billion per year in related social costs. In 2006, over 1.3 million Ohio families and 515,000 Ohio children were living in poverty; 77% of the families and 72.5% of the children were in unmarried households. The report goes on to state that marriage could reduce family and child poverty by as much as 60%, saving Ohio taxpayers more than a billion dollars per year.

As for the economic impacts of divorce specific to business, the 2006 Marriage CoMission Report, “Marriage & Family Wellness: Corporate America’s Business?”² states that the cost of time off and reduced productivity on the job due to divorce amounts to as much as \$3,770 per frontline hourly worker, to \$8,645 per mid-level employee. Overall, each divorce costs taxpayers as much as \$30,000. Social costs further escalate, given as many as one-third of divorced women end up in poverty.

Keeping FAITH’s intervention services include marriage and family-strengthening components that improve how spouses relate to each other and their children throughout the father’s incarceration and upon his release. As a result, these families are more likely to stay married, cultivate healthy relationships, and co-parent effectively, even while the father is incarcerated.

The Couples Communication training series is a key element of the program’s effective intervention. Beyond conventional therapeutic instruction, the series facilitates learning through a creative, interactive approach. Parents enjoy stepping through the art of effective communication, using a specially designed floor mat that guides how they discuss challenges. Couples randomly surveyed at one prison reported they argue less and understand each other better. Some further reported that the skills they’ve learned have improved how they communicate with their children.

The effectiveness of Couples Communication has prompted requests for the series from corrections officers interested in strengthening relationship with their spouses. Training is now additionally provided outside of prisons for Ohio families at risk.

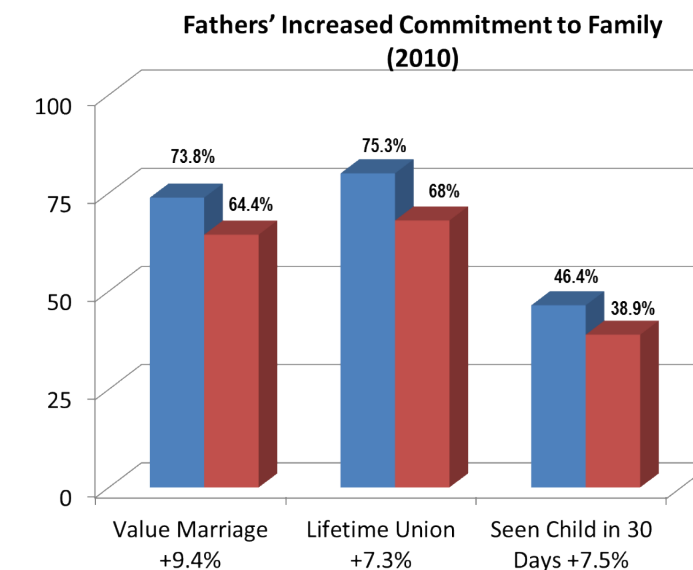
Keeping FAITH’s intervention for the benefit of children adversely affected by incarceration further includes events like Family Days that facilitate father-child bonding and help families overcome the dividing walls of prison.

To date, more than 6,500 incarcerated fathers have participated in the Keeping FAITH program, with over 4,000 participating in the Couples Communication series.

A survey conducted by The RIDGE Project in 2010 among parents receiving Keeping FAITH intervention services unveils the following findings on participating fathers’ increased commitment to family.

Redirection

According to the 2012 report, “The High Budgetary Cost of Incarceration,” produced by the Center for Economic and Policy Research¹, a reduction by one-half in the incarceration rate of non-violent offenders would lower correctional expenditures by \$16.9 billion per year. The large majority of these savings would accrue to financially-squeezed state and local governments, amounting to about one-fourth of their annual corrections budgets. ODRC states in its FY2011 annual report that Ohio’s corrections budget expenditures that year were just over \$1.6 billion.² A savings of one-fourth would amount to nearly \$421 million per year.



Keeping FAITH’s redirection services facilitate sound character building through its trademarked TYRO Dads program. Translated from the Latin word tiro, a TYRO is a young soldier, or someone learning something new. Fathers participating in the TYRO Dads program take on a new identity as they are molded into men of honor, integrity and promise, who accept their responsibility to their children and family.

TYRO Dads classes are facilitated by men who themselves live as responsible fathers, and who serve as role models for program participants. Many of the TYRO Dads class facilitators, like The RIDGE co-founder Ron Tijerina, were once incarcerated. By sharing their own stories of success, these facilitators inspire hope and motivation for a responsible lifestyle. Facilitators also serve as case managers and mentors, assisting TYROs with overcoming the barriers to successful reintegration.

A unique aspect of The RIDGE Project’s program is its exclusive, peer-led TYRO Dads Accountability Fraternities for incarcerated fathers. Unequaled behind bars except in the counterproductive form of gangs, the fraternities build on prison chaplain services to give TYROs a means of holding each other accountable and a sense of higher belonging.

¹“The Taxpayer Costs of Divorce and Unwed Childbearing: A Report to the Nation,” Benjamin Scafidi, Georgia Family Council and the Institute for American Values, 2008: <http://www.americanvalues.org/pdfs/COFF.pdf>

² “Marriage & Family Wellness: Corporate America’s Business? A Marriage CoMission Research Report,” in partnership with Life Innovations, Inc., 2006: <http://www.healthymarriageinfo.org/resource-detail/index.aspx?rid=2687>

¹ “The High Budgetary Cost of Incarceration”, Center for Economic and Policy Research 2012: <http://www.cepr.net/documents/publications/incarceration-2010-06.pdf>

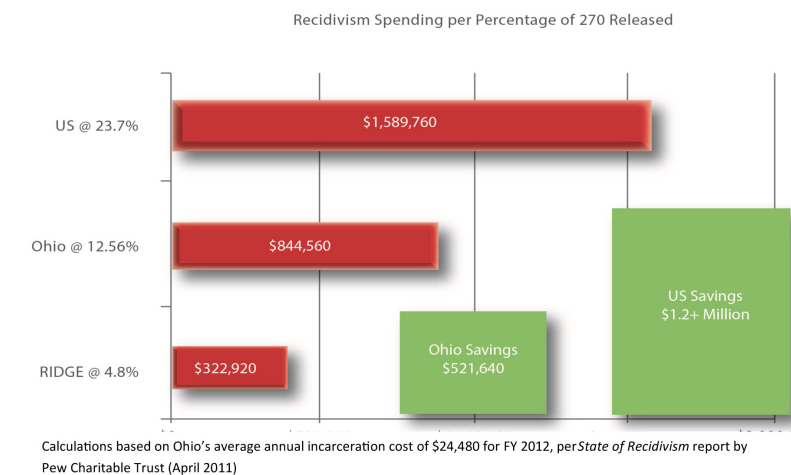
² Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction 2011 Annual Report: <http://www.drc.ohio.gov/web/Reports/reports.htm>



To date, more than 3,500 incarcerated fathers have participated in TYRO Dads; more than 1,650 have completed the program and are now TYROs. Additionally, 242 ex-offenders/releasees participated in TYRO Dads prior to June 2013; 163 have completed the program and are now TYROs.

The higher personal standards and moral character of TYROs translate into significantly improved pre- and post-release conduct. Anecdotal evidence from personnel employed by prisons providing the TYRO Dads program indicates that TYROs commit far fewer infractions against correction officers throughout the remainder of their incarceration period. A recent online survey of prison personnel familiar with TYRO Dads affirms that incarcerated fathers who complete the program exhibit more respect and self-discipline, less aggression, and have fewer conduct violations compared to their behavior prior to TYRO Dads. For each infraction no longer committed by a TYRO, ODRC saves \$970, the estimated average cost per infraction in 1996 dollars¹ (or \$1,444, today).

TYROs also may be far less likely, upon release, to reoffend and return to prison than their formerly incarcerated peers. A study on recidivism reveals that, nationally, 43.3% of those released in 2004 returned to prison within three years.² During that same period, 39.6% returned to prison in Ohio. According to The RIDGE Project's first and latest study of TYROs shows that, of those released in 2008, 12.5% were returned to prison in 2011. Though the periods of evaluation differ and thus disallow like comparison, it is expected that subsequent studies of national and state recidivism rates will not reveal a reduction significant enough to rival that of The RIDGE Project's results for TYROs.



This chart reflects US and Ohio costs and savings, based upon reported rates of recidivism among releasees from general prison populations, and releasees who are TYROs.

Per Offense Cost Analysis

Offense	Expense	Savings
Burglary (Household)	\$6,462	\$161,550
Robbery	\$42,310	\$1,565,470
Assault	\$107,020	\$2,889,540

Source: NIH, *Per-Offense Cost for Different Crimes in 2008 Dollars*

This chart unveils the savings likely for Ohio residents, when considering the repeat offenses that were not committed by formerly incarcerated fathers who participated in The RIDGE Project's Keeping FAITH intervention and TYRO redirection services.



UNREPEATED OFFENSE = UNREPEATED EXPENSE

***Given RIDGE-trained and released fathers have not repeated the 25 burglaries, 37 robberies, and 27 assaults previously committed among them.**

¹"When Inmates Misbehave: The Cost of Discipline," 1996, by D. Lovell & R. Jamelka.

²"State of Recidivism: The Revolving Door of America's Prisons, by Pew Center on the States, The Pew Charitable Trusts, 2011


It's not easy for the formerly incarcerated to find employment. Along with the stigma associated with ex-offenders, there is often a hopelessness among them that adversely affects their desire and ability to find and keep jobs. Many formerly incarcerated fathers have children who need their financial and emotional support. In the first self-report survey conducted by ODRC among incarcerated fathers in 2004, 51.6% reported having a child under the age of 18; 26.3% of the children were under the age of 5. Prior to admission to prison, 46.7% of children had lived in the same household as their father.¹

Data on the consequences of father absence, as reported by the National Fatherhood Initiative², state that children in father-absent homes are almost four times more likely to be poor. In 2011, 12% of children in married-couple families were living in poverty, compared to 44% of children in mother-only homes.³ While it is not known how many children and families in Ohio fell into poverty upon the father's incarceration, poverty becomes ever more likely given a protracted absence of employment upon his return home.

Incarcerated fathers who complete The RIDGE Project's Keeping FAITH program and become a TYRO also participate in the organization's workforce ethics training, followed by job placement or new entrepreneurial assistance services. Unprecedented among these services is the CDL (Commercial Driver's License) program provided behind prison walls for incarcerated TYROs who'd like to become truck drivers upon their release. PI&I Motor Express (PI&I) provides the tractor trailer truck used for instruction on prison grounds. The company's owner is so impressed by TYROs that he has

promised to provide CDL training to 120 TYROs per year, and employ them upon their release from prison.

P&I hired the first TYRO graduate of the CDL program, Lequan Lofton, who had just completed his second substantial prison term. Lequan worked for PI&I for over a year and received a pay raise. His tractor trailer bore the

Sample Economic Impact ⁴ :	
Lequan Lofton, Former drug dealer, now a working father providing for his family	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$56,000 annual salary \$2,301 estimated state taxes at 4.109% \$39,698 estimated disposable income after federal and state taxes \$2,183 state sales tax potential @5.5% \$25,000 annual incarceration cost avoided \$28,121 cost per drug offense avoided

message, "Powered by TYRO." Lequan's current truck-driving job pays \$27.15 per hour and provides health benefits.

According to a preliminary analysis of employment outcomes, at least 115 TYROs have obtained employment and become responsible, tax-paying citizens. Approximately 70% of the fathers were unemployed when they applied for the program. They are now employed as truckers, welders, cooks, mill operators, and in a variety of factory jobs. Full-time earnings range from \$8.50 per hour to \$23 per hour. Based on the minimum pay of \$8.50 per hour, should the 115 working fathers keep their jobs, they will generate about \$2 million in taxable wages each year. In such case, The RIDGE Project's annual average investment of \$1,000 per father will multiply itself more than 17.5 times each year a TYRO works. Additional economic gains and savings include those cited in the Lequan example above.

Fiscally Rewarding

The RIDGE Project's Keeping FAITH program requires \$1,000 per father for a year of service that makes prisons and communities safer, children and families stronger, and Ohio's economy

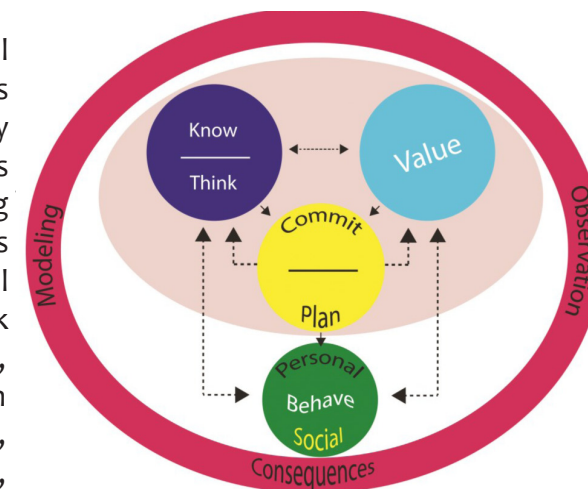


healthier in both the short and long term. As previously mentioned, this amount could multiply itself more than 17.5 times each year that each formerly incarcerated father works full-time at the minimum rate of \$8.50/hr. This projected return would be further increased by supporting factors that, in time, could include: the economic impacts of those who are earning or will earn more, those who lift their families from poverty or prevent an impending decline into poverty, savings on crimes that are not repeated, plus savings on avoided re-incarceration, reduced victims' compensation, reductions in personal/business insurance claims, etc.

When considering also the value of positive impacts on child and youth development that results when fathers are present and contributing, the cumulative socio-economic gains and savings realized through The RIDGE Project are incalculable.

The organization's low cost/high yield capability is made possible not only via sound practices and active partnerships, but also by a service incarcerated fathers value that is provided completely free of charge.

A 2004 study by Valdosta University (GA)¹ on moral and character development shows that behavior is influenced by what people know and think, as well as by what they value. While all programs that educate fathers can improve their knowledge and thinking, Keeping FAITH goes the extra mile, inspiring incarcerated fathers to develop a value system driven by higher personal standards. The fathers first see this value system at work in facilitators and case managers who are fathers and, in many cases, former offenders. These "peers" often serve beyond the call of duty and many times after hours, meeting the needs of not only the incarcerated fathers, but also the incarcerated fathers' children and families. No funding underwrites these kindnesses. Seeing such selfless behaviors and appreciating the benefits they produce, the incarcerated fathers come to value and model them, as responsible fathers and contributing citizens in their own right.



¹ Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction (ODRC), 2004 Report: Incarcerated Fathers: A Statistical Profile <http://www.drc.ohio.gov/web/reports/IncarceratedFathers.pdf>

² National Fatherhood Initiative, Consequences of Father Absence: <http://www.fatherhood.org/media/consequences-of-father-absence-statistics>

³ U.S. Census Bureau. America's Families and Living Arrangements: 2011. Table C8. Poverty Status, Food Stamp Receipt, and Public Assistance for Children Under 18 Years/1 by Selected Characteristics. Washington D.C.: <http://www.census.gov/population/www/socdemo/hh-fam/cps2011.html>

⁴ Calculations based on 2013 federal and state (Ohio) tax rates, ODRC cost of incarceration (2010), and The Cost of Crime to Society: New Crime-Specific Estimates for Policy & Program Evaluation (2010): <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2835847/>

¹ "Moral and Character Development" Educational Psychology Interactive. Valdosta, GA: Valdosta State University: <http://www.edpsycinteractive.org/morchr/morchr.html>

Prevention

The key to significantly reducing taxpayer spending for public safety and child and family well-being is preventing the anti-social behaviors that lead to incarceration. Prevention requires educating at-risk youth in ways that encourage them to make pro-social choices.

According to research reported by the Children’s Defense Fund, there are nearly 2.7 million children under the age of 18 in Ohio.¹ More than 820,000 are teens.² Teens tend to take risks. Research has shown that one risky behavior typically leads to another. For instance, a teen who drinks and/or uses drugs is likely also to engage in unwed sexual activity, crime, violence, and other anti-social behaviors that more recently have included acts of terrorism. These youth are also more likely to drop out of high school and to bear and raise children in poverty.

The National Campaign for the Prevention of Teen Pregnancy³ states that 25,610 Ohio girls between the ages of 15-19 became pregnant in 2008. Teen childbearing that year cost Ohio taxpayers at least \$392 million. Additionally, the 2006 Council on Crime and Justice report, “Children of Incarcerated Parents,” states that children of incarcerated parents are six times more likely than their peers to become criminally involved.⁴ The cost to Ohio to incarcerate juvenile offenders is \$86,000 per year⁵, according to a report from the Ohio Ex-Offender Reentry Coalition. The cumulative social, economic and health consequences of poor teen choices are beyond precise measure. They exact a taxpayer toll that carries forward for years and often over generations.

The RIDGE Project’s nationally recognized Rites of Passage (ROP) program empowers at-risk youth to practice abstinence, to stay in school and out of jail, and to identify and reach their highest potential. ROP youth develop critical life and relationship skills, as they embrace pro-social behaviors that advance the success sequence

(education, employment, marriage, and children). The program serves teens at risk primarily in Northwest Ohio, and can include the teen children of fathers who have participated in the Keeping FAITH program. Rather than have only adults provide instruction, ROP advances peer-to-peer learning.

During the 2011-12 school year, the ROP program and other partnering abstinence education programs directly impacted more than 76,000 Ohio youth in 200 public school districts and two youth detention facilities. The effort was conducted in partnership with Ohio Adolescent Health Centers and with funding from the Ohio Department of Health.

A 2010 study of the ROP program⁶ analyzed complete-matched pre-, post- and follow-up data for 791 participants in grades 7 through 12. Of post-test respondents who expressed intention to practice abstinence until marriage, 93% indicated on the follow-up survey that they had not been sexually active in the past six months. This includes 34% who initially had reported being sexually active.

The RIDGE Project’s youth program includes an innovative film camp that enables youth to develop, star in and produce 30-second public service announcements (PSAs). The PSAs counter the negative influences of today’s pop culture with messages that inspire and empower their peers to embrace their hopes and dreams. The film camp is the vision of the founders’ sons, Blake and Brandon Tijerina. At the end of the week-long camp, there is a film festival during which a panel of judges chooses the winning PSA, which is subsequently distributed and aired on TV stations throughout the state.

According to an article published by the Heritage Foundation¹, classes that teach abstinence are effective at delaying and deterring sex before marriage. Reduced sexual activity positively impacts the lives of those teens, their families, and the general public in a whole host of quantifiable ways. The reduction in potential costs for STDs, reduced likelihood of attempted suicide and intimate partner violence, the drop in underage drinking activity, the increased likelihood of high school diploma attainment, and the diminished prospects of an unwanted pregnancy produce substantial benefits to all parties involved. Furthermore, by reducing the number of teen pregnancies, the public costs associated with supporting teen mothers are also substantially reduced on both a federal and state level.

The following chart projects the economic savings attainable, assuming the avoidance of anti-social behaviors by a modest 15% of the 76,000 Ohio youths served by The RIDGE Project’s ROP Youth Development program and other abstinence education programs that comprise the Ohio Adolescent Health Centers collaborative. Using conservative estimates, more than \$55.5 million in projected savings accrued last year, pursuant to a budget of \$3.25 million, producing a greater than 1600% return.

Reducing Risky Behavior Among Teenagers: Projected Costs Avoided Through Programs Participation²

Assumptions About Program Effectiveness	
Net % gain in youths acquiring and demonstrating healthy relationship skills	15%
Number of youths served statewide	76,000
Net absolute gain in youth with applied Healthy Relationship skills	11,400

Conclusions About Program Effectiveness	Annual Savings	Lifetime Savings
Savings from STD Treatments/Medications Avoided	\$1,517,867	\$4,637,012
Savings from Violence Avoided (Attempted Suicide and Intimate Partner Violence)	\$6,827,534	\$32,548,020
Savings from the Costs of Underage Drinking (Auto accidents, violent crime, treatment, etc.)	\$10,031,198	\$10,031,198
Savings from Teen Pregnancies Avoided (based on costs of abortion, miscarriage, or delivery)	\$9,395,640	\$9,395,640
Tax Revenue Gains from Teens Achieving High School Diploma	\$5,501,051	\$258,549,386
Savings from Avoidance of Teen Pregnancies (Public Costs - Federal and State - Associated with Supporting Teen Mothers)		
Justice System (Corrections, Police, and Courts)	\$1,231,511	\$1,231,511
Income Support (TANF, EITC, SSI)	\$4,227,516	\$5,088,647
Nutrition (Food Stamps, School Meals, WIC)	\$4,959,668	\$70,157,276
Health (Medicaid, SCHIP)	\$5,284,169	\$5,284,169
Social Services (Head Start and Child Welfare Services)	\$4,535,521	\$67,993,448
Housing (Public Housing and Energy Assistance)	\$1,953,239	\$35,158,305
SUBTOTAL	\$22,191,625	\$184,913,356
TOTAL SAVINGS FROM ALL ABOVE EFFECTS	\$55,464,914	\$500,074,612
Total Program Investment	\$3,256,384	
Projected Return on investment	\$52,208,530	
Annual ROI	1603%	

¹ Children’s Defense Fund, <http://www.childrensdefense.org/child-research-data-publications/data/soac-2012-handbook.pdf>

^{2,3} The National Campaign for the Prevention of Teen Pregnancy (Ohio): <http://www.thenationalcampaign.org/state-data/state-profile.aspx?state=ohio>

⁴ “Children of Incarcerated Parents,” Council on Crime and Justice (2006): <http://www.crimeandjustice.org/researchReports/CCJ%20CIP%20FINAL%20REPORT%20updated%201.30.08.pdf>

⁵ Ohio Ex-Offender Reentry Coalition: Five-Year Strategic Plan: [http://www.reentrycoalition.ohio.gov/docs/Ohio%20Ex-Offender%20Reentry%20Coalition%205%20year%20Strategic%20Plan\(4%2015%2009\).pdf](http://www.reentrycoalition.ohio.gov/docs/Ohio%20Ex-Offender%20Reentry%20Coalition%205%20year%20Strategic%20Plan(4%2015%2009).pdf)

⁶ Seufert, R.L., & Campbell, D.G. (2010). The RIDGE Project: Final Report Evaluation, 2009-2010, Community-Based Abstinence Education Grant. Published by the Applied Research Center, Miami University (Ohio).

¹ “Evidence on the Effectiveness of Abstinence Education: An Update,” The Heritage Foundation: <http://www.heritage.org/research/reports/2010/02/evidence-on-the-effectiveness-of-abstinence-education-an-update>

² Projections based on PROI analysis of federal and state (Ohio) cost data pursuant to program outcomes provided by The RIDGE Project for the 2011-12 school year.

Value Beyond Programs

Research is beginning to show that the greatest value of human services stems not from the soundness of an organization's programs, but from the effectiveness of its people. In the Spring 2014 Stanford Social Innovation Review (SSIR) article entitled Programs Aren't Everything, the authors unveil four areas of "actual activity" critical to participant impact and organization value. Below is a description of each actual activity, plus corresponding examples from The RIDGE Project. Given The RIDGE Project is a faith-based organization, an applicable fifth activity not reported in the article's findings is also cited below and supported by examples.

Actual Activity	RIDGE Examples
Relational work: how staff connect with people in need. Staff function much like sales representatives whose ability to relate to the customer base drives whether an organization rises or falls.	Outreach and program staff who've kept their families intact through incarceration; family vs. father-only support services to meet survival needs. This work is the precursor to return on investment.
Adjustment work: how staff customize program responses to meet each participant's goals, needs, and immediate circumstances. Similar to clinical or counseling psychologists, staff must analyze participants' needs and customize an approach to wellness that the participant will embrace.	A "prescription of services" for each participant; father-to-father peer support via TYRO Dads; in-prison training for guaranteed jobs upon release. These efforts help accommodate trauma-impaired participants, most of whom will require them several times before success is realized.
Codetermination work: how staff motivate participants to own their change process. Along with the technical skills for case management (i.e., guiding and monitoring performance), staff must have the motivating skill of a self-enrichment educator.	Facilitators and case managers use Facebook, text messaging, calls and visits (often after hours) to encourage and support participants. This highly involved stage of servicing requires staff to know what to say and when to say it in order to keep participants on track to transformation.
Linking work: how staff connect participants with other resources within their agency and community. Like career education teachers, staff find and leverage all available assets to help ensure participants become whole, healthy and sufficient for the care of self and family.	Partnerships with employers, colleges, mental health services, and medical and dental clinics. When the assets of external sources are leveraged along with those inherent in internal services, life transformations of timeless socio-economic benefit occur with optimal cost-efficiency.
Spiritual work: how staff practice the biblical principle of love to help heal participants so they never have the same problems again. Like pastors, staff motivated by love and compassion rather than pay routinely serve persons in need above and beyond the call of duty.	From receptionist to board leaders, The RIDGE Project treats participants like family and friends vs. strangers and criminals. Above all, loving care moves participants beyond what otherwise might be a temporary change in behavior, to a permanent change of heart and conduct.

The following chart compares the cost impacts of various private-sector jobs as they relate in time and dollar value to the actual activity and average salary for a typical program staffer at The RIDGE Project. The correlating private-sector jobs and their mean salaries in Ohio are drawn from those reported by the Bureau of Labor Standards (BSL) for 2013. It is common in nonprofit organizations to have a single staff person performing these multiple duties. Thus, the time and salary percentage for each private-sector job was weighted proportionately and then compared to the time and salary percentage estimated for the correlating actual activity by The RIDGE Project. The private-sector salary percentages were totaled to produce a comparative salary revealing what it might cost today to have a private-sector employee perform the scope of actual activity vs. what The RIDGE Project currently pays for the work.

Actual Activity	Bureau of Labor Standards Employment Title Equivalent	2013 Annual Mean Wages (Ohio)	2013 Annual Mean Wage (RIDGE Project)	2013 Annual Mean Wage for The RIDGE Project staff performing all work is \$45,718, a savings of about 16.3% as compared to correlating mean salary of \$54,604 for Ohio's private sector.
Relational work	Sales Representative	\$56,090/\$25,241 (45%)	\$45,718/\$20,573 (45%)	
Adjustment work	Clinical/Counseling Psychologist	\$71,950/\$14,390 (20%)	\$45,718/\$9,144 (20%)	
Co-determination work	Self-Enrichment Educator	\$40,890/\$10,223 (25%)	\$45,718/\$11,430 (25%)	
Linking work	Career Education Teacher	\$55,120/\$2,756 (5%)	\$45,718/\$2,286 (5%)	
Spiritual work	Pastor	\$39,890/\$1,994 (5%)	\$45,718/\$2,286 (5%)	

Recommendations

The RIDGE Project is distinguished by its efforts to create and demonstrate socio-economic impacts important to the bottom lines of government, taxpayers, and businesses. To date, it is the leading performer among nonprofits trained via federal funds to use the Program Return On Investment™ (PROI) valuation method outlined in the Introduction & Methodology section of this report. The organization's performance, together with its considerable access to disadvantaged and at-risk populations through prisons, schools, youth detention centers and churches, exceptionally position it to leverage assets and create even greater economic impacts. Toward this end, Saint Wall Street recommends that The RIDGE Project procure research and development funding and/or further agency and community partnerships in Ohio to:

- Measure longitudinally, at least one year post-release for marriage preservation/divorce prevention and three years for recidivism reduction among formerly incarcerated TYROs. Additionally, seek to determine and remedy the cause of recidivism among the 4.8% of TYROs who return to prison.
- Measure longitudinally employment outcomes for those who complete TYRO Dads, as well as those who complete both TYRO Dads and workforce ethics training.
- Continue developing efforts that facilitate post-release employment and jobs creation, adding where necessary help for fathers to finish high school and/or attend college or vocational schools offering skills for jobs trending in the state.
- Consider developing pre-release employment opportunities that can allow fathers to work while behind bars and have earnings sent to their families for child support.
- Offer fathers of young children access to a literacy program wherein they read to help the children master reading by completion of third grade, so as to avoid the downward spiral to poor academic achievement and potential incarceration.
- Incorporate screening to identify fathers whose mental/emotional challenges can compromise the safety of peer program participants and/or their own children and families. Consider adapting the same screening to identify youth prone to violence and help ROP youth identify peers who exhibit a propensity for terrorist acts.

For information concerning cost-benefits, projected returns on investment, and/or recommendations provided herein by Saint Wall Street LLC, please contact Bernice Smoot at bsmoot@saintwallstreet.com.

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