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## SESAME STREET VISITS RIKERS

The Today Show broadcasted a [special Father's Day segment from Rikers Island](#) featuring two of Sesame Street's Muppets, Gordon, and the Cookie Monster, who together visited EMTC that Saturday during family visiting hours to mark the release of Sesame Street's new educational material aimed at helping children of incarcerated parents cope with the separation and the stigma they often experience. The Department of Correction (DOC) first began working with Sesame Street on this project in April 2012, sharing our professional insights and providing access to incarcerated parents who participated in focus groups.

"We know that children of incarcerated parents need special support, and incarcerated parents who stay connected to their families do better after their release," said Winette Saunders, Assistant Commissioner of Program Development, who facilitated Sesame Street's research with the Department was recently rewarded with an invitation to a White House event celebrating the material's release. "It is an honor to have worked with Sesame Street on this important initiative, which is good news for kids and communities," she said.

The new material – two booklets and a DVD - will be distributed to incarcerated parents, their children and caregivers in the community across the nation.

DOC opens its visit facilities in every jail five days a week, during daytime and evening hours. Nearly 1,500 come to visit someone in our custody each day, and more than half of these visits include children. In keeping with special opportunities such as Sesame Street and the Daddy and Me Storybook Project, which we presented with the New York Public Library and was [featured the day after Father's Day on WNYC's Brian Lehrer Show](#), DOC is steadfast in its commitment to families and includes child-friendly visit areas, special visits for children in foster care, and tele-visiting.

You can visit us at [NYC DOC Current Events](#), to learn more about some of the other programs that we provide inmates in our custody.



Cookie Monster and the Partnerships and Program Development team - Veronica Scudder, Sharif Nelson, Assistant Commissioner Winette Saunders, Linda Eaddy, and Ebony Lloyd.  
Below: Inmates and families enjoying the Sesame Street event.

