

DSGN 401-3 Human-Centered Service Design
MS, Engineering Design Innovation Program
Winter 2023
Amy O'Keefe + Liz Gerber

Child-friendly Early Learning Spaces in Correctional Facilities

"Services Help People Do Things" - Lou Downe, former Design Dir of the UK Government

Designing successful services requires a clear understanding of individual stakeholders, ecosystems, and the ability to create effective interventions that help participants do things they need to do in ways that are not only desirable, feasible, and viable but also inclusive, just, and equitable for stakeholders.

In this studio course, students work to understand what makes an existing service successful, what success looks like for stakeholders, and how to design additional interventions that authentically build on the existing service's success.

Project Overview //



Scaling Child-friendly Early Learning Spaces in Correctional Facilities

The project the Service Design studio will be working on is an extension of the child-friendly early learning space recently opened in the waiting room of Cook County Department of Corrections Div-10 in partnership with [Laundry Cares Foundation](#) and [Chicago Beyond](#), designed to create a safe waiting space for children and families visiting incarcerated loved ones and [support families with a trauma-informed and healing centered approach](#).

This prototype was based on Laundry Cares Foundation's "Family, Read, Play & Learn Spaces" which are in more than 200 laundromats across the country. The spaces create safe, fun, and engaging places for children and families in laundromats. Spaces are equipped with literacy-rich materials to support children's early brain and language development. "Family Read, Play, Learn" kits come in four sizes and can be easily customized to fit any laundromat space and budget. Kits can be shipped within 7-10 business days at a cost of \$295.

In addition to teaching service design, the studio course embraces principles of equity-centered collaborative design with engagement from stakeholders representing: people and families impacted by incarceration; host organizations creating child-friendly early learning spaces in correctional facilities; librarians and educators creating unique spaces for learning + support; and partners providing funds, services, and goods.

Students will engage with project leaders and current and potential stakeholders to understand and document the Child-friendly Early Learning Space model and suggest success measures for specific stakeholder groups with the long-term goal of opening similar spaces in correctional facilities across the country in partnership with national non-profits and industry partners.

Teams and Stakeholders Engagement

While students in the studio will become familiar with stakeholders across the interconnected ecosystem through discussion, studio share-outs, and collaborative design sessions, each team will engage with, understand, advocate for, and design with a specific set of stakeholders:

- > People impacted by incarceration
- > Host organizations interested in creating these spaces in correctional facilities
- > Librarians and educators creating unique spaces for learning + support
- > Contributors providing funds, services, and goods such as books, furniture, murals

Stakeholder partners will engage in a variety of ways ranging from: 30-min discussion and collaboration sessions, panels, participatory design sessions, and other modes of engagement. Participation may take place in-person or via Zoom. Individual participants will be equitably compensated for their time and travel. Details on compensation and travel will be shared through Canvas.

Project Deliverables

Deliverables will include documentation reflective of the existing service (mid-point), and concepts for additional interventions that authentically build on the existing service (final):

- >> mapping + understanding of key stakeholders' roles, contributions, needs, benefits, risks
- >> stakeholder journey maps (existing and future)
- >> service blueprints (existing and future)
- >> service playbooks (instructions/guides for standing up the service in additional locations).

Project Sponsor

We are grateful to Liz McChesney for bringing this project to the studio in collaboration with partners from the Laundry Cares Foundation, Chicago Beyond, and the Cook County Department of Corrections.

Key Dates

>> Thursday January 19th 9am central/10am eastern	Project Kick-off	via Zoom
>> Thursday February 16th 9:30-11am central	Mid-Point Share-out	In-Person or via Zoom
>> Thursday March 9th 9:30-11am central	Final Hand-off	In-Person or via Zoom

Resources for Secondary Research

We encourage you to become familiar with organizations behind child-friendly early learning spaces in correctional facilities and people working to support children with incarcerated parents:

[Laundry Cares Foundation](#)

[Chicago Beyond*](#)

[Cook County Department of Corrections](#)

[Women's Justice Institute](#)

Additionally, these articles provide context on the work of Dr. Nneka Jones Tapia and Chicago Beyond to support families impacted by incarceration:

(Chicago Beyond) [Two Chicago Leaders Aim to Increase Mental Wellness for Children of Incarcerated Parents](#)

(Chicago Beyond) [Nneka Jones Tapia: Holistic Safety Strategies will Improve Jail Conditions for Everybody](#)

(Chicago Beyond) [Nneka Jones Tapia to Address Mental Wellness of Youth](#)

More broadly, these articles and resources address the problem, impacts, and some collaborative initiatives to support families:

(Equal Justice Initiative) [Half of Americans Have Family Members Who Have Been Incarcerated](#)

(Equal Justice Initiative) [Over-Incarceration of Mothers Takes Serious Toll on Children](#)

(Youth.gov) [Children of Incarcerated Parents](#)

(Illinois) [Task Force on Children of Incarcerated Parents Final Report and Recommendations](#)

December 2020

These articles offer additional perspective on trauma-informed design and trauma-informed care

(Harvard Health) [Trauma Informed Care: What it is and Why it is Important](#)

(Dietkus) The Call for Trauma-Informed Design Research and Practice - available on Canvas