

# Mothers of Power



Fighting to give parents and children in foster care more time together to help reunify separated families.

Children in foster care and their parents/caregivers suffer unnecessary trauma when they are separated and only get to visit for one hour a week under supervision.

## The Impact:

- In 2022, an average of 437 families were served by DC Child and Family Services Agency in foster care.
- In 2022, an average of 79% of children in foster care in DC were Black.
- In 2022, CFSA had a budget of over \$216 million and over 730 full-time employees (FTEs).
- Its already hard having your kids taken away. It's even harder when you only get to see them for an hour. I know the courts sometimes think this is in the best interest of the child, but in my experience it is traumatizing and has negative effects on childrens' mental health. My kids were removed from my home for 2 years and the separation is still impacting them, even though they've been back with me for 11 years and are now adults.
- Making sure parents and children can spend time together in natural settings every day will give them hope, improve mental health, and increase the chances of successful reunification.
- "Although there is no generally accepted way to structure family time to optimize chances for reunification, families that spend time together regularly have a greater likelihood of timely reunification, and frequent family connections may also decrease depression, anxiety, and externalizing problem behaviors in children. - [Casey Family Foundation](#)

52 hours per year is the default amount of time parents get to spend with their - that's not even 3 days a year!

## The Solution:

Child and Family Services Agency (CFSA) should change the default of visitation from one supervised hour per week to **daily and unsupervised** unless contrary to the best interest of the child. DC should require that visitation be in the **most natural setting possible** unless contrary to the best interest of the child.

DC should give CFSA enough funding in Fiscal Year 2024 to:

- 1) hire more family support workers to transport children and families to daily visits and
- 2) create a natural home-like environment for families to spend time together.



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