

PRISONERS' VISITS UNDER THREAT



Duggan family at Macquarie Correctional Centre, Wellington. Source: ABC

Prison authorities in NSW are trying to replace face-to-face visits with video calls. They're starting at Macquarie Correctional Centre, Wellington, with a three-month trial – and they claim prisoners themselves asked for the change, to “lift the burden on families to travel long distances to the prison”!

At least one family has spoken out against the change, with the wife of Wellington prisoner Daniel Duggan telling the ABC:

“I just find it emotionally like another slap in the face. What my husband needs are hugs from his children. Personal touch, as we all know, is indescribable. Having a hug from your child lets all of your pain go away for just that moment.”

Video Calls are Not a Substitute

We at Justice Action know that prisoners long to have physical contact with their families and friends. Human contact is vital to lessen the destructive isolation of imprisonment. Video calls should always be an option, but physical visits are essential for reducing recidivism and creating a safer community – as is recognised even by the authorities' own research. [Media release.](#)

Why Physical Visits Matter

Research shows that **regular face-to-face visits**:

- Improve prisoners' mental health and reduce symptoms of depression
- Promote better behaviour and reduce misconduct inside prison
- Support rehabilitation by maintaining social and family ties
- Help children maintain emotional stability and attachment to incarcerated parents

The prison system **must recognise** that family connections are not a luxury—they are a core part of rehabilitation and public safety outcomes.

What do you think of Corrective Services' moves to restrict or replace face-to-face visits? Let us know your experiences and opinions.

Your feedback will help us compile a comprehensive report to forward to Corrective Services and reverse this initiative. Together, we can work toward a prison system that supports families, facilitates rehabilitation, and respects human dignity.

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