

# Prison Parenting Programs: Resources for Parenting Instructors in Prisons and Jails

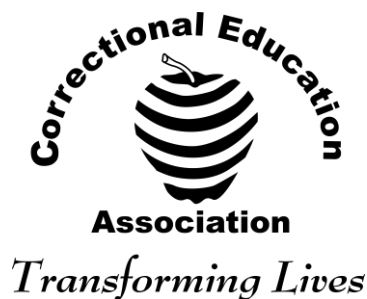


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# Prison Parenting Programs: Resources for Parenting Instructors in Prisons and Jails

*Prison Parenting Programs: Resources for Parenting Instructors in Prisons and Jails* is a publication of the Correctional Education Association-Wisconsin. This directory has been created to help correctional educators and community agencies enhance existing or create new parenting programs in correctional facilities and the community.

*Prison Parenting Programs* is intended to be a living document. It will be continually updated, posted on the [www.ceawisconsin.org](http://www.ceawisconsin.org) website, and emailed to those requesting copies. Anyone wishing to suggest additions to this directory may do so by sending them to [jerrybednarowski@new.rr.com](mailto:jerrybednarowski@new.rr.com). Corrections or updates to the listings in the directory are also welcome.

In 2004, the Correctional Education Association-Wisconsin created a Parenting Special Interest Group with the goals of helping incarcerated parents to become more caring, concerned, and informed and minimizing the intergenerational cycle of incarceration. The Parenting SIG seeks to improve cooperation and among those engaged in providing parenting programs in a variety of correctional settings and the community and to encourage the development of new programming opportunities. Since its onset the Parenting SIG has sought to create a professional network not only for the instructors of parenting classes; but also for the supervisors of children of incarcerated parent programs, coordinators of parent/child reading projects, and organizers of support groups.

## **The Parenting Special Interest Group's initiatives include:**

- Establishing a parenting network – Newsletters, handbooks and other information are distributed to a network of over 850 correctional educators, volunteers and administrators in over 30 states.
- Publishing a newsletter – A bi-monthly *Parenting Connections* newsletter has been regularly published for parenting educators working in correctional settings since November 2004. The newsletters highlight innovative parenting skills programs, parent/child reading projects, family support and mentoring programs, community resources, teaching methods, and special projects.
- Posting information on websites – Articles and newsletters are regularly posted on the [www.ceawisconsin.org](http://www.ceawisconsin.org), [www.ceanational.org](http://www.ceanational.org), and [www.fairshake.net](http://www.fairshake.net) websites.
- Presenting workshops at professional conferences – The Parenting SIG has spread the word regarding the importance of providing Parenting programming in corrections by encouraging parenting instructors to conduct dozens of workshops at national, regional, and state corrections, education and social services conferences.
- Publishing a handbook for incarcerated parents and their families – *Reaching Beyond Bars: A Handbook for Parents Incarcerated in Wisconsin and their Families* has been published by the Parenting SIG and distributed to prisons, jails and community agencies.
- Serving as an advocate for parenting programs in corrections – Information has been furnished to governmental workgroups, correctional administrations, and community organizations at the national, state and county levels.
- Serving as a resource for parenting instructors – Advice on developing Parenting programs is provided upon request to those seeking information on teaching or developing programs for incarcerated parents and their families.

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- Parenting from Prison: A Co-Parenting Guide for Divorced and Separated Parents
- Prison Fellowship Frequently Asked Questions
- Reaching Beyond Bars: A Handbook for Parents Incarcerated in Wisconsin and their Families
- A Resource Guide for Kinship Caregivers in Arkansas
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- Children with Incarcerated Mothers: Separation, Loss, and Reunification
- A Day I'll Never Forget
- Embracing Your Story
- Empowering Children of Incarcerated Parents
- First Chance: How Kids with Nothing Can Change Everything
- The Freedom of Routine
- Handbook on Children with Incarcerated Parents
- How Do I Help This Kid Adjust to What Real Life Is for Them?
- An Inmate's Daughter
- Life Inside
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- Model Practices for Parents in Prisons and Jails: Reducing Barriers to Family Connections
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# Multi-Faceted Programs

## Aid to Inmate Mothers

Aid to Inmate Mothers (AIM) supports children in Alabama who have a mother incarcerated and provides services to incarcerated women with emphasis on enhancing growth and strengthening the bonds between inmate mothers and their children. AIM's programs that address the many burdens carried by the children and families as a result of incarceration include:

- Monthly Visitation – The Monthly Visitation program gives children without means of transportation a chance to visit their mothers in prison. During the interactive visit, mothers and children spend some quality time together. Toys, board games, educational worksheets and books are provided and the families share a meal.
- Storybook Project – The Storybook Program provides comfort to children each month by offering them a video recording of their mothers reading books to them.
- Prison Classes – Professional facilitators from the community teach 8-12 week long classes that include: Parenting, Anger Management, Domestic Violence, WHI-FI (Women's Health Information for the Incarcerated), Self-Esteem, HIV Prevention and Education, and Book Club.
- WHI-FI Health Education – WHI-FI holds workshops to provide basic health information on HIV/STD Prevention, Birth Control Options, Breast Cancer, Heart Health/Blood Pressure, Diabetes, Fetal Alcohol Syndrome, Pre-Natal Class, Healthy Pregnancy, and Exercise and Nutrition
- Project Reconnect – Each week, AIM holds a Pre-Release class in the prison to provide education and information on topics relating to life skills, job preparedness, STD awareness, human sexuality and conflict resolution. After release, AIM steps in to reconnect the women to the community by helping them to secure jobs and housing and provide essential counseling. At a minimum, participants receive follow-up support for one year.
- Clothing Closet – AIM has set up a small clothes closet in their office to provide women walking out of prison with an outfit that will help them land that first job and basic clothing to wear to work.
- Family Outreach – AIM helps caregivers by offering much-needed financial relief and a strong support system. As funds allow, AIM helps caregivers pay bills, afford childcare and purchase essentials such as school supplies and, on occasion, send children to a week-long summer camp.
- Genesis Transitional Home – The Genesis House provides women who have just left prison with an independent living environment for at least 12 months. The center helps women restore dignity into their lives and learn skills that will allow them to become healthy productive members of the community by overcoming addictions, setting goals and becoming self-sufficient.

Contact: Carol Potok: [Carol@inmatemoms.org](mailto:Carol@inmatemoms.org)  
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Donna Collins: [Donna@inmatemoms.org](mailto:Donna@inmatemoms.org)  
Margarita Betancourt: [Margarita@inmatemoms.org](mailto:Margarita@inmatemoms.org)  
Website: [www.inmatemoms.org](http://www.inmatemoms.org)

## Arkansas Voices for the Children Left Behind

The grassroots Arkansas Voices effort advocates for children left behind by incarceration or loss of a parent for any reason. Arkansas Voices provides mentoring, services and supports for the children, their



caregivers, and incarcerated parents, with the goal of strengthening and empowering the family unit. Arkansas Voices helps children overcome the trauma, shame and stigma of having a parent incarcerated.

Toward these ends, Arkansas Voices provides the following services:

- Parenting classes in jail and at the Arkansas State Hospital Forensic Unit
- Development of co-parenting agreements between incarcerated parents and the caregivers of the children
- Support groups and services for caregivers
- School-based services for children whose lives have been impacted by incarceration of a parent, relative or other significant person; children with a parent returning home; and children of incarcerated parents in the foster care system
- Reunification and re-entry services for prisoners and their families
- Education about the consequences of risky behavior, including drug and alcohol use and unprotected sex
- Family literacy services, including financial literacy and health literacy
- Referrals to services and supports provided by the State and the community
- Advocacy for children in foster care who have an incarcerated parent
- Advocacy for caregivers of another family member's children and for relatives seeking to stay engaged with their relative's children in foster care (Grandparents Left Behind)
- Community Resource Development and collaborations on behalf of these children, youth and families including the Arkansas Family Re-Entry Coalition, Arkansas Bill of Rights for Children of the Incarcerated, Arkansas Restorative Justice Coalition, and the Coalition to Ban the Shackling of Incarcerated, Birthing Mothers.

Contact: Dee Ann Newell, Executive Director, [DeeAnn@arkansasvoices.org](mailto:DeeAnn@arkansasvoices.org)  
Website: [www.arkansasvoices.org](http://www.arkansasvoices.org)

### **Assisting Children of Prison Parents**

Founded by an ex-offender, Assisting Children of Prison Parents' (ACOPP) mission is to establish or re-establish relationships between children and their incarcerated parents by opening lines of communication, transporting them to visit their parents and providing creative-writing workshops.

ACOPP partners with a variety of agencies to provide quality social, psychological, developmental and educational services to children of incarcerated parents, as well as restoring communities to an environmentally safe status. All of ACOPP's seminars, workshops and youth sessions are facilitated by skilled professionals with experience and knowledge of the subject matter. Program participants are referred from educational institutions, social service agencies, courts, outreach and self-enrollment. Groups average 10-15 children, grouped according to age and needs. ACOPP works closely with referral agents in terms of assessment and evaluation of the children.

The groups of children are engaged in tutoring, home-work sessions, study sessions, arts classes, physical activities, field trips, trips to visit their parents and other programs that will afford the children opportunities to be successful while their parents are incarcerated. Consistent lines of communication between the children and their incarcerated parents are maintained through letter writing, phone calls

and transportation to the prison. ACOPP also facilitates monthly support groups for the guardians of the children to equip them with information and resources to deter recidivism after release.

Contact: Hakee Mitchell, Founder and President, [acopporg@gmail.com](mailto:acopporg@gmail.com)  
Website: [www.acopp4change.org](http://www.acopp4change.org)

### **Building Families Together**

Building Families Together is a nonprofit founded in the Northwest Suburbs of Illinois that is dedicated to providing resources to help rebuild families torn apart by a father's incarceration while inspiring the entire family unit to overcome adversities. Building Families Together's goal is to help men with a history of being in jail or prison build self-respect and self-worth as a man and as a father. They address the men's immediate needs before and after release and offer assistance to mothers and children for their immediate physical and mental health needs.

Services provided by Building Families Together include:

- Online certified court-ordered classes in Anger Management, Alcohol and Drugs, Parenting, Domestic Violence, Conflict Resolution, Behavior Modification, Marijuana Education, Minor in Possession, Theft and Tobacco Awareness
- Online employee certification classes in Bloodborne Pathogens Training, CPR Training, Diversity Awareness, Workplace Ethics Training, HIPAA Training, HIV/AIDS Awareness, Sexual Harassment Prevention, First Aid Training, Workplace Violence & Prevention, Food Handler, Theft Awareness, and Tobacco Awareness
- A Mentoring Program to provide the necessary emotional and social supports for returning citizens as they transition back to community life
- A 12-week Fatherhood Reentry Program to help inmates successfully reenter society

Building Families Together collaborates with law enforcement, business, health, library and non-profit organizations to build stronger communities and improve the quality of life for this underserved segment of society. Building Families Together also makes referrals to provide crisis intervention, food pantries, health services, legal services, mental health, shelters, social services, soup kettles and substance abuse services to ensure that their clients get the help they need.

In addition to training and mentoring services, Building Families Together offers a collection of Helpful Tips and Insights to assist fathers and their families adjust to incarceration and reentry. The Helpful Tips and Insights available on the website are:

- Tips-Incarcerated Father
- Losing Your Father
- Fathers Role Diminishes
- Silent Heroes
- You Are Not Alone
- Reunification of Husband
- Reentry Support
- While Dad's Away
- Daddy's Home
- Parents' Guide to Handling Chaos
- The Power of the Family Takes Commitment

- 5 Ways to Help You through a Non-Perfect Life
- 5 Ways to Help Kids Learn What They Are Passionate About
- No Perfect Dads – Just Heroes
- A Man’s Guide to Fatherhood-Parenting
- We Help Fathers & their Families

Contact: [connect@buildingfamielstoegether.org](mailto:connect@buildingfamielstoegether.org)  
 Website: <https://buildingfamielstoegether.org>

### **Community Solutions of El Paso**

Community Solutions was formed in El Paso, Texas with the mission to strengthen community by strengthening the most disenfranchised and underserved children, youth and families and to help them achieve their highest potential to become valued members of the mainstream community. Community Solutions has established the Connections Program which provides specialized services for children of prisoners, with outreach to their caregivers and family members.

- One-to-One Mentoring – Children of prisoners are matched with caring volunteers who become special friends to the child and their caretaker during a very difficult time. Mentors are provided comprehensive preparatory and on-going training; undergo background and drug screens and receive a home visit from a caseworker before being matched with a “Connections Kid.”
- Group & Team Mentoring Activities – Participating children are engaged in social, cultural, educational and recreational activities to help the child and their caretaker build trust with the Connections Program staff and mentors, and offer opportunities for interaction with a variety of mainstream community members.
- Academic Mentoring – Mentors provide after school homework assistance and tutoring in basic academic subjects for participating “Connections Kids.”
- Re-Entry Life Coaching – On a limited basis, Community Solutions has begun specialized services for returning citizens.
- Connections KIDS Care Project – Youth, assisted by mentors, volunteers and staff are responsible for selecting, developing and implementing service-learning projects for others in need throughout the community.
- Connections KASA – KASA is specialized services for children having parents in prison as a result of an addiction to chemical substances. Services include individual, group and family counseling as well as prevention awareness group sessions.
- Connections LOVE – LOVE provides regularly scheduled support groups and life enrichment activities for caregivers and other family members to listen, observe, validate and encourage one another during a most challenging life experience. Families are provided reintegration preparation for the return of their loved one from prison and follow up support upon their loved one’s return.

Contact: [Info@SolutionsForElPaso.org](mailto:Info@SolutionsForElPaso.org)  
 Website: [www.solutionsforel Paso.org](http://www.solutionsforel Paso.org)

### **Connecting Adults and Minors through Positive Parenting (CAMPP)**

Montana’s Connecting Adults and Minors through Positive Parenting (CAMPP) is a 12-week program focused on the continuum from incarceration to reentry into the community. The father-child bonds built during program will lower chances for an inmate to recidivate and break the cycle of incarceration. The goals are to have parental rights restored upon release, positively re-unify these families, provide

resources to support continued success post release and reduce recidivism. The primary goal of CAMPP is to eventually remove the children of the incarcerated men from the state's over-burdened foster care system by ensuring that the men have the parenting skills needed when they reintegrate into their communities.

Once selected for the program, participants begin the positive reunification process through positive bonding and communication activities. The incarcerated fathers attend classes in Nurturing Parenting, Trauma/ ACES training and Mental Health First Aide. Programming also includes supervised letter writing, supervised visiting coaching and supervised video visits designed to open up positive communication between fathers and children in this program.

The 12-week program culminates in a three-day "camp." Children and their guardians travel to Deer Lodge and stay in a hotel with the prison paying for it. Montana State inmates are now renovating an old storage facility on the prison grounds that will house the camp in future years. The walls are painted brightly with murals and a privacy fence will be erected between the camp and the rest of the correctional facility.

Once the camp is complete and the children and guardians are back in their community, the Montana DOC continues to communicate with and support these families by providing them with guides which will connect them to community resources. The hope is to give these families a second chance at positive reunification and have fewer children in the foster care system.

Website: [news.mt.gov/new-montana-doc-program-helping-to-reunite-children-with-incarcerated-parents](http://news.mt.gov/new-montana-doc-program-helping-to-reunite-children-with-incarcerated-parents)

### **Destination...Dad**

Christian Heritage established its three-phase *Destination...Dad* program to create better futures for children by coaching and supporting their incarcerated fathers. The three-phases are:

- Learning – Through a proven parenting curriculum, incarcerated dads learn how to be involved and responsible fathers when released.
- Connecting – Through letters and visits, incarcerated dads connect with their children. Video book reading, based on the Messages Project model, strengthens connections.
- Living – Through coaching and support, fathers recently released from prison become involved in their children's lives, while building a better future for their families and themselves.

The key to the success of the *Destination...Dad* initiative is its caring volunteers who complete a training program before teaming with Christian Heritage staff. Volunteer opportunities include:

- *Destination...Dad* Mentor – Each mentor is matched with an incarcerated dad. They begin communicating through letter writing and then have the option to meet inside the institution. Upon release, the mentor assists the dad in connecting with his children, following their Reentry Plan, and introducing him to positive social networks.
- *InsideOut Dad* Volunteer – Volunteers co-facilitate a 12-session curriculum created by the National Fatherhood Initiative.
- Messages Project Volunteer – Volunteers record inmates' messages to their children and work with them to complete the necessary Messages Project documents.

- Day Visit Volunteer – Day Visit volunteers provide supervision and transportation for children to and from the facilities to visit their fathers. The volunteers co-facilitate the visits and provide documentation of the interaction between inmates and their children. Training is given in the use of the assessment tool for the visitation observation.

Contact: Larry Wayne, Deputy Director Nebraska Department of Correctional Services, [Larry.Wayne@nebraska.gov](mailto:Larry.Wayne@nebraska.gov)  
 Gregg Nicklas, Christian Heritage Co-CEO, [Gregg.Nicklas@chne.org](mailto:Gregg.Nicklas@chne.org)  
 Lisa Nicklas, Christian Heritage Co-CEO, [LisaN@chne.org](mailto:LisaN@chne.org)  
 Website: [www.chne.org](http://www.chne.org)

### **Family Connections Center**

The Family Connections Center (FCC) within the New Hampshire Department of Corrections is a prison-based family support center located in both of the men's facilities (Berlin and Concord) and the one women's facility (Goffstown). The program seeks to strengthen the connection between incarcerated parents and their families by working with State and community-based, non-profit agencies to provide services and educational support for incarcerated parents, their children and their children's caregivers.

Program components include:

- FCC Parenting Class – Inmates volunteering to be involved in the FCC must first complete the 18-hour FCC Parenting Class. This class was created in collaboration with the University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension. It covers basic parenting topics including: child development, discipline, communication, self-esteem, stress, and reunification. Throughout the class, important conversations are held about how incarcerated parenting is a unique and sensitive situation, how parenting changes when one parent becomes incarcerated and how the incarcerated parent's specific crime and their absence impacts their children.
- Healthy Relationships Class – The second required course is a 10-hour Healthy Relationships Class. The class helps individuals be successful in all of their relationships, whether it is with a romantic partner, co-parent, siblings, parents, children, or friends. Topics addressed include increasing awareness of their identity, establishing a vision for themselves as it pertains to developing and maintaining positive healthy relationships, recognizing and increasing awareness of the effects of antisocial relationships, and learning ways to rebuild and strengthen pro-social relationships.
- Parent Support Group – While attending the Healthy Relationships class, participants may start attending a weekly incarcerated parent support group. Participants may bring up whatever topic they want to discuss as long as it relates to parenting or families. The goal is to help them remember that they are parents despite their incarceration. By coming to a weekly group, they are amongst other incarcerated parents focusing on this life role.
- Life Skills Seminars – Once the two core classes are complete, the parent may participate in Life Skills Seminars taught by FCC staff and outside volunteers. The sessions aim at increasing parental education and may include book clubs facilitated by the New Hampshire Humanities Council and CPR instruction.
- Book on CD Activity – The Book on CD activity involves participants choosing two books from a selection of new, donated children's books. They then record that book onto a CD and send it home to their children. This activity promotes literacy for the child who can read along with mom

or dad. The CD also gives the child some control of when they can hear their parent's voice and hear mom or dad say "I love you."

- Internet Video Visiting – One of FCC's most exciting activities is the internet video visiting via free Skype software. Once participants have completed their two required classes and have attended four support groups; they can apply to have Skype visits with their children. These visits are scheduled on a bi-weekly basis for up to 20 minutes per child.
- Family Fun Days – Family Fun Days are hosted for participants who have remained disciplinary report free. Their children and the children's caregivers visit for an afternoon of fun and games in a relaxed visit setting. They also are able to eat a meal together and make projects which the children can take home as a token of remembrance.
- Children of Incarcerated Parent's Summer Camp Program – At the summer camp, inmate's children visit at the correctional facility to play games, share meals and create a life-sized mural. The children attend the overnight summer camp for two weeks with the field trips to prison to visit mom or dad. The camp tuition is free as a result of generous donations from people in the community.

Contact: Kristina Toth, FCC Administrator at 603-271-2255 or [Kristina.Toth@doc.nh.gov](mailto:Kristina.Toth@doc.nh.gov)

## Family Matters

The *Family Matters* course, grounded in family systems and attachment theories, is designed to be used with people in prison. The focus of the course is on the family as a system with unique history, roles, rules, strengths, and challenges. The course teaches participants communication skills and how to manage conflict, change destructive behavior patterns by strengthening action over reaction, and heal relationships. Included is a focus on connection with family members, particularly children, and parenting from prison. Participants are asked to work on improving one or two family relationships as part of the course. Experiential exercises, role-plays, letter writing and phone calls support this work.

The course is divided into four main units with two or three classes per unit:

- Family Systems introduces the strengths and challenges represented by different family cultures and ethnicity. It explains the importance of family history, family life cycle and family rules and roles.
- Action and Reaction introduces the thinking and feeling brain and supports the concept of taking responsibility for positive action rather than being reactive to one's environment.
- Healing and Hope offers a way to break destructive patterns identified in the Family Systems unit using skills such as effective listening, gratitude and forgiveness.
- Precious Child focuses on attachment patterns, how to nurture secure attachment, and the importance of staying connected with family while in prison. It includes an extensive section on parenting from prison.

The Family Matters course is not copyrighted; material may be selected or adapted as needed. A free download of the Workbook & Leader's Manual is available.

Contact: Linda G. Bell, Ph.D., [Linda@familylegacies.net](mailto:Linda@familylegacies.net)  
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Website: [www.familymatterscourse.com](http://www.familymatterscourse.com)

## **Father's Love of Reading Relationships Program**

The Kettle Moraine Correctional Institution (Wisconsin) parenting program has adopted the *Inside /Out Dads* Parenting Program as the core curriculum which is supplemented by the *Family Reunification* and *Parenting from Prison* video series. The *Family in Focus* packets help round out discussion sessions. Topics covered include: how people develop parenting styles, what is masculinity, spirituality, anger management, self-esteem, communications, discipline vs. punishment, child development, age appropriate expectations, family meetings, goal setting, reentry planning, and a fathering plan.

After completing the parenting curriculum, inmates may participate in the Father's Love of Reading Relationships Program. It is an 11-week program for fathers who want to build stronger relationships with their children. Local libraries and book stores have donated children's books which incarcerated fathers read while having DVD tapes made. The DVDs are then sent home to their children.

Contact: Mary Pohlman, KMCI teacher, [Mary.Pohlman@wisconsin.gov](mailto:Mary.Pohlman@wisconsin.gov)

## **Foreverfamily**

Foreverfamily is the nation's first organization solely dedicated to helping children who experience parental incarceration. Foreverfamily works to inspire children with a parent in prison to become successful and to strengthen the bonds between the children and their incarcerated parents, enriching the lives of more than 27,000 children.

Foreverfamily's programs are not limited to providing services for children. They also provide services for families, parents and caregivers:

- Youth Engagement Zone (YEZ) - YEZ provides an opportunity for school aged youth to identify issues within their communities and work collaboratively with their peers to identify issues and implement community service projects that respond to the issues. YEZ focuses on developing public speaking skills, leadership, project management, teamwork, and problem solving.
- Young Entrepreneurs Project (YEP) – YEP seeks to improve the economic base of children of incarcerated parents by introducing them to the field of entrepreneurship. Young people between the ages of 16-28 work closely with professional mentors, identifying and developing a business idea.
- NPU-V Shared Vision (NPU-V) - NPU-V program brings together participants with community youth leaders and major youth serving organizations to develop a shared vision and agenda for youth leadership and engagement.
- Monthly Prison Trips - Foreverfamily's provides transportation to three out of the four woman's facilities in Georgia so that these children can go visit their mothers. Foreverfamily also partners with another agency so children can visit their fathers at select facilities.
- Parent Education and Family Support program - Support services are provided for parents to help them stay connected with their children, learn tips and techniques to parent successfully while incarcerated and stay on track to a productive life. The Parent Education and Family Support program provides incarcerated parents with parenting information and support for their children. Each participant receives a copy of the Foreverfamily's *Parenting from Prison* handbook and its newsletters, school supplies and holiday toys for their children.
- Parent Workshops - Parent Workshops equip inmate mothers with the knowledge they need to safeguard their parental rights and fulfill their parenting role while incarcerated and upon reentry.

Foreverfamily offers a 3-hour seminar entitled Strength to Love: Building My Skills to Parent from the Inside at the three women's facilities on a rotating basis. The seminar's key points include:

- A presentation on parenting techniques
- A legal education panel and breakout sessions with lawyers to explain parental rights and responsibilities
- An inspirational message from a formerly incarcerated mother who is reunited with her children
- A copy of Foreverfamily's *Parenting from Prison* handbook
- For parents coming out of prison, Foreverfamily staff work individually with parents to determine their needs, connect them to service providers and receive counseling from a licensed marriage and family therapist to manage expectations and create a family plan for reunification
- Caregiver Support Initiative – The Caregiver Support Initiative helps caregivers by providing the support needed to successfully navigate this trying time. Caregivers can work directly with Foreverfamily staff to secure the resources and assistance they need by calling the Foreverfamily office. Some the resources provided include: back-to-school supplies, Thanksgiving and Christmas holiday food baskets, birthday recognition for the children and Christmas wish toy drive

Website: [www.foreverfam.org](http://www.foreverfam.org)

## **Hope House**

Hope House is a non-profit organization in the Washington DC area that provides cutting edge programs to strengthen families and, in particular, the bonds between children and their fathers imprisoned far from home. Their goals include reducing the isolation, stigma, shame and risk these families experience when fathers and husbands are imprisoned and raising public awareness about this most at-risk population.

Among the key services provided by Hope House is a reading program in available in 13 facilities, where fathers record themselves reading a book to their children. They also provide a teleconferencing service at one facility, allowing fathers in far off facilities to be in contact with their children.

Another of Hope House's programs is "Prison Camp." Hope House has hosted these camps all over the country, in prisons that range from minimum to maximum security. While there are many programs across the country for incarcerated mothers, Hope House's offerings are the first of their kind for male inmates and their children.

Websites: [www.hopehousedc.org](http://www.hopehousedc.org).  
[www.meyerfoundation.org](http://www.meyerfoundation.org)

## **Hour Children**

Hour Children, a non-profit program based in Queens, NY, provides comprehensive support within the prison walls and in the community to incarcerated and formerly incarcerated women and their children. Hour Children has five residences that house approximately 60 families each year. They are unique in that they begin working with women and their children while the mothers are still incarcerated.

Prison-based services include:

- Advocacy to keep mothers and children together
- Family visitation



- Parenting classes
- Legal assistance
- Family reunification counseling

The relationships and services established in prison provide a bridge to community-based services which is key to successful community re-entry and family reunification. Community services available include:

- Housing
- Childcare
- Counseling
- Employment assistance
- Food pantry providing farm-fresh, organic produce on a sliding scale
- Three thrift shops offering affordable clothing and home furnishings

Website: [www.hourchildren.org](http://www.hourchildren.org)

### **Just Beginning**

Just Beginning is a parenting program that connects youth in juvenile facilities with their children by teaching teens how to develop a positive relationship with their child through research-based parenting instruction, facilitating weekly structured visits in a child-friendly environment specially designed for positive parental interaction and connecting the teen parent to a strong support system for the entire family as the youth reintegrates into society.

Formerly known as the “Baby Elmo Program”, the Just Beginning program is video based, using the Sesame Beginnings videos. The class includes a hands-on visitation component, in which the incarcerated teen parent plays with his or her child. The visits serve as an incentive, not only to learn about parenting, but also for improved behavior in the facility and participation in rehabilitative activities.

Just Beginning is a parenting and visitation program for incarcerated teen parents that:

- Provides hands on parenting coaching in real time during youth visits with their children
- Is easily implemented both in and out of detention facilities
- Is endorsed by probation staff
- Improves youth's behaviors in detention
- Reduces recidivism

Just Beginning trainers train staff from participating facilities and work with them to structure, support and implement the program. The training includes an instruction manual for the teacher. Once trained, the staff meet 1-on-1 with the teen parent, providing research-based parenting instruction in a format accessible for all literacy levels. The teaching component is then paired with a 1-on-1 visit between the parent and child.

As graduates reintegrate into society, Just Beginning staff collaborate with community organizations to create a supportive team to assist them on their parenting journey, including parent and family support, job training and readiness, parenting and health education, day care and child support.

Website: [www.justbeginning.org](http://www.justbeginning.org)

## **Kansas Department of Corrections Family-Based Services**

Kansas DOC Family-Based Services provide family members with information about the correctional system, help incarcerated parents develop better parenting skills, provide the incarcerated parents opportunities to stay connected with their children, support the caregivers of the children of incarcerated parents, and assist offenders in transitioning back into their family. Programs include:

- Family Orientation – Information is provided to family members about transitioning back into the community, risk reduction, parole conditions and requirements, and community based resources.
- Family Transition Class – The six sessions focus on the participants developing a balance between the release expectations of family members and the offender.
- Family Workshop – A Family Workshop is a meeting held at the facility with the inmate and his family to discuss expectations and concerns the inmate or family members have prior to release.
- *InsideOut Dad* – The National Fatherhood Initiative parenting curriculum helps incarcerated fathers become better dads while on the inside and continue their growth when they return to communities. Fathers and children are encouraged to grow as caring, compassionate people who treat themselves, others and the environment with respect and dignity.
- *Parenting Inside Out* – The *Parenting Inside Out* curriculum is based on the *Parent Management Training* program for at-risk families, but addresses unique issues of criminal justice involved parents.
- *Active Parenting Now* – The *Active Parenting Now* curriculum shows parents how to develop courage, responsibility and character in their children. It explains positive discipline and communication techniques that help families run more smoothly.
- Play and Learn – Play and Learn classes provide children whose parents are incarcerated an opportunity to come to the facility and interact with their parent in a safe and structured play group session. The incarcerated parents have an opportunity to bond with their child and practice the skills learned in parenting classes.
- Caregiver Support – Caregiver support groups help the caregivers of the children of incarcerated parents gain a better understanding of the impact incarceration may have on children and strategies and ideas of how to help them. The groups provide information about resources available and an opportunity to discuss concerns or problems they have encountered.

Website: [www.doc.ks.gov/reentry/family-services](http://www.doc.ks.gov/reentry/family-services)

## **Keiki O Ka Āina Family Learning Centers**

Keiki O Ka Āina's (KOKA) programs are based on a family engagement model that uses culture to strengthen and educate families. Since its founding as a non-profit organization in 1996, KOKA Family Learning Centers have developed programs and implemented research-proven curricula in Native Hawaiian communities in three areas:

- Keiki – Children's Programs
- Ohana – Family Programs
- Nohona – Cultural Programs

One of KOKA's Ohana programs, Strengthening Families Affected by Incarceration, serves children and youth with a parent in prison, family members who are taking care of the children and the incarcerated parent. Children, caregivers and incarcerated parents interact through mentoring, parenting classes and parent-child programs designed to help families maintain bonds and children to thrive:

- Mentoring gives children and youth the opportunity to develop another positive relationship with a caring and dedicated adult

- Parenting classes for the incarcerated parent give them the basic tools to realize that they are their keiki's first teacher
- The incarcerated parent-child sessions support, enhance and maintain the family bonds should all parties agree to attend these sessions

Website: [www.koka.org](http://www.koka.org)

### **Living for the Young Family through Education**

The Living for the Young Family through Education (LYFE) program is a New York City Department of Education program that supports student parents under 21 years old transition into parenthood by providing them with high-quality supportive counseling, academic guidance and advocacy services. LYFE also provides free early childhood education to children of student parents. LYFE makes it possible for student parents to stay on track toward graduating from high school or completing their high school equivalency while transitioning into parenthood.

At the core of LYFE's mission is the maintenance of healthy, high-functioning families. LYFE believes that all of its students – both student parents and their children – are capable of achieving the highest measures of success, both academically and social-emotionally. In the LYFE program, student engagement is an ongoing and collaborative process in which the student parent is an active participant and encouraged to set high expectations for themselves – from assessing students' comprehensive needs at the start of each school year, to setting long and short-term goals, to planning for graduation, and to empowering students to become advocates for themselves and their child. As a result, student parents transition from LYFE prepared to sustain healthy families and attain post-secondary success.

Contact: Tim Lisante, Superintendent, [tlisant@schools.nyc.gov](mailto:tlisant@schools.nyc.gov)

Websites: [www.d-79.org](http://www.d-79.org)  
[www.lyfenyc.org](http://www.lyfenyc.org)

### **Madison Urban Ministries**

Madison Urban Ministries (MUM) has programs designed to address the unique needs of recently released offenders and children who have a parent in jail or prison or awaiting sentencing. The programs include:

- The Journey Home – The Journey Home works to reduce recidivism by focusing on the areas of residency, employment, support, treatment, transportation and education. Program staff assess the needs, potential barriers and strengths facing individuals newly released from prison. MUM's Resource Specialists provide one-to-one case management, Food Share eligibility screening, employability and life skills training, job placement assistance, and ongoing support to reduce recidivism.
- Monthly Service Fairs – Monthly Service Fairs serve as a one-stop shop to provide information about training, education, transportation, housing, treatment and support networks.
- Circles of Support – Circles of Support is a reentry program that matches formerly incarcerated individuals with volunteers in the community to provide the social support. Circles provide a safe place where the recently released offender can be heard, encouraged, and respected while they discuss the challenges they may be experiencing as they transition back into the community. The volunteers are able to provide them with alternative solutions to problems and mentoring as they work through the challenges.

- Fatherhood Responsibility Program - Urban League's Fatherhood Program works to enhance children's well-being through the support and development of fathers. They are especially interested in helping non-custodial fathers who may be struggling with child support arrearages. They offer help navigating the child support system and they may be able to assist clients in developing a more manageable child support order.
- Rent Smart and Ready to Rent – MUM trains UW Law School students to offer a housing curriculum in the Dane County Jail. The class offers information on tenant rights, landlord rights, budgeting, understanding your credit history, responsibilities of a tenant, and how to effectively communicate with your landlord.
- Just Bakery – Just Bakery is a 16-week educational and vocational training program that works with individuals who are experiencing significant barriers to employment (homelessness, criminal conviction history, lack of education, or a lack of work history or skills) and who have an interest in baking or culinary arts as a career pathway. In addition to their coursework, students also receive case management and assistance with job placement and retention, and job coaching.
- Mentoring Connections – Mentoring Connections is a community based mentoring program that matches children (4-17 years) with volunteer mentors.
- Family Connections – Family Connections takes children and caregivers to visit their moms in Taycheedah Correctional Institution.
- Reading Connections – Reading Connections provides books for moms to choose and program volunteers to record the moms reading to their children. Then they mail a letter from mom, the book and the DVD to her children.

Contact: John Givens, Circle of Support Coordinator, [John@emum.org](mailto:John@emum.org)  
 Leotha Stanley, Fatherhood Responsibility Program, [lstanley@ulgm.org](mailto:lstanley@ulgm.org)  
 Shawna Lutzow, Mentoring Connections, Family Connections and Reading  
 Connections Corrdinator, [Shawna@emum.org](mailto:Shawna@emum.org)  
 Website: [www.emum.org](http://www.emum.org)

## Messages Project

The Messages Project believes, "Healthy parental connections are essential to a child's development. Children are the silent victims of their parent's crime through the trauma and loss of the environment that has been their life. When a child's parent is incarcerated and a healthy connection is maintained, it reduces the child's risk for social, emotional, and educational problems. For the incarcerated parent, family connection decreases the likelihood of recidivism. Maintaining and enhancing the bond between the child and the incarcerated parent through video messages and other interactive media are the focal points of The Messages Project."

Since 1999, The Messages Project has recorded and delivered more than 19,000 video messages from incarcerated parents from correctional institutions across the United States and abroad. The moms and dads also write poems, sing songs, pray, and most importantly, send love to their children and families.

To help establish and maintain the bond between children and their incarcerated parents, The Messages Project has recently published *A Parent's Message* which is an interactive book of activities for families of incarcerated loved ones. The book is designed for those who have a family member behind bars, or those who care for or work with children who have a parent in prison. The text acts as a guide through

the reunification process, and it includes removable worksheets that both kids and parents can complete to establish and maintain a healthy bond.

*A Parent's Message:*

- Aligns with goals of Parent Education Programs
- Uses format for voluntary facilitated groups and/or self study
- Supports incarcerated parent's identity as a parent not offender
- Facilitates re-establishing child-parent contacts, ties, and bonds
- Fosters respectful kin or other caregiver family relationships
- Provides lessons to translate parental love into parental caring
- Promotes providing honest, factual information to the child
- Uses mail – more beneficial, most common, least costly contact
- Incorporates examination and evaluation of behaviors and progress
- Evaluation and Record of Attitude Change and Personal Growth

It contains:

- 112 Pages of Parent Study Worksheets/Mailings
- 64 Parent-Child Communication Tear-Out Pages
- 24 Meaningful Parent Messages
- 20 Topics of Study and Communication
- 9 Focus Character Traits
- 26 to 52 Weeks of Purposeful and Personal Programming

Websites: [www.themessagesproject.org](http://www.themessagesproject.org)  
[www.aparentsmessage.com](http://www.aparentsmessage.com)

**Moms, Inc./Dads, Inc.**

Virginia's Moms, Inc./Dads, Inc. provides education, information, and support for incarcerated mothers and fathers that allows them to better understand the impact of their incarceration on their children and improve the quality of their relationships with their children. The program focuses on the legal problems that many parents experience during their incarceration, including custody, visitation, and termination of parental rights.

Moms, Inc./Dads, Inc assists offenders in learning to parent from prison. Communication during the incarceration between parents and their children through letters, phone calls, and visits is fundamental to keeping relationships stable and consistent as well as increasing the bond between parent and child.

Participants may earn an extra privilege of sending an audio message in which they talk to their child or record a book on tape that is mailed home to the child. Problem-specific videos and volunteer guest speakers from the community are used to increase participants' knowledge and comprehension of the problems their children may face at different developmental stages.

Contact: Sue Kennon, Parenting Education Coordinator, Virginia Correctional Center for Women in Goochland, Virginia, [skliberty@msn.com](mailto:skliberty@msn.com)

## **Motherly Intercession**

Motherly Intercession is a grassroots organization based in Michigan's Flint Township with a mission of empowering children and fostering a stronger community by preventing the cycle of inter-generational incarceration. Motherly Intercession's vision is for children of incarcerated parents to realize their parent's destiny does not have to be their destiny and to chart a successful path for themselves. Since its founding in 1999, Motherly Intercession has provided a variety of after school programs and services to children of currently or previously incarcerated parents.

### **Children Services**

- Reading and Counting to Success Plus (RACS+) – Provides afterschool homework assistance, tutoring, Summer Day Camp with academic support, and field trips during the summer months.
- N-Touch Ready 4 Real Life – The N-Touch program is for youth ages 13 and older who meet twice a month to discuss Job skills, Adulting (Life Skills), Schooling (Education), and Health. Youth have the option of a 4-week program that expands on the skills and experiences that are being taught in the N-Touch program. This program features being paired with a mentor, incentives such as gift cards, and hands-on learning.
- Social worker on site at all times to help assist with emotional aspects of their lives
- A chance to connect with other children in their situation
- Healthcare Enrollment – Referrals and assistance with enrollment for healthcare coverage for incarcerated people and their families.

### **Parents Services in the Genesee County Jail**

- Bonding from a distance children's visitation (B-FAD) – Preserving the family structure by providing children with bi-monthly face-to-face visitation with their mother in the Genesee County Jail.
- Parenting While Incarcerated – Weekly parenting and support group session for incarcerated mothers and fathers in the Genesee County Jail. These weekly sessions help parents reduce incarceration related stress and develop behaviors to become better parents.
- Healthcare Enrollment – Referrals and assistance with enrollment for healthcare coverage for incarcerated people and their families.

### **Caregiver/Parent Services**

- Strengthening Incarcerated Families – A weekly parenting classes designed to empower adults with the tools they need to reduce incarceration related stress and build the resiliency they need to meet the daily challenges in their lives
- 24/7 Dads Key Behaviors Workshop – An 8-hour workshop given over two days that helps fathers develop a set of behaviors that will help them become the best fathers possible
- Social Worker – To provide case management, referrals, and other assistance and support
- Networking – Opportunity to connect with other adults who are dealing with incarceration
- Healthcare Enrollment – Referrals and assistance with enrollment for healthcare coverage for incarcerated people and their families.

Website: [www.unlockingtheirfuture.org](http://www.unlockingtheirfuture.org)

## **Mothers and Their Children Program**

The Mothers and Their Children Program (MATCH) housed inside the Bexar County Adult Detention Center is a parent-child contact visitation program for incarcerated mothers. MATCH was created to address the trauma of separation that children experience when their mother goes to jail. It has helped to improve the lives of thousands of incarcerated mothers whose lives have been tainted by criminal activity often prompted by alcohol or drug use.

MATCH's objective is to expose incarcerated mothers to as much life-changing information as possible. Through structured educational classes, parent-child contact visits and an e-book program, MATCH seeks to transform the lives of incarcerated mothers so they can become role models their children can emulate.

Twice a month MATCH mothers can earn a one-hour contact visit if they attend all required educational classes. Visits occur in a daycare center type room and mother and child are allowed to hug and hold each other during the visit. Mothers are encouraged to allow their children the opportunity to vent their feelings, which can help the child emotionally.

In addition to educational classes, the MATCH program also offers curriculum-based certificates for a variety of educational topics such as Domestic Violence, Parenting, Anger Management, Substance Abuse, and 12 Steps.

Bexar County has increased its program efficacy partnering with the first bookless library in the nation — Bibliotech. The partnership offers incarcerated mothers the opportunity to learn new life skills by providing them with e-readers preloaded with parenting books.

MATCH participants are housed in the same living unit, so they are able to read and discuss parenting books together, encourage one another, and hold each other accountable.

Contact: Rosanne Hughes, Change Management Specialist, Bexar County Sheriff's Office,  
[Rosanne.Hughes@bexarcounty.org](mailto:Rosanne.Hughes@bexarcounty.org)

## **National Resource Center on Children and Families of the Incarcerated**

The National Resource Center on Children and Families of the Incarcerated (NRCCFI) provides information, technical assistance and training on families of offenders, children of prisoners, parenting programs for prisoners, prison visiting, and the impact of the justice system on families. NRCCFI's web site has over 100 free articles, an e-mail list, a directory of programs and links to offender family web sites.

NRCCFI maintains a large collection of pamphlets in its Children of Prisoners Library and Incarcerated Fathers Library on its website. The complete Children of Prisoners Library is also available in Spanish.

Children of Prisoners Library:

- Facts and Issues
  - Introduction to Children of Prisoners
  - Why Maintain Relationships?
  - Conversations – Questions Children Ask
  - Risk and Protection

- Visiting Mom or Dad
- Jail and Prison Procedures
- Communication Tips for Families
- Materials for Caregivers
  - Caring for Children of Prisoners
  - Questions from Caregivers
  - What Do Children of Prisoners Need?
  - Tips from Caregivers for Caregivers
- Materials for Health Care Providers
  - Impact of Parental Incarceration
  - Challenges for Health Care Providers
  - Common Stress Points
  - Different Children/ Different Behaviors
  - Strategies for Intervention
  - Tips for Fostering Trust & Safety
  - The Caregiver's Situation
- Resource Section

#### Incarcerated Fathers Library

- Pamphlets
  - A Father's Story
  - Almost 1.5 Million Children – U.S. Department of Justice Report
  - Child Support Enforcement
  - Long Distance Dads
  - National Resources
  - Preparing a Child for a Prison Visit
  - Prisoner Child Support – Broke But Not Deadbeat
  - Statewide Fatherhood Programs
  - Telling the Children
  - Tips from a Father in Prison
- Additional Materials on Incarcerated Fathers
  - Every Door Closed: Barriers Facing Parents with Criminal Records
  - FCN Report #20 – Fatherhood
  - Incarcerated Parents Materials at Center for Policy Research
  - Teaching Parenting Skills to Incarcerated Fathers

Contact: Ann Adalist-Estrin, Director, [nrccfi@camden.rutgers.edu](mailto:nrccfi@camden.rutgers.edu)  
 Website: [www.nrccfi.camden.rutgers.edu/resources/library/](http://www.nrccfi.camden.rutgers.edu/resources/library/)

#### **National Responsible Fatherhood Clearinghouse**

The National Responsible Fatherhood Clearinghouse (NRFC) produces series of resources for those interested in supporting strong families and helping fathers become better dads. Since NRFC is an Office of Family Assistance federally-funded resource center, all resources written by the NRFC are available for free.



As part of their efforts to support the responsible fatherhood field, the NRFC has hosted a series of webinars. Three of the NRFC webinars deal specifically with issues relating to incarcerated fathers and their children.

- Supporting Fathers and Families Impacted by Incarceration
- Effective Strategies for Working with Fathers Returning from Prison
- Promising Practices: Working with Incarcerated Fathers

In addition to the three webinars dealing specifically with issues relating to incarcerated fathers and their children, NRFC offers webinars focusing on related topics including child support, co-parenting, domestic violence, economic stability, employment, homelessness, literacy, marriage, mental health, special needs children, stepfamilies, substance abuse, and trauma-informed programming.

Materials relating to all of the NRFC webinars are available on the [www.fatherhood.gov](http://www.fatherhood.gov) website. For the more recent webinars, you may view the video recording. For other webinars, audio recordings, presentation slides or transcripts are available.

Website: [www.fatherhood.gov](http://www.fatherhood.gov)

### **Nebraska Correctional Center for Women's Parenting Program**

The Nebraska Correctional Center for Women's Parenting Program was one of the first such programs in the U.S. to be introduced in a women's correctional facility. It includes parenting classes, overnight on-grounds child visits, extended day visits, and a nursery program. Children between the ages of 1 and 6 may spend up to 5 nights per month with their mothers in a living unit separated from general population. Newborns and children up to age 16 may have extended on-grounds day visits in the parenting program area. An on-grounds nursery is available for babies born to mothers during their incarceration.

The overall goal of the program is to improve parenting skills and create a positive and nurturing bond between the baby and mother. To participate, women must not have a crime against children or a violent offense and must have taken parenting classes; completed a contract signed by security, the work supervisor and the agency parenting coordinator; and have good institutional conduct.

Contact: Mary Alley, [Mary.Alley@nebraska.gov](mailto:Mary.Alley@nebraska.gov)

### **Osborne Association**

For almost a century, the Osborne Association has been committed to transforming lives, communities, and the criminal justice system by working with currently and formerly incarcerated men, women, and children and families affected by incarceration. The Osborne Association works in partnership with individuals, families, and communities to create opportunities for people affected by the criminal justice system to further develop their strengths and lead lives of responsibility and contribution. They design, implement, and advocate for solutions that prevent and reduce the damage caused by crime and incarceration.

Osborne's programs are designed to be family-focused, supporting participants within the context of their family relationships and communities — strengthening relationships that are the bedrock of our participants' future success.

The Osborne Association employs more than 300 staff in community sites in more than 30 New York prisons and jails work at every point of the continuum, from arrest and pre-entry, through jail and prison, to reentry. Their programs offer a broad range of treatment, education, and vocational services to more than 12,000 people each year.

Services and supports provided by *the* Osborne Association include:

- Defender-based court advocacy and sentence mitigation leading to alternatives to incarceration or lower sentences
- Outpatient substance use disorder treatment as a condition of pretrial release or as an alternative to incarceration
- Cognitive Behavioral Treatment and other interventions to heal trauma, reduce recidivism and increase re-integration, in correctional and community settings
- Educational, restorative, and health programs in prisons and jails continuing into the community
- Training in soft skills and hard skills designed to prepare individuals to succeed in the job market
- Job placement and job retention support
- Job creation through social enterprises

The Osborne Association's New York Initiative for Children of Incarcerated Parents (NYCIP) works to ensure that children's rights are upheld, important relationships supported, and their potential nurtured during their parent's involvement in the criminal justice system.

Osborne offers a wide range of direct services to justice system-involved people and their children and families. Among the family services and supports offered are:

- Parenting and relationship education for incarcerated and formerly incarcerated parents
- Family-Focused Discharge and Reentry Planning
- Therapeutic, inclusive, and supportive services and activities for children, youth and families affected by incarceration
- Child support and financial literacy workshops and access to benefits and work opportunities to improve family financial health
- Youth Development and Youth Leadership programs for children of incarcerated parents
- Video visiting, family centers, hospitality centers and transportation assistance to enhance visiting with children

To increase visibility and support for children of incarcerated parents, NYCIP has created the See Us, Support Us (SUSU) network. For more information on the resources offered by SUSU, go to the Family Support and Mentoring Programs section of this directory.

Website: [www.osborneny.org](http://www.osborneny.org)  
[www.susu-osborne.org](http://www.susu-osborne.org)

### **Parents and Their Children**

Parents and Their Children (PATCH) is a non-profit organization dedicated to the children of mothers who are in prison at Chillicothe Correctional Center (Missouri). PATCH provides services to help strengthen the connection between the children and their mothers while they are separated during incarceration. PATCH is a program which allows children to visit with their parent, although she is still in prison. The parents and children meet in a relaxed home-like atmosphere – in a place where the mother can fix a meal for her children, read a book, and give lots of hugs and kisses in a more intimate setting.

PATCH provides:

- Required parent education classes to improve the parenting skills of the mothers
- Supervised visits in PATCH visiting rooms reserved for one mother and her children
- Transportation for children who need rides to visit their mothers in prison
- Ongoing support and encouragement to help mothers improve interactions with their children

Contact: Barb Burton, Director, [director@chillicothepatch.org](mailto:director@chillicothepatch.org)  
Website: [www.chillicothepatch.org](http://www.chillicothepatch.org)

### **Parents Place Triple P Parenting Program**

Parents Place and Waukesha County (Wisconsin) Technical College have collaborated to create a program that targets incarcerated mothers. The college provides basic adult education while Parents Place provides the evidence-based Triple P Parenting program. Triple P can be administered one-on-one or in a group setting through workshops and seminars. The Triple P approach to parenting helps families build safe, stable and nurturing relationships. The approach is about more than just memorizing and following rules. It is about gaining the skills and confidence to handle the ups and downs together.

Parents Place Triple P providers help the mothers develop positive skills to manage stress and encourage healthy habits. Through Triple P programming parents:

- Find the right level of support
- Set their own priorities and goals
- Decide what works for their families
- Tailor strategies to their unique needs
- Develop a personal plan

The collaboration between Parents Place and Waukesha County Technical College has been such a success partly because they offer inmates a direct link to the community upon release. Along with a series of seminars and workshops for Triple P, they offer Supervised Visitation where many recently released parents visit their child for the first time since they were sentenced. This program allows children who have been separated from their families the opportunity to maintain a relationship with their parent while a permanency plan is being formulated.

Contact: Kathy Duffek, Community Education Coordinator, [kduffek@parentsplacewi.org](mailto:kduffek@parentsplacewi.org)  
Website: [www.parentsplacewi.org](http://www.parentsplacewi.org)

### **Residential Parenting Program**

Some women get pregnant and then become incarcerated. And then they give birth and become mothers. Significantly, the majority of women entering prison pregnant, even for relatively short prison sentences, are separated from their babies after giving birth. Or from the babies' point of view, they are separated from their mother for a crime they did not commit at a critical time of development. Incarcerated women in the state of Washington have an average sentence of fifteen and a half months, which means that half the women currently in prison will be back in the community next year.

In an effort to be proactive in its support of the early childhood development of these infants, the Washington's Correction Center for women has created a unique program that allows minimum-security inmates serving less than three years the opportunity to live with their babies in a designated unit. The mother and baby pair share a room during her sentence and have the support of volunteer doulas and

inmate caregivers. The Residential Parenting Program collaborates with the on-grounds Early Head Start to teach the women about parenting and to support healthy attachment, which is critical to an infant's ability to learn. Conditions for healthy maternal-infant attachment are available in a safe, enriched and protective environment.

Website: [www.residentialparenting.com](http://www.residentialparenting.com)

### **South Dakota Women's Prison Parenting Programs**

The majority of incarcerated women have children and most of the inmate-mothers regain the responsibility for the care and support of their children upon their release from prison. The enforced separation of the mother and child usually creates distress for both the child and the parent. Because of the importance in the parent-child bond, the South Dakota Women's Prison has several programs in place to help improve the bond between female inmates and their children:

- Parenting classes – The South Dakota Women's Prison utilizes the Boys Town *Common Sense* parenting curriculum that deals with child behaviors from age 0-18 and the *TOTS* or *Bright Start Parenting* curriculum for children ages 0-3. The *TOTS* curriculum is designed to help parents understand their child's needs and development.
- Mother-Infant program – A female who comes into the prison system pregnant may be eligible to participate in the Mother-Infant program. The inmate who gives birth is allowed to keep the child in an area away from the general prison population for up to 30 days. To participate, inmates must have first completed a parenting class. During the program permanent placement options are evaluated for the baby with family and the Department of Social Services.
- Parent and Children Together (PACT) program – PACT offers extended visitation for inmate mothers and their children. The incarcerated mother may have her minor children with her in prison for a weekend visit once each month, in addition to the regular visiting hours.
- Mothers Making Memories program – The Pierre Area Reading Council (PARC) assists inmates in reading books to their children onto audiotape. The books and tapes are then sent to the child so that the child can either read along or simply hear their mother read to them in an effort to reinforce the parent/child relationship. PARC picks up the cost of the tapes, books and postage.

Website: [www.doc.sd.gov/adult/facilities/wp/mip.aspx](http://www.doc.sd.gov/adult/facilities/wp/mip.aspx)

### **Spare the Kids**

*Spare the Kids* is a growing national movement that Dr. Stacey Patton is leading to provide positive, nonviolent discipline practices to those rearing, teaching, and caring for children of color. Before writing her book, *Spare the Kids: Why Whipping Children Won't Save Black America*, Dr. Patton created Spare the Kids, an online anti-spanking website in 2010. The mission of the website is to combine digital technology, social media, and the basic science of early child development to educate parents and caretakers about the risks and harms of hitting, and to encourage practical peaceful alternatives to aggressive and humiliating punishment.

This site also provides resources for child welfare and juvenile justice professionals, K-12 educators, social workers in training, foster parents, residential counselors, clinicians, advocates and activists seeking to enhance their understanding of how race, power, and privilege impact the parenting practices of their clients and the institutional practices that sometimes result in racial disparities.

Though this site is targeted to Black communities because of the unique cultural and historical specificity of corporal punishment, given the prevalence and acceptance of spanking in American culture, the discussions and resources provided there will be useful to a wide and diverse audience.

In addition to corporal punishment, Dr. Patton does presentations that focus on adoption issues, writing and effective communication strategies for direct care providers and foster youth, the role of churches in addressing Black family violence, growing up in foster care, paddling in schools and the school-to-prison pipeline, as well as the history of race and childhood.

One of the features on the [www.sparethekids.com](http://www.sparethekids.com) website is the “Ask Mother Wit” parenting advice blog. Readers needing advice on how to handle problem situations, can email Mother Wit. Selected questions and Mother Wit responses are then posted on the blog.

In addition to the parenting advice blog, Dr. Stacey Patton in collaboration with artist Aubrey Harding created a series of Mother Wit comics for the website that give wisdom and practical tips to help parents keep from turning a moment of frustration into a physical strike against their child’s body.

Contact: [MotherWit@sparethekids.com](mailto:MotherWit@sparethekids.com)  
Website: [www.sparethekids.com](http://www.sparethekids.com)

### **Strength in Families**

In October 2015, Washington State Department of Corrections (DOC) was awarded one of five federal Responsible Fatherhood Opportunities for Reentry and Mobility grants to support demonstration projects aimed at helping inmates with children transition back into society and be successful parents.

The Strength in Families program implemented in Washington state begins up to nine months pre-release and continue up to six months or more after release. This voluntary program offers classes to build key knowledge and skills in the area of healthy relationships, parenting and employment or education readiness. Family-focused case management, supported access to community resources, and one-on-one assistance with education and employment goals are offered to all participants in the program.

Strength in Families uses curriculum from Parenting Inside Out, an evidence-base model and Walking the Line, meant to improve relationships and communication skills. The primary objective of the 12-week class is to help participants understand how they were parented, use the positive, eliminate the negative and communicate effectively.

Website: [www.doc.wa.gov/corrections/programs/strength-families.htm](http://www.doc.wa.gov/corrections/programs/strength-families.htm)

### **Strong Fathers/Strong Families**

CASTLE (Child Abuse Services, Training, & Life Enrichment), an organization for the prevention of child abuse, operates the *Strong Fathers/Strong Families* program in four Florida county jails.

*Strong Fathers/Strong Families* teaches incarcerated fathers about the responsibilities of being a father and the importance to children of having a responsible father in their lives. The program has four main components which involve the entire family:

- Fathers' Group – Incarcerated fathers participate in twelve weekly group sessions learning about the importance of their roles as fathers in the lives of their children. The skills of being a responsible father are taught and practiced.
- Mothers' Group – Mothers participate (before the release of the father) in twelve weekly group sessions learning about responsible parenting and separation/reunification issues. Parenting skills are taught and practiced.
- Children's Group – Children participate in a support group that helps them deal with separation and reunification issues that arise due to their fathers' incarceration. Children are encouraged to learn about and express their feelings as well as learn about self-esteem, problem-solving, and anger/frustration management.
- In-Home Parenting – Upon the release of the fathers, families wanting to reunify receive home-based continuation of the program's services with the addition of case management services to help the family gain and keep stability.

Contact: Doug Borrie, [DBorrie@castle.org](mailto:DBorrie@castle.org)

### **Wee Ones Nursery**

The Indiana Department of Corrections implemented its Wee Ones Nursery at Indiana Women's Prison in May 2008. Indiana is one of only nine states that currently have a prison nursery.

The Wee Ones Nursery is a voluntary program available for pregnant offenders who meet eligibility criteria. The program provides parenting education and ensures quality time to strengthen the mother-infant bond during the initial months after the infant's birth. Mothers and their babies have private rooms in one housing unit. A small cadre of trained nannies from the offender population also live on the housing unit and assist the mothers in caring for their infants while the mothers attend classes, counseling appointments, or similar obligations. The program also includes ongoing training of the mothers in child development and attachment.

- Family Healing focuses on understanding family system patterns and how individuals are a part of them, the importance of family history, and family communication patterns
- Healthy Starts offers education and support to women who are pregnant or mothers of children under age two focusing on building self-esteem, healthy relationships, and connecting with community resources
- The Clarian Health Network provides one-on-one assistance with mothers and their infants, focusing on child development, feeding issues, safe sleeping practices, appropriate discipline, family supports, and stress management.
- The Riley Development Center offers regular, ongoing training on child development.

Website: [www.in.gov/idoc/2857.htm](http://www.in.gov/idoc/2857.htm)

### **Women in Recovery Program**

Family & Children's Services Women in Recovery (WIR), an alternative-to-incarceration program for drug-addicted women, was founded in 2009 in Tulsa, Oklahoma. The program works with women facing lengthy prison terms due to addiction and trauma-related crimes which make them ineligible for other prison diversion programs such as Drug Court.

Women in Recovery's goal is to reduce the number of women with drug-related offenses sent to prison. WIR works closely with the criminal justice system and other community partners to give its women the

supervision they need, along with substance abuse counseling, mental health treatment, trauma treatment education, workforce training and family reunification to ensure they break the cycle of re-offending. The 14-18 month program provides its participants with services including substance abuse, mental health and trauma treatment, court-related supervision and drug-testing, culinary training, case management, wellness programs, housing, and family therapy. The family reunification component, delivered through an after-graduation program, helps to break the cycle of incarceration.

Website: [www.fcsol.org/services/wir/](http://www.fcsol.org/services/wir/).

### **Youth.Gov**

Youth.Gov is the U.S. government website that helps users create, maintain, and strengthen effective youth programs by engaging with youth to promote change, implementing evidence-based and innovative programs and locating program funding in the community. Included are youth facts, funding information, and tools to help users assess community assets, generate maps of local and federal resources, search for evidence-based youth programs, and keep up-to-date on the latest, youth-related news.

Among the 27 categories of youth topics on the website is the “Children of Incarcerated Parents” section that includes:

- Tip Sheet for Youth: Youth Supporting Fellow Youth Who Have an Incarcerated Parent
- Tip Sheet for Providers: Supporting Children Who Have an Incarcerated Parent
- Tip Sheet for Prison/Jail Staff and Volunteers: Supporting Children Who Have an Incarcerated Parent
- Tip Sheet for Mentors: Supporting Children Who Have an Incarcerated Parent
- Tip Sheet for Teachers (Pre-K through 12): Supporting Children Who Have an Incarcerated Parent
- Tip Sheet for Incarcerated Parents: Planning for a Visit from Your Child/Children
- In their Words: 4 Young People Share Experiences with Having an Incarcerated Parent

Website: [www.Youth.gov/COIP](http://www.Youth.gov/COIP)

# Parenting Skills Programs

## **Active Parenting 4<sup>th</sup> Edition**

*Active Parenting 4<sup>th</sup> Edition* has been adopted by some Departments of Corrections for use in joint classes with incarcerated fathers and their co-parents. Based on the psychological theories of Alfred Adler, the course emphasizes the importance of encouragement, nonviolent discipline, and authoritative (as opposed to autocratic or permissive) parenting. It is aimed at cultivating children's self-esteem, cooperation, and responsibility. Topics include recognizing the goals of behavior, natural and logical consequences, school success, power struggles, problem-solving skills, encouragement, and stimulating independence.

Contact : Michelle Collins, Educational Consultant, [cservice@activeparenting.com](mailto:cservice@activeparenting.com)  
Website: [www.activeparenting.com](http://www.activeparenting.com)

## **Attachment Parenting**

Attachment Parenting International's (API) mission is to educate and support all parents in raising secure, joyful, and empathic children in order to strengthen families and create a more compassionate world. API promotes parenting practices that create strong, healthy emotional bonds between children and their parents for life. API believes that when we strengthen families, we nurture and fulfill a child's need for trust, empathy, and affection and ultimately provide a lifelong foundation for healthy, enduring relationships. They can take those bonds with them into their adult lives and share them with their children, and their children can do the same, creating a life cycle of compassion and connection.

API's educational material and training workshops are rooted in attachment theory that assert infants are born "hardwired" with strong needs to be nurtured and to remain physically close to the primary caregiver, during the first few years of life. The child's emotional, physical, and neurological development is greatly enhanced when these basic needs are met consistently and appropriately. These needs can be summarized as proximity, protection, and predictability.

Contact: [info@attachmentparenting.org](mailto:info@attachmentparenting.org)  
Website: <http://www.attachmentparenting.org>

## **B'More Reconnects**

B'more Reconnects provides proven, research-based parenting education to approximately 400 parents in detention centers as well as upon re-entry with a focus on navigating and strengthening the parent/child relationship.

The program trains correctional officers on trauma-informed practices, child development, and parenting concepts in order to meet the needs of children and incarcerated parents. As a part of this work with correctional officers, B'more Reconnects examines visitation policies and practices to allow for meaningful parent-child connections during visitation, while maintaining safe practices. The project also strives to increase positive family outcomes by coordinating services for incarcerated parents upon re-entry; including educational and vocational support, healthcare, housing, and additional parenting support.

Website: [www.bmoreconnect.org](http://www.bmoreconnect.org)



## **Common Sense Parenting**

*Common Sense Parenting*, a systematic guide to raising responsible kids and building happy families, teaches skills to help parents build better families. Originally a product of years of research by Girls and Boys Town, Nebraska, the *Common Sense Parenting* curriculum was modified to the needs of offenders at the Federal Prison Camp in Yankton, South Dakota.

Topics covered in *Common Sense Parenting* are:

- Parents as Teachers
- Positive/Negative Consequences
- What Is Behavior?
- Effective Praise
- Preventive Teaching
- Corrective Teaching
- Staying Calm
- Teaching Self-Control
- Family Meetings
- What Is Discipline?

Topics added specifically for correctional inmates are:

- Social Skills/Problem Solving
- Relationship Building
- Putting It Together

By taking the course, students learn how to:

- Reduce family stress
- Support success in school
- Enrich their relationships with their children
- Reduce problem behavior
- Diminish yelling and fighting
- Increase parental confidence as well as the child's confidence

Contact: Karen Abbott, [butchdl@vyn.midco.net](mailto:butchdl@vyn.midco.net)

Website: [www.boystownpress.org](http://www.boystownpress.org)

## **Dad's Coaching Clinic**

Dads Coaching Clinic at the Marathon County Jail in Wisconsin seeks to help dads acquire the skills necessary to move from mediocrity to extraordinary in their role as fathers. Great Hall of Fame coaches went through strategic preparation in order to be successful coaches. The same goes for successful dads — they must go through a preparation phase in order to establish a successful plan for raising their family.

The Dad's Coaching Clinic program discusses the many roles a man has and how he is honor bound to be the role model for his children and family. The program's goal is to help dads become great dads by sharing with them the tools and skills essential for building an incredible family. The Dad's Coaching

Clinic gives students pointers through practical, how-to steps and principles. The coaching clinic is divided into five dynamic sessions:

1. The Coach's Preparation
2. The Coach's Plan of Action
3. The Power of a Father's Love
4. "Managing" to Be an Effective Father
5. Hall of Fame Dad

This five-session clinic teaches men 16 points to enable them to build strong and lasting bonds with their wives and children — creating a rich legacy for generations to come. The 16 tips are:

1. Know who you are
2. Establish priorities
3. Live with no regrets
4. Learn from mistakes
5. Love your wife
6. Be excellent
7. Build memories that count
8. Build a winning attitude
9. Have rules with reason
10. Live for the finished product
11. We need our father's relationship
12. We need our father's love
13. We need our father's approval
14. Invest yourself
15. Be involved
16. Be a positive influence

*Dads Coaching Clinic Leader Guide: Turning Dads into Great Dads* is the core resource for the program.

Contact : Michael Wahl, [eagle.wings.2@hotmail.com](mailto:eagle.wings.2@hotmail.com)

### **Learnovation Parenting Series**

Learnovation is a company that has developed products and delivered services which educate and empower people to enhance their lives. Among Learnovation's products are Pamphlet Series in the areas of:

- Workforce Readiness
- Reentry
- Financial Literacy
- Parenting
- Wellness & Nutrition
- Study Skills

Each topic area is comprised of several pamphlets and each pamphlet is:

- Designed to be completed by each client individually
- A four page layout – Not overwhelming, but easy to read and digest, written at a 9th grade level
- Tangible – something that belongs to the client

- A reference tool for reinforcing the message
- Complete with a outcomes assessment tool
- Able to be completed in 30-45 minutes

Learnovation's Parenting Series contains 12 pamphlets that provide best practices and guidelines for developing great parenting skills. The pamphlets in the Parenting Series are:

- P1- Life With Kids
- P2- What to Expect as Kids Grow
- P3- Being a Good Parent
- P4- Talking and Connecting With Kids
- P5- Discipline – Rules Are There for a Reason
- P6- Conflict in the Family
- P7- Kids and Divorce
- P8- Single Parenting and Step Families
- P9- Keeping Kids Healthy
- P10- Kids and School
- P11- When Your Kids Are In Trouble
- P12- Finding Help in the Community

Website: [www.learnovation.com](http://www.learnovation.com)

### **Minnesota Prison Doula Project**

Minnesota Prison Doula Project is a pregnancy and parenting program for women incarcerated at the Shakopee Women's Prison who are currently pregnant, have given birth within the last year, or are parenting a child under 5 years old. The Minnesota Prison Doula Project group meets for two hours every week, for 12 weeks. Moms in Minnesota Prison Doula Project learn about:

- Prenatal development
- The birth process
- Self-care
- Stress management
- Child development
- Maintaining relationships during incarceration

Contact: Rebecca Shlafer, [Shlaf002@umn.edu](mailto:Shlaf002@umn.edu)  
Erica Gerrity, Doula and Project Director, [EEGerrity@gmail.com](mailto:EEGerrity@gmail.com)

Website: [www.prisondoulas.blogspot.com](http://www.prisondoulas.blogspot.com)

### **National Fatherhood Initiative**

The National Fatherhood Initiative (NFI) developed the 12-week *InsideOut Dad* curriculum for incarcerated fathers that bridges the gap between the inmate father and his children. In the program, inmate dads deal with their past in order to discover their futures – even the possibility that they can parent differently from their own, often absent, fathers. Popular among both inmates and ex-offenders, *InsideOut Dad* has been proven to increase family contact, improve inmate knowledge and attitudes, and bring changes to the confidence, knowledge, behavior, and attitudes of incarcerated fathers.

*InsideOut Dad* consists of 12 one-hour core sessions and 4 optional sessions that address the specific needs of incarcerated fathers. The curriculum is modeled closely after NFI's successful *24/7 Dad* curriculum, and includes 24 optional sessions that coordinate with the core topic areas. These sessions allow facilitators the flexibility to add to their program – which makes *InsideOut Dad* ideal for use in both short and long-stay facilities. NFI's fathering programs are currently operating in over 25 states.

Topics covered are:

- Being a Man: What Kind of Father and Husband/Partner Am I?, Roles of Dad and Mom
- Co-Parenting & Communication: Parenting Differences, Ways to Communicate
- Feelings: Showing/Handling Feelings, Grief and Loss
- Men's Health: Stress and Anger, Physical Health, Body Image
- The Father's Role: The *InsideOut Dad*, Competitive/Non-competitive Fathering, Marriage Benefits
- Fathering from the Inside: Creating a Fathering Plan
- Children's Growth & Discipline: Goals, Self-Worth, Talking with Children, Morals, Values, Rewards and Punishment
- Optional Reentry Sessions: Fathering on the Outside, Responsibilities and Child Support, Visits Upon Release
- Optional Spirituality Session: Spirituality, Faith, and Fatherhood

If program sustainability is a challenge, NFI has these options:

- The *InsideOut Dad Guide to Family Ties* is a self-paced guide that does not require a facilitator.
- The *7 Habits of a 24/7 Dad Workshop* is a facilitator-led program, but is a shorter-length option.
- *The Father Topics Collection for Non-Custodial Dads*, *Father Topics Workshop: Talking with Mom*, and *Father Topics Workshop: Understanding Domestic Violence* offer fatherhood skill-building resources that have reproducible handouts.
- If you have already purchased (or plan to purchase) the full *InsideOut Dad Complete Program Kit*, which includes 10 fathering handbooks, but cannot continue to purchase fathering handbooks – then you can continue to run the 4 optional reentry sessions located in the back of the Facilitator's Manual which do not require handbooks.

NFI offers many fatherhood skill-building resources that can be adapted for Short-Stay Facilities:

- To shorten NFI's *InsideOut Dad* 12-week program for use in jails or short-term facilities, *the InsideOut Dad for Jails* supplement that can be downloaded. The free supplement consolidates the *InsideOut Dad* Program from 12 weeks to 6 or 8 weeks.
- Some halfway houses or other reentry facilities choose to use the full *24/7 Dad* program which helps all types of fathers become better dads.
- *Father Topics Collection for Non-Custodial Dads* offers half or one-day workshops on fatherhood-related topics for transient populations or it can be broken up into shorter, one hour sessions on important topics such as child support, workforce development, money management, and more.
- The self-paced *InsideOut Dad Guide to Family Ties* helps fathers learn on their own the importance of getting in touch with their family and creating strong ties between themselves, their children and the mothers of their children.

The National Fatherhood Initiative has also created four new eBooks to help professionals get started serving fathers in various settings. The new eBooks may be downloaded free from the NFI website: [www.fatherhood.org/fatherhood/4-ebooks-to-serve-fathers](http://www.fatherhood.org/fatherhood/4-ebooks-to-serve-fathers).

One of the eBooks, *The Power of Fatherhood Education in Corrections and Reentry*, is designed for professionals who work with fathers in corrections and reentry settings. Information included in the new eBook is:

- The Problem for America's Children
- The Case for Fatherhood in Corrections and Reentry
- How to Rehabilitate and Address Criminogenic Needs
- How to Maintain Facility Safety and Order
- Planning for Reentry
- Reducing Recidivism
- The Solution for America's Children
- Evidence-Based Fatherhood Programming
- Creating Sustainable Programs
- Programs in Jails and Short-Term Stay Facilities
- *InsideOut Dad* Testimonials

Contact: [corrections@fatherhood.org](mailto:corrections@fatherhood.org).

Website: [www.fatherhood.org](http://www.fatherhood.org)

### **Parenting Education in Jail**

To help jail inmates from central New York become more effective parents, the Cornell Cooperative Extension of Tompkins County established the Parenting Education in Jail program to teach participants parenting skills in the areas of understanding children, helping children learn and thrive, using effective discipline, and managing personal stress.

The instructors' delivery method has evolved from a more traditional approach to offering something of value during each session: a concrete parenting tool, a way to reduce conflict, support for making healthy choices or a new way of looking at a familiar situation.

The program consists of 12 educational modules that can be presented in any order. The modules are designed to be used in classes of about two hours per week. The modules of the Parenting Education in the Jail program are centered on a specific parenting skill or exercise rather than the lesson plan.

- Week 1: Parenting Roots & Styles
- Week 2: Family's Experience of Incarceration
- Week 3: Encouragement
- Week 4: Can Do
- Week 5: Shared Decision Making/Choices
- Week 6: Self-Control
- Week 7: Respecting Feelings
- Week 8: Handling Conflict
- Week 9: Helping Children Cope with Loss
- Week 10: Parallel and Cooperative Parenting

- Week 11: Parenting Concerns during Reentry
- Week 12: Creating a Parenting

Contact: Jennifer Gray, [jcg33@cornell.edu](mailto:jcg33@cornell.edu)

### **Parenting from Prison**

The Parenting from Prison (PFP) program is an adaptation of the *Partners in Parenting* (PIP) curriculum, which is offered in prisons in the state of Colorado by Colorado Parenting Matters. PFP aims to strengthen family bonds and increase knowledge of and positive attitudes toward parenting among both male and female inmates. The PIP curriculum was enhanced to include topics specifically relevant to incarcerated parents such as maintaining contact with children during incarceration and reuniting with children post-release. These tasks are accomplished by increasing parental knowledge about risks, resiliency and developmental assets, with a strong emphasis on preventing substance abuse. Risk factors discussed in the curriculum include community (availability of drugs), family (family history of the problem behaviors), personality/behavioral (antisocial behavior) and peer-related (friends who engage in the problem behavior) factors that place children at risk for substance abuse and related problems in adolescence or adulthood.

The PFP curriculum consists of 20 sessions. Topics covered include; self-esteem, risk and resilience factors, communication, discipline, problem solving and decision making. Information about drugs and alcohol is provided within all of these topics.

Key components of the *BrainWise* and the *10 Wise Ways* materials are integrated throughout all components of the PFP curriculum. A major goal of *BrainWise* is to teach new skills relating to building support networks, recognizing warning signals, and preventing emotional reactions from escalating that enable individuals to respond to problems with good judgment rather than impulsive reactions.

PFP also places a great deal of emphasis on issues related to reintegration. Participants learn about topics related to making a reunification plan, making decisions about prior intimate relationships, finding employment post-release, discussing a conviction record with potential employers, and practicing interview skills.

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[ccerbana@gmail.com](mailto:ccerbana@gmail.com) or (970) 227-5602

Website: [www.coloradoparentingmatters.org](http://www.coloradoparentingmatters.org)

### **Parenting Inside Out**

Children's Justice Alliance, a program of Pathfinders of Oregon, seeks to improve outcomes for children whose parents are involved in the criminal justice system. One of the means the Children's Justice Alliance uses to accomplish its mission is the *Parenting Inside Out* curriculum. It is designed specifically for criminal justice-involved parents to help them break the cycle of criminality. The prison version of *Parenting Inside Out* is an evidence-based parenting skills training program that is appropriate for both incarcerated mothers and incarcerated fathers who are parenting from prison. The community version is appropriate for parents on parole or probation.

*Parenting Inside Out* is a cognitive-behavioral parent management skills training program. The *Parenting Inside Out* curriculum is available in four versions:

- Prison 90 – 90 hours of instruction
- Prison 60 – 60 hours of instruction
- Community – 48 hours of instruction
- Jail – 20 hours of instruction

Topics covered in the *Parenting Inside Out* curricula include:

- Communications skills
- Problem solving skills
- Emotion regulation (anger management)
- Child development
- Nurturing children through reading and play
- Non-violent discipline techniques and positive reinforcement
- Adult development
- Transitioning planning and family reintegration

The *Parenting Inside Out* program includes:

- A complete curriculum manual with lesson plans and facilitation guides
- The supplemental *Parenting Coach* manual with program research, organizational set up and strategies for teaching specific activities
- A CD with all participant materials – handouts, worksheets, graduation certificates, evaluation tools
- A three day, comprehensive training program that ensures curriculum fidelity

Contact: Mindy Clark, [Mindy@childrensjusticealliance.org](mailto:Mindy@childrensjusticealliance.org)

Websites: [www.parentinginsideout.org](http://www.parentinginsideout.org)  
[www.childrensjusticealliance.org](http://www.childrensjusticealliance.org)

### **Parenting Skills Training Program**

The Correctional Service of Canada has developed the *Parenting Skills Training Program* to help offenders learn to be better parents and deal with the stress that incarceration places on family relationships. The 16-session (32 hours) program is aimed at male offenders who want to improve the skills needed to relate more effectively with their children and other family members. Based on the cognitive development model, the program strives to improve offenders' cognitive functioning while, at the same time, teaching parenting skills.

The program is structured to deal with eight common offender cognitive problems that hurt their ability to relate well with their families:

- Impulsiveness
- Putting the blame for their actions on other people
- Believing their life is beyond their control
- Lack of concrete reasoning
- Rigidity and intolerance
- Shortage of interpersonal problem-solving skills
- Egocentricity
- Underdeveloped values

- Critical reasoning problems

The *Parenting Skills Training Program* targets male offenders who have family problems related to poor communication; inconsistent, inappropriate or ineffective discipline; and the failure to apply problem-solving skills in family interactions or teach such skills to children. Their cognitive shortcomings can also lead to an inability to recognize and teach that actions have consequences.

Three main areas are stressed in the program: understanding a parent's job within the family, the responsibility that comes with being a parent and the consequences of parental action or inaction.

The *Parenting Skills Training Program* is divided into four major sections:

- The Family
- Interpersonal Skills
- Caring for your Family
- Developing Skills

Each theme is covered during four two-hour training sessions. Within these sessions, offenders are provided with a knowledge base and are taught basic skills for addressing problems related to the theme. The program uses a variety of techniques such as group activities, role-playing, improvisation, thinking games, moral dilemmas, problem solving, and case study examinations. All are introduced in the context of learning how to parent, but the objective is to enhance the offenders' creativity and sharpen their generally weak empathic abilities.

Website: [www.csc-scc.qc.ca/research/forum/e072/e072g-eng.shtml](http://www.csc-scc.qc.ca/research/forum/e072/e072g-eng.shtml)

## **Parents Apart**

*Parents Apart*: is a six-hour workshop offered through Cornell Cooperative Extension's Family and Community Development program for incarcerated men and women in the New York's Tompkins County Jail. It is taught by psychologists, family therapists, social workers, and attorneys for parents who want to help their children adjust to their separation or divorce. The workshop focuses on the emotional reactions of children and methods parents can use to help make the transition easier for children. The workshops are designed to help parents understand the reasons behind their current parenting behaviors, and learn new, more effective parenting and communication skills.

*Parents Apart* class topics include how to minimize tension between parents by using specific strategies and communication skills and how to parent when couples are separated or are experiencing high conflict. The *Parents Apart* curriculum helps parents and caregivers better understand how children of different ages experience the separation/divorce process and how to keep kids out of adult conflicts.

Workshops cover the following topics:

- The emotional reaction of children to their parents' separation and/or divorce.
- The promotion of good parenting to help children adjust after a separation and/or divorce by teaching listening skills and conflict management.
- The avoidance of common pitfalls parents experience during separation and/or divorce.
- The discussions of the mediation, collaboration, among other legal options open to families.
- The exploration of the legal resources available.



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Jennifer Gray, Family & Community Educator, [jcg33@cornell.edu](mailto:jcg33@cornell.edu)  
Website: [www.ccctompkins.org/family](http://www.ccctompkins.org/family)

### **Parents Forever**

*Parents Forever* was developed by the University of Minnesota Extension's Center for Family Development as an educational program for parents experiencing a family transition such as divorce or separation. *Parents Forever* courses are offered in-person or online. The *Parents Forever* curriculum reflects the belief that if parents engage in healthy self-care, parent-child relationships, and co-parenting relationships, their children will experience more positive outcomes after a divorce or separation.

By attending Extension's 8-hour, in-person or online *Parents Forever* course, parents will learn to:

- Describe the family transition journey and how each family member will be affected.
- Recognize the role of self-care, parent-child relationships, and co-parenting in child well-being.
- Identify internal and external resources and strategize how to leverage these resources to promote resilience for all involved.

Contact: Kathleen A. Olson, Family Relations Specialist, [KAOlson@umn.edu](mailto:KAOlson@umn.edu)  
Website: [www.extension.umn.edu/family/parents-forever](http://www.extension.umn.edu/family/parents-forever)

### **Parents on a Mission**

Parents on a Mission (POM) is a parent leadership program, Richard Ramos authored years ago as a gang prevention resource. It has evolved to the general audience of parents around the country. POM now operates inside all the State and private prisons in the State of Colorado, one jail and prison in California, and numerous nonprofits, faith-based organizations and school districts in both States. In addition, POM has been adopted by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) as part of their violence prevention strategy in Guatemala.

Parents on a Mission equips parents and parent mentors to win the love, respect, and loyalty of their children. POM asserts that raising children is a lot easier when you have the tools and resources you need to be successful. When parents become stronger and more emotionally mature as individuals, they're more likely to nurture strong, healthy relationships with their children. That's why the POM curriculum and trainings get to the root of the issues that equip and empower parents to become respected leaders in their household — things like self-esteem, confidence, and forgiveness from past hurts.

While most parenting programs and curriculums put a heavy emphasis on changing child behavior, POM focuses on the parent's personal and emotional growth. Parents on a Mission is a step-by-step parent leadership program helping parents to win the respect, love and loyalty of their children so they can make a positive impact on their communities.

The key lessons taught in the Parents on a Mission curriculum are:

- How to become more emotionally stable and mature as a parent
- The proven principles of raising happy, healthy and productive children
- How to win the trust, loyalty, and respect of your children

- The proper role and use of child discipline
- How to become a strong, confident, loving leader in your home
- The three secrets to raising children who say “no” to negative peer pressure

The POM course is comprised of six audio modules and six hours of teaching:

- Session 1 - POM Orientation
- Session 2 - Parental Personal Growth
- Session 3 - Earning Respect For Parental Authority
- Session 4 - The Proper Use Of Discipline
- Session 5 - Community Building
- Session 6 - Trust & Loyalty

A documentary about the Parents on a Mission program is available on YouTube in English with Spanish subtitles.

Contact: Richard Ramos at [richard@parentsonamission.org](mailto:richard@parentsonamission.org).  
 Website: [www.parentsonamission.org](http://www.parentsonamission.org)  
 YouTube: <https://youtu.be/rvmIINN36nJ0>

### **Pennsylvania Prison Society**

The Pennsylvania Prison Society is an organization that advocates on behalf of prisoners, formerly incarcerated individuals and their families. The Prison Society offers a variety of services, including re-entry programs for former prisoners, virtual visitation for family members and SKIP (Support for Kids with Incarcerated Parents).

The Prison Society program encourages positive family relations and gives incarcerated parents the opportunity to discuss and learn about the needs of their children. The cognitive-therapy based program fosters parenting skills and strengthens their commitment to positive family values.

The Prison Society provides parenting classes in state and county facilities, facilitates support groups for children of incarcerated men and women and operates a family resource center in a state prison. The twelve-session parenting program uses an interactive curriculum to increase parents:

- Knowledge about what constitutes child abuse and neglect
- Ability to handle their feelings and manage their anger
- Understanding of various stages of child development
- Understanding of positive parenting and ability to interact in responsive and nurturing ways
- Awareness of community resources for themselves and their families

The program addresses each objective through role-play exercises, outside readings, interactive activities, discussion and hands-on skill development.

The Prison Society’s experience and knowledge base is so strong that they are often called upon to provide “train the trainer” sessions to staff from other non-profits who work with prisoners and former offenders.

Contact: Betty-Ann Izenman, Program Director, [BAIzenman@prisonsociety.org](mailto:BAIzenman@prisonsociety.org)

Website: [www.prisonssociety.org](http://www.prisonssociety.org)

### **RealCare Parenting Program**

RealCare manufactures infant simulators which make it possible for people to practice caring for an infant 24 hours a day, seven days a week. RealCare Babies are crafted from soft vinyl and feature real infant sounds to simulate a newborn infant from birth to three months old. RealCare Baby comes in seven ethnic groups and both male and female.

In addition to the normal infant simulators, RealityWorks offers these models:

- Preemie Baby
- Shaken Baby Syndrome
- Drug Affected
- Fetal Alcohol Syndrome
- Choking
- CPR

During a simulation:

- RealCare Baby cries for care at all hours, day and night
- Baby's head and neck require constant, proper head support just like a real infant.
- Caregiver has to figure out what Baby needs: feeding, burping, rocking, diapering
- Caregiver wears unique wireless ID to ensure accountability
- RealCare Baby's computer tracks its care and safe handling
- Detailed data is downloaded after the simulation, including exact times of missed care and mishandlings – Shaken Baby, head support failure, wrong positioning, and rough handling
- Data is reported on when clothing is changed and which clothing articles Baby is wearing at various times during the simulation
- Baby records temperature of its surroundings and reports when its temperature varies from the Safe Zone

A RealCare Curriculum complements the use of infant simulations. It contains:

- *Basic Infant Care* – child safety, emergency procedures, child abuse prevention, and infant/toddler development
- *Healthy Choices: Relationships, Sexuality, and Family Planning* – an abstinence-based curriculum focusing on teen pregnancy prevention that covers relationships, self-esteem, communication, refusal skills, adolescent health, reproductive issues, and many other topics
- *Parenting: A Guide to Parenting Skills for Life* – stages of child development, parenting styles and their impact, the costs involved in raising a child, and much more

Contact: Anne Brennan, Account Manager, [Anne.Brennan@realityworks.com](mailto:Anne.Brennan@realityworks.com)

Website: [www.realityworks.com](http://www.realityworks.com)

### **Teach Inside**

Jan Walker is a retired correctional teacher and author of *Unlocking Minds in Lockup: Prison Education Opens Doors*, *Parenting from a Distance: Your Rights and Responsibilities*, and several novels and memoirs based on the experiences of children affected by a parent's incarceration. Recently, Jan has created a series of *Teach Inside Activities* that are designed to provide information to men and women

who are inside prisons and jails. The lessons can be used as class or group activities or for individual study. The *Teach Inside Activities* that are downloadable and printable from Jan Walker's website.

The *Teach Inside Activities* are:

- Talking to Children About Prison or Jail – explains how to tell children about your crime and incarceration at each stage of their development so they can understand
- Child Custody & Dependency – provides information about legal and social services that pertain to offenders' families are discussed including federal and state programs that provide assistance for the children's care, child custody, legal guardianship, dependency, foster care and termination of parental rights
- Reparent Yourself – helps you set goals for choosing to change and reparent yourself by taking personal responsibility for your attitudes and rethinking your behaviors and choices
- Reuniting with Your Family and Community – discusses the realities of transitioning back into your family and community. including suggestions for using a Contract for Forgiveness with each family member.
- Reaching Out to Children and Family – shows how you can write stories and poems to explain your absence in words children understand and stay in touch with family and friends
- Visiting Inside: Keep it Positive – helps you plan for a positive visit to make it less stressful for everyone

Three supplements have been added to the *Teach Inside* program materials:

- Think About It (critical thinking)
- Family History and Patterns
- The Power of Story

Contact: Jan Walker, [JanWalker@centurytel.net](mailto:JanWalker@centurytel.net)

Website: <https://teachinside.com/> or <https://www.janwalker-author.com>

## **TYRO Programs**

TYRO programs are based on the Tijerina family's personal experience with welfare and incarceration. The courses are designed to equip men with the life skills they need to be responsible fathers, better communicators, reliable employees, and positive role models and to strengthen individuals and families. It teaches participants how to overcome destructive generational cycles of poverty, incarceration, and dependency.

The TYRO program is comprised of three components: TYRO Dads, Couple Communication, and TYRO Job Ethics Training (JET):

- TYRO Dads – TYRO Dads uses cognitive restructuring and positive role-modeling to combat the root issues inherent in destructive or self-serving behavior patterns. Individuals are encouraged to begin taking responsibility for their actions and to act with honor and integrity. Additionally, the TYRO Dads coursework provides people with a healthy model for becoming a responsible citizen and family member. Individuals who successfully complete this course also have the ability to join a TYRO Alumni Community, a mentoring network that promotes accountability and positive behavior.
- Couple Communication – After completing TYRO Dads, participants may join with their spouse/significant other in Couple Communication which focuses on strengthening relationships. In Couple Communication I, the couples learn 11 practical and effective talking and listening skills

for better decision-making, conflict resolution, and anger management. Whether gained through pre-marriage preparation, marriage education, or counseling, these interpersonal tools help build a more satisfying and fulfilling collaborative relationship. Couple Communication II extends the use of skills taught in Couple Communication I into processes for the couples to continue building a collaborative relationship. It includes managing your own, and responding to your partner's, anger more effectively.

- TYRO JET – TYRO JET teaches how to be successful at work and provides crossover skills designed to make them valuable employees.

Contact: Bruce D. Purdy, Communications Specialist, [Bruce.Purdy@theridgeproject.com](mailto:Bruce.Purdy@theridgeproject.com)  
Website: [www.theridgeproject.com](http://www.theridgeproject.com)

# Family Support and Mentoring Programs

## **Amachi Mentoring Organization**

Amachi Mentoring Organization provides children impacted by incarceration with a different path to coping with their challenges by establishing the consistent presence of loving, caring mentors. Amachi has created at least 350 Amachi-modeled programs in more than 250 US cities and all 50 states. To date, these programs have served more than 300,000 children.

Contact: Muna A. Walker, Amachi Program Officer, [MWalker@amachimentoring.org](mailto:MWalker@amachimentoring.org)  
Website: [www.amachimentoring.org](http://www.amachimentoring.org)

## **Assisting Families of Inmates**

Assisting Families of Inmates (AFOI) was created in 1978 as a volunteer transportation program designed to assist Richmond, Virginia area families visiting relatives in state prison. Within six years, the AFOI program was providing visiting day transportation to 15 state prisons, hot meals when family members returned from visiting, and supportive outreach services such as support group meetings and referrals to other community service organizations.

In the past 40 years, the mission of AFOI has grown beyond a family visiting program to include other programming which works to prevent the breakdown of relationships among inmates and their families, provide referrals to community resources, and offer other vital services that help families cope with incarceration and prepare for release and reunification.

In January, 1999 AFOI launched a unique school-based program that addresses the needs of children impacted by parental incarceration. Today, the Milk and Cookies Children's Program (MAC) is active in several City of Richmond elementary schools.

MAC provides assistance and support to these children and their caregivers by improving the families' access to much needed resources and encouraging their children's school success. A core strategy includes support groups in the school that help children better understand and cope with the parent's incarceration. The MAC staff works proactively with school personnel and community agencies to locate specialized programs and services that will increase children's chances of succeeding. Individualized attention to the caregivers facilitates a better understanding of the needs of their children. MAC also provides assistance with transportation, in-home counseling and support, and advocacy with other service providers.

MAC services include:

- Children's support group guided by an established, evaluated and copyrighted core curriculum
- Information and training for parents, caregivers, school personnel/administration and service providers on the unique needs of these children
- Assistance to caregivers with resources that can help with financial, housing, transportation, employment and other concerns or family and household stressors
- Support for healthy family reunification and reintegration when the incarcerated parent is released

On its website, Assisting Families of Inmates provides information to help families and caregivers cope with the stress and uncertainties of having a family member incarcerated. Information sheets available include:

- Coping Strategies
- Frequently Asked Questions
- Preparing a Child for a Prison Visit
- Visiting Tips Including Process, Policies and Dress Code

Website: [www.afoi.org](http://www.afoi.org)

### **Boys & Girls Clubs of America Native Services**

The Boys & Girls Clubs of America's (BGCA) has been active for 26 years in Native Lands, BGCA is the nation's largest youth service provider for Native youth, with a network of nearly 200 Boys & Girls Clubs that serve over 86,000 youth from 100 different American Indian, Alaska Native, American Samoan and Hawaiian Tribal communities.

These Clubs offer opportunities to provide Native youth with ongoing relationships with caring adult professionals, a safe place to learn and grow, life-enhancing programs, character development experiences and hope and opportunity. BGCA is aware of the unique conditions of working in Native communities and take steps to integrating culture into the Club activities.

BGCA has the able to utilize funding provided by an Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Mentoring grant to serve their Native Clubs, reaching thousands of Native youth across the country each year. Regarding Indian Country alone, the grants received by BGCA in the past six years have served over a total of 21,700 Native youth.

Serving Native youth through the OJJDP Mentoring grant has ensured that youth are experiencing quality youth development, as well as being matched with quality mentors. Mentoring in Native communities reinforces trust and confidence between mentors and mentees and allows for an impactful relationship.

To help those interested in working with Native American youth, the Boys & Girls Clubs of America has published in collaboration with the US Department of Justice and Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention the *National Native American Mentoring Program Guide*. This manual provides information about the importance of mentoring for Native communities and recommendations for implementing mentoring programming for Native youth in culturally relevant and competent ways. It includes recommendations for the design of such programs, with worksheets for organizations to use during the planning process to help them set goals and objectives, incorporate safe mentor recruitment procedures, recruit mentees, train mentors, etc. The guide also addresses important considerations, including evaluation and marketing for the program, communicating with families about program expectations, and supporting matches in communicating effectively. It features an Appendix with template materials, including mentor training pre- and post-surveys, caregiver surveys, mentor and mentee application materials, reference check forms, etc.

In addition to the National Native American Mentoring Program Guide, BGCA Native Services offers a variety of publications:

- *Native Mentoring Media Toolkit*
- *Tribal Relations Toolbox*
- *History of Native Clubs Timeline*
- *BGCA Best Practices: Mentoring Native Youth*
- *Native Mentoring*

If you are interested in starting a Native Boys & Girls Club, you can find detailed instructions on completing an application to start a Native Boys & Girls Club, which includes chartering a New Organization, New Unit, and New Extension Site by requesting a Start a Club Packet.

Contact: BGCA Native Services at 972-581-2374 or [bqcans@bgca.org](mailto:bqcans@bgca.org).  
 Websites: <https://nationalmentoringresourcecenter.org>  
<http://naclibs.org>

### **Camp Reunite**

Camp Reunite is a program that offers trauma-informed camp activities for kids ages 8-17 who have a parent incarcerated in the Wisconsin Correctional System. The mission of Camp Reunite is to provide hope, healing and resiliency by strengthening the bond between children and their incarcerated parent. Camp Reunite provides children with coping skills, conflict resolution strategies and increased resiliency. Through extended and meaningful visits to correctional institutions, children have the opportunity to reconnect with their incarcerated parent. Along with traditional recreational summer camp activities, Camp Reunite offers mental health promotion activities. At camp, Camp Reunite staff work to help each child find healthy ways to cope with separation from a parent and maintain strong relationships. As all the children share the bond of having an incarcerated parent, Camp Reunite is a place of unparalleled acceptance and understanding.

The program started in 2018 at Taycheedah Correctional Institution as a week-long summer camp that explored ways to help kids cope with separation from their mother. It included two extended visits to see their incarcerated parent. A winter version of Camp Reunite was later added to the calendar and the program was expanded to a men's institution, Kettle Moraine Correctional Institution. During the Christmas season, Camp Reunite staff team with the Wisconsin Department of Corrections to deliver special holiday gifts to children from their incarcerated parents at the two institutions.

Children participating develop skills in:

- Conflict resolution
- Anger management
- Stress reduction
- Non-violent communication

Camp Reunite is looking for both youth recreation camps that want to partner with them as a new host site AND correctional facilities who would like to offer Camp Reunite to the families they serve.

Website: [www.campreunite.org](http://www.campreunite.org)



## **Child Welfare Information Gateway**

Child Welfare Information Gateway promotes the safety, permanency, and well-being of children, youth, and families by connecting child welfare, adoption, related professionals and the public to information, resources, and tools covering topics on child welfare, child abuse and neglect, out-of-home care, and adoption.

A service of the Children's Bureau, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the Child Welfare Information Gateway provides access to print and electronic publications, websites, databases, and online learning tools for improving child welfare practice.

One of the resource collections, *Reunification and Visits with Parents Who Are Incarcerated*, provides strategies and best practices for promoting reunification and supporting visits between incarcerated parents and their children.

Website: [www.childwelfare.gov/topics/permanency/reunification/incarcerated/](http://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/permanency/reunification/incarcerated/)

## **Children Heard and Seen**

Children Heard and Seen is a charity in the United Kingdom which provides support and interventions for children with a parent in prison. The charity has a focus on reducing intergenerational offending, and mitigating the impacts of parental imprisonment for children and young people.

When a family with a parent in prison gets in touch with Children Heard and Seen, specialized staff work with the family to create a tailored wraparound and holistic package of support. They work with the family to determine the developmental needs of each child, the nature of the parent's offence and the child's relationship with the imprisoned parent.

Children Heard and Seen offers:

- One-to-one support with specialized staff for children to explore and understand their emotions surrounding their family member in prison
- Support for parents and caregivers in communicating with children, including ways to tell the child that their parent is in prison
- Activity groups for children to explore feelings and meet others in similar circumstances
- Volunteer mentoring to help children process emotions with a neutral person outside of the family home
- Parenting support
- Online support and online activities for children
- Activity days

One of Children Heard and Seen core goals is to raise awareness surrounding experiences of parental imprisonment and encourage families impacted to have their voices heard. To give voice to the families, on their website, Children Heard and Seen created a Hidden Voices blog where families can post their stories. The Children Heard and Seen website also has links to Twitter, Instagram and Facebook where families can share ideas for coping with situations they face. Here is an example of a posting on Twitter.

Website: [www.childrenheardandseen.co.uk](http://www.childrenheardandseen.co.uk).

## **Children of Inmates**

Since its inception in 2007 in Miami, Florida's Children of Inmates non-profit organization has become one of the nation's largest providers for children of incarcerated parents. Children of Inmates' innovative approach interrupts intergenerational incarceration by working with the Florida DOC to identify children with incarcerated parents and provide wraparound case management and family reunification services.

Children of Inmates seeks to assure that children with incarcerated parents have opportunities to be cared for and supported in their development by responsible adults, helping professionals, and others in their communities. The Children of Inmates staff and network of faith-based and professional organizations reconnect children to their incarcerated parents, create positive memories for children, and facilitate rebuilding lasting bonds for a lifetime. Their focus is raising children to be happy, healthy and productive citizens.

Through its core activities, Children of Inmates has provided:

- 565 Bonding Visits
- 12,779 children that participated in Bonding Visits
- 6,597 incarcerated parents that participated in Information Sessions
- 18,101 Care Coordination Activities
- 24,424 markers, crayons, canvases, and sketch books provided to spark children's imaginations and create outlets to cope with crisis
- 7,568 items of personal protective equipment provided to keep children safe during the pandemic
- 3,951 home visits to conduct family wellness checks as part of COVID-19 response
- 118,904 pounds of food delivered to those living in food deserts and facing difficult financial hardship

Here are details relating to three of Children of Inmates programs:

**Babies 'N Brains - Babies 'N Brains** integrates science into healthy child development to break the cycle of intergenerational incarceration by staying in the lives of children from the time they are born to the time they head out to their first jobs. They have steered children toward positive futures by enabling them to have close relationships with their imprisoned parents and by keeping the parents focused on the children's futures. By getting their parents back in their lives, the children are able to overcome mental stress associated with the incarceration of their loved ones, and pour their energies into becoming productive citizens.

Children of Inmates' vision is: if fathers and mothers understand the basics about brain development, they will get more involved in raising their children and ultimately strengthen their bonding and attachment. These actions will help reduce the stress in their children's day-to-day lives. More involved parents write letters to their children, call them at home, participate in video conferencing with their families, and are truly present during family visitations.

In addition, Children of Inmates' care coordination team facilitates home visits to assess each child's developmental milestones. They work with the primary caregiver to conduct daycare and school observations, assess household functioning, and address environmental stressors, all with a focus on reducing the child's exposure to traumatic events in early life. As needed, the child and the family are linked to social service and community mental health providers to offer a continuum of care.

**Bonding Visits** - Children of Inmates provides free quarterly Bonding Visits for children and their caregivers in Miami, Jacksonville and Tampa and other parts of Florida to more than a dozen

correctional institutions. They also offer video-conference visitations for families and their loved ones in jail or correctional institutions.

At each Bonding Visit, children and their incarcerated parents sit together in secure rooms and read books, put together puzzles, do arts-and-crafts projects, and play board games — activities structured to encourage conversations, laughter, and hugs. Play mats allow little children to crawl, roll and giggle with their parents. The families also enjoy a family meal and take part in educational activities to create bonding and learning.

Following each visit, the children find stuffed animals awaiting them on the bus and rather than going straight home, they detour to either a bowling alley or skating rink as a way to ease anxieties from separating again from their parents and to build community ties with other children in their situation.

Besides visitation difficulties, phone communication barriers also exist. To reduce the costs, Children of Inmates has created video-conference visitations. These free 30-minute sessions are done via computer from Care Coordination Centers to the correctional institutions.

Hobby Time - Children of Inmates supports children year-round with opportunities for self-exploration, learning, and fun in community hobby activities. Throughout the year, Children of Inmates staff organize and facilitate one-on-one and group activities where children can participate in athletic, artistic and other activities, such as skateboarding, gardening, painting, go kart racing, mini golf, and trampoline jumping.

In addition to providing children with outlets for fun, new experiences, hobby activities also provide the chance for bonding with other children who have experienced the difficulties and loss in having a parent incarcerated, reminding children they are not alone. During down time at the hobby activities, Children of Inmates staff work with children to make sure they have supplies and supports they need for school, food at home, medical care and other critical supports.

Website: [www.childrenofinmates.org](http://www.childrenofinmates.org)

### **Children with Incarcerated Parents Initiative**

Children with Incarcerated Parents (CIP) is dedicated to providing information that may be helpful to those with a loved one in a Connecticut correctional facility. Through the sharing of information and personal experiences, this website offers support to those affected by incarceration. This resource is for parents and caregivers who are facing a prison sentence, as well as for those returning home from a term of incarceration, their children, their children's remaining caregiver, other loved ones, volunteers and staff who work with or on behalf of children with a parent incarcerated, policymakers, advocates, and researchers.

Since its founding, the initiative has helped hundreds of children through services and innovative programs that provide counseling and outlets for artistic expression to help them gain a sense of mastery over the emotions evoked by a missing parent. They offer mentoring, in-home counseling and case management with experts in dealing with incarceration and a variety of children's programming.

One of the resources that CIP offers on its website is an interactive Children's Page that helps kids deal with the stigma of having a parent incarcerated and helps them maintain family relationships despite long

odds. On the Children's Page, kids can click on graphics to find information on prison, definitions to words they may have heard, and answers to questions they might have.

Website: [www.CTCIP.org](http://www.CTCIP.org).

### **Creating Lasting Family Connections: Fatherhood Program**

The Council on Prevention and Education: Substances, Inc. (COPES) of Louisville, Kentucky has developed an innovative curriculum series to address substance abuse, mental health and family strengthening issues entitled, *Creating Lasting Family Connections* (CLFC). The *CLFC Fatherhood Program: Family Reintegration* was developed to help individuals who are experiencing family dissonance resulting from the individual's physical or emotional separation (incarceration, substance abuse, military service).

The program has been shown to:

- Increase nine different relationship skills – communication, interpersonal, intrapersonal, conflict resolution, emotional awareness, emotional expression, relationship satisfaction, relationship commitment and relationship management
- Increase spirituality
- Reduce the intention to binge drink or use drugs
- Reduce prison recidivism by 60%.

Website: [www.copes.org](http://www.copes.org)

### **Creative Corrections Education Foundation**

The Creative Corrections Education Foundation (CCEF) based in Beaumont, Texas, provides new opportunities for at-risk kids of incarcerated parents who otherwise are likely to participate in criminal activities. By providing the possibility of a better future, including academics, financial, legal and social success; they hope to empower these young men and women to change their lives.

The foundation's board currently has members from the Texas Department of Corrections, New Mexico Department of Corrections, Ohio Department of Corrections, New York Department of Corrections, Colorado Department of Corrections, and Milwaukee House of Corrections. CCEF scholarships only support those students who are enrolled full-time during the academic school year. Online courses are not permitted. CCEF has provided scholarships to students in 26 states. Applications are on a first come first served basis and are based on the needs of each individual applicant. Applications may be submitted continuously throughout the year.

Website: [www.creativecorrectionseducationfoundationorg](http://www.creativecorrectionseducationfoundationorg)

### **Direct Assistance for Dads**

Meaningful father involvement during children's early years improves children's odds against later incarceration, teen pregnancy, low educational attainment, crime, and substance abuse. Father involvement also positively impacts mothers by reducing stress and depression levels. For these reasons and more, the City of Milwaukee Health Department developed and implemented the Direct Assistance for Dads (DAD) Project, an intensive home visiting program for expectant and parenting fathers. Fathers who have recently been released from incarceration are one of the DAD Project's target populations.

The goals of the DAD Project are to positively impact infant mortality, improve birth outcomes, and strengthen African American families and communities. The project utilizes two curricula: the *Parents as Teachers* child development and parenting curriculum and the *24/7 Dad* fatherhood curriculum. Father Involvement Specialists partner with fathers to complete individualized, strengths-based care plans and track progress towards participant-driven goals. Case management services include mental health screenings; referrals for mental health consultation, education, employment, financial and legal services; and access to health services. The Fatherhood Involvement Specialists provide fatherhood coaching and support fathers in co-parenting with their child's mother.

Contact: Darcy DuBois, DAD Project Director, [DDuboi@milwaukee.gov](mailto:DDuboi@milwaukee.gov)

### **Every Single Kid**

Every Single Kid is a nonprofit in Colorado Springs, Colorado that strives to surround children who have incarcerated parents with the stability, encouragement, and hope they need while facing their parent's incarceration and after their release. Every Single Kid believes children deserve social, economic, and educational support in order to break cycles of incarceration and create bright futures for themselves.

Services provided by the Every Single Kid program include:

- Children of Incarcerated Parents: Bill of Rights
- First-person narrative accounts about how parental incarceration affects children and families
- Articles relating to Explaining the Empathy Gap; Trauma, Attachment, and Parental Incarceration; and Mass Incarceration and Transformative Justice
- Resources for Kids
- Resources for Caregivers
- Resources for Professionals

Website: [www.everysinglekid.org](http://www.everysinglekid.org)

### **Federal Interagency Working Group for Children of Incarcerated Parents**

Roughly 10% of incarcerated mothers have a child in a foster home or other state care. To address this problem, the Federal Interagency Working Group for Children of Incarcerated Parents has created *Children in Foster Care with Parents in Federal Prison: A Toolkit for Child Welfare Agencies, Federal Prisons, and Residential Reentry Centers* to help facilitate communication and cooperation between child welfare agencies and federal prisons so that parents can stay engaged in their children's lives.

Included in the toolkit are:

- Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) for Social Workers
- FAQs for Unit Teams
- FAQs for Residential Reentry Centers
- Glossary of Commonly Used Terms
- Child Welfare Myth Buster – explains that not all parents in prison automatically lose their parental rights
- Incarceration Timeline – provides general information about the incarceration process from arrest to release
- Child Welfare Timeline – provides general information about the child welfare system's process, placement in foster care and case planning

- State Child Welfare Agency Contact Information

Website: [www.csjusticecenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/COIP-Toolkit.pdf](http://www.csjusticecenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/COIP-Toolkit.pdf)

#### **4-H Living Interactive Family Education**

The 4-H Living Interactive Family Education in Missouri is a family strengthening program to address the needs of children of incarcerated parents or other incarcerated family members. It was designed to provide a strong, healthy and nurturing family environment during scheduled visitations at Missouri correctional centers using the 4-H Club model.

Contact: Roger Meissen, Senior Information Specialist, [MeissenR@missouri.edu](mailto:MeissenR@missouri.edu)

Website: [www.extension.missouri.edu/4hlife](http://www.extension.missouri.edu/4hlife)

#### **Girl Scouts Beyond Bars**

In partnership with the National Institute of Justice, the Girl Scout Council of Central Maryland embarked on a project that targets girls whose mothers were incarcerated. Maryland's initial Girl Scouts Beyond Bars (GSBB) program has spread to approximately 40 programs throughout the nation.

Lessening the impact of parental separation is the primary goal of GSBB. Through these three core components, the program aims to foster the personal and social development of girls and their mothers:

- Mother/daughter troop meetings at the correctional facility
- Girl-only troop meetings and council-wide activities
- In-prison enrichment activities for the incarcerated mothers

The GSBB program relies heavily on volunteer advisors who act as mentors, teachers, counselors, and mediators. GSBB created a resource guide to assist Girl Scout councils in developing programs in their areas. *Beyond Bars: A Curriculum for Life* begins with a section that provides GSBB staff and volunteers with tips and tools to overcome some of the challenges that may arise throughout the course of the program. The *Beyond Bars* curriculum is divided into four sections:

- Building Healthy Relationships – Today, skills such as communicating feelings, valuing diversity, and expressing empathy, often collectively referred to as emotional intelligence, are considered as important as academic learning.
- Making Decisions – Because young people often lack maturity and measured thinking, making sound decisions and solving complex problems are important parts of life skills teaching.
- Understanding You – Girls need to develop a clear sense of who they are and what they believe in and value. Being able to define one's self, apart from external influences, is not easy. One of the barriers to self-affirmation for girls with incarcerated mothers is the tendency to identify as an extension of the incarcerated parent.
- Healthy You – Activities and suggestions for introducing or reinforcing self-care skills are offered in three basic areas: maintaining good mental health by reducing stress, identifying healthy habits, and avoiding violence.

Contact: Christine Brongniart, GSBB Project Manager, [CBrongniart@girlscouts.org](mailto:CBrongniart@girlscouts.org)  
Aabha Adhiya, GCBB Project Coordinator, [AAdhiya@girlscouts.org](mailto:AAdhiya@girlscouts.org)

Website: Google 'Girl Scouts Beyond Bars' and select a link to a program near you

## **Mentor**

The Mentor non-profit organization was created more than 30 years ago to expand that opportunity for young people by building a youth mentoring field and movement, serving as the expert and go-to resource on quality mentoring. The result was a more than 10x increase in young people in structured mentoring relationships, from hundreds of thousands to millions.

The focus of Mentor's work includes:

- **Advancing Local Field Leadership:** Supporting the effectiveness of new and existing MENTOR Affiliates to scale MENTOR's geographic footprint and deepen the impact of the mentoring field
- **Expanding the Movement:** Motivating civic leaders, employers, and individual stakeholders to prioritize and invest in ensuring all young people have access to mentoring relationships
- **Prioritizing Quality:** Identifying, promoting, and driving the implementation of evidence-based practices combined with community wisdom to increase the quality of mentoring relationships for young people
- **Influencing Systems:** Creating and guiding innovative solutions that integrate relationship-centered practices and policies while driving resources for the adoption of mentoring structures and mindsets within youth-serving systems

For those wishing to start a mentoring program in their community, Mentor has established a National Mentoring Resource Center which houses a collection of resources and publications produced by Mentor, its affiliates, and collaborators over the past 30 years. Included in the collection are guides, key topic overviews, national surveys, research, toolkits, training modules, webinars, and campaigns.

Website: [www.mentoring.org](http://www.mentoring.org).

## **National Mentoring Resource Center**

The National Mentoring Resource Center was formed with the goal to improve the quality and effectiveness of youth mentoring across the country through increased use of evidence-based practices and sharing practitioner innovations.

The National Mentoring Resource Center, an initiative of the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, has compiled extensive resources for mentoring providers to review of the research base related to mentoring children with an incarcerated parent, evaluate the effectiveness and moderating factors of mentoring programs, and implement programs to improve the lives of young people impacted by the incarceration of a parent.

Youth mentoring programs can use the Center to strengthen their services by:

- Applying for no-cost training and technical assistance, including customized coaching to enhance your program and troubleshoot challenges using evidence-based practices
- Accessing high-quality program implementation resources, including tools, program curricula, and training materials
- Learning about what works in mentoring through evidence reviews on the effectiveness of program models and specific programs, practices, and services for specific populations of mentees

Resources that can be accessed on website include:

- Evidence Reviews, Studies, Reports, and Articles
- Reviews of Relevant Practices
- Blog Posts
- Webinars
- Implementation Resources
- Technical Assistance

Website: [www.nationalmentoringresourcecenter.org](http://www.nationalmentoringresourcecenter.org)

### **ParentLink**

ParentLink is a service provided by the College of Education at the University of Missouri that offers a wide variety of services for parents and families and specifically reaches out to incarcerated parents through Parenting Corners. The program aims to help offenders remain or become connected to their children and families throughout their time in prison. It's about rehabilitating offenders, not just as citizens, but as parents.

Parenting Corners offer research-based information to parents in prison. Parenting Corners are located in the visiting areas of 21 prisons throughout the state of Missouri. The corners are stocked with pamphlets that cover nine different topics that relate to both the parent and child. The themes include basic child development, legal, education, substance abuse prevention, mental health, exercise and nutrition, safety, and special populations.

Contact: [ParentLink@missouri.edu](mailto:ParentLink@missouri.edu)

Website: [www.parentlink.missouri.edu/incarcerated-parents.php](http://www.parentlink.missouri.edu/incarcerated-parents.php)

### **Project WHAT!**

Community Works West in Oakland, California, interrupts and heals the far-reaching impact of incarceration and violence by empowering individuals, families and communities through programs in jails and community, youth-led advocacy efforts, and public exhibits and performances.

Project WHAT! (We're Here And Talking) is one of Community Works' programs that is led by youth who have had a parent incarcerated, Project WHAT! raises awareness about children with incarcerated parents with the long-term goal of improving services and policies that affect these children. The program employs young people who have experienced parental incarceration as the primary curriculum content developers and facilitators for trainings.

Since it was launched in 2006, Project WHAT! has delivered nearly 100 trainings to 5,500 people in 14 counties throughout California and seven states. The youth-led trainings provide audiences with tools to more effectively serve children who have or have had a parent incarcerated.

These offerings are designed and delivered by the Community Works' team of trained youth:

- Youth-led Trainings – Custom tailored trainings enhance conferences, workshops and staff in-service trainings.
- Co-Facilitation and Presentations – Trained facilitators and speakers can add a unique perspective to organizations' programs and events.
- Educational Resources –



- ✓ *Project WHAT! Resource Guide for Teens with a Parent in Prison or Jail* answers common questions that children have when a parent is incarcerated. It has an entire section that explains complex jail and prison visiting procedures in plain language.
- ✓ *A Sentence Apart* is a 12-minute DVD that features two youth from Project WHAT! and a grandmother as they cope with a family member in prison.
- ✓ *The Bill of Rights for Children of Incarcerated Parents* pamphlet outlines the central principles of the Children of Incarcerated Parents advocacy movement.

Community Works' hires youth who after completing a training program provide many of the services. Additionally, Community Works Youth Theater Ensemble hires youth interested specifically in writing and performing about what it's like to have a parent incarcerated. Recent graduates of the Project WHAT! curriculum are eligible to receive a scholarship to further their studies. Community Works' provides technical assistance to organizations wanting to replicate their programs.

Website: [www.communityworkswest.org/programs](http://www.communityworkswest.org/programs)

### **Pure Heart Foundation**

Pure Heart Foundation is a community based, non-profit organization whose mission is to create a safe haven for these children to come together and see that they are not alone. Pure Heart Foundation has created effective programs that will not only enhance these children academically, but it will help them break barriers and succeed in life in spite their circumstance.

Pure Heart offers therapeutic, emotional learning and embracing experiences for children of incarcerated parents. Pure Heart aims to help each child to express themselves, break emotional barriers, encourage one another and face this huge giant with children who can empathize with them. Bridging the gap through a positive atmosphere, academic enhancement, mentorship and character development, Pure Heart seeks to turn doubts into dreams, heal hurt hearts and break the cycle of incarceration.

Pure Heart aims to give children the necessary tools and resources needed in order for them to become positive citizens of society and compete in this global world. Its goal is to give these children all opportunities possible so they can be all they can be and maximize each life experience.

The Pure Heart Foundation offers several afterschool enrichment programs. Some examples of the programs by the Pure Heart Foundation are:

- Hear My Voice Afterschool Enrichment Program – Hear My Voice provides students with a healthy outlet for surging emotions. Reading original poetry aloud can encourage trust and empathy in the community, while also emphasizing speaking and listening skills that are often neglected in literature class.
- Know Yourself Mentoring Program – Know Yourself is designed to enrich, empower and educate scholars on the importance of self-value. The key components of this program will identify the influences of self-esteem, educate scholars on indicators of low self-esteem, create an environment that will allow scholars to show their uniqueness and do a variety of activities that will increase their self-esteem.
- Dear Mom, Dear Dad Saturday Meet Up Session – Dear Mom, Dear Dad is a program that was developed to encourage a consistent communication between children and their incarcerated parent. Scholars meet every Saturday and write their parent in letter form or via email.

Contact: Sherelle Hogan, [info@pureheartcares.org](mailto:info@pureheartcares.org)  
Website: [www.pureheartcares.org](http://www.pureheartcares.org)

### **Reentry Myth Buster: Children of Incarcerated Parents Series**

The Federal Interagency Reentry Council National Re-entry Resource Center launched the *Reentry Myth Buster* series of fact sheets intended to clarify federal policies that effect formerly incarcerated individuals and their families. Each fact sheet includes a detailed explanation correcting the myth and refers the reader to agencies and websites that can provide more information and answer specific questions.

Website: [www.csqjusticecenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/COIP-Mythbusters\\_first-6.pdf](http://www.csqjusticecenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/COIP-Mythbusters_first-6.pdf)

### **The Right Path Program**

Through a collaborative effort of the Milwaukee Area Technical College (MATC), the MATC Foundation and the Creative Corrections Education Foundation, the Right Path Program was created to break the cycle of “generational Incarceration.”

The Right Path Program provides young adults, 18-25, who have dropped out of high school and have a parent or guardian incarcerated or on parole or probation with the opportunity to earn a high school credential, gain job skills, and embark on a career pathway. The Right Path Program enables qualified students to enroll in MATC’s Adult High School or GED/HSED program at no cost. Students take at least one occupational course each year to provide job skills and begin a career pathway. Once their credential is earned, they may continue their education at MATC or another institution of higher learning. Applicants must have a parent or guardian who is currently or has been incarcerated or on parole or probation, have not completed high school or a GED/HSED program, have been out of school or a GED/HSED program for at least four months, and meet a minimum academic level as determined by the pre-testing process

Participating students receive testing and placement services; tuition, books and fees; bi-weekly stipends based on their class schedule; at least one occupational course during the school year; public transportation; and access to MATC resources such as Life Skills, Career Advising, Tutoring, Workshops, Academic Support Centers, and Library.

Participating students are expected to attend 100% of classes, show progress toward completion of designated program, meet with program staff to review progress, complete necessary paperwork to remain in program, remain free of criminal behavior, abide by the MATC Student Code of Conduct, complete classwork as required by teachers, and participate in program-related activities as scheduled.

Contact: Marty Ordinans, Administrator, [MOrdinans@creativecorrectionalfoundation.org](mailto:MOrdinans@creativecorrectionalfoundation.org)  
Website: [www.matc.edu/precollege/index.cfm](http://www.matc.edu/precollege/index.cfm)

### **Safer Society Foundation**

Safer Society Foundation has two major initiatives to provide services and resources for preventive and restorative responses to sexual and social violence.

New Circle Mentoring helps Vermont at-risk children impacted by family member incarceration to overcome the unique obstacles in their paths to healthy adulthood. New Circle Mentoring works to

intercede with these at-risk children, matching them with the guidance and support of a caring adult. This includes providing mentoring programs for Vermont children of incarcerated who have been removed from their homes by social services and are being cycled in and out of foster care. The New Circle Mentoring program provides the constancy of a five-year-long mentoring relationship, which can be a key factor in achieving their transition into healthy adulthood.

The Safer Society Press publishes leading-edge, evidence-based books, directories and podcasts for the prevention of sexual and social violence. Its newest publication is an online quarterly magazine for professionals who work with at-risk children and adolescents: *The New Circle: Working with At-Risk Children*. The mission of the magazine is to form a circle of sharing and cross-pollination of practical knowledge with the wide array of professionals who work with at-risk children and adolescents.

Website: [www.safersociety.org](http://www.safersociety.org)

### **Save Kids of Incarcerated Parents**

Save Kids of Incarcerated Parents (SKIP) is a Community Resource Services organization that provides support services to children (“Skippers”) of incarcerated parents and their families to better cope with separation due to incarceration, to maintain family ties, and to break the cycle of incarceration by Informing the community at large of the underlying problems of children with incarcerated parents and the necessity of community support and increasing family awareness of community services and support that are available to them.

SKIP programs help “Skippers” to become self-reliant and responsible adults by giving them hope and options for the future, enabling them to become productive citizens. SKIP programs are comprehensive, modular, and customizable allowing their programs to be administered quickly as a stand-alone or fully integrated within other community programs.

Values and principles included in every SKIP program are:

- “Kids Helping Kids” - Peer Mentors
- Social Education & Enrichment
- Career Development
- Counseling and Coaching

Examples of SKIP programs available at some state chapters:

- SKIP Saturday - These monthly Saturday morning sessions for children of incarcerated parents and caregivers are hosted by community leaders to provide information about community services, self-help programs, local resources and support for the children and their families.
- W.R.A.P.S. - The W.R.A.P.S. afterschool, remediation and acceleration program provides computer-based tutoring in Writing, Reading, Arithmetic, Performance and Social Skills and Science.
- KATATer - For one full week in the summer, teens develop and improve socio-academic skills. The acronym for KATATer is Kindness, Assertiveness, Responsibility, Abstinence, Tolerance, Empathy and Respect.
- SKIP-TOGRAPHY - A 6-Week photography program for teens includes outings to various locations for photo shoots.

Website: [www.skipinc.org](http://www.skipinc.org)

## See Us, Support Us

To increase visibility and support for children of incarcerated parents, Osborne Association's New York Initiative for Children of Incarcerated Parents has created the See Us, Support Us (SUSU) network. SUSU focuses on supporting children's educational success and wellbeing from early childhood through college. SUSU shares resources, tips, and stories on how to increase visibility and support for children of incarcerated parents, of all ages, in schools.

To enlist educators to help achieve its goals, the New York Initiative for Children of Incarcerated Parents offers an Educators Resource Toolkit on its website. This toolkit is meant to guide educators and school staff as they seek to see and support children of incarcerated parents in the classroom. Resources available on the website include:

### Pamphlets

- New York Initiative for Children of Incarcerated Parents - Recommended Books for and about Children of Incarcerated Parents
- New York Initiative for Children of Incarcerated Parents - Creating Safer Spaces for Children of Incarcerated Parents
- Guidance and Resources for Schools in Supporting Children Impacted by Incarceration
- 11 Million Days Lost: Race, Discipline, and Safety at U.S. Public Schools
- POPS the Club Curriculum - Lessons for Supporting Children of Incarcerated Parents through Self-Expression
- Advocates for Children of New York - Tips for Working with Children of Incarcerated Parents
- Tip Sheet for Teachers – Pre-K through Grade 12: Supporting Children Who Have an Incarcerated Parent

### Videos

- SUSU Youth Team: ASU panel - Youth with Incarcerated Parents Share: How to Best Support Them
- School Staff: Supporting Youth with Incarcerated
- SUSU Youth Team: Do's and Don'ts

### Book

- Teaching for Black Lives - edited By Dyan Watson, Jesse Hagopian, Wayne Au

### Poster

- Youth.gov Poster - 2019 SUSU Art Contest Winner, Maison, Draws His Relationship with His Incarcerated Dad

### Postcard

- Words Matter Postcard - How to Use Humanizing Language When Speaking about People Impacted by the Justice System

### Directories

- Youth.gov Resources - Supporting Youth with Incarcerated Parents: For School Staff
- New York Initiative for Children of Incarcerated Parents - Fact Sheet of New York City Resources for Children with Incarcerated Parents and Their Families
- *National Resource Center on Children and Families of the Incarcerated* -Directory National Programs Serving Children and Families of Incarcerated People

#### Toolkits

- Sustaining Police-Free Schools through Practice: A Toolkit for New York City School Communities
- Equal Justice Initiative - Racial Justice Teaching Tools

#### Website

- The Conscious Kid - Dedicated to Equity and Promoting Healthy Racial Identity

Website: [www.susu-osborne.org](http://www.susu-osborne.org)  
[www.osborneny.org](http://www.osborneny.org)

### **Sesame Street Workshop: Little Children, Big Challenges: Incarceration**

Sesame Workshop, the nonprofit educational organization behind Sesame Street, has created a bilingual (English/Spanish) initiative, *Little Children, Big Challenges: Incarceration*. The project offers tools to help caregivers with young children (ages 3–8) navigate some of the transitions and challenges that a parent's incarceration can bring and help the children develop skills for resilience.

Sesame workshop sees service providers as playing an important role in helping families cope with the incarceration of a loved one. The *Little Children, Big Challenges: Incarceration* initiative has created resources specifically for service providers to help them guide the caregivers and children through the changes they encounter.

*Little Children, Big Challenges: Incarceration* is designed to:

- support, comfort, and reduce anxiety, sadness, and confusion that young children may experience during the incarceration of a parent
- provide at-home caregivers with strategies, tips, and age-appropriate language they can use to help communicate with their children about incarceration
- inform incarcerated parents themselves that they can parent from anywhere, and provide them with simple parenting tips highlighting the importance of communication

The materials created by Sesame Street Workshop include a series of videos, articles and printable to help parents comfort children and guide them through difficult moments just by talking.

#### Videos

What Is Incarceration?  
Visiting a Parent in Prison  
You're Not Alone, Talking about Feelings

#### Articles

Ask Me Anything  
Something to Count On  
Little Children, Big Feelings  
Staying Connected

#### Printables

Sticking to Routines  
Talk Together, Reda Together  
In My Family Storybook

Singing During Prison Visits  
Interactives  
Art Maker; Draw It Out!

YouTube: [www.YouTube.com/SesameStreet](http://www.YouTube.com/SesameStreet)  
Facebook: [www.Facebook.com/SesameStreetInCommunities](http://www.Facebook.com/SesameStreetInCommunities)  
Website: <https://sesamestreetincommunities.org/topics/incarceration/>

### **Trauma-Informed Classroom**

Having taught and coached adults in prisons, jails, homeless shelters, colleges, and a variety of community-based nonprofits, Tracy Schiffmann understands the frustration of those who work with incarcerated parents and their families and their desire for strategies to more effectively support trauma-impacted adult clients. In spite of the passion and dedication of those attempting to help trauma-impacted clients, they sometimes encounter client resistance, reluctance, hypervigilance, and behavioral upsets that get in the way of the clients' ability to learn and make progress in accomplishing what's important to them.

Tracy has helped develop many evidence-based programs that have been used by correctional facilities and community agencies to support incarcerated parents and their families. Tracy seeks to equip professionals with trauma-informed teaching, relational and environmental strategies so they can improve client outcomes. She wants to share the strategies, tools, structures and learning activities she has used to help vulnerable, trauma-impacted adults achieve life-enhancing outcomes.

To reach out to education and social service professionals, she has launched her updated The Trauma-Informed Classroom website that offers free resources for teachers, trainers, home visitors, community educators, case managers and other professionals who support adult clients and learners, to maximize positive results with trauma-impacted adults.

On her Resources page you'll find the following free offerings for download:

- Trauma-Informed Learning Environment Checklist for creating a safe, trauma-informed learning environment
- Learning Design Template for designing evidence-informed learning events of any length for your clients
- Action Planning Worksheet for your clients using evidence-based steps from the habit-formation literature
- Create Materials to Support Behavior Change in Your Trauma-Impacted Clients - a 5-day email course to support you in approaching your clients as adult learners and how to design materials to engage and motivate them

On Tracy's blog page, you'll find multiple articles outlining evidence-based practical strategies accompanied by true stories and examples from her own work and that of her colleagues. Several of the posts offer free downloads. You can find practice-based articles in the following categories.

- Teaching Environment
- Teaching Strategies
- Teaching Relationships
- Curriculum Design

- Curriculum Sample

Contact: Tracy Schiffmann, [tracy@tracyschiffmann.com](mailto:tracy@tracyschiffmann.com)  
Website: [www.tracyschiffmann.com](http://www.tracyschiffmann.com)

### **U.S. Dream Academy**

The U.S. Dream Academy is helping the nation's children reach for their dreams. Through academic, social, and values enrichment, they empower children impacted by parental incarceration to believe in themselves and to succeed. They provide a transformative mentoring experience for youth to build character, skills and dreams in a safe out of school time environment. The U.S. Dream Academy currently operates Learning Centers in seven Dream Cities (Baltimore, Houston, Orlando, Philadelphia, Salt Lake City, San Bernardino and Washington) and is now offering a Virtual Village.

U.S. Dream Academy Learning Centers are located in under-invested neighborhoods where young people are growing up amidst high rates of poverty and often higher than average rates of crime in their communities. U.S. Dream Academy offers a safe place to go every day after school, along with academic support, mentors, dream building activities, leadership opportunities, and a place to explore new options for their future. Their hope is to transform children into dreamers who envision and realize their potential.

Every year, the U.S. Dream Academy partners with local schools to deliver robust after-school programs and mentoring to students living in communities impacted by mass incarceration. DreamKids grades 2 through 12 spend 10 to 15 hours each week in a stimulating learning environment that offers them ample opportunities for growth.

Website: [www.USDreamAcademy.org](http://www.USDreamAcademy.org)

### **We Got Us Now**

We Got Us Now is a national organization built by, led by and about children and young adults impacted by parental incarceration with the mission to engage, educate, elevate and empower this historically invisible population through the use of digital narratives, safe and inclusive spaces, and advocacy-led campaigns to ensure their voices are at the forefront of strategic initiatives, practices and policies that will help to keep their families connected, create fair sentencing, and end mass incarceration.

We Got Us Now was established to recognize ALL children and young adults who have experienced having parents in local jails, state prisons and federal correctional facilities to ensure that they are the collective authors of their personal narratives, they can work to eliminate the trauma, stigma, shame of parental incarceration, they can amplify the mechanisms that continue to harm children of incarcerated parents and they can seek justice and accountability for their marginalized population.

To achieve these goals, We Got Us Now has established the We Got Us Now Leadership Program that is a 3-year initiative to actively engage directly-impacted daughters and sons of incarcerated parents from all across the country and develop them into "actionists" to address three specific areas: Keep Families Connected, Create Fair Sentencing and End Mass Incarceration.

We Got Us Now also holds a 7-week Keep Families Connected campaign from Mother's Day through Father's Day with weekly and special edition virtual activations, supports bills to change visiting policies in New York State, and supports for children and families of aging incarcerated parents by advocating for the Second Look bill which will give incarcerated individuals who have served decades in prison the long overdue prospect of freedom.

Website: [www.wegotusnow.org](http://www.wegotusnow.org)

### **Willy the Plumber Scholarship Program**

The Willy the Plumber Scholarship program was established by former Utah inmate Karl (Willy) Winsness to help children of current and former Utah inmates pay for college expenses.

By offering the scholarship to students in this difficult situation, Willy hopes they would be motivated to not only succeed in their education, but in all aspects of life. Since 2013, the Willy the Plumber Scholarship program has awarded 18 scholarships totaling \$13,000. In addition, businesses donated swag bags or gift certificates worth hundreds of dollars to help students with their living necessities.

Contact: Karl Winsness, [kwwinsness54@hotmail.com](mailto:kwwinsness54@hotmail.com)

Website: [www.willytheplumberscholarship.net](http://www.willytheplumberscholarship.net) or [www.utahcf.org](http://www.utahcf.org)

### **WriteAPrisoner.com**

WriteAPrisoner.com is largely based on what the prison ministries have been doing for years – encouraging people to communicate with inmates to transcend the walls, to promote rehabilitation, to restore dignity, and to champion human rights.

WriteAPrisoner.com is a social website dedicated to positive change for inmates, where pen-pals can offer friendship and encouragement, family members can reconnect, employers can provide job opportunities, and the public can provide education resources to inmates.

Among the programs provided to incarcerated parents and their families are:

- The Children of Inmates Scholarship Fund and the Children as Victims Scholarship Fund award annual scholarships to students who are pursuing a college education.
- Self-help guides that promote self-responsibility and self-betterment including; "Parenting from Prison: For Parents in Prison," "Tips for Visiting Prison: For Individuals Visiting Loved Ones Behind Bars," and "Welcome Home Guide: For Inmates Coming Home."

Website: [www.writeaprisoner.com](http://www.writeaprisoner.com)



## **Prison Nurseries**

### **Achieving Baby Care Success, Ohio Reformatory for Women, Marysville, Ohio**

The mother must be sentenced to prison for a low-level, nonviolent felony. She cannot have convictions for any crime against a child. The Department of Jobs and Family Services from the inmate's home county must be willing to approve the placement. Both the mother and the child must be medically cleared to participate. The prison's warden must approve the decision.

Ohio's program began in 2001 to reduce recidivism and prevent the children of incarcerated women from heading to prison. Ohio officials said they believe that breaking the bond between parent and child soon after delivery can affect the child's emotional well-being.

The length of stay is 36 months.

### **Baby and Mother Bonding Initiative, Texas women's prisons**

The mothers must deliver their children while they are inmates and must be eligible for release within a year. They cannot have any felony or immigration detainers or have a history of violence or sex crimes. Mothers must go through detailed mental health screening processes from the University of Texas Medical Branch and the Texas prison system. The program is a partnership with the University of Texas and the prison system.

The length of stay is 12 months.

### **The Bedford Hills Nursery, Bedford Hills Correctional Facility, Bedford Hills, New York**

The prison's medical and mental health staff determines whether a woman is fit for the program. The mother must go through an eight-week prenatal class and a nine-week parenting program. While at the nursery, she is required to see a pediatrician twice a month for infant screenings and medical concerns. The child's health is also an important factor in participation, as the program cannot support the needs of infants born with serious medical issues.

The program is the oldest in the country, beginning in 1901. A clinical social worker solely assists nursery mothers, helping women prepare for re-entry.

The length of stay is 12 to 18 months. The mother must be released from prison within that time.

### **Community Prisoner Mother Program, Pomona, California**

The mothers are screened extensively for behavior and mental health issues. They cannot be convicted of a violent offense. But the regulations make an exception for manslaughter in the case of an abusive male spouse or partner, as long as the woman has no other prior offenses. The incarcerated women who are chosen for the program can give birth to a child and spend as much as six years caring for the child in a 24-bed facility 30 minutes east of Los Angeles.

A private contractor runs the dorm-like structure, providing treatment, high school and college classes, and job training for mothers. While their mothers are in classes, the children take part in Head Start programs and other classes. The mothers care for their children in their rooms.

The length of stay ranges from more than 90 days and up to six years.

### **Keeping Infant Development Successful, Lakin Correctional Center, West Columbia, West Virginia**

A woman who is pregnant upon entering prison delivers her child and can be placed in the program. The mother must be cleared by mental health and medical staff; she cannot have a history of sex offenses or violence. She must participate in all prenatal and parenting classes. The program is highly structured, as less than 1 in 5 inmates who apply are accepted.

The length of stay is 18 months, though it can be extended by the prison's warden.

### **Moms and Babies, Decatur Correctional Center, Chicago, Illinois**

The program screens mothers for mental and physical health, as well as their criminal backgrounds. The mothers must attend a variety of individual and group therapy sessions to help them deal not only with parenting, but also the reasons behind what led them to prison.

The program promotes building a strong bond between the mother and the child while the inmate is in prison, and it offers special monitoring and family services counseling that will ensure the family remains strong after the mother is released.

The length of stay is 24 months, meaning the mother must be eligible for release from prison within that time.

### **Mother Infant Program, South Dakota Women's Prison, Pierre, South Dakota**

A mother who comes into the prison system pregnant is screened for mental health issues and must attend parenting classes designed to help her nurture her infant. Permanent arrangements are made with family or the state's Department of Social Services.

The majority of incarcerated women have children and most of them regain the care for them after they leave prison. The Mother Infant Program builds the bond between mother and child.

The length of stay is 30 days.

### **Mothers Infants Nurturing Together, U.S. Bureau of Prisons**

The federal government's program is for women convicted of low-level crimes. They must be in the last three months of their pregnancy when sentenced and have less than five years on their sentence. The mother can spend three months with the newborn before giving the child to a family member or social service agency. The mother or family member must assume the financial responsibility of the child while the mother is in the program. The program is structured and the screening can be intense, as authorities look into each candidate's criminal background and mental health history.

The length of stay is 3 months

### **New Expectations Group Home, Newark, Delaware**

The program offers a nursery setting in a group home for pregnant women and young mothers convicted of crimes. The women who are able to enter the program are placed on probation, rather

than being sentenced to prison. No woman with a history of violence or crimes against children can be involved. Those with mental health or behavioral also are not permitted. Most of the women who go through the program are addicted to drugs.

The Delaware prison system and its medical provider, Connections Community Support Program, monitor the home. A woman cannot leave unsupervised, smoke or carry money. Those who break the rules are sent to prison for the completion of their sentences, and the child is placed with family or authorities.

The length of stay is about 15 months.

### **The Nursery Program, Nebraska Correctional Center for Women, Southeast Nebraska**

Acceptance is determined by a committee on a case-by-case basis. The mother must never have committed a crime against children, must be screened by a parenting coordinator and prison substance abuse director. The woman cannot have used drugs during her pregnancy and must have an excellent record as an inmate. The mother must be eligible for release within 24 months.

The length of stay ranges from 18 to 24 months.

### **Residential Parenting Program, Washington Corrections Center for Women, Gig Harbor, Washington**

Prison and mental health staff study the women's criminal past and behavior before they are allowed to enter the program. Mothers must attend pre- and post-natal programs that involve parenting skills, child development, nutrition, and family life skills. They must draft plans with family services coordinators that will help their children and themselves after they leave prison. The program's key focus is breaking the "intergenerational cycle of incarceration."

The length of stay is 30 months.

### **Wee Ones Nursery, Indiana Women's Prison, Indianapolis, Indiana**

Mothers cannot have any charges or allegations of violence in their criminal histories, whether they were convicted of those charges or not. They also cannot have serious misconduct issues in prison and must have at least an eighth-grade reading level. The nursery has "nannies," inmates who help the mothers with their newborns. The nannies must meet the same requirements as the mothers in the program.

The program, begun in 2008, is modeled after Ohio's prison nursery, and the focus is on providing young mothers with the tools to bond with their children in a safe, upbeat environment.

The length of stay ranges from 18 to 24 months.

## Parent/Child Book Reading Programs

### Books Beyond

To help maintain positive family ties, the federal Reading Is Fundamental program, Reach Out and Read Rhode Island, and the Rhode Island Department of Corrections teamed to establish the Books Beyond program. Books Beyond creates a much-needed tie between parent and child. Under the guidance of the volunteers, inmates choose new, age-appropriate books for their children, read and record the books onto CDs, and then mail the books and CDs home for the children to keep.

Contact: Ken Findlay, Professional Services Coordinator, [Ken.Findlay@doc.ri.gov](mailto:Ken.Findlay@doc.ri.gov)  
Website: [www.doc.ri.gov/rehabilitative/prisonerreentry/Books%20Beyond.php](http://www.doc.ri.gov/rehabilitative/prisonerreentry/Books%20Beyond.php)

### Children's Literacy Foundation

The Children's Literacy Foundation (CLiF) is a non-profit organization whose mission is to nurture a love of reading and writing among children throughout New Hampshire and Vermont. CLiF's motto is "Opening Books, Opening Minds, Opening Doors."

Through 16 free programs, CLiF serves young readers and writers who have the greatest needs, including children in shelters or low-income housing, children of prison inmates, refugee children, migrant children, children from low-income families, children in Head Start, children in communities undergoing severe economic challenges, and many other at-risk youth.

CLiF has created a powerful program to serve children of prison inmates and their families by providing the following support to each prison and jail they sponsor:

- Books for a Family Visiting Room Library – CLiF donates new, high-quality children's books to each prison or jail for an on-site library in a facility's family visiting room for use by children on family visiting days or by family members and volunteers to read aloud with children.
- Storytelling Presentation – A CLiF representative visits the prison or jail to meet with the children of inmates and their families, delivers new books, tells stories, and talks about the joys of words and reading. The presenter also performs interactive storytelling, talks about the books being donated to the family visiting room, and reads aloud from some of them.
- Books for Children to Keep – CLiF donates a selection of new children's books for the children of inmates to take home and keep. Some children select their books at a special storytelling and book delivery event held at the correctional facility and others select their books when they come to visit their mother or father at the prison or jail.
- Storybook Program – A program offered at many of the prisons and jails gives inmates the opportunity to record a book on tape and send it along with the story home to their children.
- Seminars for Parents – A CLiF representative visits the prison or jail to conduct seminars with inmates who are parents on the importance of reading with their children and how to make reading with children fun and easy, even if an inmate has low literacy skills.
- Camp Agape – The summer camp for children who have an incarcerated parent is coordinated by the Episcopal Church, the Methodist Church and the United Church of Christ in Vermont.

Contact: Duncan McDougall, Executive Director, [Duncan@clifonline.org](mailto:Duncan@clifonline.org)  
Jana Brown, Program Manager, [Jana@clifonline.org](mailto:Jana@clifonline.org)  
Website: [www.clifonline.org](http://www.clifonline.org)

## **A Father's Voice and A Mother's Voice**

Inmates across the South Carolina Department of Corrections are given the opportunity to record books for their children as part of a program aimed at strengthening family connections. A Father's Voice and A Mother's Voice provides incarcerated parents with recordable books suitable for toddlers and small children. The parent records the book, which is then given to the child. This enables the child and parent to "read" together, connecting the two through the joy of reading.

Inmates who are interested in the program earn the right to participate. After recording, the books are given to their children as gifts. This program is particularly valuable on Father's Day, Mother's Day, birthdays and the Christmas holidays, when children can get a gift containing their parent's voice.

## **Making Reading Memories**

Making Reading Memories is a literacy-rich reading program that connects parents who are incarcerated with their kids. The project seeks to strengthen family bonds, while building literary skills in 12 Wisconsin counties. The Making Reading Memories is a partnership between counties and Literacy Link — a University of Wisconsin-Madison, Division of Extension, program. Literacy Link works with jails, libraries and family-serving agencies to offer literacy opportunities to kids who have a parent or caregiver involved in correctional systems.

To participate in the program, incarcerated parents are required to take a workshop where they learn the benefits of reading to their children, tips on how to make reading fun, and how to connect with their children through books they love. Individuals are eligible to participate as long as they are legally able to be in contact with their children. Once they are done with the workshop, they are able to choose an age-appropriate book from the selection available to them and then read it to their child while being videotaped. Jail administration then reviews the footage and if it is approved, a copy of the book and link to the video is sent to the child, as long as the child's caregiver permits the child to view the video.

A Wisconsin Idea Collaboration Grant pays for the books and the fees to mail them to kids. The grant also includes a partnership with UW-Madison researchers, so they can further study the effects of Making Reading Memories. This research will help develop a plan to replicate the program in more Wisconsin counties.

The emphasis is on building relationships and spontaneous engagement between children and their parents and caregivers through literacy serves as a buffer to the elevated stress that justice-involved families experience. The program has worked closely with its county jail partners to remake physical space so environments nurture literacy interactions during jail visits.

Contact: Liz Lexeau, Literacy Link Statewide Coordinator [elizabeth.lexau@wisc.edu](mailto:elizabeth.lexau@wisc.edu)  
Website: [www.theliteracylink.extension.wisc.edu](http://www.theliteracylink.extension.wisc.edu)

## **Motheread/ Fatheread**

Motheread offers a variety of curriculum-based trainings for developing literacy skills with different populations. Since its inception, Motheread has helped incarcerated mothers improve their literacy skills and use books to connect with their children. They currently teach classes using the Motheread/Fatheread curriculum in four North Carolina correctional facilities.

Motheread/Fatheread has designed a curriculum specifically for use with incarcerated men. *Fathers Acting to Heal, Educate, and Reconnect* uses the power of books and stories to help fathers in prison connect with their children, communicate from a distance, understand children's reactions to incarceration, and learn about parenting and child development. Topics in the 10-lesson curriculum include: Understanding Children's Reactions to Incarceration, Communicating from a Distance, Understanding Parent and Child Development, and Building Self-Esteem.

Contact: Ev Machtinger, National Training Coordinator, [EMmotheread@bellsouth.net](mailto:EMmotheread@bellsouth.net)  
Website: [www.motheread.org](http://www.motheread.org)

### **Oklahoma Messages Project**

Oklahoma Messages Project exists solely to support kids of parents behind bars with creative, life-giving programs. Oklahoma Messages Project operates a highly effective prevention and literacy program that makes positive differences in kids' lives and helps mitigate the damage of incarceration. By filming parents in prison reading books to their children, the Oklahoma Messages Project helps maintain and improve the parent-child relationship, boost literacy, and improve the child's social, emotional, and educational outcomes.

Each year, a team of Oklahoma Messages volunteers visits prisons across the state of Oklahoma for several months before Christmas, Mother's Day and Father's Day, and films parents reading books to their children and sharing personal messages. They send the completed videos, along with the book(s) that the parent reads, to the children in care of their guardians. The videos and books provide each child with a positive, loving message, and allow them read a bedtime story with Mom or Dad each night. It reminds each child that they are loved and not forgotten.

The Oklahoma Messages Project expanded to every one of the 17 public prisons in Oklahoma and serve over 8000 children whose parents are behind bars since its founding.

Website: [www.okmessagesproject.org](http://www.okmessagesproject.org)

### **Reading Is Fundamental**

Reading Is Fundamental (RIF) provides free books and literacy resources to parents in prison and their children. A variety of family literacy and parent education activities supports communication between prison and home. For nearly 50 years, RIF's signature Books for Ownership program gets books into the hands of kids who need them most. The Read for Success program has proven that getting good books into the hands of children to read and own makes a huge difference in reading outcomes.

Contact: Cheryl Clark, Vice President of Programs  
Website: [www.rif.org](http://www.rif.org)

### **The Read to the Children: Promoting Family Literacy in Colorado's Prisons**

The Read to the Children: Promoting Family Literacy in Colorado's Prisons program (RTC) is a partnership between the Colorado State Library's Institutional Library Development and the Colorado Department of Corrections Libraries.

The RTC program, currently available at 19 Colorado Department of Corrections facilities, helps offenders stay involved in their children's lives by encouraging their children to read. Since 1999, the Read to the Children program has allowed offenders in Colorado's state prisons to send young family members a book accompanied by a recording of the offender reading it. In the past year, around 1,900 offenders and 3,200 children participated in RTC.

Website: [www.coloradovirtuallibrary.org/read-to-children](http://www.coloradovirtuallibrary.org/read-to-children)

### **Story Chain**

Story Chain, a nonprofit headquartered in Greene County, Ohio, was created with the mission, "Turning Pages . . . Turning Lives. They help parents do what parents have always done to comfort and nurture their children — read them bedtime stories, using their own voices to love, reassure, and encourage them from miles away."

Story Chain connects the incarcerated with their children through community outreach, literacy intervention, and audio technology. Using the knowledge of social and restorative justice and family literacy, trained volunteers produce audio files from incarcerated parents who want to read to their children.

Volunteers provide inmates with children's books, help them train their voice either in person or over the phone, and provide the parent with recording devices to read the stories aloud at no cost to the family. The recording is then edited and downloaded on an MP3 player for the child and the caregiver to receive. Usually the exchange happens at the local library nearest to the caregiver.

Not only does this give the children a new project to focus on, but the act of recording the book by community members helps them recognize that they are not alone. The audiobooks provide companionship for the neediest members in our community.

The children Story Chain works with range from newborns to teens. Kids with developmental disabilities to gifted children are included. The books used in the project are handpicked by local librarians. Volunteers focus on the elocution of the voice. Story Chain brings in trainers that specialize in voice delivery such as radio announcers, theater performers, and oratorical professionals.

Website: [www.story-chain.org](http://www.story-chain.org)

### **Storybook Project**

Lutheran Social Services of Illinois' Prisoner and Family Ministry Storybook Project helps men and women incarcerated in more than 16 federal, state and county correctional facilities in Illinois keep connected with their children. With the help of volunteers, an incarcerated parent selects a book and makes a recording of himself or herself reading that book. Parents may also record a brief, personal message, a song, or a Bible verse for their child. The recording and book are then sent to the child.

Since 1997, 50,000+ children have received books and recordings from their incarcerated parent and more than 5,000 children each year benefit from their mother's or father's involvement in the Storybook Project.

Contact: Mike Davis, Associate Executive Director, Prisoner and Family Ministry.  
Website: [www.lssi.org](http://www.lssi.org)

### **We Got Game: The Sixth POPS Anthology**

*We Got Game: The Sixth POPS Anthology* is a project of POPS the Club, a Los Angeles-based organization formed to battle against the stigma and to create a safe space for students with an incarcerated family member.

POPS started at Venice High School and has spread to eight high schools in the Los Angeles area. Since its inception, the various clubs have affected an estimated 350 to 400 students. The number of POPS volunteers has grown to about 60. Pilot clubs are forming in New York City, Harrisburg, Baltimore and Atlanta.

POPS the Club seeks to transform shame and stigma into hope and healing for teens who are struggling with the Pain of the Prison System. In weekly club meetings, young people with loved ones in prison, jail and detention discover they are not alone. In the sacred space that is a POPS club meeting, members create community, share their stories, and to listen others'. They break bread, make art, write, engage in mindfulness exercises, invite guest speakers and publish and perform our stories and poems.

The POPS curriculum focuses on self-expression (writing, drawing, photography, performance); self-healing (mindfulness); and community engagement (sharing questions and concerns, listening to speakers, speaking to middle schoolers, forums and others).

Founders Amy Friedman and Dennis Danziger Friedman based the club on three basic rules.

1. No one could be sent to POPS by a counselor, parent or teacher. Members were to attend meetings of their own volition
2. Since the club was scheduled to meet at lunchtime, POPS would always provide food, which they saw as symbolic of breaking bread and breaking down barriers
3. The club was open to anyone with any sort of connection to incarceration, whether they had a loved one inside or had been locked-up themselves

Website: <https://popstheclub.networkforgood.com/>

### **Women's Storybook Project**

Women's Storybook Project (WSP) of Texas is a special program that helps incarcerated mothers do what moms have always done to comfort and nurture their children — read them bedtime stories, using their own voices to love, reassure, and encourage them from miles away. Storybook Project builds relationships between mothers behind bars and their children on the outside. Through turning pages, WSP is turning lives.

WSP volunteers record incarcerated mothers reading stories and brief messages to their children, with the tapes and new books mailed to their children. Currently, WSP has nearly 200 volunteers working in six of the nine Texas women's prisons, mailing 350 packages per month to the children who live all over the United States. Every prospective WSP volunteer must complete mandatory volunteer training and periodic refresher sessions as required. Also, new volunteers must be trained in WSP's recording process.



Mothers who wish to participate in WSP must have at least 90 days of good behavior. This has yielded a decrease in disciplinary infractions.

Contact: [info@storybookproject.org](mailto:info@storybookproject.org)  
Website: [www.storybookproject.org](http://www.storybookproject.org)

# Re-Entry Programs

## Center for Effective Public Policy

Center for Effective Public Policy and its partners, the Urban Institute and the Carey Group, were selected to serve as the training and technical assistance providers to U.S. Department of Justice Prisoner Reentry Initiative grantees. The Center developed a series of tools to assist grantees in specific areas of their reentry work, including 11 Coaching Packets in 3 series.

- Series 1 provides a blueprint for an effective offender reentry system.
- Series 2 addresses key issues related to the delivery of services to offenders; advances in approaches to case management; the role of staff in changing offender behavior; and research and practice as it relates to working with women offenders, engaging families, and mentoring.
- Series 3 provides guidance and tools to ensure that reentry efforts achieve their intended outcomes and offers strategies for achieving continuous quality improvement.

The *Engaging Offenders' Families in Reentry Coaching Packet* focuses on a strength-based, family-focused approach to offender management. Included in this packet are sections on:

- The Effects of Incarceration on Families
- Families as a Natural Resource for Enhancing Reentry Efforts
- Research on Families and Family Support in Reentry Efforts
- Engaging Families as Part of an Evidence-Based Approach to Offender Reentry
- Implementing a Strength-Based, Family-Focused Approach

Contact: Becki Ney, Principal, [BNey@cepp.com](mailto:BNey@cepp.com)  
Website: [www.cepp.com/coaching.htm](http://www.cepp.com/coaching.htm)

## Centerforce

Centerforce offers a continuum of services for individuals and families during incarceration, reentry and after release. The Centerforce programs are designed to improve the lives and strengthen the communities of incarcerated people and their loved ones.

Centerforce is headquartered in San Quentin and provides direct services to individuals in Santa Rita Jail and four California state prisons. In addition, Centerforce provides direct services to communities and families of the incarcerated in Oakland, San Francisco, the Bay Area Counties, Fresno County and Madera County.

Centerforce specializes in providing health and family supportive services to incarcerated men and women and those reentering their communities. Centerforce has a particular specialty in delivering services that address health education and HIV/Hepatitis C prevention; family and relationship building; and comprehensive case management.

Centerforce programs include:

- The Maximizing Opportunities for Mothers to Succeed (MOMS) – The MOMS program is designed to reduce recidivism of pregnant and parenting women, reunite incarcerated mothers with their children, improve the health and well-being of the family, and break the multigenerational recidivism cycle. MOMS combines education, individual and group support,

housing assistance, substance abuse counseling, therapeutic play groups, child development, child counseling, and other services during and after incarceration by utilizing in-custody training and education programs, community-based post-release services, cooperative post release housing, and eighteen months of ongoing post release case management.

- The Back to Family Pilot Program (BTF) – BTF works with currently incarcerated and recently released fathers to strengthen their relationships with their children. The BTF project works to reduce system barriers help to increase communication and visitation between incarcerated fathers and their children and increase responsible fatherhood activities after release. The program offers a variety of services including father-focused parenting groups, visitation support, facilitated family playgroups in the community, support groups for caregivers, and service navigation to help incarcerated fathers build and sustain healthier connections to their children. The core element of the program includes a 12-week *Back to Family* class inside San Quentin State Prison that covers topics such as child development, parenting and co-parenting, stress and anger management, relationship building, and the impact of substance use, violence, and incarceration on children and families.
- Project Start – Project Start is a 6-session intervention for individuals soon to be released from prison. It incorporates features of prevention, case management, motivational interviewing, and incremental risk reduction. Focusing on the provision of HIV, STD, and Hepatitis education and the development of self-identified risk-reduction goals, the program determines individual reentry needs and provides referrals for housing, employment, finances, substance abuse, mental health treatment, and legal issues.
- Safe Transitions – Safe Transitions is a one year program designed to identify strategies for engaging African American men returning from incarceration into mental health care. The program uses of in-prison recruitment and screening to develop case management and care objectives for men who have experienced trauma, depression and anxiety.

Website: [www.centerforce1.org/programs](http://www.centerforce1.org/programs)

## **Fair Shake**

Fair Shake is like a reentry Do-It-Yourself library/hardware store: it has tools, information and materials for returning citizens - and everyone - to build bridges of trust and understanding that support reentry success.

Fair Shake offers a huge website, packed with information and resources for a variety of stakeholders. The entire website is also available in a software format, which is updated every year. The software application is FREE for all prisons and jails.

Leaving prison and successfully returning to families and communities is just the first step in re-starting life. Most returning citizens are faced with huge challenges ranging from finding a job and housing, to paying restitution or fines, to restoring relationships. Central to all of that is finding and keeping self-confidence and a positive outlook.

Because most incarcerated people have limited or no access to computers while in prison, it is a difficult jump from prison into today's digital world. Fair Shake's website and software offer a free computer tutorial and a free office-in-the-cloud that provides email, data storage and a personal web page to use to apply for jobs or housing. The website is also loaded with information for all stakeholders: the currently

and formerly incarcerated, families and friends, employers, property managers, communities and corrections.

Benefits of the Fair Shake website include:

- 24-hour access to the tools and resources available on the website
- Free email account and personal web page hosting for folks who have come home from prison.
- Local resources and National resources!
- A Quick and Easy (and FREE) Reentry Packet-builder!
- Self-empowering non-authoritative approach
- Presentations and conversations with the incarcerated in institutions

Key features of Fair Shake's Reentry Tool Kit include:

- Resource Directory
- Reentry Packets
- Preparing for Work
- Ready for Release
- Ownership Manual
- Culture Shock!

Contact: Sue Kastensen, Director and Founder, [Sue@fairshake.net](mailto:Sue@fairshake.net)  
Website: [www.fairshake.net](http://www.fairshake.net)

## **Home Program**

Home Program at the Fox Lake Correctional Institution (Wisconsin) helps offenders transition from an incarcerated person to a parent and partner in the community. The Home Program allows participants to discuss their concerns, build on the positive, and plan for a more successful future for their families.

The program assists offenders and their family members in having a healthy, effective, and realistic approach during the transition period from incarceration to freedom. Its focus is to develop skills in communication, celebrate family and community, and provide information on resources. The goals of the program are to gain knowledge of what to expect, address concerns, gain helpful tools, and gather resources and information to continue the momentum of becoming a healthy family after release.

The Home Program consists of three sessions per group of participants:

- Session 1 – Getting to know one another, sharing past family celebrations, future ideas, and identifying concerns
- Session 2 – Celebrating cultural diversity and sharing learning opportunities
- Session 3 – Role playing and brainstorming previously identified concerns

Contact: Deborah Mejchar, Chaplain, [Deborah.Mejchar@wisconsin.gov](mailto:Deborah.Mejchar@wisconsin.gov)

# Handbooks for Incarcerated Parents and their Families

## **Guide for Incarcerated Parents Who Have Children in the Child Welfare System (2015)**

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, and the Administration for Children and Families

Developed for parents who have a child in the child welfare system during their incarceration, the this guide helps these parents work with the child welfare system to stay in touch with their children and stay involved in decisions about their children's well-being. In addition to important information on steps required by the child welfare system for reunification or having children return home to their family after foster care, this guide includes sections on:

- Child Welfare Stages
- What to Do if Your Child Is in the Child Welfare System
- What to Include in a Letter or Conversation with Your Child's Social Worker
- Other Information that May Apply to You
- Information on Termination of Parental Rights
- Who Can Help?
- State Child Welfare Agency Contact Information
- Glossary of Terms Used by Child Welfare

Child welfare and social work professionals may also benefit from this guide to inform work with incarcerated parents, their children, and the caregivers.

Website: [www.youth.gov/feature-article/guide-incarcerated-parents-child-welfare-system](http://www.youth.gov/feature-article/guide-incarcerated-parents-child-welfare-system)

## **Handbook for Family and Friends of Inmates (2010)**

North Carolina Department of Corrections

Every offender is a part of a family. Incarceration is often a difficult time not only for the offenders, but also for their family and friends. Separation from a loved one due to incarceration can be emotionally, spiritually, and economically overwhelming. This handbook is a guide to understanding the rules and regulations of North Carolina prison facilities. Although this handbook may not answer all questions, it will provide general information about the North Carolina prison system to assist during this difficult time.

Website: [www.doc.state.nc.us/Publications/2010handbook.pdf](http://www.doc.state.nc.us/Publications/2010handbook.pdf)

## **Handbook for Families and Friends of Pennsylvania Dept. of Corrections Inmates (2006)**

Katherine Hardesty, Assistant Professor, Slippery Rock University and Judith E. Sturges, Assistant Professor, Pennsylvania State University - Fayette

This handbook was designed to help families and friends of inmates understand more about the Pennsylvania prison system and guide them as they cope with changes in their lives. The handbook is divided into two sections. The first section, "Understanding the Pennsylvania Prison System," explains how the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections works and the rules that effect the relationships between inmates and their friends or family members. The second section, "Taking Care of Yourself and

Your Family,” discusses some issues that affect the family’s life outside the prison and provides resources to help resolve some of the more common problems they may experience.

Website: [www.cor.pa.gov/Documents/handbook%20for%20family%20and%20friends.pdf](http://www.cor.pa.gov/Documents/handbook%20for%20family%20and%20friends.pdf)

### **How to Explain Jails and Prisons to Children (Caregivers’ guide)**

This booklet was written as a resource to encourage open and honest communication between children and adults. Ideally, a caregiver will read through this booklet and then use it as a guide when talking with a child about his/her parent going to jail or prison.

Website: [www.ambassadorsforhope.com](http://www.ambassadorsforhope.com)

### **How to Talk about Jails and Prisons with Children: A Caregiver’s Guide (2009)**

Elizabeth Sazie and Diane Ponder, Children's Justice Alliance and Oregon Department of Corrections

This booklet is for caregivers, family members of the child, and youth who are seeking their own information. It is designed to answer children’s questions about jail and prison. When children and families receive accurate information, they can better understand and cope with the stress they may experience when a relative goes to jail or prison.

Contact: Mindy Clark, Director of National Outreach & Marketing for the Children's Justice Alliance, Pathfinders of Oregon, [Mindy@childrensjusticealliance.org](mailto:Mindy@childrensjusticealliance.org)

Website: [www.oregon.gov/doc/OC/docs/oam/explaining\\_prison\\_booklet.pdf](http://www.oregon.gov/doc/OC/docs/oam/explaining_prison_booklet.pdf)

### **Louisiana Informational Handbook for Caregivers of Children with Incarcerated Parents (2021)**

Louisiana Department of Public Safety and Corrections

In order to help caregivers and incarcerated parents, the Louisiana Department of Public Safety and Corrections created an informational handbook to offer helpful tips, resources, and strategies to support children with incarcerated parents. It is the Department’s hope that with the tips and resources found in this handbook, caregivers and children with incarcerated parents can thrive amidst the challenges of having a parent incarcerated.

Topics covered in the Informational Handbook include:

- Why Maintain Relationships?
  - Benefits for Children
  - Benefits for Incarcerated Parents
- Co-Parenting
  - Communication Tips
  - Budgeting Tips
  - Parenting Tips
  - Practicing Self-Care
- Stress Points in the Criminal Justice System
- Supporting Children

Common Emotional & Behavioral Responses  
Tips to Help Children Cope

- Answering Children's Questions
- Communicating with a Parent in Prison
- Visiting a Parent in Prison
  - Preparing for the Visit
  - After the Visit
- Resources
  - Government Services
  - Community Organizations
  - Books

Contact: Isabel Jones, [Isabel.Jones@LA.gov](mailto:Isabel.Jones@LA.gov)

Website: <https://s32082.pcdn.co/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/LA-Informational-Handbook-for-Caregivers-of-Children-with-Incarcerated-Parents-.pdf>.

### **Mommies and Daddies in Jail (2009)**

Judi Goozh and Sue Jeweler, Creative Family Projects

Children are often unintended victims of their parents' crimes. They are often afraid and confused by the changes in their lives. This child-centered booklet provides these children with some of the answers they deserve in order to understand the events in which they find themselves. A scenario about a child who witnesses the arrest of a parent is followed by questions that are asked by the child and answered throughout the process from arrest to incarceration. The booklets are available in English and Spanish and are to be distributed as a free resource.

Contact: [creativefamilyprojectsllc@gmail.com](mailto:creativefamilyprojectsllc@gmail.com)

Website: [www.creativefamilyprojects.org](http://www.creativefamilyprojects.org)

### **Parenting from Prison: A Co-Parenting Guide for Divorced and Separated Parents**

David Schramm and Christina Pucci, Missouri Department of Human Development and Family Science

Posted on the University of Missouri Extension website, this guide describes how divorce is a stressful process for families and one parent being incarcerated further complicates communication, custody arrangements, child support and relationship maintenance. Although the incarcerated parents are physically separated from their children, they can still be involved in making decisions on issues concerning their children.

Topics covered in the *Co-Parenting Guide* include:

- Effects of divorce on children, caregivers and incarcerated parents
- Co-parental communication
- How to answer children's questions
- Visitation
- Tips for families with an incarcerated parent
- Creative and fun activities to help incarcerated parents with long-distance parenting:
- Co-parenting tips for custodial parents

- Reuniting with children and re-entering society

*Parenting from Prison: A Co-Parenting Guide for Divorced and Separated Parents* can be printed from the University of Missouri Extension website's Families and Relationships page and a copy of the guide can be mailed to the incarcerated parent so both parents can benefit from this information.

Website: [www.extension.missouri.edu/families](http://www.extension.missouri.edu/families)

### **Prison Fellowship Frequently Asked Questions**

To help volunteers prepare for working with the families of incarcerated parents and gain insight into the problems children face when a parent goes to prison, Prison Fellowship has prepared a list of Frequently Asked Questions about the children of prisoners. The Prison Fellowship encourages organizations to download these Frequently Asked Questions and once downloaded, print, save, or share the pages with others.

Website: [www.prisonfellowship.org/resources/training-resources/family/ministry-basics/faqs-about-children-of-prisoners/](http://www.prisonfellowship.org/resources/training-resources/family/ministry-basics/faqs-about-children-of-prisoners/)

### **Reaching Beyond Bars: A Handbook for Parents Incarcerated in Wisconsin and their Families (2017)**

Jerry Bednarowski, Correctional Education Association-Wisconsin and Chair of the CEA Parenting Special Interest Group

The *Reaching Beyond Bars* handbook is designed to help incarcerated parents, the caregivers, and their children cope with incarceration and strengthen the bonds between incarcerated parents and their children. By using the advice and information in this handbook, incarcerated parents, their children and caregivers will find ways "Reach Beyond Bars" maintain family relationships.

Sections of this handbook are:

- Co-Parenting
- Supporting the Children
- Helping Children Stay Connected
- Encouraging Your Children's Education
- Family Finances
- Returning Home
- Help for Incarcerated Parents and Caregivers

Contact: Jerry Bednarowski, [JerryBednarowski@new.rr.com](mailto:JerryBednarowski@new.rr.com)

Website: [www.ceawisconsin.org](http://www.ceawisconsin.org)

### **A Resource Guide for Kinship Caregivers in Arkansas (2010)**

Arkansas Voices for the Children Left Behind

This resource and information guide explains what every grandparent or relative caregiver needs to know when a parent is arrested, incapacitated, or involved in a dependency-neglect proceeding. The guide helps the caregivers understand some of the complicated choices they may face and find the resources they need. At the end of the guide, are examples of forms, form letters and petitions needed during the process of becoming a relative caregiver.



Topics covered in the guide are:

- Caring for Children in Distress
- Arkansas Voices for the Children Left Behind, Inc.
- School Enrollment
- Medicaid, Supplemental Security Income, Social Security Disability, and Temporary Employment Assistance
- Juvenile Court Dependency / Neglect Proceedings
- Kinship Foster Care, Guardianship, Power of Attorney, Adoption
- Families in Need of Services
- State Laws
- Behavior Management Tips
- Transitional Issues for Relative Caregivers

Contact: Dee Ann Newell, [DeeAnn@arkansasvoices.org](mailto:DeeAnn@arkansasvoices.org)

Website: [www.arkansasvoices.org/uploads/1/4/9/2/14920838/handbook\\_for\\_kinship\\_caregivers.pdf](http://www.arkansasvoices.org/uploads/1/4/9/2/14920838/handbook_for_kinship_caregivers.pdf)

### **Safer Society Foundation**

Safer Society Foundation has created a series of illustrated storybooks for counseling children of incarcerated parents. Each of these short stories is told from the point of view of one child who has a particular family situation and challenge to overcome. At the end of the 12-page story, are two coloring pages for the child reader to write and illustrate his or her own story. In the back of the book, a note to the caregiver suggests ways to engage children in reading and talking about the story and helping them draw parallels to their own situations and challenges.

Website: [www.safersociety.org/press](http://www.safersociety.org/press)

### **Staying Connected and Staying Strong: A Handbook for Families and Friends of Those Incarcerated in Minnesota State Correctional Facilities (2011)**

The Council on Crime and Justice and the Minnesota Department of Corrections

This handbook is designed to assist families and friends of prisoners understand the Minnesota correctional system. Sections of this handbook are:

- Prison Information
- Staying in Touch with Your Incarcerated Loved One
- Reasons to Maintain Relationships
- Visiting
- Mail
- Sending Money
- Telephone Calls
- Taking Care of Yourself and Your Family – Tips for Caregivers from Caregivers
- Coping with Incarceration
- Family Finances
- Resources and Programs
- When the Inmate Comes Home

Website: [www.doc.state.mn.us/PAGES/index.php/family-visitor/family-friends- handbook/](http://www.doc.state.mn.us/PAGES/index.php/family-visitor/family-friends- handbook/)

## **Stronger Together Handbooks (2014)**

Osborne Association of New York

Twenty years ago the Osborne Association of New York issued a series of three handbooks entitled “How Can I Help?” that focused on the experiences and needs of children with an incarcerated parent. Today, the new updated and revised handbooks, *Stronger Together*, are more important than ever:

- Volume I describes the feelings and behaviors that are common when a parent is incarcerated, as well as what parents and caregivers can do to support children and prevent or minimize negative responses.
- Volume II focuses on the importance of maintaining parent-child relationships, how to navigate the criminal justice system and the power of communication – especially between a child and his incarcerated parent.
- Volume III is an entirely new volume specifically for non-parent caregivers and provides essential information for any caregiver caring for children with an incarcerated parent.

The *Stronger Together* handbooks may be downloaded Free. Much of what is in these volumes is applicable for any state and locality in the United States. Those from states other than New York may contact the Osborne Association about adapting the New York-specific sections of Volume II or most of Volume III to your state or locality.

Website: [www.osborneny.org/programSubPage.cfm?subPageID=52](http://www.osborneny.org/programSubPage.cfm?subPageID=52)

## **Telling the Children (Booklet for Families of Prisoners)**

This Outsiders booklet provides helpful and practical information about the impact that imprisonment of a parent has on the children. The booklet covers a wide range of issues from what to say to the children, dealing with the child’s changing role in the family to coping with changes in a child’s behavior.

Website: [www.app.pelorous.com](http://www.app.pelorous.com)

## **What Happens When a Relative Is Sent to prison: A Booklet for Children Aged 4 – 11**

This booklet has been written to help explain to children of primary school age what happens when a parent or relative is sent to prison. It can be a difficult time for all the family. At the bottom of each page there are additional notes for the reader to help with any questions the children may have.

Website: [www.familiesoutside.org](http://www.familiesoutside.org)

# Books and Reports on Incarcerated Parents and their Families

## **All Alone in the World: Children of the Incarcerated**

Nell Bernstein, Coordinator of the San Francisco Children of Incarcerated Parents Partnership

A must-read for lawmakers as well as for lawbreakers, Nell Bernstein takes an intimate look at the effect that current incarceration policies have parents and children. Meticulously reported and sensitively written, the book is "brimming with compelling case studies and recommendations for change."

Contact: Nell Bernstein, [NEBernstein@earthlink.net](mailto:NEBernstein@earthlink.net)

## **All Rise for The Honorable Perry T. Cook**

Leslie Connor

*All Rise for The Honorable Perry T. Cook* is a wonderful story that gives readers a glimpse into the lives of children with incarcerated parents and into the lives of inmates in a minimum-security prison. The themes of this realistic fiction are: parent in prison, social issues, friendship, family relationships, and adoption and foster care.

The focus skills for this lit log are: using text to draw inferences; summarizing; describing characters, settings, and events, using text to determine the meaning of words and phrases, and determining point of view. This lit log can be used for reading instruction (literature circle, novel study, guided reading, read aloud) or for professional development (for staff and volunteers at schools, after school programs, residential treatment programs, minimum security prisons, and foster and adoption agencies).

## **Broken Bonds: Understanding and Addressing the Needs of Children with Incarcerated Parents**

Elizabeth Davies, Nancy G. La Vigne, and Diana Brazzell, Urban Institute Policy Center

Contained in the report are these sections:

- Scope of the Problem
- Changes in Daily Life
- Living Arrangements
- Parent-Child Relationships
- Financial Circumstances
- Emotional and Behavioral Impacts
- Protective Factors
- Relationships with the Parent Before and During Incarceration
- Support from Family, Caregivers, and Members of the Community

Contact: Urban Institute Policy Center

Website: [www.urban.org/research/publication/broken-bonds-understanding-add-addressing-needs-children-incarcerated-parents](http://www.urban.org/research/publication/broken-bonds-understanding-add-addressing-needs-children-incarcerated-parents)

## **Children of Incarcerated Parents**

Ashley Bartley

Children of Incarcerated Parents is a 10-session small group counseling curriculum that offers students a chance to share ideas and support to each other through discussion and group activities related to a loved one being away due to incarceration. Each of the 10 group sessions includes an Introduction, Icebreaker, Activity, Discussion and Closing.

This resource also includes a 2-page "Offering Your Support" caregiver information guide that encourages honesty about the incarceration using age-appropriate information, as well as a list of books for caregivers to look into and a consent form for the child to participate in the 10-session group.

- Session One: Introduction
- Session Two: Sharing
- Session Three: All Feelings are Okay
- Session Four: Coping Skills
- Session Five: Trusted Adults
- Session Six: In and Out of My Control
- Session Seven: Self-Esteem
- Session Eight: Optimism
- Session Nine: Growth Mindset
- Session Ten: Closing Session

## **Children of Incarcerated Parents**

Katherine Gabel and Denise Johnston

The arrest and imprisonment of a parent is a significant trauma for children, and they often react by demonstrating a pattern of aggression, anxiety, hyperarousal, depression, attention disorders, developmental regression, and "survival guilt." Children of offenders can display behaviors similar to those of children with a parent who has committed suicide or is murdered, as well as behaviors stemming from other forms of parental loss.

This one-of-a-kind book outlines for professionals working with these children the optimum time to provide intervention following significant trauma. It also shows that direct preventative and early intervention services to children of offenders can help them cope and can steer them away from a life in which crime plays an all too familiar role. The authors and their contributors offer guidance to aid social workers, psychologists, and others who work with children of incarcerated parents to help meet the children's needs and prevent future delinquency, adult offenses, and cross-generational incarceration.

Contact: Center for Children of Incarcerated Parents, [ccip@earthlink.net](mailto:ccip@earthlink.net)  
Website: [www.books.google.com/books/about/Children\\_of\\_Incarcerated\\_Parents.html?id=Zm4zBe9MaslC](http://www.books.google.com/books/about/Children_of_Incarcerated_Parents.html?id=Zm4zBe9MaslC)

## **Children with Incarcerated Mothers: Separation, Loss, and Reunification**

Julie Poehlmann-Tynan and Danielle Dallaire

This new book presents five studies that examine new data on:

- The benefits of a prison doula program for mothers and newborns in contrast to what usually happens for pregnant women who give birth during incarceration.
- How children cope with separation from their mothers because of incarceration and how that separation continues to affect children's lives following family reunification.
- Differences in recidivism between mothers and nonmothers during the 10 years following release.
- Alternatives to incarceration for women in residential drug treatment and how community supervision mandates can affect, contribute to, or extend mother-child separation.

The final chapter integrates information from the studies and summarizes implications for policy and practice.

## **A Day I'll Never Forget**

Dana L. Cunningham

*A Day I'll Never Forget* provides a child's perspective of incarceration from a minority point of view. In the book, Javon's world is turned upside down when his father suddenly goes to jail. He is devastated and has no idea what he will do without his father. Javon eventually discovers that although he is separated from his father, he can maintain his relationship with him.

This touching story is ideal for children ages 10 and younger and would benefit any adult who works with children who have been affected by the incarceration of a loved one. The narrative and accompanying discussion questions provide an opportunity for adults to help children process their feelings about incarceration. and paves the way for grade school children to apply the coping strategies suggested.

## **Embracing Your Story**

Alisa Smedley

*Embracing Your Story* is now being used in literacy and life skills classes in correctional facilities in three states. *Embracing Your Story* is an honest depiction of a child experiencing the emotional, spiritual, and financial toll that poverty and parental incarceration exacts. Coach Smedley's moving stories illustrate the lesson her mother taught her that "tomorrow is your sacred armor against the hopelessness of today." Tomorrow holds your destiny. That is why surviving the obstacles of today is imperative. *Embracing Your Story* is a blueprint for how to survive hardships. In ten short chapters, Coach Smedley shares stories, lessons learned, and provocative questions to ponder for those who are trying to do better in life. Instructors find that the essays often serve as "door openers" for students to share experiences and feelings with their children.

In addition to the book, Coach Smedley also offers a free online teacher site with supplemental materials for classroom use, and will join your class via Zoom to answer student questions. After students are released, they are invited to join a public book club on Facebook.

Contact: [beinspired@coachsmedley.com](mailto:beinspired@coachsmedley.com)

## **Empowering Children of Incarcerated Parents**

Stacey Burgess, Tonia Caselman, and Jennifer Carsey

A book for counselors, social workers, psychologists and teachers who work with children ages 7-12 with a parent in jail or prison. It is designed so that work can be done individually or in small groups. Each chapter includes a brief literature review, suggestions for additional support, discussion questions, fictional letters between a boy and his incarcerated father, activities, and reproducible worksheets.

Topics include:

- Understanding What Happened
- Building a Support System
- Dealing with Shame
- Allowing for Grief
- Acknowledging Trauma
- Developing a Positive Identity
- Learning to Ensure Success
- Handling Angry Feelings
- Building Positive Relationships
- Planning for the Future

Website: [www.activeparenting.com/product/Empowering\\_Children\\_of\\_Incarcerated](http://www.activeparenting.com/product/Empowering_Children_of_Incarcerated)

## **First Chance: How Kids with Nothing Can Change Everything**

*First Chance: How Kids with Nothing Can Change Everything* examines the challenges facing kids who have endured foster care or the incarceration of a mother and their triumphs against all odds.

Robert Carr founder of the Give Something Back Foundation turned the focus of its college scholarship program toward these often forgotten and neglected kids. This book highlights the remarkable success of his college scholarship and mentoring program. As the inspiring stories in *First Chance* reveal, students who have faced immeasurable obstacles and have the smarts and drive are able to compete with peers from more comfortable backgrounds — a testament to the power of a lending hand.

## **The Freedom of Routine**

Linda Armas,

Incarceration breaks up families, creating unstable environment for kids that can have lasting effects on their development and well-being. Children with incarcerated parents face many challenges. Often they may have moved homes, changed schools, and been separated from siblings. Many children will have feelings of shame about their parents' incarceration, and they may feel isolated from others. As a result, the children suffer more emotional problems and lower school success than their peers. Like all children, they need a source of support and stability.

This book offers strategies for designing a routine that enhances family function and relationships. Parents and caregivers of children with incarcerated family members will find particular value in learning to design routines for promoting positive behaviors.

Contact: Linda Armas, [linda@prepareparents.com](mailto:linda@prepareparents.com)  
Website: [www.PrepareParents.com](http://www.PrepareParents.com)

## **Handbook on Children with Incarcerated Parents**

J. Mark Eddy and Julie Poehlmann-Tynan

The handbook examines family life, health, and educational issues that often arise for the millions of children in the United States whose parents are in prison or jail. It details how these youth are more likely to exhibit behavior problems such as aggression, substance abuse, learning difficulties, mental health concerns, and physical health issues. It also examines resilience and how children and families thrive even in the face of multiple challenges related to parental incarceration.

Chapters integrate diverse, interdisciplinary, and rapidly expanding literature and synthesize rigorous scholarship to address the needs of children from multiple perspectives, including child welfare, education, health care, mental health, law enforcement, corrections and law. The handbook concludes with a chapter that explores new directions in research, policy, and practice to improve the life chances of children with incarcerated parents.

Topics featured in this handbook include:

- Findings from the Fragile Families and Child Wellbeing Study
- How parental incarceration contributes to racial and ethnic disparities and inequality
- Parent-child visits when parents are incarcerated in prison or jail
- Approaches to empowering incarcerated parents of color and their families
- International advances for incarcerated parents and their children

Contact: [www.springer.com/us/book/9783030167066](http://www.springer.com/us/book/9783030167066)

Email: Julie Poehlmann-Tynan, [poehlmann@waisman.wisc.edu](mailto:poehlmann@waisman.wisc.edu)

## **How Do I Help This Kid Adjust to What Real Life Is for Them?**

Samantha Boch

“How Do I Help This Kid Adjust to What Real Life Is for Them?: Youth Service Providers’ Experiences on Supporting Children with Incarcerated Parents” is an article that appeared in the March 2020 issue of *Children and Youth Services Review*. The researchers’ study sought to obtain a snapshot of the experiences and recommendations of youth service providers who have worked with or currently work with youth exposed to parental incarceration. The results of the research highlights the strong associations found between the exposure of parental incarceration and a host of negative social, economic, and health outcomes in youth.

Provider experiences working with children exposed to parental incarceration are grouped by the phase of incarceration of the parent: upon arrest, during incarceration, and upon re-entry into the community. Three primary themes were identified for the child for each phase of incarceration: justice contact needs, social and economic needs, and communication needs.

Contact: Samantha Boch, [samantha.boch@nationwidechildrens.org](mailto:samantha.boch@nationwidechildrens.org)  
Website: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0190740919312952>

## **An Inmate's Daughter**

Jan Walker

The author captured all of the fundamental psychological crises that children of incarcerated parents struggle with every day, and she did it in a context of typical early adolescent development. It is a gripping story of a young teen whose father is in prison and whose mother insists that it be kept a secret. It brings a new and compassionate view of families in this kind of challenging situation.

Contact: Jan Walker, [JanWalker@centurytel.net](mailto:JanWalker@centurytel.net)  
Website: [www.janwalker-author.com](http://www.janwalker-author.com) or [www.TeachInside.com](http://www.TeachInside.com).

## **Life Inside**

In June 2019, the Marshall Project's website ran a special Life Inside series of essays about fathers and incarceration. The essays in the series included:

- Father and Son, Next Door Neighbors in Prison
- My First Father-Daughter Dance Was in the Prison Gym
- I Thought I Knew My Father, Then I Met Him in Prison
- My Cellie Was the Father I Never Had
- After Prison, I Became a Better Dad

Website: [www.themarshallproject.org](http://www.themarshallproject.org)

## **Make Your Own Counseling Game**

*Make Your Own Counseling Game* is great for small groups, individual counseling, lunch bunches and classroom community building. *Make Your Own Counseling Game* with both printable and DIGITAL options covers 32 topics relevant to student success, growth and agency. Color and number-coded, this build your own counseling game resource acts as both 32 standalone Social Emotional Learning games and as an auxiliary device to transform your store-bought games into therapeutic interventions.

Topics covered include: Anger, Attendance, Boys Group, CBT: Think-Feel-Act, Children of Incarcerated Parents, Classroom Guidelines, Conflict Resolution, Conversation Skills, Coping Skills, Digital Technology, Divorce, Empathy, Executive Functioning, Expected Behavior, Feelings, Flexible Thinking, Friendship, Getting To Know You, Girls Group, Goal Setting, Growth Mindset, Homework, I Messages, Intake Interview, Joy and Happiness, Loss and Grief, School Success, Self-Control, Self-Esteem, Self-Regulation at School, Social Skills, and Worry and Anxiety.

## **Make Your Own Family Changes School Counseling Game**

*Make Your Own Family Changes School Counseling Game* in both print and digital options covers the topics of children of incarcerated parents, divorce and loss and grief. Color and number-coded, this DIY counseling game acts as both a standalone therapeutic tool and as an auxiliary device to transform your store-bought games into therapeutic interventions. Game card topics include: Children of Incarcerated Parents, Divorce, and Loss and Grief.

The *Make Your Own Family Changes School Counseling Game* can be used during individual counseling sessions, small groups, teletherapy, distance learning or lunch bunches. It can function as an assessment, the main activity, as an ice-breaker and/or rapport building conversation.



## **Model Practices for Parents in Prisons and Jails: Reducing Barriers to Family Connections**

Bureau of Justice Assistance, National Institute of Corrections, Urban Institute and Community Works West

*Model Practices for Parents in Prisons and Jails: Reducing Barriers to Family Connections* details a set of model family-friendly practices designed to help correctional agencies reduce barriers to parent-child contact and communication and help mitigate the harmful effects of a parent's incarceration on children and families. To accomplish this objective, it is suggested that correctional administrators (1) consider that children need and want to have a relationship with their incarcerated parents and vice versa; (2) allow incarcerated parents to take responsibility for their children; and (3) provide opportunities for families to communicate, interact, and bond. By implementing the practices outlined in this guide, it is thought that administrators will reduce the stress and confusion children experience when their parent is incarcerated while sustaining or maximizing safety and security in the facility.

Topics covered in the guide include:

- Partnership Building
- Training and Core Competencies
- Intake and Assessment
- Family Notification and Information Provision
- Classes and Groups
- Visitor Lobbies
- Visiting
- Parent-Child Communication
- Caregiver Support
- Family-Focused Reentry

Contact: Bryce Peterson, [BPeterson@urban.org](mailto:BPeterson@urban.org) or Lindsey Cramer, [LCramer@urban.org](mailto:LCramer@urban.org).  
Website: [www.urban.org](http://www.urban.org)

## **Parenting from a Distance: Your Rights and Responsibilities**

Jan Walker

Jan Walker has taught parenting, child development and family courses to incarcerated dads and moms for 18 years. *Parenting from a Distance* is designed to assist parents who are separated from their children to strengthen their bonds through learning rights they have and responsibilities they can accept. She wrote this book to help incarcerated parents reach out to their children. It will help parents separated by incarceration explain prison and crimes in ways children can understand. Her books have been used in prisons and jails throughout the country.

Contact: Jan Walker, [JanWalker@centurytel.net](mailto:JanWalker@centurytel.net)  
Website: [www.janwalker-author.com](http://www.janwalker-author.com) or [www.TeachInside.com](http://www.TeachInside.com).

## **Piplo Productions**

Chandra Ghosh Ippen, Erich Ippen, Jr. and Raiden Ippen

Piplo Productions was established to make the world a little better by using story, clinical psychology, and cute characters to help children and families connect and recover after stressful or traumatic events.

The series of books that acknowledges how stressful and traumatic events impact a child's development and relationships and how to insure that the child's life is not defined by them.

When parents and other important caregivers face challenges related to mental illness or addiction, children need the help of grown-ups within and outside their families to . . .

- have language for the challenges that their parents face
- know that they can talk about tough times and good times
- better understand why their parent may not be around
- keep good memories alive because these memories shape their view of themselves as worthy of love

The Piplo team has developed free resources to accompany each book and has translated many of most of the materials into several different languages.

Website: <https://piploproductions.com>

## **The Prisoner's Kid: My Journey to Freedom**

Sherelle Hogan

To give voice to her personal journey, Sherelle Hogan has authored an autobiography, *The sad, funny and upsetting autobiography shares a story of an urban American youth who struggled to cope with the life-altering effects of America's mass incarceration. A childhood punctuated with both parents being incarcerated, Sherelle found herself in a life of psychological imprisonment that was equivalent to what her parents were coping with. Often, she experienced haunting feelings of being unwanted and thoughts of suicide. After being nearly suffocated by soul-shattering trauma, being on life support did not derail her fight for her emotional, spiritual, and mental freedom. This compelling and inspiring story will undeniably engulf emotions. In sharing life's darkest moments and the ability to find light through darkness, *The Prisoners' Kid* is a truly a survivor's story of triumph that will inspire others to free themselves from entities that often imprison the mind, body, soul, and spirit. A powerful woman now applauds the girl of the past. *The Prisoners' Kid* is an example of how the circumstances that were meant to kill you may be turned into the catalysts for your life's richest blessings.*

Website: [www.sherellehogan.com](http://www.sherellehogan.com).

## **A Shared Sentence: The Devastating Toll of Parental Incarceration on Kids, Families and Communities**

The Annie E. Casey Foundation

The incarceration of a parent can have as much impact on a child's well-being as abuse or domestic violence. But while states spend heavily on corrections, few resources exist to support those left behind.

*A Shared Sentence* offers commonsense proposals to address the increased poverty and stress children of incarcerated parents experience. In this report, you will learn:

- How children of the incarcerated face unique challenges and stresses
- How incarceration destabilizes families, particularly those teetering on the edge of financial disaster
- Strategies to connect parents who have returned to the community with pathways to employment
- How communities with a sizable portion of residents behind bars are economically burdened and, therefore, lack resources to support families appropriately
- The disproportionate impact of incarceration on children and families of color
- Promising practices across the country that are supporting children and families during and after incarceration

Website: [www.aecf.org/resources/a-shared-sentence/](http://www.aecf.org/resources/a-shared-sentence/)

### **Somebody's Daughter**

Ashley C. Ford

*Somebody's Daughter* is an extraordinarily powerful memoir: the story of a childhood defined by the looming absence of her incarcerated father. The memoir steps into the world of growing up as a poor Black girl in Indiana with a family fragmented by incarceration, exploring how isolating and complex such a childhood can be. As Ashley battles her body and her environment, she embarks on a powerful journey to find the threads between who she is and what she was born into, and the complicated familial love that often binds them.

The book focuses on her difficult upbringing and her often fraught relationships with her parents, in particular her mother. Throughout her childhood, her father was incarcerated and the book explores the ways the formative conditions that created for her and her mother have "shaped her understanding of childhood, authority, forgiveness and freedom."

### **Spare the Kids: Why Whupping Children Won't Save Black America**

Dr. Stacey Patton

The author explores the deeply embedded practice of corporal punishment for Black children, both within and outside of the home. Dr. Patton weaves together race, religion, history, popular culture, science, policing, psychology, and personal testimonies and connects what happens at home to what happens in the streets in a way that is thought-provoking, unforgettable, and deeply sobering. She draws on decades of research and interviews with adults who suffered corporal punishment during their childhood and traces the history of spanking to European parenting styles that were eventually passed on to Black American slaves. She advocates fiercely against hitting children in any way, as well as the embrace of such parenting tools within Black culture.

Website: [www.sparethekids.com](http://www.sparethekids.com)

## **The Teen Guide to Living with Incarcerated Parents: A Self-Help Book for Coping During an Age of Mass Incarceration**

At 16 years of age, Anyé Young, a high school senior in Maryland, offers a glimpse into her life as a teenager coping with life while her father is serving a prison sentence for theft. Anyé's book, *The Teen Guide to Living with Incarcerated Parents: A Self-Help Book for Coping During an Age of Mass Incarceration*, offers advice on how to deal with an incarcerated parent and how to thrive during those tough circumstances.

Anyé shares personal stories along with tips and tricks she's learned while coping with the challenges of life away from her father and in a single-parent home. She aims to motivate and inspire children who have parents in prison. She wants them to know that they can overcome the shame and embarrassment they may feel. She also aims to help the single parents and extended family members gain a better understanding of the challenges their children face. Anyé offers her book as a guide for teenagers like her who are determined to succeed in life no matter the circumstances.

## **Unlocking Minds in Lockup: Prison Education Opens Doors**

Jan Walker

In *Unlocking Minds in Lockup*, Jan Walker uses the power of story to give insight into how women and men who spent time in prison learn, think and prepare for release to their communities as contributing adults and involved parents.

*Unlocking Minds in Lockup* contains several chapters that specifically address parenting issue. Chapter titles include:

- Moms in Prison Parenting Classes
- Moms Facing Termination of Parental Rights
- Teaching Inmates the Meaning of Discipline
- Inmates Reparenting Themselves
- The Parenting Experiment
- Family Matters
- Parenting From a Distance
- Rebuilding Families

Contact: Jan Walker, [JanWalker@centurytel.net](mailto:JanWalker@centurytel.net)

Website: [www.janwalker-writer.com](http://www.janwalker-writer.com) or [www.TeachInside.com](http://www.TeachInside.com)

## **The Unvarnished Truth about the Prison Family Journey**

Carolyn Esparza and Phillip Don Yow Sr.

The authors have over fifty years of combined personal and professional experience with the criminal justice system. They weave graphic personal, legal and emotional perspectives into a rare and boldly honest look at the realities faced by prison families. They offer encouragement and hope for successfully navigating the journey. Readers will learn both the legal steps and the emotional steps involved in becoming a member of a sad, huge group — incarcerated Americans.

Website: [www.pffunited.org/the-book/](http://www.pffunited.org/the-book/)

## **What Will Happen to Me?**

portraits by Howard Zehr, interviews with children by Lorraine Stutzman Amstutz.

Howard and Lorraine traveled the nation, photographing children of incarcerated parents and their caregivers, interviewing the children, and giving us an opportunity to know these families in a direct and wonderful way. Additionally, they have written on the role of restorative justice and reconciliation processes in the pursuit of family justice in a compelling and gentle way that can guide us all.

Contact: Dee Ann Newell, [DeeAnnlr@yahoo.com](mailto:DeeAnnlr@yahoo.com)

## **Zero to Three Journal**

The March 2020 issue, of the *Zero to Three Journal*, “Trauma and Resilience in Young Children: Effects and Experiences of Parental Incarceration,” focused on infants and toddlers with incarcerated mothers and fathers. This issue of the Journal draws attention to the millions of children in the United States who have experienced parental incarceration and its consequences, and invites readers to consider how one can help.

- The Table of Contents includes:
- This Issue and Why It Matters
- Promoting Resilience With Children Impacted by Parental Incarceration
- “No One Has Ever Asked Me if I’m a Dad.”: Supporting Families in the Context of Incarceration Through Community-University-Corrections Partnerships
- Parent-Child Separation Due to Incarceration: Assessment, Diagnosis, and Treatment Considerations
- Reuniting Young Children with Their Incarcerated Parents
- Understanding Secondary Trauma and Stress in the Early Childhood Workforce
- Exploring Early Care and Education Policy for Young Children of Incarcerated Parents, Family Systems, Communities of Care, and Mental Health

Website: [www.zerotothree.org](http://www.zerotothree.org)

## Videos on Incarcerated Parents and their Families

### **Apart**

Jennifer Redfearn  
Red Antelope Films

This documentary follows the story of 3 women in an Ohio jail who have struggled with being incarcerated and motherhood. While fighting harsh sentences, fines, and emotional trauma these women try their best to create new lives for themselves and their family while trying to stay out of prison. This documentary shows how the children and families involved view these women for their past choices and just how hard it is to escape the stigma that follows. It's as if the time served was just the beginning of the real hurdles to come. The children in this documentary shared a multitude of different emotions in regards to their mother's incarceration. Some felt resentment while others felt sadness, overall, the children's voices within this documentary are extremely important.

*Apart* is available for virtual and in-person community screenings, as well as Q&As with the film's participants and experts.

Contact: [lillie@representjustice.org](mailto:lillie@representjustice.org)  
Website: [www.representjustice.org/campaigns/apart](http://www.representjustice.org/campaigns/apart)

### **The Children of Incarcerated Parents and the Realities of COVID-19**

Children's Defense Fund-California and the Bay Area Children of Incarcerated Parents Partnership

On June 3, 2020, the Children's Defense Fund-California and the Bay Area Children of Incarcerated Parents Partnership hosted *Children of Incarcerated Parents and the Realities of COVID-19*, a webinar that explored the impacts of COVID-19 and the trauma it inflicts on an often invisible population: children of incarcerated parents.

In the two-part interactive discussion Panel 1 discusses "COVID-19 Pandemic, Mental Health Trauma and the Impact on Children/Youth of Incarcerated Parents." A panel of experts talks about what COVID-19 is and how to protect yourself and stay safe. The layers of trauma experienced by children of incarcerated parents and their families are described and how COVID-19 adds an addition layer to their trauma.

The topic for Panel 2 is "The Pandemic: Voices of Families and Youth from the Community." A panel of those personally affected talk about their experiences and what they have learned.

YouTube: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=VtmsARfo4nc](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VtmsARfo4nc)  
Website: <http://cdfca.org>

## Children of Re-Entry Series

New America Media

The single most accurate predictor for successful re-entry is strong family bonds. And no group has a stronger vested interest in re-establishing relations with ex-prisoners than their children. Like children of divorce, they bear the brunt of separation and yearn for an integrated family life.

New America Media has compiled a video collection of portraits of parents returning home from incarceration through the eyes of their children. Produced by young reporters at Richmond Pulse and Silicon Valley De-Bug, these videos tell the evolving stories of families adjusting to life changes.

- ***I Can't Just Be Done with My Mom*** by David Meza – When Alisha's drug-addicted mom was preparing for her release from state prison, she asked her daughter Alisha to be her caretaker. Alisha said "no." Alisha spent the first nine years of her mother's incarceration, release, and re-incarceration cycle as a child, and as she enters into her own adulthood, she is finding her mom's absence and chaotic lifestyle an even more bitter pill to swallow.
- ***I Want to Be Like Him When I Grow Up*** by Daniel Zapian – Greg was just released after a being incarcerated most of his life. To his great surprise, his son has taken him under his wing, looking after him while his other sons won't even talk with him. Greg is so grateful for his son's support, he says, "I want to be like him when I grow up."
- ***Baby Quintero*** by Valerie Klinker – The one thing that Suzie couldn't handle while in prison was not being able to protect her daughter, Baby. Baby spent two months in juvenile hall while her mom was incarcerated. But now that her mom has returned home with a new job and a newfound sense of self-worth, Baby considers herself her mom's backbone.
- ***Life Lost, Family Found*** by Anthony May – Ever since Nate's dad left his family when he was 8 years old, Nate has never fully recovered. Nate went on to join a gang and spent 20 years in state prison for a murder charge. But after his first year behind bars, something special happened in his life. He had a baby girl. Now that Nate's been released, he is piecing together the relationship with his daughter that for 20 years has been limited to letters and a few visits to the state penitentiary.
- ***A Reentry to Motherhood*** by Jean Melesaine – Steeda is finding life with her two young girls to be not exactly what she had envisioned from behind bars. Transitioning from prison life to the responsibilities of motherhood is a struggle that Stacy faces daily -- but she doesn't do it alone. Steeda stands with other mothers in similar situations through the organization she founded, Sisters That Been There, which is a peer support group for women reentering society after incarceration.
- ***Joey Visits Lisa*** by Jean Melesaine – Joey, hadn't seen her mother Lisa since she was incarcerated 18 years ago. Joey and Lisa's attorney make the drive to visit Lisa for the first time in 20 years, causing everyone in the car to reflect on their relationship to Lisa, even the attorney.
- ***Joshua & Kenny – A Father Lost, and Found*** by Sean Shavers – Joshua Davis, was four years old when his father Kenny was sent to prison. But instead of returning to the blissful times of Joshua's childhood when his father came home five years later, Joshua and his father began to resent each other. Today it has been nine years since Kenny's release and Joshua has lost interest in his father and building a relationship with him. But despite the distance between Joshua and Kenny in their relationship, they actually live on the same block, seeing each other only on holidays and at the local corner store.

- **Angela Birts** by Fernando Perez – Angela says she has a positive relationship with her father, despite the fact that for 18 years he’s been behind bars. The physical barrier erected between Angela and her father has become even more painful as her life presents more and more opportunities that she wants to enjoy with her father there. As she prepares for a potential new life with her dad, she realizes that she too will need help with the transition

Website: [www.newamericamedia.org/special/children-of-reentry.php](http://www.newamericamedia.org/special/children-of-reentry.php)

## Connections

Family Resource Information, Education, and Network Development Service (FRIENDS)

FRIENDS National Center for Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP) produced *Connections*, a special National Child Abuse Prevention Month series of short videos. The videos were released on each of the five Wednesdays in April 2015. The *Connections* video series features presentations from 11 different partner organizations, focused around themes to help move the child maltreatment field forward to a greater emphasis on prevention.

Videos in the series include:

April 1, 2015

- Children’s Bureau Associate Commissioner, JooYeun Chang hosted a webinar that discussed the prevention components of the FY2016 President’s Budget request for the Administration for Children and Families, as well as the prevention resources that the Children’s Bureau offers

April 8, 2015

- *Connect the Dots: Building a Movement for Children and Families* – Prevent Child Abuse America, the Center for the Study of Social Policy and the National Alliance of Children’s Trust & Prevention Funds
- *Making Meaningful Connections* – The Child Welfare Information Gateway
- *Developing a National Strategy to Eliminate Child Abuse and Neglect Fatalities* – The Commission to Eliminate Child Abuse and Neglect Fatalities

April 15, 2015

- *Using Adverse Childhood Experiences Research to Prioritize Prevention* – the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention
- *Connecting with Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention and the FRIENDS National Center* – The FRIENDS National Center for CBCAP

April 22, 2015

- *Early Experiences Matter: Preventing Child Maltreatment from the Start – Zero to Three*
- *Introduction to Strengthening Families: A Protective Factors Framework* – The Center for the Study of Social Policy
- *Child Abuse Prevention to Trauma Treatment: Psychology Benefitting All Children and Families* – American Psychological Association

April 29, 2015

- *Healthy Communities, Strong Families, Safe and Healthy Children* – the National Alliance of Children’s Trust & Prevention Funds
- *The Benefits of Infant Massage: For Babies, Parents, Communities and Society* - Infant Massage USA



- *Harnessing Mobile App Technology with the Period of PURPLE Crying to Prevent Abusive Head Trauma/Shaken Baby Syndrome* – The National Center on Shaken Baby Syndrome

Website: [www.friendsnrc.org/connections](http://www.friendsnrc.org/connections)

## **Echoes of Incarceration**

Jeremy Robins

*Echoes of Incarceration* is an award-winning documentary produced by teens with incarcerated parents. The 10-minute DVD intercuts the stories of four young people with the voices of experts and advocates in the field, and creates an emotional, compelling case for the importance of ongoing parental contact. The project explores the issue of mass incarceration and its effects on families as told through the life experiences of the filmmakers themselves.

The *Echoes of Incarceration* DVD is a collaboration between filmmaker Jeremy Robins and a group of non-profit organizations and advocates around the country. Eventually the project seeks to nurture a crew of highly-trained young filmmakers and embark on a large scale documentary on the issues of justice, prison reform, and families of the incarcerated around the country. Free *Echoes of Incarceration* DVD's are available for educators and advocates.

Contact: Jeremy Robins, [Jeremy@ibisdocs.com](mailto:Jeremy@ibisdocs.com)  
 Website: [www.echoesofincarceration.org/](http://www.echoesofincarceration.org/)

## **Jacinta**

Jessica Earnshaw  
 Lunamax film

The documentary *Jacinta* focuses on the impact of addiction and incarceration on an entire family. The film crew goes to Maine and follows Jacinta during her initial incarceration with her mother and older brother while also bringing awareness to what the path of recovery can truly look like. An entire family plagued by the grips of incarceration provides first hand experiences on how it has impacted their economic situation, mental state, and even the way they view love. This documentary shows Jacinta's struggles within the criminal justice system as well as the hurdles she faces as a returning citizen recovering from addiction. Her story is the reality for many women and mothers within the jail system. Jacinta's ten-year-old daughter provides first hand experiences of how his mother's incarceration has impacted her own self-esteem and their mother/daughter relationship.

Website: [www.jacintafilm.com](http://www.jacintafilm.com)

## **If You Only Knew**

US Dream Academy

During the winter of 2021, the US Dream Academy partnered with Tatemmen Entertainment to create a unique new podcast that brought together six young people committed to social justice, who gathered weekly to discuss how to help other young people who grew up in similar circumstances to their own. Their purpose was to help heal, to educate, and to advocate for change in their community.

Each participant came to the podcast with their individual experiences, such as an incarcerated parent, personally incarcerated, living in homeless shelters, and challenges in school. While each person has a unique story to tell, they all share similar experiences of being stereotyped, feelings of shame, uncertainty, challenging family dynamics, and aloneness. They also discovered that they shared many more feelings and experiences in common: hope, resilience, family support, mentors, and raised aspirations for their futures.

The *If You Only Knew* podcast is the result of their work together. In the podcast, Green Bay Packer star Kenny Clark, whose father was incarcerated when he was nine, is interviewed. Clark expressed how the 55-year sentence of his father completely changed the dynamic of his family. Through visitations and phone conversations Kenny Clark Sr. made sure to maintain a constant relationship with all of his children. This interview provides first-hand accounts of how children with incarcerated parents are impacted at a young age.

Website: <https://ifonlyyouknew.live/#!/podcast>

### **Mothers of Bedford**

Jenifer McShane

*Mothers of Bedford*, a feature-length documentary, follows five women incarcerated in the Bedford Hills Correctional Facility in New York and looks at their lives through the lens of motherhood. The film provides audiences with unprecedented access to this community of women and seeks to move the national conversation about incarceration to a new level. It explores the effects of a long-term prison sentence on the mother-child relationship.

Contact: Jenifer McShane, film maker, [mothersofbedfordoutreach@gmail.com](mailto:mothersofbedfordoutreach@gmail.com)  
Website: [www.mothersofbedford.com/](http://www.mothersofbedford.com/)

### **Purdy**

PBS station KBTC, Washington

*Purdy* is an intimate portrait of five offender mothers and their infants. Originally aired by Washington PBS station KBTC in 2010, the documentary explores the struggles of raising a child at the Washington Corrections Center for Women in Purdy, the challenges that the women face as they prepare to re-enter the community, and the joy that these women experience as the bond develops between their infants and them.

*Purdy* is a look at the Residential Parenting Program inside the women's prison. The parenting program allows minimum-security inmates serving less than three years in prison to live with their babies in a designated unit. The women learn about parenting and are able to support healthy attachments to their newborns.

Website: [www.kbtc.org/page.php?id=304](http://www.kbtc.org/page.php?id=304)

## **Talking Is Teaching: Talk, Read, Sing**

Talking Is Teaching: Talk, Read, Sing is a public awareness and action campaign that helps parents recognize their power to boost their children's early brain and vocabulary development through simple, everyday actions - like describing things while walking outside, or singing songs together during bath time. Using books, parent videos, text messaging, social media, and information from expert partners, Talking Is Teaching empowers parents and caregivers with fun and easy ways to improve their babies' learning.

Talking Is Teaching is part of *Too Small to Fail*, a joint initiative of The Opportunity Institute and the Clinton Foundation.

Talking Is Teaching has created a series of videos to help parents learn more about how to support their child's early social-emotional development:

- Understand What's Driving Your Child's Behavior
- Setting Limits with Love
- Parenting as a Process
- Fostering Healthy Social and Emotional Development in Young Children

Other Talking Is Teaching videos designed to help build children's brains as well as important language, math, reading and social-emotional skills to help prepare them for school and beyond are:

- Everyday Fun with Science
- Everyday Fun with Engineering and Technology
- Talk, Read, and Sing Together Everyday!
- Turn 'Wash Time' Into "Talk Time"
- Social and Emotional Development Research Background

Website: [www.TalkingIsTeaching.org](http://www.TalkingIsTeaching.org)

## **Time**

Garrett Bradley, Director  
Concordia Studios

*Time* is a documentary film based on the actual events surrounding Sybil and Robert Richardson's incarceration. As parents of six children, their case serves as a prime example of racism and unfair sentencing of people of color within our criminal legal system. The documentary follows Sybil's fight to release her husband, while also shining a spotlight on how her children were impacted by these events. Between Sybil and Robert, a total of 31 years was served behind bars away from their family, despite the fact that it was a first offense for each of them. This documentary uses its platform to compare the treatment of those incarcerated to slavery which has impacted more than 2 million people who are incarcerated. Sybil and Roberts three boys describe what it was like growing up during this era in Louisiana and how their parents' incarceration has impacted them in their adulthood.

Website: [www.concordia.studio/time](http://www.concordia.studio/time)

## **Time Zone**

Gabriela Bulisova

*Time Zone* follows Lashawna Etheridge, convicted of two murders, in the aftermath of imprisonment as she and her children struggle with re-entry. The video focuses on Lashawna's personal transformation while in prison, her difficult yet highly successful reentry into society, and the conflicts that remain within herself and with family members.

For many former prisoners, the basic tasks that face them upon release – getting housing, a job, and an education – become overwhelming obstacles. Lashawna's successful reentry has made her a role model for other ex-offenders. She quickly obtained housing, found a full time job, and continued her college education. However, the less perceptible currents of her life – rebuilding relationship with her family, and living with and answering for her past – have gone less smoothly. Most importantly, Lashawna struggles constantly with the question of whether she will be able to forgive herself.

Website: [www.vimeo.com/68177411](http://www.vimeo.com/68177411)

## **Tre Maison Dasan: Life with a Parent in Prison through the Eyes of their Sons**

Denali Tiller

*Tre Maison Dasan* is a 2019 PBS Independent Lens film that is an intimate portrait of three boys growing up, each with a parent in prison. Directly told through the child's perspective, the film is an exploration of relationships and separation, masculinity, and coming of age in America when a parent is behind bars.

The film documents the pressure, stigma, and trauma they face due to the absence of a parent, as well as their resilience and moments of joy. The children face growing up in a society that often demonizes their parents, provides little support for their families, and assumes "the apple doesn't fall far from the tree." The film shows how society writes the parents off as criminals, but in their hearts their children still see them as mom and dad.

The website, [www.pbs.org/independentlens/films/](http://www.pbs.org/independentlens/films/), provides two short clips from the film. The entire *Tre Maison Dasan* film is available for purchase or screening from the Director's website, [www.tremaisondasan.com](http://www.tremaisondasan.com).

Also available on the [www.tremaisondasan.com](http://www.tremaisondasan.com) website are two viewing guides, Classroom and Prison and Re-entry, that have been designed to supply facilitators both with suggested guidelines for leading discussions around the film and issues presented, and also critical information on how to best acknowledge, work with, and support children of incarcerated parents and their families. The website also has a page for Social Engagement to help those screening to empower kids to communicate with their parents and caregivers, improve support systems for families and begin therapeutic healing for incarcerated and formerly incarcerated people that can strengthen family bonds.

Websites: [www.pbs.org/independentlens/films/](http://www.pbs.org/independentlens/films/)  
[www.tremaisondasan.com](http://www.tremaisondasan.com)

## **Wake Me Up When My Father's Home Again**

Voices of Children

Writer by Felix Latham believes that his song, "Wake Me Up When My Father's Home Again," will help incarcerated parents imagine what their children are feeling. He believes that song can help not only to parents on the street, but also to those who are incarcerated have a change of heart. Sung by his daughters, Kiyah, Khadijah, Kendra, and Khaleigha Latham, the song is a message to help children by reaching out to parents that are making choices that could take them away from their children.

Contact: [voiceofchildrenthelatham@gmail.com](mailto:voiceofchildrenthelatham@gmail.com)  
Website: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=MbS-31aNZH0](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MbS-31aNZH0)

## **We Got Us Now Podcasts**

We Got Us Now is a national nonpartisan advocacy organization built by, led by and about children and young adults impacted by parental incarceration with the mission to Engage, Educate, Elevate & Empower the historically invisible population through the use of digital narratives, safe and inclusive spaces, and advocacy led campaigns to ensure their voices are at the forefront of strategic initiatives, practices and policies that will help to keep families connected, create fair sentencing and end mass incarceration.

We Got Us Now was established to recognize ALL children and young adults who have experienced having parents in local jails, state prisons and federal correctional facilities to ensure that:

- We are the collective authors of our personal narratives.
- We work to eliminate the trauma, stigma, shame of parental incarceration.
- We amplify the carceral mechanisms that continue to harm children of incarcerated parents.
- We seek justice and accountability for our marginalized population.

Because the children and young adults impacted by parental incarceration stories are often unknown and untold, their traumas are misdiagnosed and overlooked, and their futures are often misrepresented and experiences unheard, We Got Us Now has produced a series of podcasts to shine a spotlight on the invisible population of 10 million children and young adults in the US impacted by parental incarceration.

Website: [www.wegotusnow.org](http://www.wegotusnow.org)

## Newsletters and Blogs

### **Daily Strength**

Sharecare

DailyStrength is a website that serves as a social network centered on support groups, where users provide one another with emotional support by discussing their struggles and successes with each other. DailyStrength was created by WebMD founder and Discovery Communications' Chief of Global Digital Strategy Jeff Arnold, along with Dr. Mehmet Oz.

The DailyStrength site contains over 500 online communities that deal with different medical conditions or life challenges. One of the online communities is the Families of Prisoners Support Group. A last count, the Families of Prisoners Support Group had 1280 registered members.

This community is dedicated to families that have been disrupted by prison. Having a loved one incarcerated or having been incarcerated comes with its own unique challenges that require support and understanding. Families of prisoners are encouraged to join the group to find others who know what they are going through, and to seek advice or share their experiences.

The site is free for members and the members are encouraged to remain anonymous. The site provides members with continual support as someone is always available to talk.

Website: [www.dailystrength.org/group/families-of-prisoners](http://www.dailystrength.org/group/families-of-prisoners)

### **Inside Out: Keeping Loved Ones Informed**

This quarterly newsletter published by the Louisiana Department of Public Safety and Corrections is designed specifically for friends and family members of people in the Louisiana prison system. The goal of this newsletter is to enhance communication channels between the DOC and loved ones of people in the Louisiana prison system by providing pertinent and helpful information on an ongoing basis.

Website: <https://doc.louisiana.gov/public-programs-resources/>

### **Kids with Incarcerated Parents blog**

Julie Poehlmann-Tynan, PhD

Julie Poehlmann-Tynan, PhD has been studying children and families affected by parental incarceration since she received her first National Institutes of Health grant in 2001. While working as a clinical psychologist at the State University of New York Health Science Center at Syracuse, she searched the child and family literature to see what was known about children affected by parental incarceration and found virtually nothing. She decided then that when I went back into academia, she would study these kids and try to help.

In 2016, Julie started a blog focusing on Kids with Incarcerated Parents that features information for parents and caregivers, professionals, and students. On this blog, she posts recent findings from her lab, links to her colleague's research and interventions, and discussions of issues that she presents in her graduate seminar.

Contact: Julie Poehlmann-Tynan, [poehlmann@waisman.wisc.edu](mailto:poehlmann@waisman.wisc.edu)  
Website: <http://kidswithincarceratedparents.com/>

### **Parenting Connection newsletter**

Editor: Jerry Bednarowski

This newsletter for parenting educators working with correctional students is published bi-monthly by Correctional Education Association-Wisconsin and CEA Parenting Special Interest Group. Each issue highlights innovative parenting skills programs, parent/child reading projects, family support and mentoring programs, community resources, teaching methods, and special projects. All *Parenting Connection* newsletters are posted on the [www.ceawisconsin.org](http://www.ceawisconsin.org) and [www.ceanational.org](http://www.ceanational.org) websites.

Contact: Jerry Bednarowski, [JerryBednarowski@new.rr.com](mailto:JerryBednarowski@new.rr.com)  
Website: [www.ceawisconsin.org](http://www.ceawisconsin.org)