

THE CHILDREN OF INCARCERATED PARENTS:

THE FACTS, THE NEEDS, THE GAPS,
RECOMMENDATIONS, AND RESOURCES

PREPARED
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THE NEEDS OF CHILDREN OF INCARCERATED PERSONS AND THEIR CAREGIVERS: THE FACTS

A. NATIONAL RESEARCH ON INMATE POPULATION, THE IMPACT ON THEIR FAMILIES AND CHILDREN:

1. The Needs

National statistics reported by Centerforce -a non-profit organization working to support, educate, and advocate for individuals, families and communities impacted by incarceration- indicate that the United States incarcerates more persons per capita than any other industrialized nation in the world. As recently as 2003, there were 2 million children in the United States with at least one incarcerated parent. According to a 2007 report by Dr. Hairston for the Annie E. Cassie Foundation, 65% of women and 55% of men incarcerated in State Prisons are parents, and 59% of women and 63% of men in Federal Prisons are parents. This same study reveals that prior to their admission, 46% of all imprisoned parents lived with their minor children. Incarcerated mothers overwhelmingly report that during their incarceration, their children are living with grandparents. Incarcerated fathers overwhelmingly report that during their incarceration, their children are living with the mother.

Incarcerated mothers report their children are living:	State	Fed
With fathers	28%	31%
In foster care	10%	3%
With grandparents	53%	45%
With other relatives	26%	34%
With friends or other	10%	12%

Incarcerated fathers report their children are living:	State	Fed
With mothers	90%	92%
In foster care	2%	1%
With grandparents	13%	10%
With other relatives	5%	5%
With friends or other	4%	6%

This same study found that once admitted to prison, more than half of incarcerated parents with minor children had never seen any of their children. This may be partly due to differences in gender and culture, but is also attributed to distance from prisons. Research indicates a direct correlation between the number of visits a prisoner receives and the number of miles away they are from their home. Grandparents are not always able and are less likely to drive long distances to bring children to visits. Additionally, only 8% of grandparents say they will accept a collect call, which is typically the only way an incarcerated parent may place a phone call to his/her child. These are not just statistics, but the everyday realities and tragedies in the lives of the more than two million children of incarcerated parents in the United States.

2. The Response

The San Francisco Children of Incarcerated Parents Partnership (SFCIPP) is a coalition of social service providers, representatives of government bodies, advocates and others who work with or are concerned about children of incarcerated parents and their families. Formed in 2000 under the auspices of the Zellerbach Family Foundation, SFCIPP works to improve the lives of children of incarcerated parents, and to increase awareness of these children, their needs and their strengths. After studying the issues affecting these children and their families, SFCIPP members agreed that a children's perspective was the logical framework from which all future work should evolve.

The bill of rights that follows is derived from the experience of Gretchen Newby, executive director of Friends Outside—who drafted the original bill of rights on which this one is based—in working with families affected by incarceration, and from interviews conducted by journalist Nell Bernstein with over 30 young people who have experienced parental incarceration. This Bill of Rights now serves as the recognized framework for all work with children and families of incarcerated parents.

Children of incarcerated Parents: Bill of Rights

1. I have the right to be kept safe and informed at the time of my parent's arrest.
2. I have the right to be heard when decisions are made about me.
3. I have the right to be considered when decisions are made about my parent.
4. I have the right to be well cared for in my parent's absence.
5. I have the right to speak with, see, and touch my parent.
6. I have the right to support as I struggle with my parent's incarceration.
7. I have the right not to be judged, blamed, or labeled because of my parent's incarceration.
8. I have the right to a lifelong relationship with my parent.

Varying programs that are emerging around the country to address the needs of children of incarcerated parents:

- transportation to prison and detention facilities for visits
- summer camps for children of an incarcerated parent
- mentoring for children of an incarcerated parent
- in-school character building programs
- after-school tutoring
- visitation programs in partnership with DOC on prison grounds, which typically include parenting classes as well as transportation
- childcare programs for persons with business in the courts
- storybook project

B. RESEARCH ON INMATE POPULATION IN OKLAHOMA, THE IMPACT ON THEIR FAMILIES AND CHILDREN:

1. The Needs

In 2004, a comprehensive University of Oklahoma Study of Incarcerated Mothers and their Children by Susan F. Sharp indicated that Oklahoma's female prison population was the largest per capita in the country. According to the study, incarcerated mothers were nearly twice as likely as incarcerated fathers to have a minor child living in their home at the time of their arrest. This means that the incarceration of a mother is much more likely to disrupt the children's living arrangements. Similarly to Dr. Hairston's report for the Annie E. Cassie Foundation, this Oklahoma study also finds that mothers are significantly less likely than fathers to indicate that their children are now living with their other parent. Taken in tandem, these two statistics highlight the reality that when a woman becomes incarcerated, her children likely find themselves not only without their mother but also without their home. The study notes that for children who were previously living with their mother, these children most likely find themselves living with grandparents. Placement with grandparents is not always a best alternative as several studies indicate that incarcerated mothers report their parents' homes were abusive. The Sharp study concludes that children of inmates will suffer many difficulties and emotional wounds as a result of the trauma of their parent's incarceration and the ongoing separation. Depression and difficulty with caregivers and in school are the three looming, growing, and overwhelming issues, which increase dramatically once a parent becomes incarcerated. Early intervention, education about the issues, and regular contact when appropriate are highly recommended.

2. The Response

The types of programs that have emerged to address the needs of children in Norman and Oklahoma City:

- transportation for visits
- summer camps for children of DOC inmates
- some mentoring
- storybook project

Services offered by the Oklahoma DOC:

- The DOC offers Parenting classes for men and women inmates, but without children present.
- The Oklahoma DOC schedules a Playday for lunch, games, and art activities to promote communication between inmate mothers and their children.

Oklahoma also offers a video-based discussion group for parents of adolescents.

Contact Person with Oklahoma DOC:
Mary Smith, Programs Administrator
2901 N. Classen
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73106
(405) 962-6178

C. SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS: HOW TO BEST MEET THE NEEDS OF CHILDREN, FAMILIES, AND CAREGIVERS IN THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

Oklahoma incarcerates more women than any other state in the nation. At the time of their incarceration, 34% of women are the sole caregivers to one or more child. This means that the incarceration of that woman will create a significant trauma in the life of one or more children. That child will not only lose their mother, but also their house, friends, school, teachers, neighbors, and more. Aside from the whatever act of violence the child may have witnessed -the one which led to the parent's arrest or the parent's actual arrest- the child has been traumatized and has lost all that is secure and familiar. Trust will be difficult to establish. In order to reach out to these fragile children, it is crucial to intervene early. Allowing children to maintain a close contact with their parent when appropriate is crucial in working through anger problems and developing the capacity to maintain strong and secure bonds and build trust. Facilitating visits is ideal. Many state DOC facilities have allowed organizations to work on site to offer private visitation in a nurturing environment. Trained volunteers who can assist mothers with parenting advice, and who can also lead parenting classes facilitate these visits. Transportation should be provided for the children in an effort to maximize the visits and to ease the burden on caregivers. There is also a Storybook project, which can be implemented in any state and in any facility. The Storybook project allows the involvement of volunteers and permits incarcerated parents to read and record a story on cassette tape for their child. Their child then gets to listen to their parent 'read' to them and 'hear' their voice. This is another wonderful way to nurture strong bonds and attachments from behind bars -this may be done on CD in some places.

For young children a key component in reversing the significant increase in depression rates and the rise in school failure is building self-esteem and character development. This has been successfully done through some mentoring programs

-such as Amachi (see Resources), but most effectively through summer camps and year-round in-school curriculums. Mentoring programs have had less success in some areas due to the lack of volunteers and because the need and commitment is ongoing. Because the ratio in mentoring programs is one volunteer to one child, and supervision and training should be closely monitored, these prove more difficult to staff in the long term. Summer camp programs, which serve the specific needs of this population have been very effective. Common 'best practice' is to provide a one-staff to two-camper ratio, as the needs for this population are typically very intense.

Common 'best practice' for in-school curriculums is for the organization to hire paid staff to work in cooperation with the school's guidance counselor or social worker. This is done in small groups during non-core academic time over 6 or 8-week segments. This not only serves to meet the unique needs of the children, but if done well and in conjunction with the serving the needs of caregivers, can be holistic and can also provide respite care to worn out grandparents, aunts, etc... (See AFOI's Milk And Cookies program in Appendix B and the Resources section. MAC provides a year-round Character Education curriculum. They have received grant funding for their curriculum and now have 3 full-time program coordinators in the public schools, each serving four elementary schools. They are now serving 12 of 29 elementary schools in their district.)

Key Factors:

- Early intervention is essential. Children have been traumatized and should be given every opportunity, and as soon as possible, to learn to rebuild trust, resolve anger, build strong bonds and attachments whenever possible with the incarcerated parent. A prison sentence is much worse for a child. It may come without warning, explanation, or preparation and it may bring with it violence, trauma, and upheaval. Children are the least well equipped for a prison sentence, but they have to serve it all the same.
- Provide skills to cope with trauma and equip child with life long strategies for success –children of incarcerated parents are more likely to drop out of school and have much higher rates of depression
- Whenever appropriate, foster strong bonds between children and incarcerated parent –through transportation to visits, facilitation of visits, development of parenting classes, creation of local storybook project, etc...
- Support and encourage Caregivers through respite childcare, facilitating transportation to visits, support groups, parenting classes, advocacy, and more

Gaps in Services in the Norman/Oklahoma City Area:

- No evidence of services to the children of jailed parents –different than those serving life or long sentences at a DOC facility, but those in and out of local jail. This population is more transient and therefore more difficult to serve.
- No evidence of year-round mentoring programs (one on one)
- No evidence of character education and case management in the schools serving the specific and unique needs of these children
- No evidence of caregiver assistance, support groups, education, resource, and referrals provided holistically through case management services unless the child is State custody as a foster placement (and at that point the services to the caregiver are peripheral since the case management is being provided to the child/ren)
- No evidence of transportation for visits with fathers (CJAMM of the OK UMC is looking at beginning such a program since they have one for mothers)
- Lack of outcomes based research as to short, medium, and long term effectiveness of programs that serve the needs of children and families of inmates
- No evidence of culture based programs (serving needs of Latino community, Native American community, African American community, etc...) serving the needs of children and families of inmates
- Cleveland County (District 29) totals 15 Elementary Schools: Adams, Cleveland, Eisenhower, Jackson, Jefferson, Kennedy, Lakeview, Lincoln, Madison, McKinley, Monroe, Roosevelt, Truman, Washington, and Wilson. According to the District office, there is no program of any kind in place in any of these schools that specifically targets the children of inmates or ministers to their unique needs.

AN EIGHT-STEP APPROACH TO DEVELOPING AN IN-SCHOOL CURRICULUM

STEP 1. ASSESS THE NEED

- The first task of the planning group is to assess the need for a Character Education program to meet the unique needs of children who have an incarcerated parent. The group should also determine if there are any other organizations that are already providing the same service and if so, to what extent, in what schools, and what are their limitations. Contact person is the Director of Guidance for Cleveland County (District 29) Elementary Schools, Sharon Heatley (405) 366-5846. In an effort to provide holistic services, the planning group should assess the needs of caregivers –many of whom are grandparents who are left to care for children- to gauge what scope of support services may be required, but are not being adequately provided. These may range from simple referral for intake services, to provision of support services, or respite care.

STEP 2. DEFINE THE MISSION

- This brief statement should describe what the program intends to do to address the identified needs. The mission statement will guide you as you design, implement, and evaluate the program. The mission statement should reflect an understanding of social work ‘best practice’ with children and families, and the voices of children as heard in Children of Incarcerated Parents: A Bill of Rights.

STEP 3. SET GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

- Objectives are clear and measurable descriptions of specific outcomes related to the changes in behavior seen in the children produced as a result of the curriculum. These can be observed, reported, and measured in the classroom and in the home as a baseline when children enter the program, periodically throughout the curriculum, and upon completing various stages of the program. All of the program’s services, policies, and practices will be based on the mission statement and the proposed goals and objectives. These should reflect the unique needs of children who have an incarcerated parent.

STEP 4. CREATE PROGRAM PARTNERSHIPS

- Program Partnerships should include two or more organizations that serve the same population. It is suggested that if being modeled after an existing program in Oklahoma or elsewhere in the Nation, a strong relationship or partnership be maintained with that organization as it will prove beneficial in the early years as

policies, evaluation tools, and outcomes are established. Strong partnerships should be formed with several other non-profit organizations in the local community, which serve the needs of the same client population. If the organization intends to work with children, it would be ideal to have a District Level School Social Worker or Guidance Counselor on the Board. If transportation to the prisons or parenting classes is a need that will be met, then a good relationship with the DOC should be a priority. Mary Smith is Programs Director for the Oklahoma DOC and should be consulted as the program is designed.

STEP 5. DESIGN THE PROGRAM

- The design of the curriculum should address details regarding the method of recruitment of the children, hiring and training of staff, co-operation with the schools to determine space, hours, length of curriculum, confidentiality, and disciplinary concerns, involving and supporting caregivers, communication, and other policies and procedures. If the program will involve and support component for caregivers, what will it look like, how will it be structured, what space will be needed? This part of the program may offer more opportunity for volunteer involvement and might look very different from the in-school program.

STEP 6. SELECT OR ADAPT A CURRICULUM

- Select or adapt a curriculum that has been proven successful with children whose needs are similar to those of the children being targeted through this program. The curriculum would at its core, seek to build trust in children who have lost the ability to trust. It would also work to build self-worth, teach anger management and conflict resolution skills, how to be a good friend, how to take care of myself and others, and would teach respect, etiquette and good manners. The curriculum should be intentionally culturally relevant based on the specific demographics of each small group.

STEP 7. PROVIDE SUPPORT FOR STAFF

- By providing appropriate and adequate training and supervision for staff and volunteers, the Board will help ensure that all involved have the knowledge and skills required to carry out their roles and responsibilities effectively. The children being served have suffered a great deal; most are traumatized and emotionally neglected. They require and deserve well and fully trained professionals to equip and prepare them to manage life without a parent.

STEP 8. IMPLEMENT THE PLANS

- Key stakeholders can continue to play a role in operating and evaluating the program as you move from planning and design stage to implementation. Evaluation tools should be designed for teachers to measure behaviors in the classroom, and for caregivers to measure behaviors at home. These can be used as a baseline as children enter the program, periodically, and upon completion of the full curriculum.

PROGRAM EVALUATION TOOLS

Developing a mechanism for evaluating the effectiveness of a program will help ensure that children are benefiting and that improvements are made. Most funding groups require evaluation. Statistical components usually include enrollment, attendance, and dropout rates. Another useful evaluation mechanism is a review of individual participants' performance and group experiences. Student portfolios containing for example, photographs, artwork, and writings, can provide information about each child's progress over time. These may be considered more subjective evaluation tools, but are useful indicators nonetheless. Joint review of these materials by staff, families, and the participants themselves can enhance the children's self-esteem and allow for self-evaluation. Another important function of the program can be 'prevention.' To what extent does the program prevent low self-esteem, gang involvement, or school failure? These may be more difficult to measure but could be assessed using statistical data from State research on children of inmates, and behavioral reports from teachers, caregivers, and participants, as students enter and complete the various segments of the curriculum.

Lastly, the participants themselves should be included as evaluators as they can be asked how the program is helping them at school, with peers, at home, and how the program can be made more fun, since the more engaged they are, the more they will learn.

EVALUATION OF PROGRAM PROGRESS AND EFFECTIVENESS

Effective character building programs have a continuous evaluation component built into the design so that program planners can objectively gauge their success based on the clear goals set for the curriculum.

Using data for improvement

A system of accountability and continuous evaluation supports program involvement. With this data, partners can discuss the progress and success of the program, which will help in decision making around design and funding.

Continuous monitoring and shared understanding of program goals

These will assist the staff and/or volunteers in maintaining their focus, improving their effectiveness and accountability, ensuring school administration-caregiver-participant satisfaction, and identifying necessary changes.

Designing effective evaluations

The program should be evaluated regularly in ways to incorporate multiple measures of success that reflect program goals

RESOURCES

Many resources are available for reference and consultation and many local and national organizations are working tirelessly to meet the growing and changing needs of inmates, their children, and caregivers. Following is a list of resources, many of which were consulted and some personally interviewed for the purpose of this research and the resulting recommendations. This list is by no means exhaustive, but is representative of some of the best work being done in the field. They are organized into three broad categories.

A. PUBLICATIONS — RESEARCH:

Prisoners Once Removed: The Impact of Incarceration and Reentry on Children, Families, and Communities By Jeremy Travis, Urban Institute Press, 2004, ISBN# 0-8776-6715-2.

Children of Incarcerated Parents by Katherine Gabel, Lexington Books, 1997, ISBN# 0-0291-1042-4.

Loving Through Bars: Children with Parents in Prison By Cynthia Martone, Santa Monica Press, 2005, ISBN# 1-8916-6148-5.

All Alone in the World: Children of the Incarcerated By Nell Bernstein, New Press, 2007, ISBN# 1-5955-8185-5.

Working with Families Separated by Incarceration By Lois Wright, CWLA Press, 2000, ISBN# 0-8786-8783-1.

Focus on Children with Incarcerated Parents: An Overview of the Research Literature, A Report Prepared for the Annie E. Cassie Foundation by Creasie Finney Haiston, Ph.D, October 2007, full report available at <http://www.fcnetwork.org/AECFOverview%20of%20the%20Research%20Literature.pdf>

B. ORGANIZATIONS AND WEBSITES:

www.afoi.org Assisting Families Of Inmates seeks to prevent the breakdown of relationships among inmates and their families by providing regular, meaningful visitation, support groups for children and caregivers, and education services for children. Children's services are provided in the schools as a Character Education curriculum and in the summer during camp. Started as ministry of the local

Presbyterian Church to provide transportation to families of inmates for visits, AFOI was one of the earliest of its kind. It has since grown to encompass a breadth of other vital services to address the challenging needs of children and caregivers. Contact Fran Bolin at 1 North 5th Street, Suite 400, Richmond, VA 23219, (804) 643-2401, or family @afoi.org.

www.amachimentoring.org Amachi has chapters in 48 states and is partnership of secular and faith-based organizations working together to provide mentoring to children of incarcerated parents. Faith institutions work with human service providers and public agencies (particularly justice institutions) to identify children of prisoners and match them with caring adults.

www.angeltree.org/site_hmpg.asp An estimated 1.5 million children have a mom or dad in prison. The number is huge – but so is the opportunity. Angel Tree is a ministry that reaches out to the children of inmates and their families with the love of Christ. Angel Tree provides an opportunity to connect with those families and begin ministering to them at Christmas and then continue through a variety of year-round ministry opportunities. Contact at 44180 Riverside Parkway, Lansdowne, VA 20176 or (800) 552-6435.

www.centerforce.org/families/kids.cfm Centerforce provides services for incarcerated individuals, formerly incarcerated individuals, and their loved ones through direct services, its annual conference and, through consultation and training for government agencies, community-based organizations and correctional facilities around the country and internationally. Direct services for clients are provided in four Service Areas in eligible facilities in the Bay area: Children and Families Services, Prison & Transitional Services, and Information Services. Contact information is Judy Leahy, Director of Programs, 2955 Kerner Blvd., 2nd Floor, San Rafael, CA 94901 or (415) 456-9980.

www.curenational.org/ Citizens United for Rehabilitation of Errants (CURE) is a grassroots organization that was founded in Texas in 1972. It became a national organization in 1985. CURE believes that prisons should be used only for those who absolutely must be incarcerated and that those who are incarcerated should have all of the resources they need to turn their lives around. They also believe that human rights documents provide a sound basis for ensuring that criminal justice systems meet these goals. CURE has an Oklahoma chapter whose leader is Lynn Powell and the contact information is PO Box 9741 Tulsa OK, 74157, (918) 744-9857, or okcure@okcure.org, and www.okcure.org.

www.doc.state.ok.us/treatment/programs/index.html The Oklahoma Department of Corrections Programs Division consists of inmate Treatment Programs, Correctional Education, and Offender Reentry. The Oklahoma Department of Corrections currently offers parenting classes without the children present, to male and female inmates who are within one year of release. Some facilities also facilitate playdates for mothers and children on occasion, where nurture and physical contact are allowed. The Administrator for Programs is Mary Smith and she can be contacted at 2901 N. Classen, Oklahoma City, OK 73106, (405) 962-6135.

www.fcnetwork.org The Family and Corrections Network is the first national organization in the United States focused on families of prisoners. The Family and Corrections Network has provided ways for those concerned with families of prisoners to share information and experiences in an atmosphere of mutual respect. They have done this through publishing, sponsoring conferences, liaison with other agencies, presentations, and consultation. They have published information on children of prisoners, parenting programs for prisoners, prison visiting, incarcerated fathers, hospitality programs and a variety of other topics. They can be reached at 93 Old York Road Suite 1 #510, Jenkintown PA 19046, (215) 576-1110.

www.okumcministries.org/CJAMM/new_day_camp.htm New Day Camp was created in 1995 to affirm kids who have a parent in prison. Many blame themselves for their parent's incarceration, or feel they will follow in their parent's footsteps. Some are uprooted suddenly from their home and placed in foster care or with relatives, leaving them with a sense of loss. They feel isolated; and that they are the only ones with a parent in prison. New Day Camp lets these children know that they are not alone; they have worth; and God loves them no matter what. Two weeklong camps are offered at Cross Point in Mid-June. Contact New Camp Dean, Stan Basler at 1501 NW 24th Street, Oklahoma City, OK 73106, (405) 528-0963, or redemptionumc@coxinet.net.

www.prisonmatch.org Prison Mothers And Their CHildren of NC is a non-profit organization housed in the NC Women's DOC and started by a ministry of the NC Women's UMC. It understands that all children need their mothers, and brings children to spend time with their incarcerated mothers in a warm, home-like setting. Regular visits strengthen the bond between mother and child, and help break the cycle of violence and incarceration. Contact Joan Purcull at 1034 Bragg Street, PO BOX 14469, Raleigh, NC 27620, (919) 828-4767, or director@prisonmatch.org.

www.projectavary.org/pages/about.html Project Alternative Ventures for At Risk Youth supports children & youth with incarcerated parents in developing the skills, confidence, and positive life views that promote healthy personal development and responsibility to community. What began with a summer camp for 32 children in 1999 has grown into a year-round enrichment program for more than 150 children and their families. Contact Program Director Maria Schell Hassid at 1018 Grand Ave., San Rafael, CA 94901, (415) 460-1184, or maria@projectavary.org.

C. PUBLICATIONS — MATERIALS:

<http://www.centerforce.org/edMaterials/posters.cfm> Free Downloadable Posters (i.e. ‘My Dad just got of Prison... He will need my help and yours too. With a job, a place to live and healthcare he will make it. Ex-Prisoners are family too!’)

A Visit to the Big House by Oliver Butterworth. Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1993, ISBN #0-395-52805-4.

I Know How You Feel Because This Happened to Me. Center for Children with Incarcerated Parents, Pacific Oaks College and Children's Programs, 714 West California Blvd., Pasadena, CA 91105.

Just for You - Children with Incarcerated Parents. Center for Children with Incarcerated Parents, Pacific Oaks College and Children's Programs, 714 West California Blvd., Pasadena, CA 91105.

Mama Loves Me from Away by Pat Brisson, illustrated by Laurie Caple. Boyds Mills Press, 815 Church Street, Honesdale, PA 18431, (2004), ISBN# 1-56397-966-7.

My Mother and I Are Growing Stronger by Inez Maury. New Seed Press, PO Box 9488, Berkeley, CA 947099, ISBN# 0-938678-06-X.

Two in Every Hundred: a special workbook for children with a parent in prison Reconciliation, 702 51st Avenue North, Nashville, TN 37209, (615) 292-6371.

Visiting Day by Jacqueline Woodson, James Ransome (Illustrator), Scholastic Press; 1st ed edition (October 1, 2002), ISBN# 0-5904-0005-3.

When Andy's Father Went to Prison by Martha Whitmore Hickman. Albert Whitman and Company, 5747 Howard Street, Niles, IL 606487-4012, ISBN #0-8075-8874-1.

My Daddy Is In Jail: Story Discussion Guide and Small Group Activities for Grades K-5 by Janet M. Bender, YouthLight, Inc. (November 2003), ISBN# 1-8896-3648-7.

What is Jail Mommy? By Jackie Stanglin, Cierra Jade McGuckie (Illustrator), Lifestest Publishing, Inc. (October 30, 2006), ISBN# 1-5987-9248-5.

A Terrible Thing Happened: A Story for Children Who Have Witnessed Violence or Trauma by Margaret Holmes, Magination Press, (February 2000), ISBN# 1-5579-8701-7.

How to Take the GrrrrR Out of Anger by Elizabeth Verdick and Marjorie Lisovskis, (December 2002), ISBN# 1-5754-2117-8.

A novel for 10-14 year olds:

The Same Stuff as Stars by Katherine Paterson, Clarion Books, NY, 2002, ISBN 0-618-24744-0.

A picture workbook for professionals:

When a Parent Goes to Jail: A Comprehensive Guide for Counseling Children of Incarcerated Parents by Rebecca Yaffe and Lonnie Hoade, Rayve Productions, (April 15, 2000), ISBN# 1-8778-1008-8.

APPENDIX A

1. [Focus on Children with Incarcerated Parents: An Overview of the Research Literature](#)
2. [Children of Incarcerated Parents: A Bill of Rights](#)
3. [Oklahoma Study of Incarcerated Mothers and Their Children: Phase I](#)
4. [Oklahoma Study of Incarcerated Mothers and Their Children: Phase II](#)
5. [Oklahoma Study of Incarcerated Mothers and Their Children: The Real Cost of Incarcerating Mothers in 2008](#)
6. OK Senate Bill 448 – 2/10/09
7. Storybook Project

APPENDIX B

1. FCOIP Survey with MATCH in Raleigh, NC
2. FCOIP Survey with AFOI in Richmond, VA
3. FCOIP Survey with Project AVARY in San Francisco, CA
4. FCOIP Survey with CJAMM New Day Camps in Oklahoma City, OK

APPENDIX A-6

For Immediate Release: February 10, 2009

Senate Judiciary Committee Approves Bill Dealing with Children of Women Inmates

The Senate Judiciary Committee has approved a measure aimed to break cycles of violence that can lead to the children of inmates eventually becoming inmates themselves. Senator [Debbe Leftwich](#) is the principal author of Senate Bill 448. This bill would require the judge to have written findings related to the placement of the children of inmates who are single custodial parents, most of whom are women. “Women who grow up in abusive homes are much more likely to be convicted of felonies themselves. Unfortunately, when these women are sent to prison, their children are often sent to live with the grandparents or other family members that were responsible for that woman’s abuse in the first place,” explained Leftwich, D-Oklahoma City. “We need to break the cycle of abuse that results in even more incarcerations once these children are grown.” Oklahoma ranks first in the nation in the incarceration rate of women. According to the federal government, Oklahoma’s rate of 129 women per 100,000 is 50 percent higher than the national average. According to the Oklahoma Commission on Children and Youth, a 66 percent of women inmates have children. “Part of the problem is we have a ‘don’t-ask-don’t-tell’ situation within our criminal justice system. Inmates and family members often fly under the radar screen. If we know that an inmate was physically or sexually abused by her parents, we can keep her children from being sent to live in that environment, and hopefully, break this cycle of abuse and incarceration,” Leftwich said. SB 448 next will be heard by the full Senate for further consideration.

For more information contact: Sen. Leftwich's Office: (405) 521-5557

*full Senate Bill can be downloaded from www.oksenate.org/legislation.htm

APPENDIX A-7

STORYBOOK PROJECT

Storybook Projects throughout the United States provide children of incarcerated parents the gift of a book and the voices of their parents on tape reading the book. This gives the children an opportunity to hear their absent parent's voice whenever they wish. Lutheran Social Services of Illinois's Storybook Project began in 1998 at Logan Correctional Center in Illinois. It now is in 11 prisons and jails, mainly in central and southern Illinois. These projects were based on Aunt Mary's Storybook Program at Cook County Jail in Chicago. The originator of that program was Companions, Journeying Together, Inc.

1. How to (and Why) Do a Storybook Project

Modeled on the *Aunt Mary's Storybook Project* of 'Companions, Journeying Together, Inc.'

It is an easy idea. Just collect new paperback children's books, bring them and a tape recorder into prison, help the mom and dads there to read stories to their kids on tape and then mail the books and tapes to the children. As simple as it is, this is a most important project and ministry. The children can turn on the tape recorder and hear their mom/dad's voice whenever they feel lonely. They play the tape over and over. Each time they hear their mom read the story and say, "miss you, I love you." It never gets old. It's the next best thing to having mom or dad right there with them.

2. How do Volunteers Get Started?

The reason volunteers like you are needed to do this program is so that nothing inappropriate is sent out of the prison. Volunteers need to be part of a respected group to be trusted enough by a warden to be allowed to bring books, tapes and tape recorders into a jail or prison and to work with the women and men. For instance, your group might be a prison ministry group with a good track record, a social service group or professional sorority. Plan to meet with the warden of programming or the volunteer coordinator to explain what you would like to do. Tell them this is being done across the United States in county jails, state and federal facilities and for both men and women. Plan to start with a short-term project--for example, with a nearby facility in the time before Christmas or Mother's or Father's Day.

Gathering the books and tapes you need is a wonderful chance for the general public to begin to be aware that there are many children who have parents in prison. Ask for donated, cellophane-wrapped **60-minute** tapes and multicultural and urban-appropriate books for children, ages 1 - 14. Books need to be new (since these are the only gifts children will receive from their inmate parent) and paperback (since they must be light enough to mail). Women's groups, fraternal organizations, scout groups, and older children in schools or church groups can be encouraged to donate them. Many books are appropriate for all children. However, since most of the children of imprisoned parents live in poverty, it is important to avoid books that are focused on middle class suburban stories. There are excellent multicultural books available that the **Storybook**

Project parents would be delighted to read to their children. Children who donate books should be encouraged to find books that they would enjoy themselves. They can often get them from paperback book clubs at school. Books cannot have stickers or other "extras" if they are to be allowed into a jail or prison. It's important to get some baby books with cardboard covers for very young children -- even those books can be multicultural. Besides paperbacks and 60-minute audiotapes, you will need padded mailing envelopes and the cost of postage. You will need to find an organization willing to cover this cost-- which can add up. You will be surprised to find that there are groups quite willing to be involved in this. Occasionally the correctional center will do the mailing.

3. With the Mother or Father

A few volunteers can run this program in a prison or jail. A teacher who can sort the books according to age level would be helpful. The parents should have a choice of books, but these should be limited since usually the parent won't have long to make selections. If there is time, the parent may want to write a note to his or her child inside the front cover of each book. In some programs every child receives a book, though perhaps only one or two are read onto tape. If the parent is reading to an older child they only read the first chapter and then they suggest that the child finish the book and write to them about it.

To begin with, the parent should greet every child by name and just talk to them. Volunteers should be ready with Kleenex and ready to push the recorder's 'pause' button if the mom or dad gets choked up. Do not be surprised if they cry a little and be ready with encouragement if one says, "I can't do this." Say you will help with a word if they get stuck and tell them the pause button is always handy. Don't let them hear the tape unless you are finished, because hearing it will just make them more self-conscious. The parent will surely want to tell you about their children, so realize that this is a way for them to tell their story in a setting that doesn't often lend itself to listening. This is a very important role of the volunteer. However, make no promises. The volunteer is just there to do this project. Always keep that in mind. Also, don't give out personal information. Even if the person you are speaking to has good intentions, nothing stays private in a jail or prison. Additionally, you would be breaking Department of Corrections rules. When finished reading, ask the parent if he/she would like to say good-bye to the children and also add a word of thanks to their caregiver, most often the grandmother. When finished, press the squares out of the edge of the cassette casing so that the youngsters can't tape over the recording by mistake.

If the correctional facility mails the tapes and books, simply have the mother or father write the address on the envelope. If you mail the envelope, have a form for the parents to fill out, including the names and addresses of all the children. (If they don't live together you will have to make separate tapes for them.) Make sure you have the name of the caregiver of the children as well as that person's phone number, in case the package comes back to you. Afterwards, add to the form the name of the volunteer who taped the parent. When mailing the books and tape, put the initials of the volunteer and a post office box # or organization address on the return address. The volunteers should not use their own address.

4. Some Extra Information

- **Always** follow the jail and prison rules, no matter how much you may question them. These are first and foremost security institutions. Everything you might be able to do counts on **your good reputation** with Corrections officials.
- Every Department of Corrections has its own way of dealing with new volunteers coming into a facility. Some evaluations are complicated, time consuming and extensive, often including drug and TB tests. It may be quite frustrating to get a large number of volunteers vetted to be volunteers, so start with a few "diehards" at first.
- Different groups do storybook projects in different ways. Some do it as the ending part of a parenting class or part of a literacy class. Many do it as a special event before Christmas or Mother's/Father's Day.
- Don't forget that parents are located in county jails, state and federal prisons. No doubt there is one of these facilities by you.
- Some programs make this a weekly effort with a few volunteers and some monthly with more volunteers. A lot of this depends on how the prison authorities think it will work best for them.
- Realize there will be a lot of waiting time while inmates are called. They may not be available on many occasions; don't be surprised by disappointment.
- Ask for a location where there won't be a lot of noise and where you can plug in the recorders.
- Have quick-to-read handouts to give the parents so they can decide if they want to take part in the program. You may go to a tier to explain the program to a large group and then have the inmate fill out a request. Or the prison may take care of that and choose the participants and have the parents ready for the program when you arrive.
- Make sure the prison gets some good publicity for their part in the program. If they are willing to stick out their neck and cooperate, they deserve it.
- Don't forget that there will be some people who sincerely think you shouldn't be doing this. Listen to what they have to say and then share your own positive experience.

IF WE CAN BE OF ANY MORE HELP, e-mail Pat Davis
(Pat.Davis@LSSI.org) of Lutheran Social Services of IL or Karen Hutt
(Karen.Hutt@SBCGlobal.net) of Companions, Journeying Together, Inc.
THANK YOU! LET US KNOW WHAT YOU ARE DOING!

*downloaded from www.fcnetwork.org/storybook.pdf

APPENDIX B-1

1. Organization name and your preferred contact information:

Name of Program: MATCH, Raleigh NC

Joan Purcull

director@prisonmatch.org

(919) 828-4767

2. Who is your Primary Client?

The children of the women who are incarcerated, in an effort to break the cycle and keep the bond strong.

3. What is most successful about your program?

On site visitation with the children, which is private so they can really be parents. MATCH is set up at the Maximum security women's prison. They have toys, books, games, and a kitchen, all on site. Mothers get a three hour private visit with their child, can cook them a meal, get to hold them, rock them. With older children they get to have private conversation without a caregiver present.

4. How do you measure success?

That is hard to say, but the women have to go through parenting classes before they can have visits, so they do surveys with the caregivers, and they all hear and witness first hand stories of success.

5. The Volunteers are from all over the state, they have given up their time to make the visit possible, they give the mothers support. Some drive the children to Raleigh.

6. What is the biggest challenge you face?

Getting the children there. The children can come once a month, but the caregivers can't always make that happen. Average distance traveled is 125 miles one way! And it is often grandparents that are making the drive.

7. What is the biggest mistake your organization made early on if any?

The women in their program have been sentenced 7 years or more. If they have been on good behavior, then within 5 years they go to minimum security so are moved and then lose their involvement with MATCH. Wishes they had the forethought to implement a program that would work

in the minimum security sites/prisons, which serve a more transient population.

8. What do you wish you could change about the way you provide services?

Wish they could service more children and families, are restricted by one visitation facility. There are also limitations to become involved in the program and funding is always a problem.

9. Who has been your biggest ally?

The Prison, they allowed the program and they donated the space, but MATCH is a non-profit. The NC UMC women started the program and are still doing a great deal to help fund it. Several local UMC remain involved through their volunteers.

10. Who has been your biggest adversary?

The prison, there is always a great deal of red tape, bureaucracy. Scheduling volunteer training for example, which is only available every 6 months, so they are inconsistent.

11. What greatest piece of advice could you give an organization desirous to launch a ministry to serve the children and families of persons who are incarcerated?

Go for it~ it is SO important! It works, even if you can't measure it, it is important to the women and the children, one individual at a time, it does make a difference!

12. Is there a question we should have asked that we did not?

13. Comments: Would like a copy of the product of the research, findings, and recommendations, if the board is not opposed.

APPENDIX B-2

1. Organization name, and your preferred contact information:

Assisting Families Of Inmates

Fran Bolin (804) 643-2401

1 North 5th Street

Suite 400

Richmond, VA 23219

family@afoi.org

2. Who is your organization's Primary Client?

Transportation to five state facilitates and then a shared meal. Primary client is older women, African American, less than \$15,000 for their household, mothers and grandmothers of incarcerated sons. Ten years ago they started a program for children of a parent who is incarcerated K-5 in 9 schools with 3 coordinators. School social workers, Communities and schools interdisciplinary teams, school administrators, etc... The involvement at each site might look very different depending on the administration and staff. 17 week curriculum during their non-academic period for 45 minutes, it is a culturally based curriculum, first 8 weeks are talking about issues built around what they are dealing with, then after the winter break, 3 weeks of self esteem, 3 weeks of anger management, and 3 weeks of grief and loss. In the summer they have a more relaxed curriculum, being green, etiquette and manners, etc... They operate by referral and they also send home flyers (that alone increased enrollment by 30%)

3. How are you primarily staffed? –paid employees, volunteers, or a balance of both? –briefly describe the role of each position

The 3 program people are paid, the people that feed the transportation folks are volunteers, the others are mostly volunteers, they hire a charter bus. She recommends a hired driver due to liability insurance. They had an accident in the late 80's and 3 family members were killed. They settled out of litigation, but that was a wake up call.

4. What is most successful about your program?

Everyone believes in the mission, they are still tiny, for something so small but they have a very dedicated core group of folks.

5. How do you measure success?

Decrease absences, increase in grades, qualitative questions for the teachers about behaviors as a result of MAC, questions for caregivers about stress as a result of MAC. (provides small services bus tickets, holiday presents, food, in addition to resource and referral).

6. What is the biggest challenge you face as an organization?

Funding so they can grow and can serve more families.

7. What is the biggest mistake your organization made early on, if any?

Having volunteer drivers, but that was a different age and time.

8. What do you wish you could change about the way you provide services?

Updates in technology, wish they could get promotion out there about their services, word of mouth in the prison is still their biggest marketing.

9. Who has been your biggest ally and why?

Having great people on the board of directors. They have on their board of directors: Social Workers, Teachers, Power Players, which has been great. That helped established the first Memorandum of Understand between the organization and the DOC. The Gov's Wife is on the board of Directors. CURE Citizens United for the Rehabilitation of Errants.

10. Who has been your biggest adversary and why?

DOC sometimes.

11. What greatest piece of advice could you give an organization desirous to launch a ministry serving the children/families of persons who are incarcerated?

Don't be territorial. Solid board, The name alone has Incarcerated in it. Being told no a lot.

12. What question should we have asked that we did not?

APPENDIX B-3

1. Organization name, and your preferred contact information:

Project Alternative Ventures for At Risk Youth (AVARY)

Contact person: Maria Schell Hassid

1018 Grand Ave.

San Rafael, CA 94901

(415) 460-1184

maria@projectavary.org

2. Who is your organization's Primary Client?

Any child who has an incarcerated parent –whether their parent is serving a life sentence or is in and out of local jail. The down side to serving 'both' these types of children, is that their needs are different.

All of the children have serious trust issues.

3. How are you primarily staffed? –paid employees, volunteers, or a balance of both? –briefly describe the role of each position

Most are paid staff and they are all well paid in order to keep them around –this is important if you intend to build trust with kids, you need to have a low turn over with staff, consistency is key. They have 3 full time staff: an ED, a program director, and a program coordinator who does all of the administrative support. They also 60 paid part time staff. These are the folks who run and direct the camp. They maintain a two-campers for every one-staff ratio. The low ratio is important because the needs of the kids are intense and wide ranging. The work is built a great deal around building trust and self esteem. Because these kids and their families move around a lot, there is a lot of keeping track of people!

4. What is most successful about your program?

Hard to quantify or qualify, but the kids LOVE it and keep coming back! There are not a lot of positives in these kids lives, so the fact that they love it and continue to return says a great deal. The types of activities they do, such as swimming, climbing, etc, are meant to build trust, and it works! Many graduates of the program will become staff in the juniors program.

5. How do you measure success?

There is very little research available, so there is no baseline of comparison. The challenge is to find ways to comparatively measure

progress. Of the 8 kids who have 'graduated' from the program (it takes 17 years to complete), 8 are in college- they call that success.

6. What is the biggest challenge you face as an organization?

Getting those who fund, support the organization, or those in the community to understand these children and the population they serve. Most well-adjusted, middle-class people think that people with kids don't go to jail. That is to say that it has never occurred to most people that the 'type' of person that would be in prison, might also be a parent!

7. What is the biggest mistake your organization made early on, if any?

Perhaps might not have lumped together, or tried to serve children of parents serving long prison sentences as well as those whose parents are in and out of county jail. The children whose parents are in and out of county jail tend to be much more needy –because their parents come and go (their parents make promises and break them over and over)– and are much less likely to be accepted into programs that serve the children of incarcerated parents.

8. What do you wish you could change about the way you provide services?

Wishes they had been able to provide better case management and social work services early on. They are getting ready to add a full-time social worker to their staff and only wish they had done it much earlier. Many of their families need a social worker and unless the child is in foster care or has some identified special need, they do not have one.

9. Who has been your biggest ally and why?

Project What? An advocacy organization, they also take older teenagers and work with them. They worked with the San Francisco PD to write a policy stating that anytime they responded to a crime scene where it was suspected that children would be present, a Social Worker would come along to meet the needs of that child in the event the parent was arrested.

10. Who has been your biggest adversary and why?

The funding agencies that do not understand this population. They educate a lot of people about the fact that many of the people that are in prison are parents, and that incarceration affects children in traumatic ways. Also, the volunteers and staff can be a problem. A word of caution:

Only hire and recruit staff and volunteers whose genuine desire is to work with kids, not those who want to 'rescue' kids from violence or have some other motive or agenda around abuse or incarceration. These children DO NOT need the emotional baggage and unresolved issues that these adults bring with them!

11. What greatest piece of advice could you give an organization desirous to launch a ministry serving the children/families of persons who are incarcerated?

Reach out to other programs who do the same work in the area and outside the area and get support and feedback from them. Also, start with one program goal because the kids have MANY needs and you can not be all things to all people affected by this. If you are going to serve the kids, they need to know you can be trusted, so know what you can do and deliver on it! Also secure a diversity of funding! This is crucial. Would highly recommend a social worker on staff or on the board to advise. Wish they had done it sooner.

12. Additional Comments if any: (i.e. What question should we have asked that we did not?)

If interested in transportation and more direct work with the families, may want to talk with Centerforce in CA. They have a very strong and diverse program.

APPENDIX B-4

1. Organization name, and your preferred contact information:

Criminal Justice and Mercy Ministries

New Day Camps

Stan Basler

1501 NW 24th Street

Oklahoma City, OK 73106

(405) 528-0963

2. Who is your organization's Primary Client?

8-14 with at least one parent in prison. With summer camp, once parent is released they can longer be camper but can work as staff. Local jail not eligible, DOC if they are confined to an Oklahoma facility

3. How are you primarily staffed? –paid employees, volunteers, or a balance of both? –briefly describe the role of each position

More volunteers than anything else. Church camps. Small group leaders. Worship, recreation, focus group leaders, arts and crafts, camp nurses, transportations. Redemption churches (Prison Churches) funded by donations by individuals and churches.

4. What is most successful about your program?

Barrier breaking, humanizes a setting that is demonized in our society. A lot of the kids come back again and again so that says a lot. There is a lot of movement with these families, so that makes it difficult. Some of the families do get in the redemption churches so that means a lot!

5. How do you measure success?

Discipleship is a measure of success, 75 to 100 people involved, so the ratio is 80/100 or 2 to 1.

6. What is the biggest challenge you face as an organization?

Lack of money and finding the people to help.

7. What is the biggest mistake your organization made early on, if any?

They get evaluations from camps and make adjustments. But, early on one year they didn't have the staff and the ratio was off. Now they have learned that if the staff ratio doesn't match then they do not accept more children.

8. What do you wish you could change about the way you provide services?

Wish the church staff was a little more aggressive/intentional about trying to get the kids involved in the life of the local church.

9. Who has been your biggest ally and why?

Prison Fellowship /Angle Tree Database/The UMC – they are good partners and good resource

10. Who has been your biggest adversary and why?

No true adversary, but sometimes, the cooperation from caregivers makes the ministries to the children difficult.

11. What greatest piece of advice could you give an organization desirous to launch a ministry serving the children/families of persons who are incarcerated?

Be tolerant. These children will not be very good to volunteers. They are not trusting, their behaviors mask a great deal of pain, their problems are not the same, they share some issues, but they are each unique.

12. What question should we have asked that we did not?

Where are the gaps, so we are not duplicating services? For example in Oklahoma City area, there are several organizations sending these children to camps, so we might not want to duplicate in that area.

13. Follow up question: Are there any programs, or organizations working in the schools in OK City area to address the unique needs of these children? Not that he is aware of.