

# **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 Parenting Special Interest Group (SIG) of the Correctional Education Association (CEA) and the Correctional Education Association-Wisconsin. This directory has been created to help correctional educators enhance existing or create new parenting programs in their correctional facilities.

*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.

The Parenting SIG was created in 2004 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 communication and cooperation among correctional educators engaged in providing parenting programs in a variety of correctional settings and 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 parents' fairs.

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

- Establishing a parenting network – Newsletters, handbooks and other information are distributed to a network of over 700 correctional educators, volunteers and administrators in over 30 states.
- Publishing a newsletter – A bi-monthly *Parenting Connections* newsletter has been published for parenting educators working in correctional settings regularly 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 correctional and education conferences.
- Publishing handbooks for incarcerated parents and their families – Two handbooks have been published by the Parenting SIG, *Reaching Out: A Handbook for Parents Incarcerated in Wisconsin* and *Reaching In: A Handbook for the Families of Parents Incarcerated in Wisconsin*.
- 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 correctional educators seeking information on teaching or developing parenting programs.

## Thanks to Community Circles of Support, a Program of Goodwill Industries of North Central Wisconsin

Community Circles of Support helps people make the move from incarceration to the community by creating an environment of acceptance for the individual's return to the community, promoting positive social ties and responsibility, looking to the future rather than the past, focusing on the individual's strengths and struggles, supporting and recognizing individual successes, and using community resource

CEA-Wisconsin wishes to thank President and CEO of Goodwill Industries of North Central Wisconsin Bob Pedersen, Executive Coordinator Sara Saxby, and Community Circles of Support Regional Leader Anne Strauch for generously arranging for Goodwill Industries to print these *Prison Parenting Programs: Resources for Parenting Instructors in Prisons and Jails* handbooks to be distributed to correctional institutions and community agencies.



A program of Goodwill NCW 

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# Multi-Faceted Programs

## Arkansas Voices for the Children Left Behind

The grassroots Arkansas Voices effort was founded “to advocate for children left behind by incarceration or loss of a parent for any reason and to provide mentoring, services and supports for the children, their caregivers, and incarcerated parents, with the goal of strengthening and empowering the family unit.” Arkansas Voices administers to the holistic needs of children by helping them receive counseling to deal with the trauma from witnessing their parent being taken from the home. The group is dedicated to helping children overcome the 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 kinship 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 relative 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 and Other Policy Initiatives, 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)

## Center for Children of Incarcerated Parents

The Center for Children of Incarcerated Parents (CCIP) was founded with the mission of preventing intergenerational crime and incarceration through the development of model services for children of criminal offenders and their families, as well as producing and disseminating information on this population. Since 1989, CCIP has served more than 25,000 families and currently provides services in these four areas:

- Education – CCIP has conducted dozens of educational projects and produced 14 curricula. The curriculum manuals are sold through the CCIP Clearinghouse. Topics include:
  - Parent education for prisoners
  - Parent empowerment
  - Parent education for substance-dependent parents in treatment
  - Parent education for elementary school children
  - Family life education
  - Health education for incarcerated mothers
  - Women’s issues
  - Effects of trauma and violence on children

- Mentor training
- Parent advocacy for prisoners
- Family Reunification
  - Child Custody Advocacy Services Project provides assistance to offenders with child custody, child placement or related issues
  - MotherRight and FatherRight Projects foster healthy parenting by promoting healthy sexuality, healthy reproduction and healthy relationships among clients and their families
  - The Miracle Project offers case management and other services to pregnant, jailed women and their families for up to five years
  - Other projects have provided parent mentoring, child and caregiver support services, referrals and placements for families that are failing to supervise their children, and training for children of prisoners
- Therapeutic Services
  - Children's services include group and individual therapy, developmental skills-building activities, mentoring, and social-recreational activities
  - Services to children's caregivers include parent advocacy meetings, parent/caregiver support groups, parent education, and case management
  - Services to teachers or other site staff include training and support groups
- Information
  - CCIP Clearinghouse is a collection of over 3500 documentary and audiovisual items that can be purchased online or by mail through two catalogs
  - The Catalog for Incarcerated Parents has more than 200 items free of charge to prisoners and their families
  - The CCIP Journal, the Center's newsletter, is available online on the CCIP website and by regular mail
  - CCIP research projects include the landmark "Children of Offenders" and "Children of Criminal Offenders & Foster Care" studies

Contact: Tamara Satterwhite, Administrator or Denise Johnston, M.D., Executive Director,  
[ccip@earthlink.net](mailto:ccip@earthlink.net)  
 Website: [www.e-ccip.org](http://www.e-ccip.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.

Email: [Info@SolutionsForEIPaso.org](mailto:Info@SolutionsForEIPaso.org)

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

### **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 videotape inmates recording 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 of Programs and Community Services for the 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 and Corrections Network**

Family and Corrections Network (FCN) 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. FCN's web site has over 100 articles, an e-mail list, a directory of programs and links to offender family web sites.

FCN 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
  - Bringing Family Literacy to Incarcerated Settings: An Instructional Guide
  - Every Door Closed: Barriers Facing Parents with Criminal Records
  - Constructing and Coping with Incarceration and Re-Entry: Perspectives from the Field
  - FCN Report #20 – Fatherhood
  - How to Explain Jail and Prison to Children – Oregon DOC Booklet
  - Incarcerated Parents Materials at Center for Policy Research
  - Teaching Parenting Skills To Incarcerated Fathers
  - CDs of training workshops

Contact: Ann Adalist-Estrin, author, or Carol Burton, Board Chair, [fcn@fcnetwork.org](mailto:fcn@fcnetwork.org)  
Website: [www.fcnetwork.org](http://www.fcnetwork.org)

## Family Strengthening Project

The Family Strengthening Model, created by the Council on Crime and Justice, was perhaps the first in the nation to provide resource materials and assistance, education, and family counseling to inmates and their families simultaneously, during incarceration and after release. The Project's goals are to:

- Intervene early with a family experiencing incarceration, increasing the likelihood that they will stay connected
- Strengthen commitment to relationships by building effective communication, parenting skills, and conflict resolution skills
- Improve both parents' ability to foster healthy connections with their children upon release
- Increase the family's economic self-sufficiency to provide a stable base for continued growth

The Family Strengthening Model is a multi-faceted project comprised of:

- Employment skills training opportunities for both parents
- Financial education
- Mentorship opportunities
- Case advocacy and support
- Family counseling
- Parenting and relationship classes

Prior to the Family Strengthening Project, the Council on Crime and Justice provided parenting classes in Minnesota DOC facilities. The 10-session *Families in Focus* curriculum topics include:

- Breaking the chain (of abuse)
- Anger
- Self-esteem
- Discipline
- Talking with children
- Cooperation
- Assertiveness

The Council on Crime and Justice also offers 10-week courses on healthy relationships to its clients, both in correctional facilities and in the community. These classes are based on the beliefs that higher levels of commitment, effective communication, and conflict-resolution without violence and hostility can lead to stronger family relationships. A stronger family can enhance success for incarcerated persons re-entering the community by offering a place of physical and emotional safety and support

The Family Strengthening Project has selected the *Within My Reach* curriculum for its Relationship classes. Topics covered in the *Within My Reach* curriculum are:

- What is a "healthy relationship"
- Better decisions about who to be with
- Knowing yourself, what you want in relationships
- Dangerous patterns in relationships
- Communication and conflict-resolution
- Infidelity, trust, and forgiveness
- Commitment
- Blended (Step) families

Contact: Pamela G. Alexander, President, [alexanderp@crimeandjustice.org](mailto:alexanderp@crimeandjustice.org)  
Mark Haase, Vice President, Projects and Operations,  
[haasem@crimeandjustice.org](mailto:haasem@crimeandjustice.org)

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

## **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, teacher, [mary.pohlman@wisconsin.gov](mailto:mary.pohlman@wisconsin.gov)

## **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 tape 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 nonprofit 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 and 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)

### **Madison Urban Ministries**

Madison Urban Ministries has three programs specifically designed to address the unique needs and concerns of children who have a parent in jail or prison or awaiting sentencing. The programs are: Mentoring Connections, Family Connections and Reading Connections.

- Family Connections takes children and caregivers to visit their moms in Taycheedah Correctional Institution.
- 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.
- Mentoring Connections is a community based mentoring program that matches children (4-17 years) with volunteer mentors.

Contact: Fabu Phillis Carter, [fabu@emum.org](mailto:fabu@emum.org)

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

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

The primary goals of Virginia's Moms, Inc./Dads, Inc. include providing 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. In addition, 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)

### **National Incarcerated Parents and Families Network**

The National Incarcerated Parents and Families Network is a non-profit organization that provides a support network for incarcerated mothers and fathers and their families.

*Parenting From Behind Bars* is a character-based educational and support program developed in collaboration with various Department of Corrections staff, prior offenders, faith-based, community, local, state and federal agencies. The curriculum assists incarcerated parents, both adult and juvenile, in developing skills to become more involved, responsible and supportive parents while incarcerated. Once trained and certified, the incarcerated parents facilitate the program and mentor other inmates or peers.

The primary focus of the nine week program is on the following issues:

- Understanding “self” and decision making
- Accepting the responsibilities of being incarcerated – rules and regulations
- Promoting responsible parenting, while incarcerated
- Empowering incarcerated parents to assume emotional, moral, spiritual, and psychological responsibility for their children
- Understanding child support and taking financial responsibility of your children
- Positive relationships
- Effects of both positive and negative communication
- Effective and positive mentoring
- Transitioning back into the community

The National Incarcerated Parents and Families Network also provides these training programs:

- Peer Leader Training
- Facilitator Training
- Correctional Staff Training

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

### **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. The Parenting Program includes an on-grounds nursery 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, work supervisor and agency parenting coordinator; and have good institutional conduct.

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

### **PATCH (Parents and Their Children)**

PATCH is a not-for-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 visiting program which allows children to visit with their parent. Although 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 increase improve the parenting skills of offender 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)

## **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
- 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.
- Riley Development Center – offers regular, ongoing training on child development.

Contact: David Miller, Chief Visionary Officer, [dmiller@urbanleadershipinstitute.com](mailto:dmiller@urbanleadershipinstitute.com)  
Website: [www.urbanyouth.org](http://www.urbanyouth.org)

# Parenting Skills Programs

## Active Parenting Now

*Active Parenting Now* has been adapted 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 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, family meetings, power struggles and problem-solving skills, encouragement, and stimulating independence.

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

## 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 His Relationship with His Children
- Reduce Problem Behavior
- Diminish Yelling and Fighting
- Increase His Confidence as Well as His Child's Confidence

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

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

## Effective Black Parenting Program

Milwaukee County University of Wisconsin-Extension Family Living Programs strengthen families and communities by providing low cost comprehensive training, parent education services, public awareness, and advocacy activities. Milwaukee County is home to numerous parent education services for families

that respond to local community needs with research based education and partnerships and partner with community organizations. UW-Extension offers training in the *Effective Black Parenting Program*, a nationally acclaimed model parent skill-building program that teaches parents and others about child development.

Contact: Kimberly Porter, University of Wisconsin-Extension Family Living Programs,  
[kimberly.porter@ces.uwex.edu](mailto:kimberly.porter@ces.uwex.edu)  
Website: [www.uwex.edu/ces/flp](http://www.uwex.edu/ces/flp)

### **Greystone Educational Materials**

Greystone has produced several exclusive video series and reproducible guides which address the needs of correctional inmates. Among them are three parenting skills series:

- *Dads: Ex-Offenders Talk about Fatherhood* – This 4-part video/DVD series features multi-ethnic ex-offenders offering insights and advice on fatherhood. They discuss how they learned their parenting skills, how they handled being incarcerated and separated from their children, and how they approached their reunion with their children.
- *Family Reunification: Ex-Offenders Talk About Going Home* – This 6-part series asks how the inmate leaving prison reintegrates back into the family. Are the expectations real? Ex-offenders give first hand accounts and insights on how they made the transition from prison to family life. They cite their struggles, successes and failures.
- *Parenting from Prison: Practical Advice & a Positive Message* – This 4-part series features multi-ethnic ex-offenders discussing parenting from prison and beyond. The series features Barbara Rasmussen, parenting teacher at the Racine Correctional Institution in Wisconsin, who offers her expert advice and a message of hope to parents in prison.

Contact: Ted Harms, Owner, [greystoneedmat@frontiernet.net](mailto:greystoneedmat@frontiernet.net)  
Website: [www.greystoneducationalmaterials.com](http://www.greystoneducationalmaterials.com)

### **The Happiest Baby**

Renowned pediatrician Dr. Harvey Karp's books and videotapes explain the Happiest Baby approach to calming even the fussiest infants. New parents and caregivers learn a step-by step method of calming of crying babies, setting limits, and discipline,

Email: [education@thehappiestbaby.org](mailto:education@thehappiestbaby.org)  
Website: [www.thehappiestbaby.com](http://www.thehappiestbaby.com)

### **InsideOut Dad**

*InsideOut Dad* is a curriculum developed by the National Fatherhood Initiative (NFI) for incarcerated fathers that bridges the gap between the inmate father and his children. Through 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.

*InsideOut Dad* consists of 12 one-hour core 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.

The 12 core topics are:

- Ground Rules
- About Me (Self-Awareness)

- Being a Man
- Spirituality
- Handling Emotions
- Relationships
- Fathering
- Parenting
- Child Development
- Discipline
- Fathering from the Inside
- Closing
- An optional topic, “Reentry: Being a Dad on the Outside,” is also included.

Email: [corrections@fatherhood.org](mailto:corrections@fatherhood.org).  
 Website: [www.fatherhood.org](http://www.fatherhood.org)

### **Isis Rising**

Isis Rising is a pregnancy and parenting program for women incarcerated at the Shakopee Women’s Prison (Minnesota) who are currently pregnant, have given birth within the last year, or are parenting a child under 5 years old. The Isis Rising group meets for two hours every week, for 12 weeks. Moms in Isis Rising 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, [eegerrity@gmail.com](mailto:eegerrity@gmail.com)  
 Website: <http://prisondouglas.blogspot.com>

### **Keeping FAITH**

*Keeping FAITH* (Families and Inmates Together in Harmony) is the centerpiece of The Ridge Project, a non-profit Christian organization dedicated to serving youth and families in need throughout Ohio. *Keeping FAITH* focuses on teaching men to be men of honor and conviction, learn skills to effectively father while still in prison, build healthy relationships, and communicate effectively. Topics include offering advice to children without being controlling and coping with children who have difficulty communicating. The programming was developed by Ron and Catherine Tijerina, who held their family together for 15 years while Ron was incarcerated.

*Keeping FAITH’s* 18-week program involves both the incarcerated father and his partner.

- Tyro Dads – For the first 10 weeks incarcerated fathers focus on intensive character development. Tyro Dads are taught to own responsibility for their actions and prepare to overcome obstacles as they transition back to their homes and communities
- Couple Communication I – A four-week course teaches fathers and their partners collaborative marriage and basic communication skills
- Couple Communication II – After the initial four-weeks, the spouses return for a four-week advanced communication class where they learn conflict resolution, anger management and relationship stability

- Peer Leadership – The final stage of healing features peer leadership where incarcerated fathers surround themselves with others who share their goals and are committed to holding one another accountable to their new lifestyle
- Youth Program – Where possible, children of offenders are involved in a youth program designed to prevent them from following their parent's negative behavior and to truly rehabilitate and heal the entire family

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

### **Long Distance Dads**

The *Long Distance Dads Program* of the National Fatherhood Initiative is a character-based education and support program that assists incarcerated men in developing skills to become more involved and supportive fathers. The four objectives of the class are: nurturing, involvement, consistency and awareness. By nurturing, loving and becoming involved parents, these fathers can be positive role models to their children and at the same time, increase their communication skills and develop positive, constructive relationships that their children will develop themselves. The curriculum consists of 12 modules, each delivered in two to three hours.

*Long Distance Dads* focuses on universal aspects of fatherhood as well as the unique challenges faced by incarcerated fathers. Men of all cultures, races, religions, and backgrounds can benefit from the curriculum and program. The program helps inmates to:

- Recognize and describe positive family values
- Demonstrate an increased knowledge of parenting and family-relationship skills
- Identify realistic strategies to connect with their families through increased appropriate contact
- Identify realistic strategies to fulfill their responsibilities as fathers
- Identify the effects that their behavior and incarceration have on their families
- Develop a viable family-integration plan
- Identify and use positive skills for dealing with issues of loss, shame, and guilt
- Clearly communicate to their children the negative effects of incarceration, without glorifying the status of inmate or "ex-con"

Essential to the success of the program is recognizing that many inmates have been raised by their mothers or grandmothers without the presence of a father or grandfather. Without a father figure to emulate, basic fathering skills such as self-discipline, nurturing, and consistency are foreign concepts to most men in prison. The program focuses heavily on these skills.

*Long Distance Dads* is used in federal, state, or community correctional facilities in 19 states.

Email: [programsupport@fatherhood.org](mailto:programsupport@fatherhood.org)  
 Website: [www.fatherhood.org](http://www.fatherhood.org)

### **Parenting Inside Out**

The mission of the Children's Justice Alliance, a program of Pathfinders of Oregon, is 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:

- Complete curriculum manual with lesson plans and facilitation guides
- 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
- 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, and 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.gc.ca](http://www.csc-scc.gc.ca)

### **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 S.K.I.P. (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)

### **Positive Parenting**

*Positive Parenting I*, *Positive Parenting II* and *Parenting Teens Today* were developed by the University of Minnesota Extension Service. The programs are delivered in five Minnesota county detention centers.

Each topic covered in the program includes a short video, lesson guide, facilitator background, parent handouts, discussion aids, and resource list. Content of each program includes:

- *Positive Parenting I* – Physical Punishment, Limits, Consequences, Listening, Anger, Challenging Behavior
- *Positive Parenting II* – Parenting Tools, Attention, Respect, Responsibility, Monitoring, Siblings
- *Parenting Teens Today* – Perception, Development, Communication, Conflict, Discipline, Teen Decision Making Friends/Peers

Contact: Kathleen A. Olson, Family Relations Specialist, [kaolson@umn.edu](mailto:kaolson@umn.edu)  
Website: [www.parenting.umn.edu](http://www.parenting.umn.edu)

### **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:

- Shaken Baby Syndrome
- Drug Affected
- Fetal Alcohol Syndrome
- Choking
- CPR
- Special Needs

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, comprehensive curriculum focusing on teen pregnancy prevention that covers relationships, self-esteem, communication, refusal skills, adolescent health, and reproductive issues, among 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, Product Consultant, [anne.brennan@realityworks.com](mailto:anne.brennan@realityworks.com)  
Website: [www.realityworks.com](http://www.realityworks.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)

## 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). Their most recent program, *CLFC Fatherhood Program: Family Reintegration* was developed to help individuals who are experiencing family dissonance resulting from the individual's physical and/or emotional separation (e.g., 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 intention to binge drink or use drugs
- Reduce prison recidivism by 60%.

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

- 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: <http://csgjusticecenter.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 in 1992 that targets girls whose mothers were incarcerated. Since then, 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, GCBP Project Coordinator, [aadhiya@girlscouts.org](mailto:aadhiya@girlscouts.org)  
Website: [www.girlscouts.org](http://www.girlscouts.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.

Email: [ParentLink@missouri.edu](mailto:ParentLink@missouri.edu)  
Website: [www.parentlink.missouri.edu](http://www.parentlink.missouri.edu)

### **Reentry MythBuster: 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: [http://csgjusticecenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/COIP-Mythbusters\\_first-6.pdf](http://csgjusticecenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/COIP-Mythbusters_first-6.pdf)

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

Sesame Workshop, the nonprofit educational organization behind Sesame Street, unveiled its newest, bilingual (English/Spanish) initiative, *Little Children, Big Challenges: Incarceration*. The new initiative has designed some 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 also 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 *Little Children, Big Challenges: Incarceration* initiative components include:

- Multimedia resource kits
- Sesame Street DVD featuring a Muppet story, live-action films showcasing real children and their families, and an animated short film
- Guide for parents and caregivers
- Children's storybook
- Sesame Street: Incarceration app for adults to use on tablets and phones
- Online toolkit with downloadable versions of all materials
- Tip sheet for incarcerated parents
- Training webinars for service providers on how to use the resources with children and families
- A playlist of featured videos from the initiative

You Tube: [YouTube.com/SesameStreet](http://YouTube.com/SesameStreet)  
Facebook: [Facebook.com/SesameStreetInCommunities](http://Facebook.com/SesameStreetInCommunities)  
Website: <http://www.sesameworkshop.org/news/pressroom/incarceration>

## Parent/Child Book Reading Programs

### Books Beyond

To help maintain positive familial 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 audiotape or CD, and then mail the books and the tapes or CDs home for the children to keep.

Contact: Ken Findlay, Professional Services Coordinator, [ken.findlay@doc.ri.gov](mailto:ken.findlay@doc.ri.gov)

### 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 has been in operation for seven years and is coordinated by the Episcopal Church, the Methodist Church and the United Church of Christ in Vermont.

Contact: Suzanne Loring, Program Director, [Suzanne@clifonline.org](mailto:Suzanne@clifonline.org)

Julia Rogers, Program Coordinator, [Julia@clifonline.org](mailto:Julia@clifonline.org)

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

### Daddy and Me

Daddy and Me program is a five-week literacy course at several jails on Rikers Island. Implemented in conjunction with the Administration for Children's Services and financed with New York State Library's

Family Literacy Library Services grant, the Daddy and Me program initiative encourages incarcerated fathers to connect to their children through reading.

After two workshops on the importance of early literacy and storytelling skills, the dads involved record stories for their children and present the finished CDs with the books to their kids, so that their sons and daughters are able to hear their fathers read bedtime stories. The program's final session is a special reading time in which the children visit their fathers in jail.

Contact: Angela Tolosa, Assistant Commissioner, [Angela.Tolosa@doc.nyc.gov](mailto:Angela.Tolosa@doc.nyc.gov).  
Website: [www.nyc.gov/html/hra/nycdads](http://www.nyc.gov/html/hra/nycdads)

### **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 parent and child development. The 10-lesson curriculum includes these topics: 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)

### **Reading Is Fundamental**

Reading Is Fundamental provides free books and literacy resources to parents in prison and their children. It provides a variety of family literacy and parent education activities that support communication between prison and home.

Contact: Blythe Robinson, Program Coordinator  
Marilyn Smith, Vice President of Programs  
Website: [www.rif.org](http://www.rif.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 him- 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 Storybook Project.

Contact: Gail Beard, [gail.beard@LSSI.org](mailto:gail.beard@LSSI.org).  
Website: [www.lssi.org](http://www.lssi.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 the 2007 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: <http://www.cepp.com/coaching.htm>.

## Centerforce

Centerforce is a non-profit organization based in the San Francisco Bay area that provides programs to improve the lives and strengthen the communities of incarcerated people and their loved ones. One of Centerforce's initiatives is the Healthy Marriage, Responsible Fatherhood project that helps strengthen marriages and relationships of incarcerated men releasing from San Quentin State Prison.

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.

The program provides *Couples Enhancement Workshops* for men prior to their release, bringing the men together with their partners inside the visiting area to participate in a day-long facilitated relationship and communication-building workshop.

The *Family Reunification Case Management* program reinforces progress made in the *Back to Family* classes and *Couples Enhancement Workshops* and provides case management for men with their partners in preparation for and after reentry, to facilitate healthy family reunification.

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

## Fair Shake

Fair Shake is an innovative nationwide website focused on successful prisoner reentry. Through an interactive blend of electronic tools, reentry awareness, and community building; Fair Shake encourages all stakeholders (former felons, families and friends, employers, property managers, communities and

corrections) to participate in the successful reintegration of formerly incarcerated people into society. Fair Shake offers former felons a free virtual office that can be accessed from any computer. In addition to email, data storage and a personal resource directory; members can create a web page to use as a supplement to employment or housing applications. Instructional tutorials are also available.

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)

### **Preparing for Release**

*Preparing for Release* is a program sponsored and facilitated by Rebuilding Families, Inc. inside three Washington state women's prisons. The program assists Washington state female offenders with their transition back into the community and reunification with their families. It is presented in four sessions over two week-ends.

To be eligible to participate in *Preparing for Release*, the women must be nearing their release dates, have family members who are willing to help them with the reentry process and ready to make realistic choices for their own futures.

Contact: Jan Walker, [janwalker@centurytel.net](mailto:janwalker@centurytel.net) or [info@preparingforrelease.com](mailto:info@preparingforrelease.com)  
Websites: [www.rebuildingfamilies.org](http://www.rebuildingfamilies.org)  
[www.janwalker-writer.com](http://www.janwalker-writer.com)

# Handbooks for Incarcerated Parents and their Families

## **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.ncdps.gov/div/AdultCorrection/2010Handbook](http://www.ncdps.gov/div/AdultCorrection/2010Handbook)

## **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.state.pa.us](http://www.cor.state.pa.us)

## **How to Talk about Jails and Prisons with Children: A Caregiver's Guide**

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.childrensjusticealliance.org](http://www.childrensjusticealliance.org)

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

Judi Goozh and Sue Jeweler, Creative Family Projects, LLC.

Children are often unintended victims of their parent's 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)

### **Reaching Out: A Handbook for Parents Incarcerated in Wisconsin (2014)**

### **Reaching In: A Handbook for Families of Parents Incarcerated in Wisconsin (2014)**

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

These handbooks are 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 these handbooks, incarcerated parents will find ways to “Reach Out” to their children and caregivers will find ways to help the children “Reach In” to their separated parent. Sections of this handbook are:

- Coping with Incarceration
- 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)

### **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

Contact: Pamela G. Alexander, President, [alexanderp@crimeandjustice.org](mailto:alexanderp@crimeandjustice.org)  
Mark Haase, Vice President, Projects and Operations,  
[haasem@crimeandjustice.org](mailto:haasem@crimeandjustice.org)

Websites: [www.crimeandjustice.org](http://www.crimeandjustice.org)  
Minnesota DOC, [www.doc.state.mn.us](http://www.doc.state.mn.us), under “Publications”

## **Books 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: [nebernstein@earthlink.net](mailto:nebernstein@earthlink.net)

### **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 sections discussing these topics:

- 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](http://www.urban.org)

### **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 ultimately, cross-generational incarceration.

Contact: Center for Children of Incarcerated Parents, [ccip@earthlink.net](mailto:ccip@earthlink.net)

Website: [www.e-ccip.org](http://www.e-ccip.org)

## **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

Contact: Active Parenting  
Website: [www.activeparenting.com](http://www.activeparenting.com)

## **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: [janwalker@centurytel.net](mailto:janwalker@centurytel.net)  
Website: [www.janwalker-writer.com](http://www.janwalker-writer.com)

## **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: [janwalker@centurytel.net](mailto:janwalker@centurytel.net)  
Website: [www.janwalker-writer.com](http://www.janwalker-writer.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.

### **What Happens When Daddy Comes Home**

Urban Leadership Institute

The Urban Leadership Institute provides training and technical assistance on mentoring children of prisoners, with emphasis on working with African American males. What Happens When Daddy Comes Home is a curriculum for fathers who return home from prison.

Contact: David Miller, Chief Visionary Officer, [dmiller@urbanleadershipinstitute.com](mailto:dmiller@urbanleadershipinstitute.com)

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

### **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 now 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)

### **Working with Children and Families Separated by Incarceration: A Handbook for Child Welfare Agencies**

Cynthia Seymour and Lois Wright.

More than 1.9 million children in the U.S. have a parent in prison or have had a parent in prison at some point in their lives. They have been separated from their parents and are often placed in the child welfare system. The authors' goals for this handbook are to:

- Make the child welfare community aware of the needs of children whose parents are incarcerated
- Inform child welfare agency organizations and caseworkers of the need for policies and programs that respond to these children's needs
- Emphasize the importance of agency collaboration to help children and families separated by incarceration
- Provide suggestions for improving case management and permanency planning for children with parents in prison
- Encourage caseworkers to use this opportunity to assess at-risk children and families, identify broader family issues, and engage in comprehensive intervention

Contact: Child Welfare League of America, [cwla@pmds.com](mailto:cwla@pmds.com)

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

# Videos on Incarcerated Parents and their Families

## Echoes of Incarceration

Jeremy Robins

*Echoes of Incarceration* is an award-winning documentary initiative 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 part of a collaboration between filmmaker Jeremy Robins and a group of non-profit organizations and advocates around the country. In 2013 the project created a series of short films that loosely correspond to the *Bill of Rights for Children with Incarcerated Parents* created by the San Francisco Children of Incarcerated Parents Partnership. 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)

## 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)

# Newsletters for Parenting Educators in Correctional Facilities

## Parenting Connection

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.

Contact: Jerry Bednarowski, [jerrybednarowski@new.rr.com](mailto:jerrybednarowski@new.rr.com)  
Website: [www.ceawisconsin.org](http://www.ceawisconsin.org)