



Justice Center

THE COUNCIL OF STATE GOVERNMENTS

Better Together: The Power of Mothers and Families to Improve Reentry Outcomes

September 17, 2024 | 2 p.m. E.T.

Presentation Outline

- I. Welcome and Introductions
- II. Data and Research about Mothers Who Experience Incarceration and the Effects on Their Children and Families
- III. Common Barriers to Reentry
- IV. Strategies to Actively Integrate Family Members' Input and Perspective
- V. Questions and Answers

The Council of State Governments Justice Center

We are a national nonprofit, nonpartisan organization that combines the power of a membership association, serving state officials in all three branches of government, with policy and research expertise to develop strategies that increase public safety and strengthen communities.

How We Work

- We bring people together
- We drive the criminal justice field forward with original research
- We build momentum for policy change
- We provide expert assistance

Our Goals

- Break the cycle of incarceration
- Advance health, opportunity, and equity
- Use data to improve safety and justice

Equity and Inclusion Statement



The Council of State Governments Justice Center is committed to advancing racial equity internally and through our work with states, local communities, and Tribal Nations.



We support efforts to dismantle racial inequities within the criminal and juvenile justice systems by providing rigorous and high-quality research and analysis to decision-makers and helping stakeholders navigate the critical, and at times uncomfortable, issues the data reveal. Beyond empirical data, we rely on stakeholder engagement and other measures to advance equity, provide guidance and technical assistance, and improve outcomes across all touchpoints in the justice, behavioral health, crisis response, and reentry systems.

Speakers

- *Arielle Andrews, Program Associate, Center for Children and Family Futures*
- *Clarence James, Program Associate, Center for Children and Family Futures*
- *Felicia López Wright, Project Manager, Behavioral Health, CSG Justice Center*
- *Jane Pfeifer, Program Director, Center for Children and Family Futures*

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Incarcerated People Who Are Mothers

**State and
federal
prisons**

=

58%

**County
jails**

=

80%

**An estimated
58,000 women
are pregnant
upon entering
jail and prison**

Most are the primary caregiver of their children

For sources, see slide 39.

Substance Use and Mental Health Disorders among Women Who Are Incarcerated

“...about half (50.8%) of women in prison are expected to meet substance use disorder criteria for illicit drugs...”

“More females (66%) than males (35%) in prison also had a history of mental health problems”

For sources, see slide 39.

Disproportionality across Systems

Juvenile Justice

Parental Incarceration

Child Welfare



National Resource Center on Children & Families of the Incarcerated, *Children and Families of the Incarcerated Fact Sheet* (Camden, NJ: Rutgers University, 2014), <https://nrccfi.camden.rutgers.edu/files/nrccfi-fact-sheet-2014.pdf>.

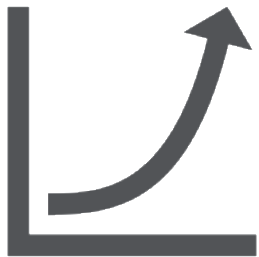
Children Experiencing the Incarceration of a Parent



>2.7 million



**1/2 under
age 10**



**15–20% in
child welfare**



**6x more likely to
become
incarcerated***

For sources, see slide 40.

Incarceration of Parent and Child Well-Being: Early and Middle Childhood

Behavioral problems, mental health, delinquency

More attention and aggression problems

Antisocial behaviors

More emotional difficulties

Julie Poehlmann-Tynan and Kristin Turney, "A Developmental Perspective on Children with Incarcerated Parents," *Child Development Perspectives* 15, no. 1 (2020): 3, <https://doi.org/10.1111/cdep.12392>.

Incarceration of Parent and Child Well-Being: Adolescence

Mental health and delinquency

Substance use and misuse

ADHD, conduct disorder, oppositional-defiant disorder, depression

Suicidal ideation and attempts

Lower GPA, decreasing odds of completing high school

Julie Poehlmann-Tynan and Kristin Turney, "A Developmental Perspective on Children with Incarcerated Parents," *Child Development Perspectives* 15, no. 1 (2020): 3, <https://doi.org/10.1111/cdep.12392>.

Incarceration of Parent and Child Well-Being: Early Adulthood

Mental health and physical health problems

Early parenthood

Social isolation

More likely to become incarcerated

Julie Poehlmann-Tynan and Kristin Turney, "A Developmental Perspective on Children with Incarcerated Parents," *Child Development Perspectives* 15, no. 1 (2020): 3, <https://doi.org/10.1111/cdep.12392>.

Percentage of Children with Terminated Parental Rights by Condition Associated with Removal (2021)

- Sample size = 126,244
- Estimates are based on all children in out-of-home care at some point during the fiscal year in the United States.
- **Almost half** of mothers experiencing incarceration **had at least one child** who had been **involved with the child welfare system.**

Condition	Percentage
Neglect	67.7%
Parent Alcohol or Drug Use	43.8%
Parent Unable to Cope	14.7%
Inadequate Housing	13.5%
Physical Abuse	12.5%
Parent Incarceration	6.9%
Abandonment	6.5%
Sexual Abuse	4.4%
Child Behavior	3.8%
Child Alcohol or Drug Use	2.7%
Child Disability	2.5%
Parent Death	1.4%
Relinquishment	1.3%

For sources, see slide 41.

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)

Those who experience traumatic events...

- Experiencing violence, abuse, or neglect
- Witnessing violence in the home or community
- Having a family member attempt or die by suicide

...may be more likely to engage in delinquent and criminal behavior.

"About Adverse Childhood Experiences," Center for Disease Control and Prevention, accessed July 19, 2024, .

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC9959059/#:~:text=From%20a%20life%2Dcourse%20perspective,early%2Donset%20misconduct%20during%20childhood.>

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)

Aspects of Environment

- Substance use problems
- Mental health problems
- Instability due to parental separation
- Instability due to household members being in jail or prison

“About Adverse Childhood Experiences,” Center for Disease Control and Prevention, accessed July 19, 2024, <https://www.cdc.gov/aces/about/index.html>.

Children Who Experience Foster Care

**2x number of
conduct
symptoms**

**4x more likely
to attempt
suicide**

**8x more likely
to report
anxiety**

**5x more likely to be
diagnosed with
substance use
disorders (SUDs)**

**>90% who experience
5 or more placements
will enter juvenile
justice system**

For sources, see slide 42

Parental Incarceration = Uncertainty

M. Brooks et al., *Stronger Together: Volume I, Experiences of Children of Incarcerated Parents* (New York: The Osborne Association, 2013), https://www.justicestrategies.org/sites/default/files/PDF_StrongerTogetherVol1_0.pdf.

Children of Incarcerated Parents: Bill of Rights

Safe and
informed

Heard

Considered

Cared for

Speak, see,
and touch
parent

Support

Not be
judged,
blamed, or
labeled

LIFELONG
relationship
with parent

Nell Bernstein, *Children of Incarcerated Parents: A Bill of Rights* (Stockton, CA: San Francisco Partnership for Incarcerated Parents, 2003).

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What is successful reentry?

Helping people who experience incarceration succeed and positively contribute to their families and communities



Common Barriers to Successful Reentry



Obtaining
employment



Safe and
stable
housing



Lack of
Education



Lack of
prosocial
support
networks



Substance use
and
mental health

Eric Martin and Marie Garcia, "Reentry research at NIJ: Providing robust evidence for high-stakes decision-making," National Institute of Justice Journal, April 11, 2022, accessed July 19, 2024, <https://nij.ojp.gov/topics/articles/reentry-research-nij-providing-robust-evidence-high-stakes-decision-making>.

Systems-Level Strategies for Reentry Programs



Establish community coalition



Create sustainable infrastructure



Conduct ongoing monitoring and evaluation



Make equity explicit

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, *Best Practices for Successful Reentry from Criminal Justice Setting for People Living with Mental Health Conditions and/or Substance Use Disorders* (Rockville, MD: National Mental Health and Substance Use Policy Laboratory, 2023), <https://www.samhsa.gov/resource/ebp/best-practices-successful-reentry-criminal-justice-settings-people-living-mental-health>.

Key Considerations for People with Substance Use and Mental Health Disorders

Begin reentry planning as early as possible

Prioritize building rapport

Provide needed supplies immediately

Provide in-person connections to services

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, *Best Practices for Successful Reentry from Criminal Justice Setting for People Living with Mental Health Conditions and/or Substance Use Disorders* (Rockville, MD: National Mental Health and Substance Use Policy Laboratory, 2023), <https://www.samhsa.gov/resource/ebp/best-practices-successful-reentry-criminal-justice-settings-people-living-mental-health>.

Key Considerations for People with Substance Use and Mental Health Disorders

Establish connections to support services

Reduce immediate risks

Prepare to reengage if reincarcerated

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, *Best Practices for Successful Reentry from Criminal Justice Setting for People Living with Mental Health Conditions and/or Substance Use Disorders* (Rockville, MD: National Mental Health and Substance Use Policy Laboratory, 2023), <https://www.samhsa.gov/resource/ebp/best-practices-successful-reentry-criminal-justice-settings-people-living-mental-health>.

SAMHSA's Four Domains of Recovery



HEALTH



HOME



PURPOSE



COMMUNITY

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, *Best Practices for Successful Reentry from Criminal Justice Setting for People Living with Mental Health Conditions and/or Substance Use Disorders* (Rockville, MD: National Mental Health and Substance Use Policy Laboratory, 2023), <https://www.samhsa.gov/resource/ebp/best-practices-successful-reentry-criminal-justice-settings-people-living-mental-health>.

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Family Input and Perspective Is Beneficial

Family
preservation

Interpersonal
relationships

Family buy-in

Family
connectedness
and belonging

Better support
for families

Child Welfare Information Gateway, *Family Engagement: Partnering With Families to Improve Child Welfare Outcomes* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2021).

Authentically Engaging Families in Systems of Care



Family-centered
practice



Contact



Communication



Concrete
services



Individualized
service plans



Strengths-
based approach

“Family and community engagement components,” youth.gov, accessed July 19, 2024, <https://youth.gov/youth-topics/family-and-community-engagement-components>.

Authentically Engaging Families in Systems of Care



Shared decision-making



Broad-based Involvement



Foster and adoptive parent



Parent praise and recognition



Confidentiality

"Family and community engagement components," youth.gov, accessed July 19, 2024, <https://youth.gov/youth-topics/family-and-community-engagement-components>.

Engaging and Empowering Families in Reentry Case Planning

Make it a priority

Co-create clear vision

Peer-led supports

Change language

Feedback loops

Jerry Milner, *Engaging, Empowering, and Utilizing Family and Youth Voice in all Aspects of Child Welfare to Drive Case Planning and System Improvement*, (Washington, DC: The Children's Bureau, 2019).

Strategies for Practitioners to Support Family Connections



Partnership
building



Training
staff



Intake and
assessment



Family
notification

Bryce Peterson et al., *Model practices for parents in prisons and jails: Reducing barriers for families while maximizing safety and security* (Washington, DC: Bureau of Justice Assistance and the National Institute of Corrections, 2019).

Strategies for Practitioners to Support Family Connections



Classes and
groups



Visitor lobbies



Visiting



Parent-child
communication

Bryce Peterson et al., *Model practices for parents in prisons and jails: Reducing barriers for families while maximizing safety and security* (Washington, DC: Bureau of Justice Assistance and the National Institute of Corrections, 2019).

Strategies for Practitioners to Support Family Connections



Caregiver
support



Family-focused
reentry

Bryce Peterson et al., *Model practices for parents in prisons and jails: Reducing barriers for families while maximizing safety and security* (Washington, DC: Bureau of Justice Assistance and the National Institute of Corrections, 2019).

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Questions and Answers

Sources: Slides 9 and 10

- Laura M. Maruschak, Jennifer Bronson, and Mariel Alper, *Survey of Prison Inmates, 2016: Parents in Prison and their Minor Children* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2021).
- Wendy Sawyer and Wanda Bertram, “Prisons and Jails Will Separate Millions of Mothers From Their Children in 2022,” Prison Policy Initiative, May 4, 2022, accessed July 19, 2024, https://www.prisonpolicy.org/blog/2022/05/04/mothers_day/.
- Michele Staton et al., “Identifying and Treating Incarcerated Women Experiencing Substance Use Disorders: A Review,” *Substance Abuse and Rehabilitation* 14, no. 1 (2023): 131, <https://doi.org/10.2147/SAR.S409944>.
- Jennifer Bronson and Marcus Berzofsky, *Indicators of Mental Health Problems Reported by Prisoners and Jail Inmates, 2011–2012* (Washington, DC: The Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2017).

Sources: Slide 12

- Julie Poehlmann-Tynan, and Kristen Turney, "A Developmental Perspective on Children with Incarcerated Parents," *Child Development Perspectives* 15, no. 1 (2020): 3, <https://doi.org/10.1111/cdep.12392>.
- National Resource Center on Children & Families of the Incarcerated, *Children and Families of the Incarcerated Fact Sheet* (Camden, NJ: Rutgers University, 2014), <https://nrccfi.camden.rutgers.edu/files/nrccfi-fact-sheet-2014.pdf>.
- Casey Family Programs, *What should child protection agencies consider when working with children who parent or primary caregiver is incarcerated? Issue Brief*, (Baltimore, MD: The Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2023), https://www.casey.org/media/23.07-QFF-SF-Parental-incarceration_02.pdf.
- Eric Martin, "Hidden Consequences: The Impact of Incarceration on Dependent Children," *National Institute of Justice Journal* 278, no. 1 (2017): 278, <https://nij.gov/journals/278/Pages/impact-ofincarceration-on-dependent-children.aspx>.
 - Note that the "6x more likely to be incarcerated" statistic was recently removed by NIJ because the source could not be found.

Sources: Slide 16

- Amy Dworsky et al., *Addressing the Needs of Incarcerated Mothers and Their Children in Illinois* (Chicago, IL: Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago and the University of Chicago's School of Social Service Administration, 2020).
- Children's Bureau, Department of Health and Human Services. *Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS), Foster Care File 2021, V1*, Distributed by National Data Archive on Child Abuse and Neglect, <https://doi.org/10.34681/MW23-Q135>.

Sources: Slide 19

- Daniel J. Pilowsky and Li-Tsy Wu, "Psychiatric Symptoms and Substance Use Disorders in a Nationally Representative Sample of American Adolescents Involved with Foster Care," *Journal of Adolescent Health* 38, no. 4 (2006): 351, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jadohealth.2005.06.014>.
- "What is the Foster Care-to-Prison Pipeline?," Juvenile Law Center, May 26, 2018, accessed July 19, 2024, <https://jlc.org/news/what-foster-care-prison-pipeline#:~:text=The%20foster%20care%2Dto%2Dprison%20pipeline%20is%20the%20la, test%20iteration, worsens%20existing%20disparities%20and%20discrimination.>

Thank You!

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For more information, please contact Felicia Lopez Wright at fwright@csg.org

This project was supported by Grant No. 15PBJA-23-GK-05504-MUMU awarded by the Bureau of Justice Assistance. The Bureau of Justice Assistance is a component of the Office of Justice Programs, which also includes the Bureau of Justice Statistics, the National Institute of Justice, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, the Office for Victims of Crime, and Office of Sex Offender Sentencing, Monitoring, Apprehending, Registering, and Tracking. Points of view or opinions in this document are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice.

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