

Mentoring for Children of Prisoners

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Developmental Issues

Families Left Behind: The Hidden Costs of Incarceration and Reentry, The Urban Institute, 2003

TABLE 1. POSSIBLE DEVELOPMENTAL EFFECTS OF PARENTAL ARREST AND INCARCERATION ON CHILDREN

Developmental state	Developmental characteristics	Developmental tasks	Effects of separation
Infancy (0–2 years)	Limited perception, mobility Total dependency	Development of trust and attachment	Impaired parent-child bonding
Early childhood (2–6 years)	Increased perception and mobility and improved memory Greater exposure to environment; ability to imagine	Development of sense of autonomy, independence, and initiative	Inappropriate separation anxiety Impaired socioemotional development Acute traumatic stress reactions and survivor guilt
Middle childhood (7–10 years)	Increased independence from caregivers and ability to reason Peers become important	Sense of industry Ability to work productively	Developmental regressions Poor self-concept Acute traumatic stress reactions Impaired ability to overcome future trauma

Developmental Issues...continued

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TABLE 1. POSSIBLE DEVELOPMENTAL EFFECTS OF PARENTAL ARREST AND INCARCERATION ON CHILDREN

Developmental state	Developmental characteristics	Developmental tasks	Effects of separation
Early adolescence (11–14 years)	Organization of behavior in pursuit of goals Increased abstract thinking Puberty Increased aggression	Ability to work productively with others Control expression of emotions	Rejection of limits on behavior Trauma-reactive behaviors
Late adolescence (15–18 years)	Emotional crisis and confusion Adult sexual development and sexuality Formal abstract thinking Increased independence	Development of cohesive identity Resolution of conflicts with family and society Ability to engage in adult work and relationships	Premature termination of dependency relationship with parent Intergenerational crime and incarceration

Impact by Stages of Arrest, Prosecution, and Incarceration

.....from a child's perspective

- Arrest
- Pretrial detention
- Incarceration
- Release and re-entry
- Overarching issues

Outcomes to be Avoided

- Poor academic performance/dropping out
- Mental health problems
- Drug abuse
- Early pregnancy
- Delinquency/gang involvement

The Costs of Getting it Wrong

Mark A. Cohen, Journal of Quantitative Criminology

- The typical career criminal costs: \$1.3 - \$1.5 million in external costs
- A heavy drug user: \$370,000 - \$970,000
- A high school dropout: \$243,000 - \$388,000
- Monetary value of saving a high-risk youth from these negative outcomes: \$1.7 - \$2.3 million

Policy Issues/Barriers to Program Implementation

- Finding the children and families at risk
- Identifying mentoring programs with capacity to provide appropriate mentoring and related service needs
- Difficult program administration
 - Monitoring capacity and delivery
 - Mini-grant oversight
 - Evaluation challenges

Rights of Children of Incarcerated Parents

CHILDREN OF INCARCERATED PARENTS | A BILL OF RIGHTS

1. I have the right to be kept safe and informed at the time of my parent's arrest.
2. I have the right **TO BE HEARD WHEN DECISIONS ARE MADE ABOUT ME**
3. I have the right **TO BE CONSIDERED WHEN DECISIONS ARE MADE ABOUT MY PARENT.**
4. I have the right **TO BE WELL CARED FOR IN MY PARENT'S ABSENCE.**
5. I have the right **TO SPEAK WITH, SEE AND TOUCH MY PARENT.**
6. I have the right **TO SUPPORT AS I STRUGGLE WITH MY PARENT'S INCARCERATION.**
7. I have the right **NOT TO BE JUDGED, BLAMED OR LABELED BECAUSE OF MY PARENT'S INCARCERATION.**
8. I have the right **TO A LIFELONG RELATIONSHIP WITH MY PARENT.**

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