

# Children with Incarcerated Parents

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## Outline



What we know      Staying Connected      Resources

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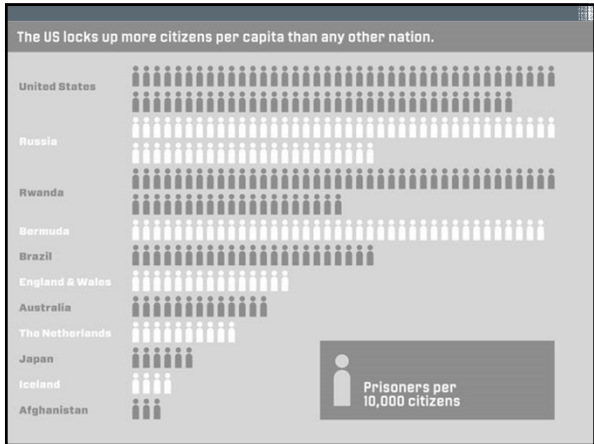
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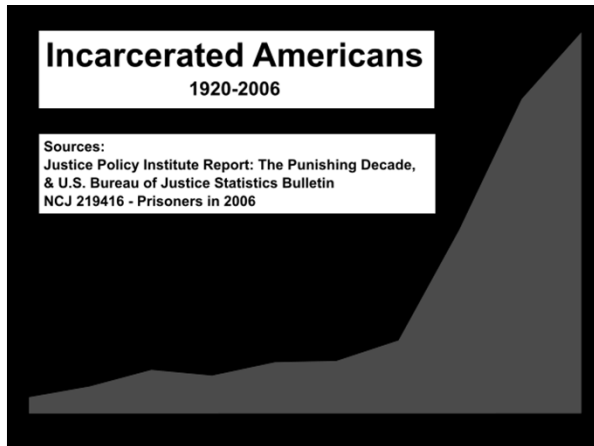
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1 in 28

- 2010 report by The Pew Charitable Trusts indicated that 1 in 28 children in the U.S. has a parent behind bars
  - up from 1 in 125 in 1985

Sources: The Pew Charitable Trust (2010). Collateral consequences

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### Changes that may occur for children when a parent is incarcerated

- Trauma associated with arrest
- Separation from parent
  - Sometimes siblings too
- Family income declines
- Child may have to move
- Child may have to change schools
- Stigma
- Corrections visiting environments
- Challenges associated with reunification

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### Caregiving Contexts

- Children of incarcerated fathers live with their mothers in 85-90+% of cases
- Children of incarcerated mothers are more likely to live with grandparents or other relatives
  - About 25-30% live in foster care
  - About 25% live with their fathers

Sources: Poehlmann (2005), Glaze & Maruschack (2008)

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### Children of incarcerated parents are more likely than their peers to exhibit

- Externalizing behavior problems
- Anxiety or depression
- School-related problems
  - Truancy
  - Academic problems
  - Lower cognitive skills
- Risk behaviors as adolescents
  
- They are also more likely to experience multiple risk factors

Sources: Murray et al., 2014; Eddy & Poehlmann, 2010; Shlafer et al., 2011

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### Resilience

- Positive child outcomes (i.e., resilience) are more likely when children have
  - Positive relationships with their caregivers
    - Stable living arrangements (not moving from one caregiver to another)
  - Nurturing and stimulating home environments
  - Positive contact with incarcerated parents

Sources: Poehlmann, 2005a, 2005b, 2013, 2014

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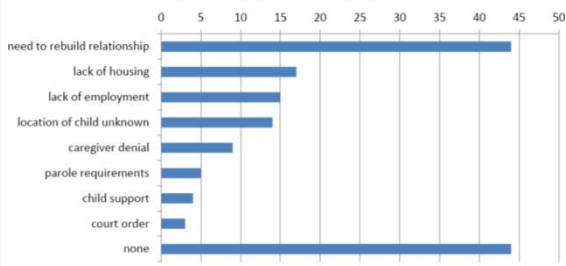
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**Frequency of Anticipated Barriers to Reunification**  
(percentage out of 977)



From a 2010 survey of prisoners in New York State prisons (2013).

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- Resources

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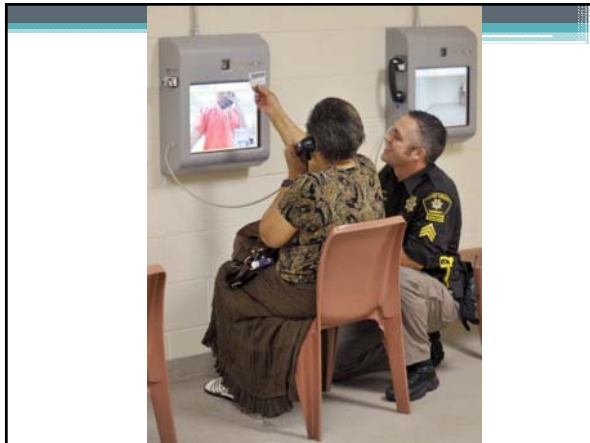
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**Recommendations to United Nations:  
Child-Friendly Visitation**

- Provide positive, safe, friendly environments for visits
- Open communication among caregivers, children, incarcerated parents, supportive professionals
- Prepare children for visits
- Contact between visits
- Support incarcerated parents



- E.g., Girl Scouts Beyond Bars, the Linkages Program, Parenting Inside Out
- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iOXJa-4EBBw&feature=related>

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### Outline

		
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<http://www.sesamestreet.org/parents/topicsandactivities/toolkits/incarceration>

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### Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Fact Sheets

- Research-based information to help custodial grandparents (and other non-parental caregivers) focus on child's development
  - Evaluated with focus groups and web-based survey
  - <http://fyi.uwex.edu/grandparenting/through-the-eyes-of-a-child/fact-sheets/>
- Adapted by
  - WPT for use in 5 midwest states for caregivers of children of parents with methamphetamine addiction
  - major national non-profit group for children

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## Examples of programs

- Mentoring
  - Big Brothers Big Sisters
- Summer camps and after school programs
  - Children of Promise
- Girl Scouts Beyond Bars
- Filmmaking
  - Echoes of Incarceration
- Federal information
  - <http://findyouthinfo.gov/youth-topics/children-of-incarcerated-parents>

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