

**Arizona
Children of
Incarcerated
Parents**



**Bill of
Rights
Project**

Report and
Recommendations

DECEMBER 2007

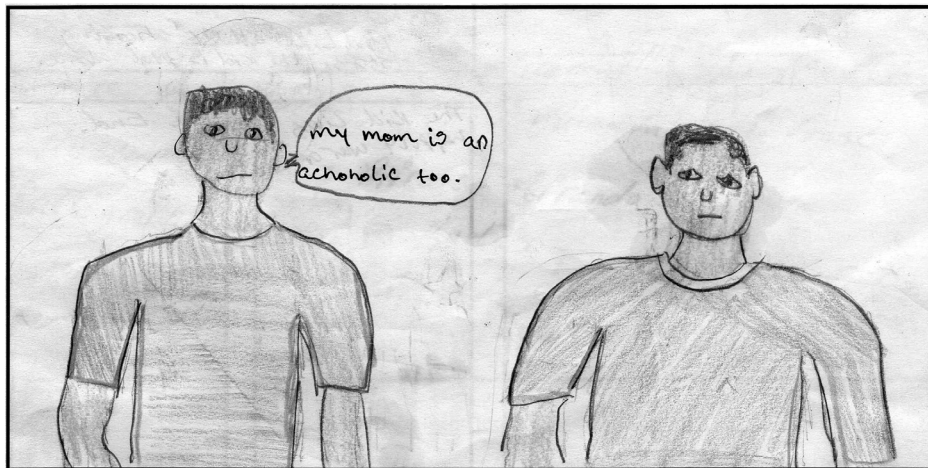
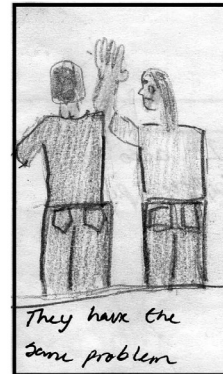
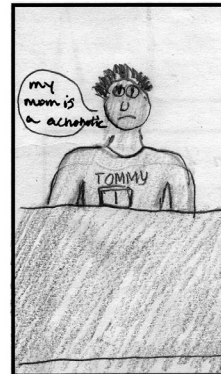
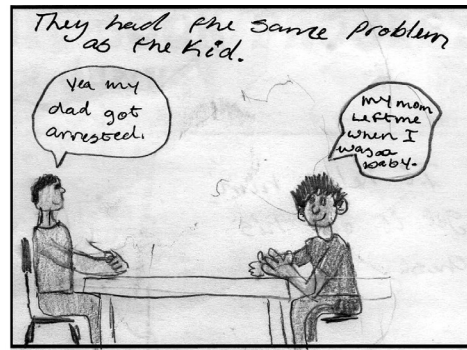
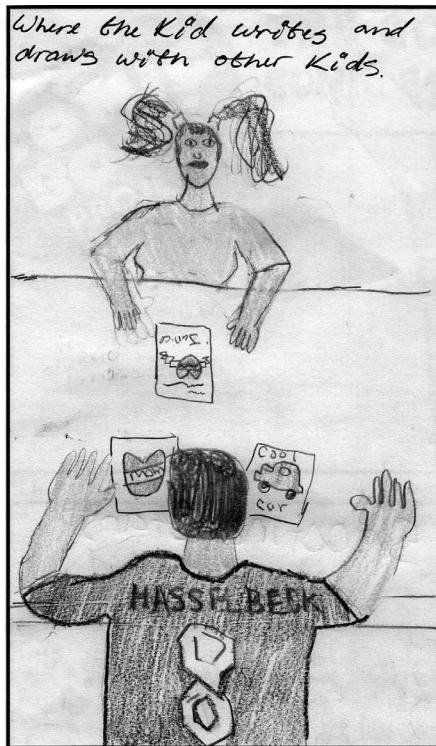
Prepared by Pima
Prevention Partnership
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Funded by the Arizona
Parents Commission



**“They are innocent, being punished
for the sins of their parents.”**

- Work Group Member



This report is dedicated to children of incarcerated parents who struggle every day to take responsibility for their siblings and themselves in spite of the dimensional difficulties they face.

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Suggested Citation:

Pima Prevention Partnership (2007).
 Arizona Children of Incarcerated Parents
 Bill of Rights Project: Report and Recommendations. Tucson, AZ: Pima Prevention Partnership

Sponsored by the Governor's Office for Children, Youth and Families – Division for Substance Abuse Policy

Arizona Children of Incarcerated Parents Bill of Rights Project Report and Recommendations December 2007

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Message from the Statewide Steering Committee Chair



Children of incarcerated parents are among the most vulnerable, and over-looked, groups of children at-risk within the state. The report and recommendations contained within this document represent the dedicated efforts of more than 250 community activists, public servants and affected citizens. When we embarked on this Bill of Rights project, we selected the three rights that relate to security and stability of the children who are innocent victims of their parents' choices. The children suffer from trauma,

abuse, neglect, interruptions in their home life and school, poverty, and the social stigma that comes with having a mother or father in prison.

On any given day, the number of children impacted by arrest and parental incarceration in Arizona is approximately 95,669 with parents in prison or jail and an additional 80,398 children with parents on probation (total 176,067).

When a parent is incarcerated, the extended family is often called upon to take care of the child. The families try hard to provide for the child's physical and emotional needs, but they are in need of support. Many of the recommendations in this report have to do with the need to support the single parent, grandparents, aunts and uncles who, often at great hardship, accept responsibility for raising the children. Research shows that fewer than 10% of children of incarcerated parents are in state custody.

It is critical to offer this kind of support because inaction has a high cost. Children of incarcerated parents are five to seven times more likely to end up behind bars themselves. One-third of the Arizona state prison population had at least one incarcerated parent when he/she was a child. Among youth currently serving a sentence in the Arizona Department of Juvenile Corrections, over 50% have an adult family member who was/is incarcerated in the youth's life.

This is an urgent call to action to the people of Arizona. This is an opportunity for citizens, public agencies, community organizations, and faith based organizations to step up and provide help and assistance to children of incarcerated parents and their caregivers. Working together, we can help children of incarcerated parents become productive members of society and stop the cycle of incarceration.

- Emily L. Jenkins

Statewide Steering Committee

Chairperson: Emily Jenkins, Chair, Juvenile Services Coordinating Council (JSCC)

Arizona Administrative Office of the Courts, Ellen Kirschbaum

Arizona Attorney General's Office, Jane Irvine

Arizona Children's Association, Brenda Tomlin

Arizona Department of Corrections, Steve Ickes, Chris Moody

Arizona Department of Economic Security, Stacy Reinstein,
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Maricopa County Superior Court, Warren Granville

Phoenix Indian Center, Patricia Hibbeler

Phoenix Police Department, Gerald Richard

Prison Fellowship Ministries of Arizona, William Anderson

Tucson Police Department, Kathleen Robinson

Thanks to Leslie Johnston, in The University of Arizona Office of
External Relations | Marketing, for help in producing this publication.

Acknowledgements

Sincere thanks are extended to the Governor's Office of Children, Youth and Families (GOCYF) and its Division of Substance Abuse Policy, as well as the Arizona Parents Commission for their active and sustained leadership on behalf of children of incarcerated parents.

We acknowledge and deeply appreciate the caring and commitment of more than two hundred and fifty citizens who contributed their leadership, time and ideas through participation in Arizona Children of Incarcerated Parents Bill of Rights Project work group meetings, guided interviews with agencies, and focus groups across the state.

Special thanks to the many organizations and individuals in the state of Arizona who hosted work group meetings including the Governor's Office of Children, Youth, and Families (GOCYF), the Flinn Foundation, Every Voice in Action Foundation, Arizona's Children Association in Phoenix, Coconino County Juvenile Court and Big Brothers Big Sisters in Flagstaff, and Yavapai Big Brothers Big Sisters in Yavapai County, and the Church of the Beatitudes in Phoenix.

We also express our appreciation for the leadership and hospitality of the organizations which helped recruit diverse focus group members including Women in New Recovery (WINR) in Prescott and Mesa, Beatitudes Center DOAR, Child Crisis Center, Fresh Start Community, Chapter 5 in Prescott, Arizona's Children Association, Big Brothers Big Sisters in Flagstaff, and Yavapai Big Brothers and Big Sisters.

**“Think of each individual as being complex,
instead of thinking in stereotypes.”**

- Work Group Member

At the Pima Prevention Partnership, Deputy Director Claire E. Scheuren served as project director. Maggie Allen, Linda Wright, and Sandra Klinger provided leadership to the process of recruiting planning participants and providing staff support to thirty-three Work Group meetings, nine focus groups, and the interview process with ninety-nine agencies across the state. Karen McBeath coordinated the collection of quantitative data, synthesis of the guided interviews, and research on model programs, practices, and policies for this report's companion Manual of Strategies.

Points of view represented in this report are those of Work Group participants and do not necessarily reflect the official position or policies of the Governor's Office of Children, Youth and Families, the Arizona Parent's Commission, or the Pima Prevention Partnership.

I. SUMMARY

As the number of parents who are being incarcerated increases, so does the need to address the impact on children.

THE PROBLEM

There are close to 3 million children of incarcerated parents in the U.S. today, and 12 million who have been directly affected by parental incarceration in their lifetime (Bernstein, 2005). This means that 1 out of every 33 children in the U.S. currently has a parent in prison or jail (Bernstein, 2005).

There is no indication that this trend will reverse itself. As the number of incarcerated parents increases, so does the number of affected children. Over the past decade, there has been a steady average annual increase in the prison population. Currently 2.2 million individuals are in prison in the U.S. Over 600,000 prisoners are released each year, but two-thirds are arrested again within three years (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2006b; Congressional Record, 2007).

If rates of first incarceration remain unchanged, 6.6% of all persons born in the U.S. in 2001 will go to State or Federal prison during their lifetime (U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2007a).

Arizona leads the Western states in the rate of incarceration. Following national trends, Arizona's incarcerated population is disproportionately minority, and Arizona is incarcerating more women than other states. This has resulted in an estimated 95,669 minor children in Arizona directly affected on any given day by parental incarceration in jail and prison, with many thousands more who have experienced parental incarceration in their lifetime. Tens of thousands more have a parent on probation.

Children of incarcerated parents are among the most vulnerable populations of children, at high risk for neglect, abuse, behavioral health problems, delinquency and substance abuse. The problems of children whose parents are incarcerated, if unattended, can produce intergenerational patterns of crime and violence. National studies report that children of incarcerated parents are five to seven times more likely to be incarcerated themselves (Center for Children of Incarcerated Parents, 2004; Congressional Record, 2007; Administration for Children Youth & Families, 2004).

A 2005 study of the Arizona state prison system reported that one-third of inmates had at least one parent incarcerated when he/she was a child (Applied Behavioral Health Policy, 2005). According to 2006 data provided by the Arizona Department of Juvenile Corrections (ADJC), among youth currently serving a sentence in the Arizona Department of Juvenile Corrections, 55.3% of girls and 47.7% of boys have an adult family member who was/is incarcerated in the youth's life (M. Crane, Arizona Department of Juvenile Corrections, personal communication, September 17, 2007).

In spite of these challenges, experts state that the effects of trauma on young children from arrest and parental incarceration can be mitigated if recognized and addressed early and comprehensively. A review of current service systems and law enforcement processes in Maricopa, Pima, Coconino, and Yavapai counties reveals a significant opportunity for child welfare, schools, faith-based organizations, mental health service providers and law enforcement agencies to work together to improve life outcomes for children of incarcerated parents.

“One of the biggest things is to keep kids out of the system.”

- Work Group Member

THE PROJECT

In the fall of 2006, the State of Arizona’s Bill of Rights Project was selected as one of 14 partnerships in the U.S. to engage in the pursuit of strategies and initiatives to secure The Bill of Rights for Children of the Incarcerated with support and technical assistance from a team led by Senior Justice Fellow Dee Ann Newell of the Soros Foundation’s Open Society Institute and the Washington, D.C.-based Family and Corrections Network. The overarching purpose of the Arizona Children of Incarcerated Parents Bill of Rights Project was to improve outcomes for children of incarcerated parents. A statewide needs assessment and planning process was conducted to inform the implementation of system and program improvements to reduce risk factors for delinquency, poor school performance, substance abuse, suicide, and future incarceration. The focus was on reducing traumas associated with parental arrest, addressing existing delays in behavioral health services, providing support for caregivers and promoting awareness of the needs of this largely invisible, yet highly vulnerable, population of children.

The Project selected three of the eight identified rights around which to focus their work group efforts. Addressing these three rights was perceived by the *Project* to have the greatest potential positive effect on child well-being in Arizona:

1. To be kept safe and informed at the time of their parent’s arrest;
2. To be cared for in their parent’s absence; and
3. To support as they struggle with their parent’s incarceration.

The Project’s year-long effort resulted in the following Arizona Children of Prisoners Bill of Rights Report and Recommendations, which reflects feedback from more than 250 Arizona citizens statewide, including agency and institutional representatives, children of prisoners, ex-inmates, caregivers of children of incarcerated parents (CIP), and volunteer mentors of CIP.

The process was highly comprehensive. Within a short time (5 months), project staff conducted nearly one hundred interviews, convened and coordinated of two statewide and four county-specific professional work groups convened to assess CIP needs, reviewed model programs and approaches, and made recommendations for changes in state and local policies and practices. In addition, project staff conducted four in-depth interviews with age and racially diverse children of incarcerated parents who are now adults, and nine focus groups with private citizens who had personal experience with CIP, including as caregivers.

The report documents the existing needs of children of incarcerated parents and provides clear direction for citizens, as well as state and local policymakers, to take action to avert the long-term negative effects on the children and the financial costs to society.

The 10 recommendations for statewide action are insightful and far-reaching. As they are implemented, they will significantly improve the lives of children and families throughout Arizona and contribute to breaking the cycle of intergenerational incarceration.

Ten Key Recommendations of the Arizona Children of Incarcerated Parents Bill of Rights Project

- 1.** Establish arrest guidelines for law enforcement to follow when arresting parents to ensure children's identification, proper placement, safety and stability.
- 2.** Train all law enforcement officers in the State of Arizona on the needs of children of incarcerated parents.
- 3.** Designate and identify resources needed to support an advocacy and service coordination mechanism at the state and local levels. This coordination mechanism will work with service providers who will serve as an immediate and ongoing resource to the child at-risk, the caregiver and community.
- 4.** Ensure that adequate and accessible resources are available to foster security and stability for children whose parents are incarcerated.
- 5.** Develop, maintain and circulate a local resource directory specific to the needs of CIP in Spanish and English in every jurisdiction for AZ 211, community agencies, law enforcement, health care providers, schools and caregivers to ensure that this information is available across Arizona at all times.
- 6.** Advocate for statewide funding and access to best-practice mentoring services for children of incarcerated parents to allow for positive modeling when a parent is made unavailable.
- 7.** Support community and faith-based organizations and services that can provide comprehensive resources to children of incarcerated parents and their caregivers.
- 8.** Foster communication among children, caregivers and incarcerated parents, as appropriate and in the best interests of the child.
- 9.** Conduct wide-ranging education and awareness efforts to inform the public about the needs of children of incarcerated parents and what the public can do to address those needs.
- 10.** Conduct training for professional service providers to foster personal understanding, skills and strategies to better serve children of incarcerated parents.

II. HISTORY

When Governor Napolitano assumed office in January 2003, she pledged to make the protection, well-being and permanency of Arizona's most vulnerable children one of her top priorities. Shortly thereafter Governor Napolitano convened a group of leaders from around the state to initiate reform in Arizona's child welfare system. This group's work culminated in the *Improving Arizona's Child Protection System Report and Recommendations* and the Governor's *Action Plan for Reform of Arizona's Child Protection System* (2003), including recommendations for legislative, policy and practice change.

Concurrent to the child welfare system reform action planning process, the Governor's office took on a parallel challenge by focusing attention on a highly vulnerable and largely invisible population of children of incarcerated parents. While less than 10% of these children are involved in the child welfare system (Travis, Cincotta, & Solomon, 2003; Applied Behavioral Health Policy, 2005), their need for physical, social and emotional support and housing stability match those of children involved in the child welfare system.

In 2006, Governor Napolitano collaborated with the Juvenile Services Coordinating Council in their application to obtain technical assistance from the Soros Foundation's Open Society Institute in pursuit of securing an Arizona Bill of Rights for children of incarcerated parents. This opportunity for technical assistance came on the heels of a needs assessment, planning and issue development process conducted by the Pima Prevention Partnership and funded by the National Institute of Corrections, which highlighted the unmet needs of children of incarcerated parents in Southern Arizona.

In the fall of 2006, the State of Arizona's Bill of Rights Project was selected as one of only 14 partnerships in the U.S. to receive support and technical assistance from the Soros Foundation and the Washington, D.C.-based Family and Corrections Network. Governor Napolitano furthered her leadership role by supporting funding through an Arizona Parents Commission initiative entitled Arizona Children of Incarcerated Parents Bill of Rights Project to conduct a statewide needs assessment and planning process. The purpose of the initiative was to inform the implementation of system and program improvements to reduce risk factors for delinquency, poor school performance, substance abuse, suicide, and future incarceration among children of incarcerated parents (Slavin, 2000).

At the behest of the Governor's Office for Children, Youth and Families (GOCYF), the Bill of Rights Project was conducted by the Juvenile Services Coordinating Council (JSCC) and the Pima Prevention Partnership (PPP) in collaboration with leaders from GOCYF and Arizona Department of Economic Security, Prison Fellowship Ministries-Arizona, Arizona's Children Association, Arizona Department of Education and more than sixty-six other state and regional groups. The project took place from October 2006 to October 2007.

The purpose of the Bill of Rights Project was to improve outcomes for children of incarcerated parents by reducing traumas associated with parental arrest, addressing existing delays in behavioral health services, providing support for caregivers and promoting awareness of the needs of this largely invisible, yet most vulnerable, population

of children. The San Francisco Children of Incarcerated Parents Partnership's publication, *Children of Incarcerated Parents: A Bill Of Rights* (2005), was chosen as a guide to the creation of the Arizona Bill of Rights. The San Francisco Children of Incarcerated Parents Partnership advocates eight rights for children of incarcerated parents.

The Arizona Children of Incarcerated Parents Bill of Rights project chose to focus on three of the eight San Francisco-identified rights. Addressing these three rights was perceived by the committee to have the greatest potential positive effect on the well-being of the children. Children of incarcerated parents should have the right:

1. To be kept safe and informed at the time of their parent's arrest;
2. To be cared for in their parent's absence; and
3. To support as they struggle with their parent's incarceration.

The needs assessment activities were designed to evaluate the degree to which policy and practice honored these rights across the state.

The Steering Committee recruited and coordinated six active volunteer Children of Incarcerated Parents work groups: two statewide work groups and one in each of the four Arizona counties (Maricopa, Pima, Coconino, Yavapai), with the highest number of incarcerates in the prison system and identified as representative of the state overall. These work groups were charged to assess needs, review model programs and approaches, and make recommendations for state and local policy and program developments and enhancements. As part of the needs assessment, project staff conducted ninety-nine interviews with members of these work groups and other affiliated entities.

In addition to garnering information from the agency and institutional representatives, project staff conducted four in-depth interviews with children of incarcerated parents (now adults), and nine focus groups with private citizens who had personal experience with the child of incarcerated parent issue, including children of prisoners (now adults), ex-inmates (male and female), caregivers of children of incarcerated parents (CIP), and Big Brothers/Big Sisters volunteer mentors of CIP.

The Arizona Bill of Rights Project needs assessment findings are being disseminated statewide through two Project publications, including the *Manual of Strategies Directory*, and this Final Report. These publications are designed to guide a data-driven approach to developing or enhancing local and state protocols and policymaking to improve outcomes for children of incarcerated parents.

**“Everyone touches the lives of these kids,
but no one takes responsibility.”**

- Work Group Member

III. BACKGROUND ON ISSUE

AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL

There are close to 3 million children of incarcerated parents in the U.S. today, and 12 million who have been directly affected by parental incarceration in their lifetime. This means that 1 out of every 33 children in the U.S. has a parent in prison or jail (Bernstein, 2005).

Children of incarcerated parents are among the most vulnerable populations of children, at high risk for neglect, abuse, behavioral health problems, delinquency and substance abuse. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and other federal sources estimate that children of incarcerated parents are five to seven times more likely to become incarcerated themselves (Center for Children of Incarcerated Parents, 2004; Congressional Record, 2007; Administration for Children, Youth & Families, 2004). They have an 11 percent higher rate of suicide than other at-risk groups of children (Gabel & Johnston, 1995). Since these children may not be receiving the services and support they need, many of them are already overstressing our education and juvenile justice systems, and are on an unfortunate trajectory to cause future stress on human services and law enforcement systems.

Historic changes in family structure, substance abuse rates, criminal sentencing policies and related increases in the number of incarcerated parents have exerted a profound negative impact on the well being of children of incarcerated parents. As states and the federal government have instituted tough new mandatory sentencing policies on drug offenses, the incarceration of women has grown markedly. In the twenty year period between 1985-2005, the number of incarcerated women more than tripled, and the number of incarcerated men doubled. This trend is still continuing with the number of women under the jurisdiction of State or Federal prison increasing at almost twice the rate of men; a 4.8 percent increase from midyear 2005 compared to a 2.7 percent increase for men (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2007b).

The vast majority of women inmates were single parents with sole custody of their child(ren) when they were arrested, and more than 85 percent of these women intend to resume care of their children upon release from prison (Mumola, 2000). This presents a special challenge for the child welfare system. Children of mothers in prison are more than five times more likely to enter the foster care system than children whose male parents are in prison (Seymour, 1998).

A confluence of laws and policies, particularly mandatory sentencing for drug convictions, has contributed to a significant increase in prison populations over the past decade. The growing rate of incarceration and a trend to impose longer sentences has resulted in an increased number of parents who find it difficult to maintain close ties with their children. At the same time, the majority of parents in prison are held in rural locations up to 100 miles from home which makes visitation virtually impossible for families without cars or access to transportation (Bloom, 1995, as in Gabel & Johnston, 1995; Bernstein, 2005).

Decades of attachment research underscore the fact that to develop successfully, children need parents, and they will suffer when the parent relationship is severed or breached (Bernstein, 2005). Yet, those incarcerated are primarily parents of young children. Fifty-eight percent of children of incarcerated parents are 9 or under; of which 22 percent of children are under the age of 4 (Mumola, 2000).

Nationally, approximately 54 percent of children of incarcerated parents live with relative caregivers - often grandparents on fixed incomes, and a total of 47% live with single parents - usually mothers who are working multiple jobs (Mumola, 2000). According to U.S. Department of Justice Statistics, 9.6 percent of state-incarcerated mothers have minor children in foster care, as the vast majority of incarcerated mothers are single parents and unable to make provisions for someone else to take over the children's care (Mumola, 2000). Thus, maternal incarceration may place even greater burden on children if the primary caretaker is lost, temporarily or permanently (Gabel & Johnston, 1995; Bernstein, 2005).

Foster parents and caregivers have reported that children of incarcerated parents often experience severe problems in school and show signs of serious mental health and behavioral problems during the period of parental incarceration. Children of incarcerated parents have often been subject to a broad range of adverse experiences including extreme poverty, exposure to violence, pre-natal drug exposure, and violent deaths of family members. Added to these extreme stress factors may be the forced removal of the parent from the household.

WHAT IS HAPPENING IN ARIZONA

Arizona leads the Western states in the rate of incarceration. Taking into consideration the national formulas and the number of inmates in Arizona's county jails, state and federal prisons, and on probation and parole, there are an estimated 95,669 minor children in Arizona directly affected by parental incarceration today and many thousands more who have experienced parental incarceration. An additional 80,398 children have at least one parent on probation. Thus, on any given day, approximately 176,067 minor children in Arizona have a parent directly involved with the criminal justice system.

Following national trends, Arizona's incarcerated population is disproportionately minority. Arizona's female inmate population is growing at an average rate of 10-11 percent per year, close to twice the Arizona average for men (Arizona Department of Corrections, 2007). Research has demonstrated that women are more likely than men to be arrested for non-violent crimes with 80 percent of women in the Arizona state prison system admitted for nonviolent offenses (Mauer & Chesney-Lind, 2003; Villa, 2003). Over the past year, there were 48 births to incarcerated women in the Arizona prison system (Arizona Department of Corrections Health Services, personal communication, October 2, 2007).

There is already ample evidence that parental incarceration is a significant risk factor for delinquency, youth criminal justice involvement, and incarceration as an adult. Among youth currently serving a sentence in the Arizona Department of Juvenile Corrections, 2006 data indicates that 55.3 percent of girls and 47.7 percent of boys have an adult family member who was/is incarcerated in the youth's life (M. Crane, Arizona Department of Juvenile Corrections, personal communication, September 17, 2007). In a recent study of Arizona inmates, at least one-third of all participants reported that their mother and/or father had been arrested or imprisoned while he/she was a child, and well over 25 percent of all respondents had lived in a group home, been placed in foster care, or spent time in the juvenile justice system (Applied Behavioral Health Policy, 2005).

On average, incarcerated mothers in Arizona are imprisoned for a sentence of seven years and fathers are imprisoned for 12 years (Applied Behavioral Health Policy, 2005). Typical of other states in the U.S., very little data is available on this population. National studies and a

2002 Arizona study indicate that during parental incarceration, more than 80 percent of children are living with the other parent, a family caregiver or family friend, and that relatively few of the children of incarcerated parents, less than 10 percent, are involved with Child Protective Services (CPS), the state's child abuse and neglect protection agency (Travis, Cincotta, & Solomon, 2003; Pima Prevention Partnership, 2002; Applied Behavioral Health Policy, 2005). Thus, the majority of children are not involved in the child welfare system, and families may be less likely to access and benefit from social services designed for them. This data is consistent with other states in the U.S. (Bernstein, 2005).

Most children with fathers incarcerated in Arizona live with their mothers, while most children of incarcerated mothers live with a grandparent, other relatives or are in the foster care system (Applied Behavioral Health Policy, 2005). These caregivers may have little to no experience responding to the needs of at-risk children in their care and generally have few resources to obtain professional help. Data suggest that most caregivers are maternal grandparents over age 50, caring for an average of 2.3 children averaging 8.5 years of age. Financial resources were the largest concern of the caregivers, with 43 percent supporting the children with their own personal income (Applied Behavioral Health Policy, 2005).

To further complicate the situation, many of the children are reunited, if even for brief periods, with their biological parent upon community re-entry, which may result in further changes in the child's living situation, school, friends and parental expectations. While family reunification has benefits for CIP, the context within which it occurs may be problematic. Work group members and focus group participants noted that upon release, most ex-offenders have requirements to meet the terms of their probation/parole, including finding adequate housing, getting a job or job training and engaging in treatment/aftercare. The ex-inmate may not have the ability or time to consistently care for their children's physical and emotional needs.

It is important to note that the availability of the few services that do exist does not mean that they are being effectively utilized or accessed. Identification and referral is a vitally important strategy to ensure that 1) parental incarceration is seen as a crisis moment for children, requiring immediate attention to their needs; and 2) caregivers are well informed of potential needs and available services. For example, crisis intervention services exist, but if children are not perceived as being in crisis, these resources are not utilized. Emergency social services are available, but caregivers may not know how to access them.

In spite of these challenges, experts state that the effects of trauma on young children from arrest and parental incarceration *can* be mitigated if recognized and addressed early and comprehensively. A review of current service systems and law enforcement processes in Maricopa, Pima, Coconino and Yavapai counties reveals significant opportunity for child welfare agencies, schools, faith-based organizations, mental health service providers and law enforcement agencies to work together on behalf of the children of incarcerated parents.

Thus far, nearly 100 law enforcement and social service agencies across Arizona have provided information to the *Bill of Rights Project*. Extensive data has been compiled and addressed in the recommendations of this report.

The chart on the following page outlines the number of Arizona children of arrested and incarcerated parents affected on daily basis.

Number of Arizona Children of Arrested and Incarcerated Parents
Affected DAILY by Age**

Among All Arizona Children Whose Parents Are in Federal and State Prison,
County Jails and Those with Parents on Probation

<u>Correctional System</u>	<u>Daily Population*</u>	<u>Number of minor children (0-18) of Arizona Incarcerates**</u>	<u>Under the age of 4 (22%)**</u>	<u>Under the age of 10 (58%)**</u>	<u>Between 10-17 (42%)**</u>
Federal Prison System in Arizona	3,798 (estimate of 3,342 are Arizona residents - at least 12% are non-Arizonans)	5,681	1,250	3,295	2,386
Arizona State Prison	37,088*	63,050	13,871	36,569	26,481
Total Prison	40,430	68,731	15,121	39,864	28,867
Apache County Jail	120	204	45	118	86
Cochise County Jail	204	347	76	201	146
Coconino County Jail	559	950	209	551	399
Gila County Jail	188	320	70	185	134
Graham County Jail	100	170	37	99	71
Greenlee County Jail	36	62	13	36	26
La Paz County Jail	250	425	94	247	179
Maricopa County Jail	9,200	15,640	3,441	9,071	6,569
Mohave County Jail	525	893	196	518	375
Navajo County Jail	419	712	157	413	299
Pima County Jail	2,046	3,478	765	2,017	1,461
Pinal County Jail	1,034	1,758	387	1,020	738
Santa Cruz County Jail	115	196	43	114	82
Yavapai County Jail	500	850	187	493	357
Yuma County Jail	550	935	206	542	393
Total Jail	15,846	26,938	5,926	15,624	11,314
Total Prison and Jail	Total Inmates	Total Minor Children	Under 4 years	Under 10 years	Between 10-18
	56,276	95,669	21,047	55,488	40,181

Probation Department	Daily Population^{***}	Number of minor children (0-18) of Arizona Incarcerates^{**}	Under the age of 4 (22%)^{**}	Under the age of 10 (58%)^{**}	Between 10-17 (42%)^{**}
Federal Probation	5,000	8,500	1,870	4,930	3,570
Apache County Probation	487	827	182	480	347
Cochise County Probation	873	1,484	326	861	623
Coconino County Probation	500	850	187	493	357
Gila County Probation	726	1,234	247	716	518
Graham County Probation	430	731	161	424	307
Greenlee County Probation	143	243	54	141	102
La Paz County Probation	308	524	115	304	220
Maricopa County Probation	25,951	44,117	9,702	25,588	18,529
Mohave County Probation	1,086	1,846	406	1,071	775
Navajo County Probation	1,033	1,756	386	1,019	738
Pima County Probation	4,956	8,425	1,854	4,887	3,539
Pinal County Probation	1,820	3,094	681	1,795	1,299
Santa Cruz County Probation	349	593	131	344	249
Yavapai County Probation	2,056	3,495	769	2,027	1,468
Yuma County Probation	1,575	2,678	589	1,553	1,125
Total Probation	47,293	80,398^{***}	17,688	46,631	33,767
	Total adults in prison, jail, and on probation	Total children with parent in prison, jail or on probation	CIP under 4 years old	CIP under 10 years old	CIP between 10-17
TOTALS: Prison, Jail, Probation	103,569	176,067	38,735	102,119	73,948

* Arizona Department of Corrections (ADC) website (June 30, 2007); <http://www.azcorrections.gov/adc/reports/CAG/CAGJun07.pdf>

**On average, each inmate in Arizona has 1.7 minor children. This formula is based on the 2005 inmate study which determined that among 28,305 ADC, Thmate census, there were 48,930 minor children; This is consistent with national studies that point out that 76% of incarcerates are parents with an average of 2 children each; On average, mothers in state prisons report having at least two and a half children; on average, fathers in state prisons report having at least two children (Source: Mumola, 2000)

*** Source of Jail and Probation Data: Telephone Interviews to County Sheriff's and Probation Departments, September 10-14, 2007, and telephone interview with (Arizona) Federal Probation, October 18, 2007.

*** For this data chart, it is assumed that a similar percentage of men and women in jail and on parole and probation are parents, since parolees and jail inmates across the country have similarly sized families as male and female state inmates. An effort is underway to better identify ages of the children of Maricopa County probationers.

IV. PROJECT STRUCTURE AND METHODOLOGY

The following provides an overview of the five primary methodologies employed in the Arizona Children of Incarcerated Parents Bill of Rights Project needs assessment activities.

WORK GROUP MEETINGS

The Statewide Steering Committee for the *Project* engaged in bi-monthly, two-hour meetings at the State Capitol, hosted by the Governor's Office for Children, Youth and Families, to provide leadership to the overall effort and to share ideas and information about how their respective agencies could assist in implementing the *Arizona Bill of Rights for Children of Incarcerated Parents*.

The Statewide Work Group on Arrest Protocols met monthly to review research on model programs and make recommendations to address Right #1: *To be kept safe and informed at the time of parental arrest*. The Work Group drafted elements of an arrest protocol that would address the safety and security of the child(ren).

Regional Work Groups (Maricopa, Pima, Coconino and Yavapai counties) met monthly in their respective regions to assist in the needs assessment through meeting dialogue, guided interviews and focus groups. These work group members discussed Right #1, but focused primarily on Right #2: *To be cared for in their parent's absence*; and Right #3: *To support as they struggle with their parent's incarceration*.

GUIDED INTERVIEWS

As part of the *Project's* qualitative assessment of the needs of children of incarcerated parents and gaps in services in each region, 99 agency interviews were conducted with law enforcement and social service agencies. These interviews either were 1) conducted by phone or in person by work group members and staff; or 2) the questionnaires were completed by agency representatives and submitted by email, fax or postal service.

Staff also conducted four in-depth interviews with age, gender and race-diverse children of incarcerated parents who are now adults.

FOCUS GROUPS

Nine focus groups were conducted in three of the four project-targeted counties throughout Arizona, in small rural areas and large cities and collected a significant amount of information. Participants were individuals who were directly affected by parental incarceration. Specifically, focus groups included: children of prisoners (now adults), caregivers, ex-inmate parents (male and female) and mentors of children of incarcerated parents.

Participants in the focus groups answered a number of questions in a small group format averaging between 5-12 participants each (of diverse and representative demographics of race, age, income). The questions were divided into different categories to best assess the experience and the opinion as well as personal knowledge of available services.

The results collected from these focus groups confirmed the results of the first needs assessment in Arizona conducted in 2001-2002 in Pima County, re-affirmed that parental incarceration is a time of significant stress and creates multi-dimensional problems for the children and their caregivers. Results of the focus groups are summarized and included in this report.

QUANTITATIVE DATA COLLECTION

Project staff compiled data on populations of adults in the state of Arizona who are currently incarcerated in federal or state prison, county jails, and on probation. There were four counties targeted for needs assessment and planning activities within the scope of the Arizona Children of Incarcerated Parents Bill of Rights Project. Data on prison, jail and probation was compiled from all fifteen Arizona counties.

RESEARCH ON MODEL PROGRAMS AND EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICES

One of the distinct advantages of being selected to serve as one of the 14 sites to receive national technical assistance for the Arizona Children of Prisoners Bill of Rights Project was having access to the latest model programs, policies and practices. As a result of investigating available sources identified by the national technical assistance provider, project staff completed a comprehensive Manual of Strategies which is available as a complementary reference to this report.

V. RESULTS: IDENTIFIED NEEDS OF ARIZONA'S CHILDREN OF INCARCERATED PARENTS

The project interviewed 99 organizations in the four target counties as part of the needs assessment, and identified the following gaps in targeted resources for children of incarcerated parents and their caregivers. Please note that the needs assessment process was thorough but not exhaustive, and there may be some CIP-specific and targeted programs or services not captured in this report.

The guided interview process revealed many details about the existing system of referrals, services and partnerships with the targeted counties. This information will be fully utilized as part of the implementation planning process.

Gaps in Existing Resources Targeted Specifically to Children of Incarcerated Parents

- Less than one third of the social service providers identify children of incarcerated parents in their intake or database systems.
- Approximately 10 percent provide CIP-specific staff training.
- Approximately 80 percent welcome CIP-specific staff training.
- According to the results, only the following agencies provide CIP-specific services:
 1. Pima Prevention Partnership/Big Brothers Big Sisters – STARS Mentoring
 2. Blake New Visions for Families
 3. Early Head Start Zero-Five
 4. Girl Scouts Beyond Bars
 5. K.A.R.E. Family Center
 6. Mentor Kids USA
 7. Prison Fellowship-AngelTree Ministry
- Coordinated by the Pima Prevention Partnership's (PPP) STARS Mentoring initiative across much of Arizona, Big Brothers Big Sisters/STARS is mentoring CIPs

Adult “Bigs” meet with “Littles” at least an hour a week for a minimum of one year to offer friendship and support to help children succeed. Longitudinal research studies have indicated excellent outcomes from BBBS matches. This mentoring model is considered to be a best practice.

- In Maricopa County, Early Head Start’s Zero–Five Program provides innovative services to parents in Adobe Mountain and Black Canyon Juvenile Correction Facilities. Weekly visits unite teen parents with their children to focus on teaching parenting skills. Curriculum includes stages of child development, health, school readiness, and family literacy. Also, caregivers and children receive weekly home-based services and sometimes join the incarcerated teen parents for group activities.
- In Maricopa County, Girl Scouts Beyond Bars brings girls and their incarcerated mothers together on a monthly basis to work on projects and activities. This program attempts to preserve and/or rebuild the mother-daughter relationship. It provides mothers with parent education and helps the girls build character, self-confidence and self-esteem.
- In Phoenix and Tucson, Mentor Kids USA is a program for Christian adults to help at-risk youth, ages 8-17. Mentors participate in weekly activities with their matches to provide friendship and role modeling.
- In Tucson, Blake New Visions for Families provides behavioral health services for CIPs age 0-5 years in foster care under Child Protective Services. Some staff members attend the annual AZ CIP conference and share information and strategies with their peers.
- In Tucson, the K.A.R.E. Family Center of Arizona’s Children Association provides resource information to families, assistance with guardianship, CIP & caregiver support groups, legal, mental health, and advocacy services. CIP group activities such as art and writing projects are also part of the program.
- Prison Fellowship-AngelTree Ministry coordinates over 18,000 holiday gifts each year to CIP in Arizona.

Needs of Children of Incarcerated Parents

The needs were identified through interviews, focus groups, background research and quantitative assessment conducted through the project.

THERAPEUTIC HELP TO MITIGATE TRAUMA

Children whose parents are incarcerated carry tremendous emotional burdens. In such cases therapeutic help may be beneficial for trauma, anger, fear for their parent’s safety and well being, abandonment and other emotional issues (fear, anxiety, sadness, loss and guilt). Problems relating to lack of contact; physical care and custody; child abuse and neglect; family stress associated with community and family reintegration, may also improve with services, including therapy.

Focus group participants shed light on the issues facing Arizona’s children of incarcerated parents. Key points that they stressed included:

- Children need parental guidance, love, and a strong role model.

- There is stigma, harassment, mocking by other kids.
- Children are often exposed to drug abuse in the home, before, during and after parental incarceration.
- Children often have to raise themselves and/or their siblings.
- Children often have to deal with the fact there is no food, no clean clothes, and no support for going to school.
- Children may feel confusion and/or fear for parent(s) and insecurity regarding their future/what will happen next, after arrest, and beyond.
- There are often changes in living location and conditions including school and friends.
- There is often a lack of accessible benefits/services (e.g. medical, dental, nutritional, behavioral, counseling).
- There is often difficulty with the reunification and transition processes.
- Children may develop negative views of authority figures.

AUTOMATIC FOLLOW-UP SUPPORT SERVICES

The vast majority of children separated from their parent by arrest, detention or incarceration are not in any formal service system (Applied Behavioral Health Policy, 2005). Once a child is settled with a family or friend caregiver, services are rarely sought to assess or address the impact of trauma, such as behavioral or emotional issues.

In addition, the needs assessment interviews, meetings and focus groups identified the following issues as potential contributors to the current plight of children of incarcerated parents:

- There is no continuum of care or services specifically targeted to children of incarcerated parents. Little or no information is readily accessible or routinely provided to caregivers or service agencies or school counselors about problems or issues that the child may be experiencing as a result of parental incarceration.
- Since caregivers often face significant financial hardship as they assume responsibility for the care of children (food, clothing, health care, etc.), this often increases family stress, and may be magnified by emotional and behavioral problems exhibited by CIP.
- Caregivers believed that access to information would be useful to them such as: emergency food assistance, laws regarding custody and guardianship, rights and responsibilities of caregivers, healthcare, and other services.
- Caregivers are not routinely given information about the signs of trauma or the possible physical and psychological effects of parental incarceration on child(ren).
- Since public awareness about the conditions affecting children of prisoners is limited, the many services available through the social services system are not targeted or promoted as being services that are accessible to children of incarcerated parents or their caregivers.

FOCUSED TRAINING FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT AND SYSTEMS OF CARE PROVIDER STAFF

The documented trauma experienced by children at the time of and during their parental incarceration remains relatively unseen by service agency and community professionals. While the focus remains on the adults being incarcerated, their children continue to live essentially “below the radar.” This is evidenced by the following:

- Although not currently mandated, 10 percent of the ninety-nine agencies surveyed provided staff training on CIP issues, and the majority indicated that they would welcome such training.
- There is currently no designated policy that provides specific guidelines for crisis intervention and/or referral for children at the time of parental arrest. Law enforcement records are not routinely required to include data about children, such as names, ages, and placement.
- Similar to the other 50 states, child welfare agencies do not routinely track children of incarcerated parents as a population in their system.

UPDATED LAW ENFORCEMENT AND COURT GUIDELINES TO BETTER IDENTIFY AND SERVE CHILDREN AFFECTED BY PARENTAL INCARCERATION

The mission of law enforcement is to promote public safety. Emphasis at the scene of arrest is to “clear the scene” as efficiently and safely as possible. Under most conditions, it is not practical for law enforcement officers to be involved in child welfare issues that are not directly related to the immediate safety of children. The focus of professionals in pre-trial services and at the correctional facilities is on the person arrested. Any information gained about children or family members is secondary to their central purpose.

The needs assessment interviews, meetings, and focus groups identified the following issues:

- Currently, there is no specific standard guideline to address the presence of children of incarcerated parents at the time of arrest.
- There is no standard source of information for law enforcement officers to refer to regarding available resources and services at the time of arrest.
- Law enforcement may recognize the presence of a child, however, beyond physical safety, they are not routinely trained how to identify or respond to the needs of children at the time of arrest.
- In more than 80 percent of the cases of parental arrest, the officer places children in the care of the non-custodial parent, a relative or a friend upon arrest of parent. When this is the case, the child does not enter into any “system” and is not followed up by any outside service.
- In cases where the child is not present, arrested parent may be reluctant to disclose information about their children and their whereabouts, meaning that vital information on children may not be captured or addressed.

- In most jurisdictions, only a modest amount of basic data regarding children of incarcerated parents is collected as part of the routine law enforcement process.
- Professionals interviewed agreed that the information that may be gathered is not currently or routinely analyzed, used on behalf of children or shared among service agencies and institutions.
- In recent years, the Arizona Department of Corrections (ADC) has instituted a policy of gathering self-reported information from inmates about their children. ADC provides a family reunification program called Healthy Options Prevention Education (HOPE) to reunite families that have been adversely affected by the incarceration of an adult female family member, and to increase exposure to protective factors for children of incarcerated parents including supportive families, consistent parental supervision, child-parent attachment, and child's self-esteem.

“During the parenting class in prison the statistics broke my heart.”

- Ex-inmate Parent

IMPROVED STATE AND FEDERAL POLICIES THAT INCREASE RESOURCES, ESPECIALLY FOR RELATIVE CAREGIVERS, TO ADDRESS THE NEEDS OF CHILDREN OF INCARCERATED PARENTS

The research conducted by the Arizona Children of Prisoners Bill of Rights Project verifies that children of incarcerated parents have not been targeted for specific programming or funding by local or state agencies. The federal government targets and funds mentoring for children of incarcerated parents as part of only one national initiative targeting this group. Services for children and their caregivers continue to be provided on a case-by-case basis.

Work group members, focus group participants as well as Dr. Denise Johnston, Director of the Center for Children of Incarcerated Parents, and other national experts warn against further stigmatizing the children by labeling or targeting services too specifically for individual children of incarcerated parents. Support groups for children and caregivers are one notable exception. In general, participants felt that prevention and intervention programs should adopt a community development approach in which broad-reaching programs are focused in high-risk areas, as well as in child-centered settings such as day care centers, schools and after-school programs.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Arizona Children of Incarcerated Parents Bill of Rights project set out to evaluate the degree to which statewide policies and practices responsibly support the rights of minor children whose parents are incarcerated. These children are innocent victims who should have the right:

1. To be kept safe and informed at the time of their parent's arrest;
2. To be cared for in their parent's absence; and
3. To emotional support as they struggle with their parent's incarceration.

Above all, the Arizona Children of Incarcerated Parents Bill of Rights Project seeks to protect the dignity, confidentiality and human rights of children of the incarcerated.

It should be noted that planning participants expressed the need to ensure that data is collected on the number and demographics of children of incarcerated parents for the purpose of program development and service delivery. At the same time, Bill of Rights Project members also expressed significant concerns about making individual, specific information of these children accessible or part of the criminal justice information network. There was universal concern that information about children of incarcerated parents could be used to discount, further stigmatize, or violate the privacy rights of individual children.

Based on the findings of the needs assessment as described in this report, the Arizona Children of Incarcerated Parents Bill of Rights Project has developed 10 recommendations for changes in local and statewide policies and practices to improve the likelihood that children of incarcerated parents will be safe, and become healthy, responsible adults. Arizona's recommendations are consistent with other states, which are taking similar initiatives to improve the health and well-being of this highly vulnerable population of children.

The recommendations are organized around the three rights mentioned above. Each right is followed by descriptions of the overarching assumptions of need, the current situation in Arizona, the goal and objectives of the recommendations, ideal characteristics and potential beneficial outcomes. Following this context framework the 10 recommendations are described in greater detail.

“It's really hard to fix what's missing.”

- Child of an incarcerated parent (now an adult)

CIP Right #1: Children of incarcerated parents have the right to be kept safe and informed at the time of their parent's arrest

Assumptions:

- Arrest is a tense situation with ever-present safety issues.
- Trauma to the child is not normally considered.
- Arrest raises immediate and long-term risks for children and requires special services.
- Many parents are involved in multiple arrests that may, or may not, result in incarceration.

Current situation:

- In Arizona, there are law enforcement procedures in practice, but not necessarily written protocols embedded in law enforcement departments to know what to do with children at the time of parental arrest.
- The diversity of resources for police departments across the state makes it difficult to implement a statewide policy for CIPs.

Goal:

- Foster feeling within the child of incarcerated parent that “someone cares about ME.”

Objective:

- Create toolbox of resources for law enforcement, providers and caregivers at time of parent arrest to ensure child's short and long term security, safety, and healthy development.

Characteristics:

- Care, advocacy, communication, connection, available expertise, continuity, community based, system accountability.

Outcomes:

- Provide immediate support to address trauma and loss of control.
- Work to address children's fear, feelings of guilt and confusion.
- Provide information about what will happen next – to the children, their siblings and their parent.

Recommendation 1

Establish arrest guidelines for law enforcement to follow when arresting parents to ensure children's identification, proper placement, safety, and stability.

■ Rationale

There is significant potential to minimize trauma for CIPs, as they would connect with a caring adult and be stabilized and secure much sooner.

Stabilization services need to be provided immediately after the arrest trauma to minimize long-term impact on the child.

Arrest guidelines will direct the arresting officer to:

- 1) address the immediate needs of children who are on the scene at time of arrest;
- 2) inquire and document if arrestee has minor children without adequate supervision;
- 3) ensure that the child is placed with a responsible adult or Child Protective Services (CPS); and
- 4) connect the child and caregiver with a support linkage such as a designated local child advocate or service provider, where available.

■ How

Law enforcement agencies across the state will develop arrest guidelines that include procedures for management of children at the scene of arrest and procedures for securing care for minor children whose parent/guardian has been arrested outside of the home setting.

The arrest guidelines will be linked with existing multi-disciplinary protocols for joint investigations between child welfare, law enforcement, community-based organizations and the local family advocacy center, where applicable.

■ Considerations for Implementation

Address the impact of separation from parents for all children, including those whose parents are undocumented or whose citizenship status is being determined.

Guidelines should be applicable to arrests in adult and juvenile probation offices.

The Arizona Attorney General has committed to encouraging law enforcement agencies across the state to adopt arrest guidelines that include procedures for management of children at the scene of arrest and procedures for securing care of minor children whose parent/guardian has been arrested outside of the home setting.

Recommendation 2

Train all law enforcement officers in the state of Arizona on the needs of children of incarcerated parents

Rationale

Providing attention to the needs of children at the time of parental arrest could reduce trauma, foster stability and safety, foster positive attitudes toward law enforcement, and reduce the intergenerational cycle of incarceration.

How

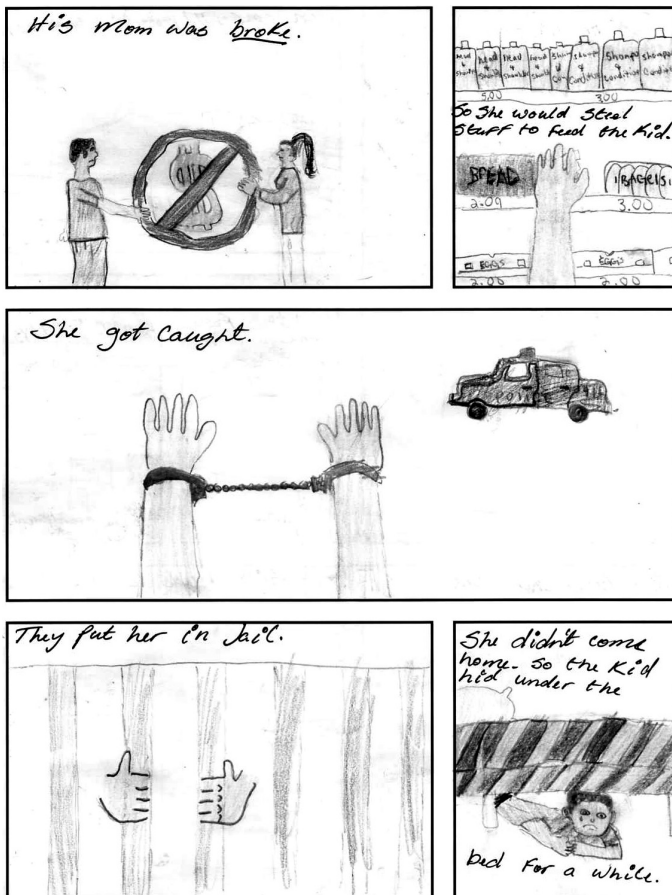
Arizona Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST), Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC), and local law enforcement training programs could institute a one-hour training curriculum for use by state and local law enforcement and probation officers to address issues related to child safety and long-term well being when a caretaker parent or guardian is arrested.

Considerations for Implementation

Statewide Arrest Protocol Work Group will draft a one-hour lesson plan and complete a DVD to demonstrate the viability and importance of including this issue in mandatory and ongoing training programs.

The Tucson Police Department has committed its media resources to create the training DVD and provide it to Arizona POST and other law enforcement entities.

The Arizona Attorney General has committed to encouraging Arizona POST to adopt a one-hour training unit for new officers.



Recommendation 3

Designate and identify resources needed to support an advocacy and service coordination mechanism at the state and local levels. This coordination mechanism will work with service providers who will serve as an immediate and ongoing resource to the child at-risk, the caregiver and community.

Rationale

Immediate assessment should be part of the crisis response with a link to community supports.

Basic needs for food, clothing, personal hygiene, health care, transportation, financial support, and prison/jail visitation are not being systematically addressed.

Family care (including relative care, foster care, guardianship and adoption) is the most appropriate and healthy setting for children who cannot remain safely at home with their parents.

How

Provide a coordinated mechanism to provide resources to local service agencies such as the child and family advocacy centers, crisis shelters, CASA (Court-Appointed Special Advocate)-type volunteer services, or other social service providers to implement regionally appropriate, immediate and ongoing services.

Locally designate a child advocate and service coordination provider to:

- 1) conduct immediate crisis intervention;

- 2) conduct assessment of needs and issues of children (e.g., allergies, school location, contact numbers, medical and/or behavioral health history) and caregiver (e.g., car seat, transportation, diapers).

- 3) follow up with caregiver to connect with appropriate resources (e.g., guardianship, support services) and provide connection with mentoring programs and follow-up, including aftercare services.

- 4) follow up with incarcerated parent to assist in securing unique information about their child and to discuss and support temporary guardianship and other childcare issues.

Considerations for Implementation

The Statewide Steering Committee will work to identify the state or local agency (ies) who could be effectively responsible for the service coordination mechanism.

The advocacy and service coordination may be in the form of a program manager at the state level, an individual serving as an advocate and service coordinator locally, and/or a local team through existing providers and resources. Financial resources may be from reallocation of existing resources, demonstration grants, and/or public-private philanthropic partnerships.

The service coordination mechanism would:

1. Enhance the existing service delivery system by sharing information, training of staff, networking, referrals, and funding opportunities.

2. Mobilize the support of community volunteers by cultivating active links with faith-based and civic organizations.

3. Feeding into existing systems, institute an integrated agency data sharing system and develop policies and procedures for maintaining confidential information.

Short-term (2007-08) Project staff and Statewide Steering Committee members will work with local community organizations to create a multi-year demonstration project for a tracking mechanism and a continuum of caregiver support services in Maricopa County that will include an outcome evaluation.

Statewide Steering Committee will actively explore the possibility and consequences of securing resources for children of incarcerated parents (CIP) from federal Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) if CIP could be deemed victims under the act.

CIP Right #2: Children of incarcerated parents have the right to be cared for in their parent's absence

Assumption:

- All children in Arizona deserve to be safe, secure and nurtured by caring and responsible adults.

Current situation:

- Children of incarcerated parents are too often living in unsupervised situations without sufficient food, clothing, support for school attendance, medical care, and quality childcare.

Goal:

- Children will have access to medical, dental, educational support, sufficient food, clothing and secure shelter with nurturing caregivers trained in positive parenting skills by qualified professionals.

Objective:

- Improve the implementation of a system of services for children of incarcerated parents to ensure child's short and long term security, safety, and development.

Characteristics:

- Care, advocacy, communication, connection, available expertise, continuity, system accountability.

Outcomes:

- Access to needed services and skilled people who can provide appropriate care.
- Financial resources for basic shelter, clean clothes and healthy food.

Recommendation 4

Ensure that adequate and accessible resources are available to foster security and stability for children whose parents are incarcerated.

■ Rationale

Caregivers frequently experience financial hardship and difficulties and lack of support in navigating systems of care.

Families may be denied services because of their income and assets, even with the added financial burden of the child(ren)'s care.

Capabilities and resources of caregivers change throughout the incarceration period. The impact on caregivers is often ignored and can include a wide range of psychological, emotional, and persistent economic stresses.

■ How

Support enactment of the federal Kinship Caregiver Support Act, S. 661/H.R. 2188 (110th Congress).

Provide a streamlined process for immediate behavioral health services and AHCCCS for the child.

Advocate for additional supports for kinship caregivers similar to those supports provided to licensed foster parents.

Work with families to help access resources for children and caregivers throughout the incarceration process, from initial arrest to parental release and family reunification.

■ Considerations for Implementation

Local service coordination mechanism could work in collaboration with local jails to arrange for legal guardianship paperwork to be completed at jail intake. This will ensure that a relative caregiver or other responsible adult can seek health care (medical, dental and behavioral), school enrollment, and secure needed services for the child.

Caregivers are often elderly grandparents with limited financial means; children have often suffered from trauma and other behavioral risks and may not have had consistent health care services.

Recommendation 5

Develop, maintain and circulate a local resource directory specific to the needs of CIP in Spanish and English in every jurisdiction for AZ 211, community agencies, law enforcement, health care providers, schools and caregivers to ensure that this information is available across Arizona at all times.

■ Rationale

Information is not readily available to identify existing services and support.

Caregivers currently express difficulty in identifying specially trained therapists, and/or services targeted to CIP such as mentoring or support groups.

■ How

Target information and resource materials to law enforcement, providers and caregivers with information on emergency services, guardianship counsel and other child and caregiver support services. Make the resource directory available and widely distributed in written brochures, via AZ 211, websites and other alternative media formats.

■ Considerations for Implementation

The Pima Prevention Partnership will provide a template to local work groups who can:

- 1) Tailor the resource directory to contain information and resources for kinship caregivers.
- 2) Conduct focus groups with caregivers to determine what resources should be included.

CIP Right #3: Children of incarcerated parents have the right to receive emotional support as they struggle with their parent's incarceration

Assumption:

- Children of incarcerated parents are emotionally burdened.
- They are too often isolated from parent(s), caregivers, and classmates without anyone to talk with about their feelings or needs.
- They are subject to stigma and social rejection.

Current situation:

- In the State of Arizona, there are very few identified programs and services that specifically target the needs of children of incarcerated parents.

Goal:

- Ensure that children of incarcerated parents are supported and nurtured as they face their parent's incarceration.

Objective:

- Provide for the behavioral health needs of the CIP and caregiver by coordinating accessible resources and emotional support throughout the time period from parental arrest to reunification.
- Foster, when appropriate, regular communication with incarcerated parent to foster attachment and alleviate fears about the incarcerated parent's well being.

Characteristics:

- Advocacy, caring adults, available and accessible expertise, continuity, system coordination and accountability.

Outcomes:

- CIP have access to emotionally nurturing and supportive programs, responsive policies and practices for CIP and caregivers among behavioral health providers, early childhood centers, schools, recreation programs, and jails and prisons.

Recommendation 6

Advocate for statewide funding and access to best-practice mentoring services for children of incarcerated parents to allow for positive modeling when a parent is made unavailable.

■ Rationale

Mentoring (the Big Brothers/Big Sisters model providing at least one hour per week for at least one year) promotes the resilience, well-being and dignity of children of incarcerated parents.

■ How

Actively recruit and train qualified adult role models to work with existing STARS Mentoring projects.

Advocate for allocation of funding mentoring services per the Texas Amachi model which has demonstrated effectiveness with children of incarcerated parents.

■ Considerations for Implementation

Big Brothers/Big Sisters model program descriptions, budget information, and draft legislation are available as templates.

Pima Prevention Partnership's STARS Mentoring Project in partnership with Big Brothers/Big Sisters organizations is demonstrating positive results with 488 mentor matches in Tucson, Phoenix, and Northern Arizona.

Mentors can be recruited from faith-based organizations.

Recommendation 7

Support community and faith-based organizations and services that can provide comprehensive resources to children of incarcerated parents and their caregivers.

■ Rationale

Assistance with obtaining guardianship, accessing resources, and support groups for caregivers and children reduces vulnerabilities and risk.

Volunteers from community and faith-based groups can be mobilized to provide support for CIPs and their caregivers.

■ How

Utilize the CIP and caregiver family support center model providing one-stop services (e.g., guardianship, support groups, transportation, visitation, connection with faith-based and behavioral health support).

Work with the Kinship Coalitions.

Provide relationship/parenting skills to inmates and their families.

Collaborate with the schools to create support services for CIPs.

■ Considerations for Implementation

Arizona's Children Association has a model kinship support program in Tucson and has received a five-year grant from a private foundation to implement additional kinship services in Phoenix, Apache Junction, Yuma, Flagstaff, and Prescott.

Recommendation 8

Foster communication among children, caregivers and incarcerated parents, as appropriate and in the best interests of the child.

■ Rationale

Communication with children, coupled with parent training for inmate is low cost, yet it increases attachment between children and parent, benefits the relationship after incarceration, lowers recidivism of offender, and may increase literacy and motivation.

During incarceration, children and parents need mutual love, respect, and support.

■ How

Develop support programs and publications that provide parenting classes in jail and prison, resources and structured activities (using existing, tested models) as appropriate (e.g., virtual, video, letter and story writing).

When in the best interests of the child, encourage correctional facilities to facilitate communication, family-friendly visitation environments and procedures.

Develop culturally competent educational DVDs on prison life with a teacher's guide to show children and caregivers, to help them cope with their parent's prison experience.

■ Considerations for Implementation

Jails and prisons take initiative to enhance, as needed, the quality of the parent-child interaction during visitation, where appropriate.

There can be conflicting orders and decisions made by juvenile/CPS/adult courts which necessitates improved coordination and information sharing on behalf of the involved child.

Correctional facilities (adult and juvenile) could facilitate better communication, when appropriate, between inmate parent, child, and caregiver.

Any activities should include linkages with current behavioral health services and supports the child and caregiver are receiving.

Consideration of distances to correctional facilities should be made, including utilization of video-conferencing capacity for parent-child communication, parent-teacher conferences, and communication by parent inmate with child-family teams, when appropriate.

“Now one little girl has a rubber band to hold her older sister’s dress on.”

- Work Group Member

Recommendation 9

Conduct wide-ranging education and awareness efforts to inform the public about the needs of children of incarcerated parents and what the public can do to address those needs.

■ Rationale

Citizens of Arizona do not always recognize the scope of need, or the costs and consequences that may arise when the needs of children of incarcerated parents are not being adequately addressed.

■ How

Work Group members will conduct media outreach to local and statewide media to generate public information about the needs of children of incarcerated parents.

Create an information packet, discussion guide on CIPs that could be utilized with local media outreach efforts and in conjunction with an Awareness Day, to be conducted in faith-based and community settings.

■ Considerations for Implementation

Support the Awareness Day with faith-based and civic organizations to mobilize community involvement and concern, address stigma, reduce prejudice and to engender public support for improved services for children of incarcerated parents and their caregivers.

Bill of Rights Project staff will develop a media guide that will be distributed to Work Group members, participants on the Statewide Conference on Children of Prisoners, and will be posted on the PPP and other partner websites.

Recommendation 10

Conduct training for professional service providers to foster personal understanding, skills and strategies to better serve children of incarcerated parents.

■ Rationale

Children of incarcerated parents are largely an unrecognized, invisible population whose needs are not widely known or understood.

■ How

Participating agencies can provide training using a comprehensive curriculum on CIPs for behavioral health providers, human service providers, law enforcement and court personnel, child welfare workers, Boys and Girls Clubs, teachers and other school personnel, counselors.

■ Considerations for Implementation

Among providers interviewed for the needs assessment for this report, widespread interest in securing specialized training has been expressed.

A comprehensive curriculum currently exists through the Family and Corrections Network, and Pima Prevention Partnership staff have been trained in the curriculum.

Additional Considerations for Policy Recommendations

1. State and local agencies will review their policies and procedures, including data collection, across state and local systems to minimize barriers to CIPs and caregivers obtaining services with a goal to improve access to quality services.
2. Free legal services for caregivers seeking guardianship should be made available.
3. Designate a state commission on CIPs, or add CIPs to the charge of an existing statewide commission, to support the refinement and implementation of the recommendations in this report.
4. Focus on resource development for demonstration projects to establish targeted services (advocacy and referral system) in the best interests of the child beginning at time of parental arrest through reunification, when appropriate.
5. The Judicial Education Checklist could be modified or enhanced for other Court use to include children of incarcerated parents.



VII. CONCLUSION

The Arizona Children of Incarcerated Parents Bill of Rights Project provides a picture of how Arizonans can work together to ensure safety, security, and better outcomes for children of incarcerated parents. The Bill of Rights Project will enhance the capacity of law enforcement, service providers, and the general public to address the special needs of this vulnerable population. At the same time, the Project has identified model programs that will further strengthen the capacity of single parents and caregivers to provide support to the child and the family and for service providers to address their needs.

The news is good. With dedicated, consistent and early intervention, we can mitigate the traumatic effect of parental incarceration on children in our state.

Project publications, including the Manual of Strategies Directory, and the Final Report of the Statewide effort will effectively inform a data-driven approach to developing or enhancing local and state protocols and policymaking that will result in reduced risk factors for this population of children. These documents provide a detailed roadmap for legislators, policymakers, public and private sector leaders, and members of the community at large to take positive steps toward meeting the critical needs of this population. Specific issues and available resources have been identified by a cross-section of our communities statewide, ensuring that realistic solutions will have broad and meaningful impact throughout the urban, rural and tribal areas of our state.

WHAT'S NEXT?

The Arizona Children of Incarcerated Parents Bill of Rights Project has initiated the following actions on the 10 identified recommendations. Work Groups are continuing to meet monthly, and additional developments will take place before the end of this phase of the project on December 31, 2007. By that time, the project's six statewide work groups will have completed more detailed plans for implementation of the recommendations and taken initiatives to secure resources by looking at possible reallocation of funding, asking the state legislature for support (e.g., statewide mentoring initiative), and completing grant applications for funding support.

“Realize whatever you feel [as an inmate], kids feel 10 times more.”

- Ex-inmate parent

RIGHT 1: CHILDREN OF INCARCERATED PARENTS HAVE THE RIGHT TO BE KEPT SAFE AND INFORMED AT THE TIME OF THEIR PARENT’S ARREST

RECOMMENDATION 1: Establish arrest guidelines for law enforcement to follow when arresting parents to ensure children’s identification, proper placement, safety and stability.

NEXT STEPS: The Statewide Arrest Protocol Work Group has completed guidelines that will be made available as a reference for law enforcement. Since there are 15 different counties, each with different localized law enforcement and social service systems, the work group suggests that each county draft and train on their own arrest protocol. The Arizona Attorney General has committed to encouraging law enforcement agencies across the state to adopt arrest guidelines that include procedures for management of children at the scene of arrest and procedures for securing care of minor children whose parents/guardian has been arrested outside of the home setting.

RECOMMENDATION 2: Train all law enforcement officers in the State of Arizona on the needs of children of incarcerated parents.

NEXT STEPS: The project’s Statewide Arrest Protocol Work Group is committed to create a one-hour lesson plan and DVD on the issue of children of incarcerated parents for Arizona POST (Peace Officers Standards Training) and law enforcement entities in Arizona. Statewide law enforcement leadership will encourage AZ POST to train all new law enforcement officers and local law enforcement officers will be encouraged to train their existing staff.

RECOMMENDATION 3: Designate and identify resources needed to support an advocacy and service coordination mechanism at the state and local levels. The coordination mechanism will work with service providers who will serve as an immediate and ongoing resource to the child at risk, the caregiver and community.

NEXT STEPS: The Statewide Steering Committee will work to identify the most appropriate agency to accept responsibility for overseeing the advocacy and service coordination mechanism and will develop a multi-year strategy to seek legislative funding.

Short-term (2007-08), project staff and Statewide Steering Committee members will work with local community organizations in Maricopa County to create a multi-year demonstration project for a tracking mechanism and a continuum of caregiver support services that will include an outcome evaluation. The evaluation data from the demonstration project can be used to support future funding.

RIGHT 2: CHILDREN OF INCARCERATED PARENTS HAVE THE RIGHT TO BE CARED FOR IN THEIR PARENT'S ABSENCE

RECOMMENDATION 4: Ensure that adequate and accessible resources are available to foster security and stability for children whose parents are incarcerated.

NEXT STEPS: Support enactment of the federal Kinship Caregiver Support Act, S. 661/H.R. 2188 (110th Congress). Propose additional supports for kinship caregivers more in line with resources for licensed foster parents.

The Statewide Steering Committee and project staff will more fully investigate how best to reach out to Native American children of incarcerated parents in both urban and rural settings. The Project will determine who is providing primary care for the children and what kind of services, if any, they are receiving for crisis intervention, family caregiver support, and behavioral health services, mentoring, or support groups for CIPs.

RECOMMENDATION 5: Develop, maintain and circulate a local resource directory specific to the needs of CIP in Spanish and English in every jurisdiction for AZ 211, community agencies, law enforcement, health care providers, schools and caregivers to ensure that this information is available across Arizona at all times.

NEXT STEPS: Pima Prevention Partnership's STARS Mentoring Maricopa and the Child Crisis Center are in the process of completing a resource directory specific to the needs of CIP that can serve as a template for other jurisdictions.

RIGHT 3: CHILDREN OF INCARCERATED PARENTS HAVE THE RIGHT TO SUPPORT AS THEY STRUGGLE WITH THEIR PARENT'S INCARCERATION.

RECOMMENDATION 6: Advocate for statewide funding and access to best-practice mentoring services for children of incarcerated parents to allow for positive modeling when a parent is made unavailable.

NEXT STEPS: Lay the groundwork with state legislators for legislation for future sessions that would fund implementation of an Arizona Statewide Amachi program modeled after the successful Texas best-practice mentoring program.

RECOMMENDATION 7: Support community and faith-based organizations and services that can provide comprehensive resources to children of incarcerated parents and their caregivers.

NEXT STEPS: Arizona's Children Association has a model kinship support program in Tucson and has received five-year funding from a private foundation to implement additional kinship services in Phoenix, Apache Junction, Yuma, Flagstaff, and Prescott.

RECOMMENDATION 8: Foster communication among children, caregivers and incarcerated parents, as appropriate and in the best interests of the child.

NEXT STEPS: When in the best interests of the child, the Statewide Steering Committee will encourage correctional facilities to facilitate communication, family-friendly visitation environments and procedures.

RECOMMENDATION 9: Conduct wide-ranging education and awareness efforts to inform the public about the needs of children of incarcerated parents, including what the public can do to address those needs.

NEXT STEPS: Copies of the report will be distributed to all members of the state legislature.

The Chair of the Statewide Steering Committee, individual Work Group members and project staff will meet with individual legislators to present the report and recommendations.

Work Group members will form a Speaker's Bureau that will be prepared to go to editorial boards, local policymakers, civic organizations, and professional associations to communicate the needs of children of incarcerated parents.

Work Group members will make presentations at professional meetings of organizations such as child welfare, behavioral health, and area agencies on aging, educators, etc.

RECOMMENDATION 10: Conduct training for professional service providers to foster personal understanding, skills and strategies to better serve children of incarcerated parents.

NEXT STEPS: The Arizona School Superintendent has agreed to collaborate with the Bill of Rights Project to add a link on the Arizona Department of Education website to inform teachers and other school personnel about the needs of children of incarcerated parents and available training and community resources.

Pima Prevention Partnership's STARS Mentoring program will continue to provide training on children of incarcerated parents to professionals in Pima, Maricopa, and Northern counties.

Additional areas for future analysis could include: a) a focus on substance abuse as a contributing risk factor of parental arrest and impact on children; b) education, training and employment in low-income areas; and c) other strategies known to decrease criminal behavior.

More study will be devoted to the assessment of: 1) alternatives to incarceration for non-violent drug offenders; 2) family strengthening as it applies to reducing recidivism; 3) model programs for parent education and character education for inmates; 4) housing for ex-inmates and the potential of earning housing vouchers through work in prison for stable family housing on release; and 5) education, jobs and community service opportunities for teens of incarcerated parents.

Ultimately, the Arizona Bill of Rights Project calls for a concerted effort by all Arizonans to initiate child advocacy and statewide systems and program changes on behalf of the critical and compelling needs of children of incarcerated parents.

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Special acknowledgement to Hon. Margaret McCullough of the Coconino County Juvenile Court for support and hosting the Work Group meetings.

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The University of Arizona-Coconino Extension Service, Beth Tucker

**“The connection between the family and
the resources needs to be made.”**

- Work Group Member

YAVAPAI WORK GROUP

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Susan Stewart-Rickelman, Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Yavapai

Special thanks to Hon. Robert M. Brutinel for his support of the project

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The comic book drawings included in this report were created by children of incarcerated parents for The Comic Book Project, an arts-based literacy and learning initiative headed by Teachers College, Columbia University. The comic book was produced in partnership with ArtsReach of Tucson and funded by Armstrong McDonald Foundation. The artists are children of incarcerated parents in Pima Prevention Partnership's Shooting Stars program at the K.A.R.E. Family Center in Tucson, a program of the Arizona's Children Association and Casey Family Programs. Shooting Stars is sponsored by Pima Prevention Partnership/ STARS Mentoring Project through funding from U.S. Department of Health and Human Services/ACYF, GRANT #90CV0273.

PROJECT PARTNERS

Governor's Office for Children, Youth and Families (GOCYF)

Arizona Governor Janet Napolitano has demonstrated a longstanding interest in the issue of children of incarcerated parents beginning when she was Attorney General for the State of Arizona, sponsoring and presenting at the first regional Children of Prisoners conference in Tucson in 2002. Her Office of Children, Youth, and Families (GOCYF) has provided state leadership and has been an active partner and funder with a series of initiatives benefiting children of incarcerated parents. GOCYF acts as a catalyst for integration of programs and services with other State agencies such as the Arizona Department of Economic Security, Arizona Department of Health Services, Arizona Department of Corrections and the Arizona Department of Education to ensure program and service coordination.

Arizona Parents Commission

Arizona Parents Commission on Drug Education and Prevention has provided substantive leadership and support for children of incarcerated parents. In 2004, the Arizona Parents Commission established the Children of Incarcerated Parents Initiative with the Arizona Department of Corrections (ADC). This initiative provides gender-specific substance abuse treatment and family-focused transition services for female prisoners and their children. In 2004, the Parents Commission funded a major report, *An Epidemiological Study of the Prevalence and Needs of Children of Incarcerated Parents*, and has supported the annual statewide conference on children of incarcerated parents since its inception, in 2003.

Juvenile Services Coordinating Council (JSCC)

The Juvenile Services Coordinating Council (JSCC) is a broad-based institutional partnership in Pima County which seeks to prevent juvenile delinquency by addressing the needs of children of incarcerated parents and other particularly vulnerable populations of children, those who are most likely to overstress the human service and law enforcement system. Since 1999, ongoing research, program and grant development assistance for JSCC initiatives has been provided by the Pima Prevention Partnership (PPP). The JSCC and PPP's joint efforts started with a preliminary needs assessment of vulnerable youth populations that resulted in a comprehensive needs assessment and action planning related to children of incarcerated parents (2001-2002).

Pima Prevention Partnership

Pima Prevention Partnership (PPP) is a nationally recognized community-based, non-profit organization that provides research, program, and grant development assistance for JSCC initiatives. Projects include the 2000 Pima County assessment on delinquency prevention, and a series of projects to address the needs of children of incarcerated parents and children exposed to domestic violence: Breaking the Cycle, Tucson Safe and Bright Futures, Ensuring Safe and Bright Futures, and STARS Mentoring for children of prisoners which is ongoing in Pima, Maricopa, and Northern Arizona. In its sixteen year history as Pima County's leading substance abuse and delinquency prevention coalition, the PPP has provided policy leadership, program development, youth prevention services, grant writing, planning and evaluation services to promote community development. PPP has been recognized as an Outstanding Coalition in the U.S. from CADCA (Community Anti-Drug Coalition of America) for its work in delinquency prevention and the inclusion of ethnic and disability cultures in its prevention efforts.



Samantha and her Siblings - A True Story, Arizona 2006

Linda (not her real name) is a 31-year-old mother of six living in an apartment on the east side of an Arizona city. Linda had delivered her youngest child just eight weeks earlier, and Linda's fourteen year old daughter Samantha was looking after the younger children while mom recuperated from childbirth. **O**ne Saturday evening the police arrived at the apartment to arrest Linda for a number of outstanding warrants. Linda was arrested, handcuffed, and read her rights in her living room and in front of her six children. In less than fifteen minutes the police arrested mom, made a cursory search of the apartment, and then they were gone. In the aftermath, they left the six children alone in the apartment with no adult caretaker, no food, no diapers, and no money. **T**he children stayed alone in the apartment on Saturday evening. The younger children cried most of the evening, and the two oldest daughters moved a chair in front of the door in an effort to reassure the younger siblings that no one would come into the apartment to take anyone else during the night. By noon on Sunday the older girls were in tears, and they telephoned their Big Sisters from the Big Brothers Big Sisters program and described the events of the previous night. The Big Sisters filed a report with Child Protective Services, and by mid afternoon on Sunday the CPS investigator arrived at the home and was assured by a family friend that she would be staying with the children during the mother's absence. The family friend moved into the apartment with her boyfriend and child, but were economically stressed and unable to purchase sufficient food and diapers for the six children. CPS staff did not conduct a background check on the family friend or her boyfriend and no temporary legal guardianship was established. **T**wo weeks post the arrest the children were still living in an unstable situation with the family friend and her boyfriend. They were still fearful and insecure. The children were not going to school. Efforts by the STARS Mentoring Program staff to find counseling services for the children met with negative results. The children could not be seen by any behavioral health provider sooner than three weeks, and could not be seen without a parent/guardian signature. Linda was in jail, and no guardianship arrangement existed with anyone who could sign for medical care or counseling services. Linda remained incarcerated for more than three months, and the family friend and boyfriend moved in and out of the apartment providing sporadic care and supervision for the children. **They were not informed of their mother's status or the timeline for her return.**



**“People won’t help single moms with fathers incarcerated.
People don’t realize, it could happen to them.”**

- Caregiver of child of an incarcerated parent

**“Have you ever had a time in life when you wished
for just one person to listen to you?”**

-Mentor of Child of Incarcerated Parent