

UNIVERSITY OF WI-EXTENSION
COOPERATIVE EXTENSION
FAMILY LIVING PROGRAMS

*THE ROLE OF FAMILY
IN REENTRY*

MARY HUSER, PROGRAM SPECIALIST

COOPERATIVE EXTENSION: OUR MISSION

The Wisconsin Idea --

- ❖ Education should influence and improve people's lives *beyond* the university classroom
- ❖ Cooperative Extension extends University knowledge and resources to people *where they live and work.*

FOCUS AREAS OF COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

- ① *Family Living Programs*
- ① 4-H Youth Development
- ① Agriculture & Natural Resources
- ① Community Natural Resource and Economic Development

JAIL INMATES AND FAMILIES FAST FACTS



IN THE U.S.

- © How many persons were admitted to U. S. Jails during the 12 months ending June 30, 2010?
 - a) 229,000 (population of Madison)
 - b) 603,000 (population of Milwaukee)
 - c) 5,700,000 (population of Wisconsin)
 - d) 11,000,000 (population of WI and Minnesota)

IN THE U.S.

- © Local U.S. jails admitted almost **13 million persons** during the 12 months ending June 30, 2010 (Minton)

What do 13 million people look like?

13 MILLION PERSONS...



...would fill **178** Lambeau Fields

6½ MILLION OF THESE INMATES...

◎ are **parents** of at least one child

(**89+** Lambeau Fields)





IN THE U.S.

Millions of family members

**Likely millions of U.S. children
have a parent in jail**

(Kemper and Rivara, Western and Wildeman, Poehlmann et. al.)

...AND IN WISCONSIN

- ③ 236,000 county jail admissions in 2010



- ③ How many are parents?
- ③ MANY MORE family members affected

(Wisconsin Department of Corrections)

HOW MANY CHILDREN?

- ◎ 1 of 50 children in the U.S. has a parent in jail (Kemper and Rivara)
- ◎ More common than:
 - ◎ autism
 - ◎ maltreatment (abuse or neglect)
 - ◎ juvenile diabetes

CHILDREN OF INCARCERATED PARENTS

- ③ 2x – 2½ times higher risk for many problems, but can overcome risk with support (Murray et. al.)
- ③ more likely to be involved in troubled behavior at school (truancy and failure), at home, with alcohol and other drugs and suffer from isolation or withdrawal (Gabel and Johnston)
- ③ At significantly higher risk for behavior problems and involvement with criminal activity (Johnston)

WHY INVOLVE FAMILY?

When reentering...

- ① Who most often provides housing?
- ① Who provides financial support?
- ① Who provides transportation?
- ① Who provides help getting a job?
- ① Who is go-to for child care?

(diZerega, M.)

THE ANSWER?

FAMILY!

- ◎ Incarcerated adults in contact with supportive family members do better when released
- ◎ Family support is one of the keys to successful reintegration

RESEARCH ON REENTRY AND THE FAMILY

- ③ Visits from pro-social family members during incarceration can reduce and delay recidivism; timing of visits is key (Bales & Mears)
- ③ Contact between parent and child is key for successful reintegration (Conway and Hutson)
- ③ Family involvement can result in better employment outcomes and reduced alcohol and other drug use (Visher et.al.)

RESEARCH ON REENTRY AND THE FAMILY

Research finds...

- ◎ Positive family contact while incarcerated → lower re-arrests and lower re-incarcerated rates (diZerega)
- ◎ Family approaches linked to lower recidivism among youth offenders

Prisoners say...

What has been the most important factor in helping stay out of prison?

family support

(La Vigne, Visher & Castro)

FAMILY LIVING PROGRAMS

- ◎ *Strength-based Family Systems –*
 - ◎ *Incarceration and reentry affects the entire family **and** its individual members*
 - ◎ *Traditional and non traditional family sources of positive support*
 - ◎ *Goals re: family well-being and self-sufficiency*

FAMILY LIVING PROGRAMS

Correctional System Audiences (one of many possible audiences)

- ◎ *Jail inmates* (sometimes prison populations)
- ◎ Probation and parole
- ◎ Huber
- ◎ Drug court clients
- ◎ *Families of incarcerated* (caregivers, partners, parents, children)
- ◎ Jail staff

MAKING AN INFORMED DECISION

- ③ Programming priorities
- ③ Educator skill, comfort level and safety concerns
- ③ Educational resources and research
- ③ Local support and partners

OUR APPROACH

Education is one part of a **comprehensive system-wide approach** to addressing the needs of jail inmate and other correctional system populations

- Other Vital Parts –
 - treatment (mental health and substance abuse)
 - employment/economic stability
 - housing

FAMILY SUPPORT IN JAILS

- ⊙ Jail Visits and Family Contact
- ⊙ Parenting Programs
- ⊙ Life skills Education
- ⊙ Preparation for Community Life
- ⊙ From “family is the problem” to “family is part of the solution”
 - ⊙ Soliciting input from family members
 - ⊙ Family specialists
 - ⊙ Staff training

KID-FRIENDLY JAIL VISITS

Mock visiting
booths at
Allegheny
County Jail
Pennsylvania



EXAMPLES OF FAMILY SUPPORT

- ③ While in prison, Frank talks with his son by phone about his homework.
- ③ When Donna is about to come home from jail, her pastor brings her a list of N.A. meetings in their community and offers to go with her.
- ③ Even though Miguel's grandmother is unable to visit, she accepts his collect calls and writes to him every week. Miguel knows that she is in his corner, and he plans to live with her when he gets out.

Why Ask About Family? 2011. Family Justice Program, Vera Institute on Justice.

EXAMPLES OF FAMILY SUPPORT

- ① Jail visits are family- and kid-friendly
- ① Contact between the inmate and supportive adults is encouraged; for example, an uncle or pastor lends computer skills, helps fill out a job application, and shares name of a small-business owner he knows who has a job opening

UW-EXTENSION EXAMPLES

- ③ The DAD Thing
- ③ Family Resiliency classes and newsletter
- ③ CJCC
- ③ Life skills education (\$, family relationships)

SETTING UP FOR SUCCESS



SETTING UP FOR FAILURE

“It was in March and they just came and got me and said I was being released. I had no coat, no ride, no cell phone. Nobody knew I was getting out. So

I just started
Extension
walking.
Cooperative Extension



UW-EXTENSION WEB SITE

Family Living Programs:
Local Criminal Justice
and Prevention

[http://fyi.uwex.edu/families
andcommunities/local-
criminal-justice-and-
prevention/](http://fyi.uwex.edu/families
andcommunities/local-
criminal-justice-and-
prevention/)

Find:

- ⊙ Today's PPT
- ⊙ *"Select Resources for Jail Reentry, Family and Reentry, and Children of Incarcerated Parents"*
- ⊙ Juvenile Delinquency prevention resources
- ⊙ Alternatives to Incarceration

REFERENCES

- Bales, W. D. and Mears, D. P. "Inmate Social Ties and the Transition to Society: Does Visitation Reduce Recidivism?" *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency* 45 no. 3 (2008): 287-321.
- Conway, T. and Hutson, R. (July-August 2007). *Parental Incarceration: How to Avoid "Death Sentence" for Families*. Clearinghouse REVIEW Journal of Poverty Law and Policy, Shriver National Center on Poverty Law.
<http://www.policyarchive.org/handle/10207/13961>
- diZerega, M. Engaging Offenders' Families in Reentry – Coaching Packet. Edited by Carter, M., M., and Giguere, R. 2010.
- Gabel K. and Johnston D. (Eds.), *Children of Incarcerated Parents* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Inc, 1995).
- Glaze, L. and Maruschak, L. (August 2008, revised March 2010). Parents in Prison and Their Minor Children. Bureau of Justice Statistics, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Dept of Justice.
<http://bjs.ojp.usdoj.gov/content/pub/pdf/pptmc.pdf>
- Johnston, D. "Effects of Parental Incarceration" in *Children of Incarcerated Parents*, edited by K. Gabel and D. Johnston (New York: Lexington Books, 1995), 59-88.
- Kemper, K.J. and Rivara, F.P. (1993). Parents in jail. *Pediatrics*, 92, 261-264.
- Klein, N., Alexander, J., and Parsons, B. "Impact of Family Systems Intervention on Recidivism and Sibling Delinquency: A Model of Primary Prevention and Program Evaluation," *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology* 45, 3 (1997): 469-474.
- La Vigne, N. G., Visher, C, and Castro, J. L. *Chicago Prisoners' Experiences Returning Home (Research Brief)* (Washington DC: The Urban Institute, Justice Policy Center, 2004).

REFERENCES

- Minton, T. (April 2011). *Jail Inmates at Mid-Year 2010 - Statistical Tables*. Bureau of Justice Statistics, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Dept of Justice. <http://bjs.ojp.usdoj.gov/content/pub/pdf/jim10st.pdf>
- Murray, J., Farrington, D. P., Sekol, I., & Olsen, R. F. (2009). Effects of parental imprisonment on child antisocial behaviour and mental health: A systematic review. *Campbell Systematic Reviews, 4*, 1-105. Oslo, Norway: Campbell Collaboration
- Nelson, M., Deess, P., and Allen, C. *The First Month Out: Post-Incarceration Experiences in New York City* (New York: Vera Institute of Justice, 1999).
- Poehlmann, J, Dallaire, D., Loper, A.B>, and Shear, L. Children's contact with their incarcerated parents: Research findings and recommendations. *American Psychologist*, Vol 65(6), Sep 2010, 575-598.
- Vera Institute of Justice, Family Justice Program. *Why Ask About Family? A Guide for Corrections*. (2011). <http://www.vera.org/content/why-ask-about-family-guide-corrections>
- Visher, C., La Vigne, N. G., and Travis, J. *Returning Home: Understanding the Challenges of Prison Reentry* (Washington, DC: Urban Institute, 2004); Sullivan et al., 2002.
- Western, B. and Wildeman, C. (2009). The Black family and mass incarceration. *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 621, 221-242.
- Wisconsin Department of Corrections. (2011). Presentation at the *Transitioning Jail Inmates Back to Community: Why Family Matters* conference. Marty Ordinans, Office of Detention Facilities.