

Parenting Connection

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Parenting Inside Out Recognized as Evidence Based Program

Parenting Inside Out (PIO) is the only evidence based parenting program developed specifically for incarcerated and criminal justice involved parents. In December 2013, PIO completed the review process with the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration and was added to the National Registry of Evidence Based Programs and Practices. In addition, PIO has been evaluated by the Federal Bureau of Prisons and is listed as a Model Program.

Parenting Inside Out is a cognitive-behavioral parent management skills training program created through a six-year collaboration of scientists, policy makers, practitioners, and instructional designers. Its development was a joint effort of the Oregon Department of Corrections, the Oregon Social Learning Center and Pathfinders of Oregon.

At the core of PIO is Parent Management Training (PMT), various versions of which appears on the "best practice" lists of the American Psychological Association, the US Department of Health and Human Services, and the Office of Victims of Crime of the US Department of Justice. PMT includes communication, problem solving, monitoring, positive reinforcement and non-violent discipline techniques. With input from inmates and their families, researchers built upon the PMT curriculum to make it effective within the context and restrictions of parents and families involved in the criminal justice system.

PIO was the subject of a five year, \$2.1 million, randomized controlled study of 359 incarcerated mothers and fathers (41% racial minority) funded by the National Institute of Mental Health. The study, the largest ever done on a parenting program for this population, followed parents during their final year of incarceration and for one year after they released from prison.

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The Parenting Connection is a publication of the Parenting Special Interest Group and the Wisconsin Chapter of the Correctional Education Association.

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Among the results found were the following:

- When compared to the control group, at one year post release
 - PIO participants had a 27% (men) to 59% (women) reduction in rearrest
 - PIO participants had a 95% reduction in self-reported criminal behavior
 - PIO participants had a 66% reduction in self-reported substance abuse
- PIO participants had significantly higher positive prison attitude scores following their PIO class than did the control group and moderately higher prison attitude scores six months post release
- During incarceration, the PIO group reported significantly more Positive Parent-Child Contact, had a higher score on the Parent Ease of Relationship with Caregiver measurement at the end of their PIO class, and received more total family visits than did the control group
- After release from prison, PIO fathers used significantly more positive reinforcement with their children than did non-PIO fathers and PIO participants reported less use of poor discipline practices than did the control group

PIO helps parents develop and refine social interactional skills and citizenship behaviors they can use in all aspects of their lives and that will help them guide their children toward becoming positive, constructive adults. The program is popular with parents and has a very high completion rate. Corrections staff have been supportive of the program and have noted that its graduates have fewer disciplinary issues than the general population.

PIO has been in use in the Oregon Department of Corrections and in community programs across the state for more than ten years. It is being used in both men's and women's prisons, in county jails and in several community programs in California, Kansas, Pennsylvania, Michigan, Illinois, Iowa, Rhode Island, Virginia and West Virginia. There are four versions of the curriculum: community, jail and two for prison.

For information about purchasing the Parenting Inside Out program, please contact Mindy Clark at mclark@pathfindersoforegon.org.

by: Mindy Clark, Children's Justice Alliance, a program of Pathfinders of Oregon

Mommies and Daddies in Jail Booklet Project Expands

For the past six years, Sue Jeweler and Judi Goozh have been working on a special project, *Mommies and Daddies in Jail*, a booklet designed to be given free to children with an incarcerated parent, their families, and the professionals who serve them. To date, they have distributed over 8,000 copies of the book in Montgomery County, Maryland and throughout the country.

Children, who are victims of their parent's crimes, are often afraid and confused by the changes in their own lives. Their questions and deeply felt concerns are not always addressed. The booklet, *Mommies and Daddies in Jail*, clearly and concisely addresses these issues. A scenario about a child who witnesses the arrest of a parent is followed by questions that are asked by the child and answered throughout the process from arrest to incarceration. The booklets are available in English and Spanish and are to be distributed as a free resource.

Recently, the Federal Bureau of Prisons asked Sue and Judi to collaborate with them on an adaptation of their booklet. The new booklet titled, *Mommies and Daddies in Prison* addresses a child's questions and deeply felt concerns about a parent's experience in prison and is accompanied by photographs from the Bureau of Prisons (BOP) archives. It is designed for incarcerated parents and caregivers to read with



children so that the children understand more about their parent's daily experience. Recently, the booklets were distributed at the BOP's "Universal Children's Day" as an important resource for families.

As a result of their work, Sue and Judi were nominated for the White House "Champions of Change" honor. Although they were not recipients, they were invited to attend the ceremony at the White House.

In his remarks at the Children of Incarcerated Parents Initiative "Champions of Change" event, Deputy Attorney General James Cole pledged the Bureau of Prisons support for Sue and Judi's work:

"To help incarcerated parents maintain relationships with their children during their sentence and become better parents, the Bureau of Prisons has identified model parenting programs for use in prisons around the country. And with the help of Judi Goozh and Sue Jeweler from Creative Family Projects, we will circulate a "Mommies and Daddies in Prison" booklet for incarcerated parents and caregivers to read with the children so that they understand more about their parent's daily experience."

Deputy Attorney General Cole went on to affirm the administration's commitment to the Children of Incarcerated Parents Initiative:

"We're also calling for funding to support these efforts. The President's 2014 budget calls for \$5 million in grants to enhance parental and family relationships for incarcerated parents as a reentry and recidivism-reduction strategy. It also requests \$2 million for the Bureau of Prisons to expand education programs that strengthen family and parental ties."

Our efforts don't stop there. We're improving our research, enhancing resources and training, educating the public to dispel myths, and conducting more research about how to assist these children."

All of these efforts would not be complete without helping formerly incarcerated individuals become productive, law-abiding and tax-paying citizens upon their release from prison or jail. The best way former inmates can positively contribute to their children's lives is to remain crime-free. Without a doubt, successful reentry policies and practices go hand-in-hand with the theme of today's event. Motivated individuals – who have served their time and paid their debts – need the opportunity to compete for jobs and attain stable housing to support their children and their families and contribute to our communities."

For information on ordering *Mommies and Daddies in Jail* booklets go to www.creativefamilyprojects.org or e-mail: creativefamilyprojectsllc@gmail.com.



National PRISONER'S FAMILY CONFERENCE
Join the Conversation
Dallas, Texas
February 19-21, 2014

Overcoming Obstacles

My Dad is in Prison

1 in 28 kids
have a parent in prison

Come learn how you can help

(915) 861-7733
www.PrisonersFamilyConference.org



Sesame Street Helps Little Children Meet Big Challenges

Big Bird, Elmo and the gang have a new friend. His name is Alex. Alex is dealing with a big challenge. His father is in prison.

Alex is part of Sesame Street's new Little Children, Big Challenges program, a series of online tool kits for children and their parents dealing with adversity. Issues include not only prison, but also bullying, divorce and relocation. Alex's story is online only. It is not part of the regular Sesame Street TV show.

The *Little Children, Big Challenges* program provides much-needed resources for families with young children (ages 3-8) as they encounter the difficult changes and transitions that come with a parent's incarceration.

Sesame Street believes, "The incarceration of a loved one can be very overwhelming for both children and caregivers. It can bring about big changes and transitions. In simple everyday ways, you can comfort your child and guide her through these tough moments. With your love and support she can get through anything that comes her way. Here are some tools to help you with the changes your child is going through."

The *Little Children, Big Challenges: Incarceration* tool kit contains videos, activities and handouts offering advice, encouragement and games for when they visit Mom or Dad in jail.

In one video, Alex, a Muppet whose father is in prison, is faced with a wave of questions from his puppet peers about the meaning of "carceration." Sofia, a neighbor, explains that "incarceration is when a parent breaks a grown-up rule – a law – and has to go to jail."

The tool kit also offers the caretaker the following "Tips for Coping with Incarceration"

- 1) **Build Security** – In the morning, let your child know some of the things that will happen throughout the day. For example, "Grandma will pick you up from school. Then you'll go to the park, and later we'll all have dinner together."
- 2) **Share Your Heart** – Give your child a paper heart to keep in her pocket. You might say, "This is to remind you that I love you and will always be there for you."
- 3) **Express Emotions** – Take time each day to check in with your child and ask, "How are you feeling?" Remember to let your child know that it's okay to have big feelings.
- 4) **Answer Honestly** – When explaining where an incarcerated parent is, you can say, "Daddy is in a place called prison (or jail) for a while. Grown-ups sometimes go to prison when they break a rule called a law."
- 5) **Stay Connected** – Phone calls are a great way to reach out. Help your child to think of something she'd like to tell her incarcerated parent, and give her a photo of her parent to hold during the call.
- 6) **Prepare Together** – Before you visit your incarcerated loved one, let your child know some of the things she can expect to happen. For instance, "We won't be able to sit in the same room with Mommy, but we can see her through a window and read a story together."
- 7) **Take Care of Yourself** – Caring for yourself helps you care for your child. At least once a day, do something that you enjoy or find relaxing.

Jeanette Betancourt, vice president for outreach and educational practices at Sesame Workshop, says the video is meant to give children like Alex support and comfort. "We are looking not at the cause of the incarceration of the parent, but at the impact of the incarceration on the lives of children and their caregivers," Betancourt says.



"We're tackling this very difficult topic, but also acknowledging this very invisible community," she says. "We've heard quite a bit from adults who experienced this as children and never talked about it because of their guilt or shame."

You may find the *Little Children, Big Challenges: Incarceration* tool kit at:

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

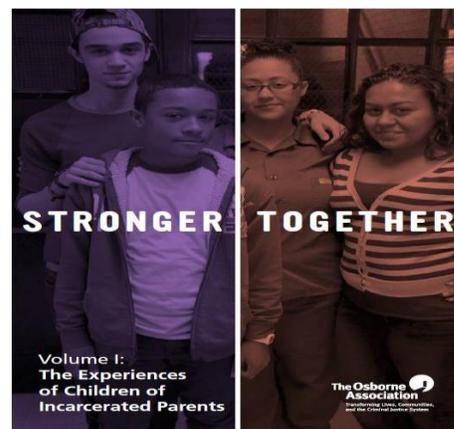
Updated Stronger Together Handbooks Now Available

Twenty years ago when few people were paying attention to a growing epidemic, the Osborne Association of New York issued a series of three handbooks entitled "How Can I Help?" that focused on the experiences and needs of children with an incarcerated parent. Today, with over 2 million children on any given day in the United States having a parent in jail or prison, the new updated and revised handbooks, *Stronger Together*, are more important than ever.

Volume I describes the feelings and behaviors that are common when a parent is incarcerated, as well as what parents and caregivers can do to support children and prevent or minimize negative responses.

Volume II focuses on the importance of maintaining parent-child relationships, how to navigate the criminal justice system in order to do this, and the power of communication – especially between a child and his incarcerated parent.

Volume III is an entirely new volume specifically for non-parent caregivers and provides essential information for any caregiver caring for children with an incarcerated parent.



Note: Much of what is in these volumes is applicable for any state and locality in the United States, including Volume I and much of Volume II. For those from states other than New York, please contact the Osborne Association at www.NYInitiative@osborneny.org about adapting the New York-specific sections of Volume II or most of Volume III to your state or locality.

The *Stronger Together* handbooks may be downloaded FREE.

To purchase hardcopies, email www.NYInitiative@osborneny.org or call 1-800-344-3314.

The following prices do not include shipping costs or New York State sales tax. For more information or to order the handbooks, please

- Cost for single handbook \$10
- Cost for set of Volumes I, II, and III \$25
- Cost for orders of 10-30 handbooks (any combination of Volumes) \$8/ handbook
- Cost for orders of 31-50 \$7/ handbook
- Cost for orders of 51 and more \$6.50/ handbook
- Sliding scale pricing is available for those directly affected by incarceration

To join CEA go to: www.ceanational.org



Hour Children Provides Key to Family Reunification

In 1986 Sister Teresa Fitzgerald (Sr. Tesa) and four other Sisters of St. Joseph led an initiative to open the doors of St. Rita's Convent in Queens, New York, when they began caring for children whose mothers were in prison. They continued this with support of volunteers, and in 1992, Hour Children officially incorporated into a non-profit organization.

Sister Tesa has spent the last 26 years as the founding Executive Director of Hour Children that provides comprehensive support within the prison walls and in the community – including prison visitation, supportive housing, job training and placement, mentoring, mental health support, and child care – to incarcerated and formerly incarcerated women and their children. Believing, wholeheartedly, in a person's potential to change and acknowledging every child's right to a stable and secure family, Sister Tesa lives among and stands beside the families that she serves helping them to achieve their potential.

As the years went by, she and a community of other sisters expanded the program. Today, the group has developed a "village" of 5 residences that house approximately 60 families each year. Sandwiched between the residences are three thrift shops, a food pantry, a licensed child-care center for the community, an after-school program, a summer day camp and a computer-equipped office where women recently released from jail are trained to re-enter the workforce.

Hour Children is unique in that they begin working with women and their children while the mothers are still incarcerated. Prison-based services include:

- Advocacy to keep mothers and children together
- Family visitation
- Parenting classes
- Legal assistance
- Family reunification counseling.

The relationships and services established in prison provide a bridge to community-based services and linkages, which are key to successful community re-entry and family reunification.

Sister Tesa will tell you that the impetus for their action was something simple, "I was just moved to think that a child was ripped apart from a mother at any point in time."

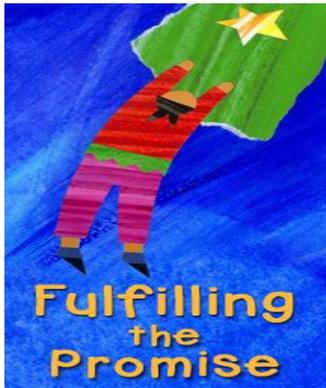
Sister Tesa says, "My heart and my life and my passion have really been working with not only the children whose mothers are in prison, but also with their moms." Her mission is to guide women who have made bad decisions back to a point of recovery and success. Hers is a mission to keep children from losing their moms entirely. Hers is a mission to create families and goodwill that reconnect, reinvigorate and strengthen communities.

Last June, when the White House honored twelve "Champions of Change" who have dedicated themselves to supporting children of incarcerated parents and their caregivers, Sister Tesa was among those honored.

You can find out more about Sister Tesa and Hour Children at www.hourchildren.org.

**For past issues of the Parenting Connection
newsletter, go to www.ceawisconsin.org**





Fulfilling the Promise Conference

February 25-26, 2014
Chula Vista Resort
Wisconsin Dells, WI

You are invited to attend the 19th Annual Fulfilling the Promise Conference sponsored by the University of Wisconsin-Extension. At Fulfilling the Promise you will:

- ✓ Hear from parent education and home visitation professionals, peers with innovative programs, and experts in related sectors
- ✓ Learn more about the things that matter most in your work with parents and families
- ✓ Gain up-to-date information and great resources from conference exhibitors.
- ✓ Connect with colleagues from across Wisconsin

The Fulfilling the Promise Conference will offer:

- ✓ 7 full-day institutes
- ✓ 6 half-day institutes
- ✓ Networking activities
- ✓ Paul Schmitz from Public Allies, keynote speaker
- ✓ 30 workshops featuring 10 different topic tracks

Among the scheduled workshops is:

Connecting Incarcerated Parents and Their Families

*Presenters: Mary Pohlman, Teacher at Kettle Moraine Correctional Institution
Andrea Uherka, Social Worker at Taycheedah Correctional Institution
Jerry Bednarowski, CEA Parenting Special Interest Group Chair.*

Incarceration is very disruptive to families. In order to stay connected, the offender not only needs to learn positive parenting behaviors, but also needs to transform his/her thinking and learn ways to access support. This workshop will describe parenting programs available during incarceration. You will also learn about programs and resources that help the offender maintain communication with the family and transition back into the community

For a conference brochure and to register online go to:

[www.http://blogs.ces.uwex.edu/flpconferences/fulfilling-the-promise](http://blogs.ces.uwex.edu/flpconferences/fulfilling-the-promise)

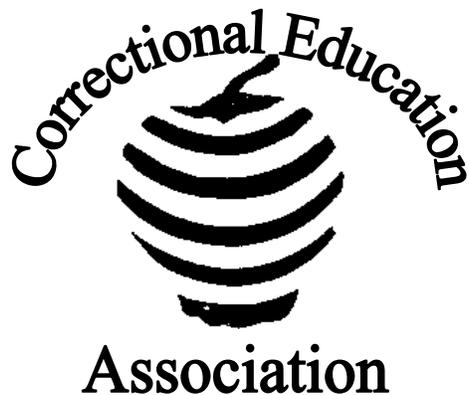
Need Help?

Do you have any questions or need some advice on starting or improving your parenting classes, parent/child literacy program, or parent support group for offenders?

We have an email list of approximately 500 parenting educators from throughout the country who are eager to help. Just send an email to jerrybednarowski@new.rr.com with your question or request and I will forward it to our email list. Then wait a few days and the helping responses will be sent to you.



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Editor's Message:

In addition to publishing this bi-monthly newsletter, the Parenting Special Interest Group and the Wisconsin Chapter of the Correctional Education Association publishes three booklets for incarcerated parents and their families and those who provide education and services for them. The booklets are *Reaching Out: A Handbook for Parents Incarcerated in Wisconsin*, *Reaching In: A Handbook for Families of Parents Incarcerated in Wisconsin*, and *Prison Parenting Programs: Resources for Parenting Instructors in Prisons and Jails*.

These booklets are "living documents." That means information will continue to be added to them as relevant programs and resources are identified. The booklets will be updated approximately every two months and will be posted on our www.ceawisconsin.org website.

Those who work with incarcerated parents and their families are welcome to print the booklets or any sections of them for use with their clients. Goodwill Industries of North Central Wisconsin has partnered with CEA-Wisconsin to print hardcopies of the booklets. The hardcopies will be distributed those to people who request them and to those attending workshops that the Parenting Special Interest Group presents.

If you have information that you feel should be included in any of the booklets or would like to request a hardcopy of a booklet, email jerrybednarowski@new.rr.com.

Jerry

