Children of people who are incarcerated are five times more likely to endure hardships that increase the risk for alcoholism and alcohol abuse, depression, illicit drug use, financial stress, poor academic achievement and many other negative health and well-being outcomes.

A study done in 1998 by Kaiser Permanente brought together 10 questions about childhood experiences that could be linked with adult health and wellbeing. As the number of ACEs or Adverse Childhood Experiences increases, so does the risk for alcoholism and alcohol abuse, depression, illicit drug use, financial stress, poor academic achievement and many other negative health and well-being outcomes.

When parents have opportunities to maintain their relationship with children while incarcerated, parental attachment is supported and a bond is maintained. When parents have opportunities to maintain their relationship with children while incarcerated, parental attachment is supported and a bond is maintained.

Parent-child relationships can also help motivate people who are incarcerated to avoid disciplinary action and participate in programming that can help them avoid recidivism. People who are incarcerated can become better parents if they have someone who will help them do this. Programs that help incarcerated parents become better parents are a crucial step in reducing recidivism.

For parents, benefits include a lower rate of recidivism and a more successful re-entry after release.

How to use this Zine

Strengthen Families Through Visits

Visits are most beneficial when they are made in a place where children feel welcome and comfortable and occur in conjunction with a family strengthening program.

Resources

The United States now has the highest rate of incarceration in the world, by far, with 2.2 million women and men in prison at any given time. The Justice Institute cites the massive increase in incarceration since the 1970s as the reason why more mothers and fathers with dependent children are incarcerated than in previous decades.

The National Institute of Justice explains that when mothers are incarcerated, the children left behind are at an increased risk for negative health and well-being outcomes. When children are dealt with this type of trauma, they may have an increased risk of incarceration themselves.

Parent-child relationships can also help motivate people who are incarcerated to avoid disciplinary action and participate in correctional programming that supports their needs.

Parent-child relationships can also help motivate people who are incarcerated to avoid disciplinary action and participate in correctional programming that supports their needs. For parents, benefits include a lower rate of recidivism and a more successful re-entry after release.

Notes


2 Prisons Today,” Eastern State Penitentiary Historic Site: https://www.easternstate.org/explore/explore/prisons-prisons


Zine developed by Adrienne Testa in partnership with colleagues from Kansas City Children’s Museum, Children’s Museum of Manhattan, Kansas Discovery Children’s Museum, and Washington Department of Corrections.