Parents in Prison
Collateral Consequences for
Children and Families

Rebecca J. Shlafer, Ph.D.
University of Minnesota
MACMH – April 20, 2014

U.S. Incarceration Rate 1925-2008

Source: Glaze & Maruschak, 2008

Parents in State and Federal Prison
and their Minor Children

Developmental Considerations

Source: Glaze & Maruschak, 2008

Facility Types

State Prisons in Minnesota

Mid-Year 2013
• 9,090 men
• 682 women
Federal Prisons in Minnesota
Mid-Year 2013
- FPC Duluth – 812
- FCI Sandstone – 1,456
- FMC Rochester – 981
- FCI Waseca – 981

Adverse Childhood Experiences

Parental Incarceration
- Depression
- Anxiety
- Withdrawal
- Aggression
- Substance Use
- Delinquency
- Poor Grades
- Truancy
- School Failure

Parental Incarceration
- Child Outcome

Before

- What was the quality of the parent-child relationship?
  - Did the parent live with the child?
  - Was the parent a primary caregiver?
  - Did the parent contribute to the family income?
- What was the quality of the co-parenting relationship?
- Did the child witness the parent’s criminal activity, arrest, or trial?
During

- Where is the child living?

- What is the quality of the co-parenting relationship?

- Where is the parent incarcerated?
  - How long is the parent’s sentence?
  - How is the parent-child relationship maintained?

- Any type of contact
  - Daily or almost daily
  - At least once a week
  - At least once a month
  - Less than once a month
  - Never

- Mail is most common
- In-person visits least common

Figure 3: Biological Context Related to Frequency and Quality of Parent-Child Contact When Parent Are Incarcerated

- Importance of caregiver-parent relationship
During

• Importance of caregiver-parent relationship
• Visit context
• Barriers to visitation

After

• What is the quality of the parent-child relationship?
• Will the parent live with the child?
  – Will the parent be a caregiver?
  – Will the parent contribute to the family income?
• What is the quality of the co-parenting relationship?

Adverse Childhood Experiences

- High Cholesterol (OR = 1.31)
- Asthma (OR = 1.30)
- Migraine (OR = 1.26)
- Depression (OR = 1.43)
- PTSD (OR = 1.72)
- Anxiety (OR = 1.51)
- HIV/AIDS (OR = 4.05)
- Fair/poor health (OR = 1.28)

Implications for Health Across the Life Course

National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health, 2007-2008

Paternal Incarceration
• High Cholesterol (OR = 1.31)
• Asthma (OR = 1.30)
• Migraine (OR = 1.26)
• Depression (OR = 1.43)
• PTSD (OR = 1.72)
• Anxiety (OR = 1.51)
• HIV/AIDS (OR = 4.05)
• Fair/poor health (OR = 1.28)

Maternal Incarceration
• Depression (OR = 1.60)