Welcoming Communities and the Resilience of Justice-Involved Women and Children

Arizona State University Children of Incarcerated Parents Conference 2018
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IT STARTS WITH A GIFT

UMU: Confronting Assumptions

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UMU: Confronting Assumptions: Guess Who?

Instructions

1. Each panelist has been assigned a number
2. Review each anonymous panelist quote
3. Match quote to panelist
4. See results
Prison Fellowship Overview

What is Prison Fellowship
THE PROBLEM

5% of the world’s population

25% of the world’s prison population
65 million adults have a criminal record or 1 in 4 Americans.

2.2 million men and women are incarcerated.

2.7 million children with a parent in prison or 1 in 28 American children.

The Human Cost of Incarceration
Every child has a story…..

For 2.7 million American children, that story is filled with the abandonment, loneliness, and shame that come from having a mom or dad in prison. For many, it may also include following their parents down the same destructive road to incarceration.
The growing number of children with an incarcerated parent represents one of the most significant collateral consequences of the record prison population in the U.S.

- Approximately 10 million children have experienced parental incarceration at some point in their lives.

- One in 9 African American children (11.4%), 1 in 28 Hispanic children (3.5%), and 1 in 57 white children (1.8%) in the United States have an incarcerated parent.

- Approximately half of children with incarcerated parents are under ten years old.
Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) are stressful or traumatic events, including abuse and neglect. They may also include household dysfunction such as witnessing domestic violence or growing up with family members who have.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Physical Abuse</th>
<th>Intimate Partner Violence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sexual Abuse</td>
<td>Mother Treated Violently</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Abuse</td>
<td>Substance Misuse Within Household</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Neglect</td>
<td>Parental Separation or Divorce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Neglect</td>
<td>Incarcerated household member</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Given the effects of the community environment and the family of origin on overall physical, mental and intellectual health, describe your family of origin. Describe your neighborhood? Describe your family dynamics. Considering the ACE’s list, how many of the stressful or traumatic events occurred in your family? Share your experience?

Describe your school experience. Were teachers, counselors and other school staff aware of the issues with your family? Were there any interventions by the school staff? If so, describe what was done.
Reflections

Talk to your child self and reflect on the kind of support you received and/or needed from family, faith or community organization members? Do you think they could have reached you? How did you respond when faith or community organization members attempted to guide you? What could they have done differently?
Juvenile Justice Statistics and Trends

• In 2015, the arrest rate of America's youth (ages 10-17) amounted to 2,751 per every 100,000. Many juvenile intake and arrests are based on acts that would not be criminal for adults, such as status offenses or truancy charges.

• Many of these referrals are due to zero-tolerance policies set by school boards and state legislatures. They address behaviors that otherwise would be handled by parents and school administrators.

• Six states automatically try youth under the age of 18 as adults, regardless of how minor the crime: Georgia, Missouri, Michigan, North Carolina, Texas and Wisconsin.
Juvenile Justice Statistics and Trends

• 46% of youth are physically assaulted by an adult prisoner
• Youth in adult prisons are 30x more likely to commit suicide
• Youth released from adult prisons are 77% more likely to commit a violent felony
Adolescent Years

For those who were in prison or had a parent in prison, did you finish high school? Were you ever in a Juvenile Detention Center? Describe that experience.
Over the past quarter century, there has been a profound change in the involvement of women within the criminal justice system. This is the result of more expansive law enforcement efforts, stiffer drug sentencing laws, and post-conviction barriers to reentry that uniquely affect women.

- Women now comprise a larger proportion of the prison population than ever before; the female prison population stands nearly eight times higher than its population count in 1980. More than 60% of women in state prisons have a child under the age of 18.

- Between 1980 and 2014, the number of incarcerated women increased by more than 700%, rising from a total of 26,378 in 1980 to 215,332 in 2014.
There are 1.2 million women under the supervision of the criminal justice system.

- Prison- 106,232
- Probation- 966,029
- Jails- 109,100
- Parole- 102,825
# Justice-Involved Women

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>2000</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>% increase/decrease</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White Women</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>56% increase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White Men</td>
<td>449</td>
<td>465</td>
<td>4% increase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American Women</td>
<td>205</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>47% decrease</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American Men</td>
<td>3457</td>
<td>2724</td>
<td>21% decrease</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic Women</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>7% increase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic Men</td>
<td>1220</td>
<td>1091</td>
<td>11% decrease</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The increase in justice involved women can be traced to changes in state and national drug policies that mandated prison terms for even relatively low-level drug offenses, changes in law enforcement practices (particularly those targeting minority neighborhoods) and post-conviction barriers to reentry that uniquely affect women.

- 74% of the women in state prison used drugs regularly before incarceration.
- 43% of women in prison have been physically abused, and 39% have been sexually abused.
Today’s experts in rehabilitation recognize that female prisoners often have different needs than male prisoners. By learning about the issues specific to women behind bars, volunteers can respond to them more effectively.

Describe some of the needs specific to women that were unmet in prison? Describe the programs provided by the Department of Corrections and/or volunteer organizations such as Prison Fellowship that addressed your gender specific need. Needs of prisoners in general.
Prison Culture

• For those who currently or have in the past volunteered in prison, describe the prison culture from a volunteer perspective.
• For those who had a parent (s) or other family member in prison, how old were you when you realize they were incarcerated and describe how it impacted your life?
• Please describe how it felt to visit the parent or loved one in prison? For those who had a spouse in prison, what did you observe about your child(ren) before and after visitation?
• Were you able to attend prison events such as the Prison Fellowship Hope events, family day, etc.? Describe that experience?
Prison Culture

• What method of communications, if any, did you use to communicate with your loved one and how often?

• In what ways can the prison community foster healthy behavior for those inmates who have experienced sexual abuse, addiction, and/or abandonment?
Every person has dignity and potential. But one in four American adults has a criminal record, which limits their access to education, jobs, housing, and other things they need to reach that potential. Prison Fellowship along with pastors, leaders and people from around the country are celebrating "Second Chance Month" in April! Together we can unlock brighter futures for 65 million Americans who have repaid their debt to society. According to the American Bar Association, there are more than 48,000 documented restriction-collateral consequences affecting people with a criminal record.
Welcoming Communities and the Resilience of Justice Involved Women and Families

- Describe some of the documented as well as undocumented restrictions that affected your full reintegation to the outside community?

- What have been the contributing factors in helping you maintain a crime free and productive lifestyle since incarceration.
Women’s recidivism rates are similarly troubling to those of men. About one-quarter of women released from prison fail within 6 months (i.e., have an arrest for a new crime), one third fail within a year, and 2/3 fail (68.1%) five years out from release.

• How many times did you or your loved one return to prison and what were the contributing factors?

• What was the catalyst in your life that allowed you to defy the negative statistics associated with children of prisoners, prisoner or spouse of prisoner?
Q & A
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How You Can Take Action Today

• Register your church or organization to sponsor Angel Tree children in your community or partner with another organization in their community at https://www.prisonfellowship.org/about/angel-tree/

• Volunteer to facilitate classes in Prison Fellowship Academies

• Request a Prison Fellowship Speaker at prisonfellowship.org/resources/request-a-speaker/
How You Can Take Action Today

• Sign the Justice Declaration at justicedeclaration.org

• Facilitate a Outrageous Justice Study Group at a church, community group or organization.
Children experience stigma when their parents are incarcerated. How can we balance the call to serve prisoners, widows and orphans and our responsibility to protect our own children? How would you communicate with the caregiver? Would you let your child play with a child whose parents are in prison or had been in prison? Why? Why not? If not, what is the basis of your hesitation? Does the crime make a difference?
References

- Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2006