

***Facilitating Children's
Relationships with their
Incarcerated Parents:
Good for the Children
Good for Society***

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Mentor:

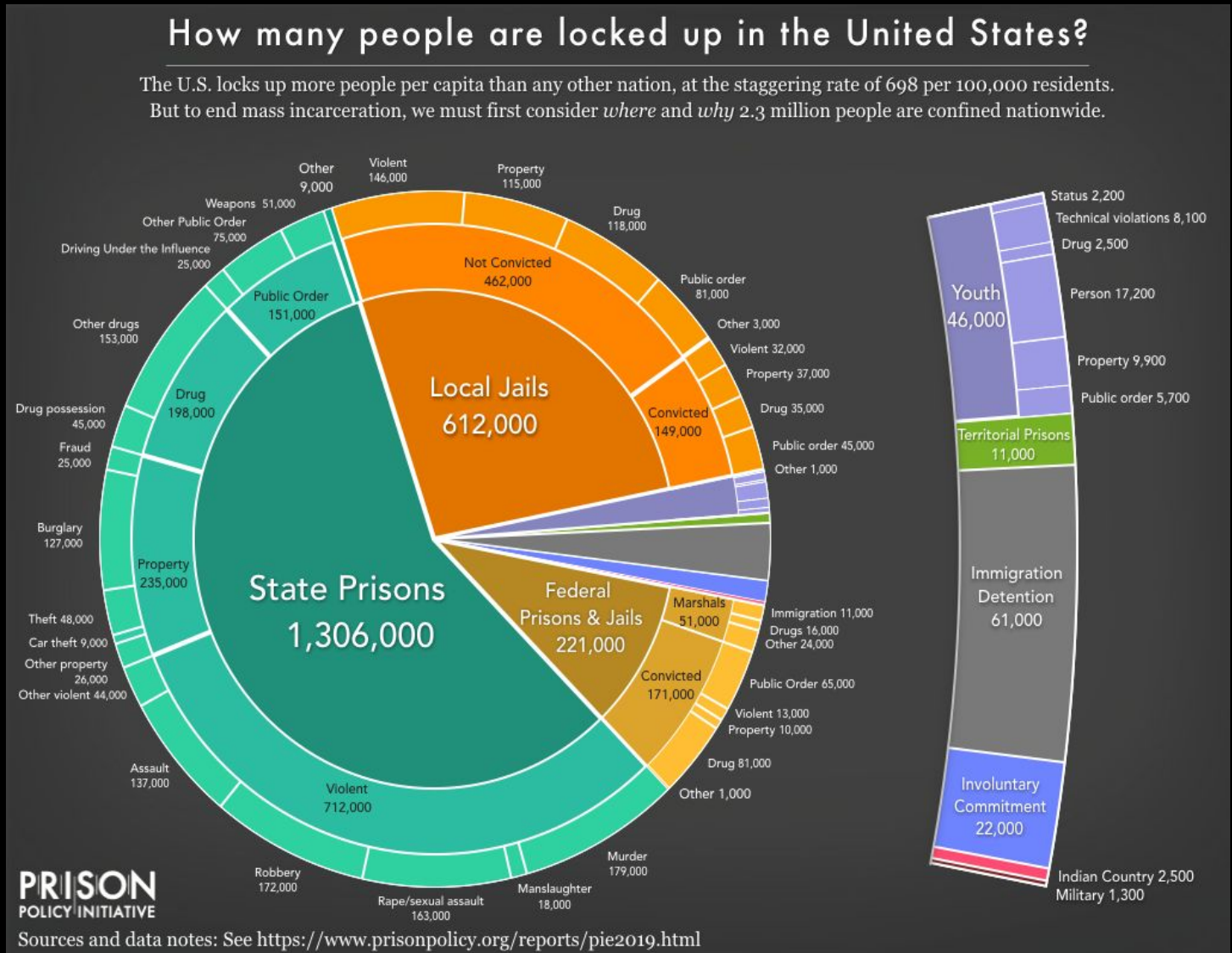
Jeanine Staples-Dixon, Ph.D.

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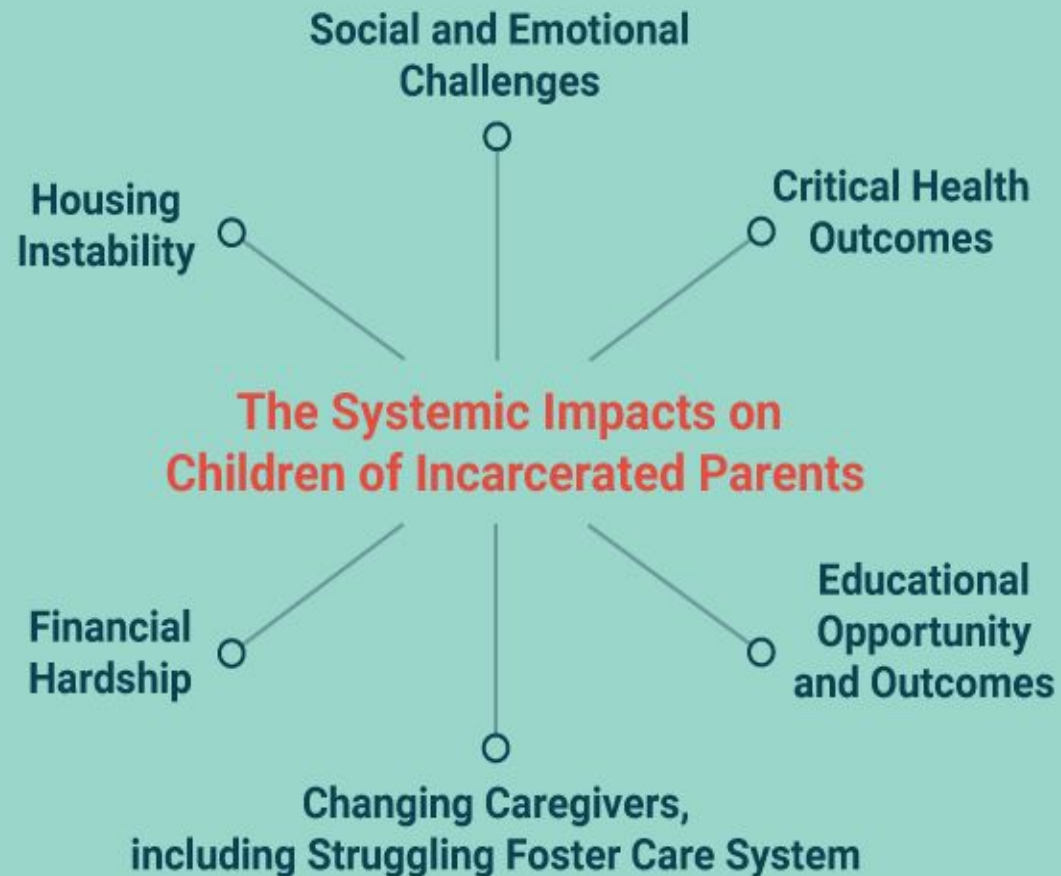


The Problem

- 2.1M incarcerated in U.S.
- U.S. has highest incarceration rate & population in the world
- 2.7M children with incarcerated parents
- 5M children experienced parental incarceration



Potential Adverse Effects on Children of Incarcerated Parents



Next
100

- Caregiver/living situation disruption
- Financial hardship
- Health problems
- Social isolation
- Emotional difficulties
- Behavioral problems
- Mental health issues
- Negative educational outcomes

Real Children and Their Stories

- Brian
 - Father serving life sentence
 - Father was only source of income
 - Financial hardships
- Victoria
 - Mother serving 4 year sentence
 - Victoria has learning disability
 - Victoria educational struggles



Incarcerated Parents' Relationships With Their Children

- Regular contact (i.e. in-person visits, phone calls & video visits) creates the following benefits:
 - Improve social and academic outcomes for children
 - Improves prisoner behavior
 - Reduces recidivism
 - Reduces children's aforementioned health and behavioral problems



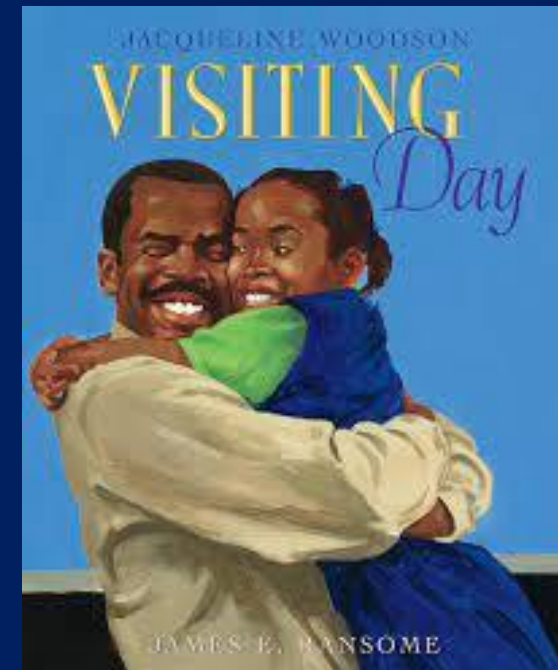
Barriers to Contact

- Barriers to in-person visits:
 - Geographic distance
 - Transportation costs
 - Complicated logistics
 - Children-unfriendly visit rooms
- Barriers to phone calls & video visits:
 - Excessive costs
 - Technology problems
 - Internet access



Potential Solutions

- In-person Visits:
 - Mitigation & proximity laws
 - Transportation funding
 - Policy reform
- Video visits
 - Free Zoom visits
 - Other video uses
 - Better technology
 - Partner for Internet access



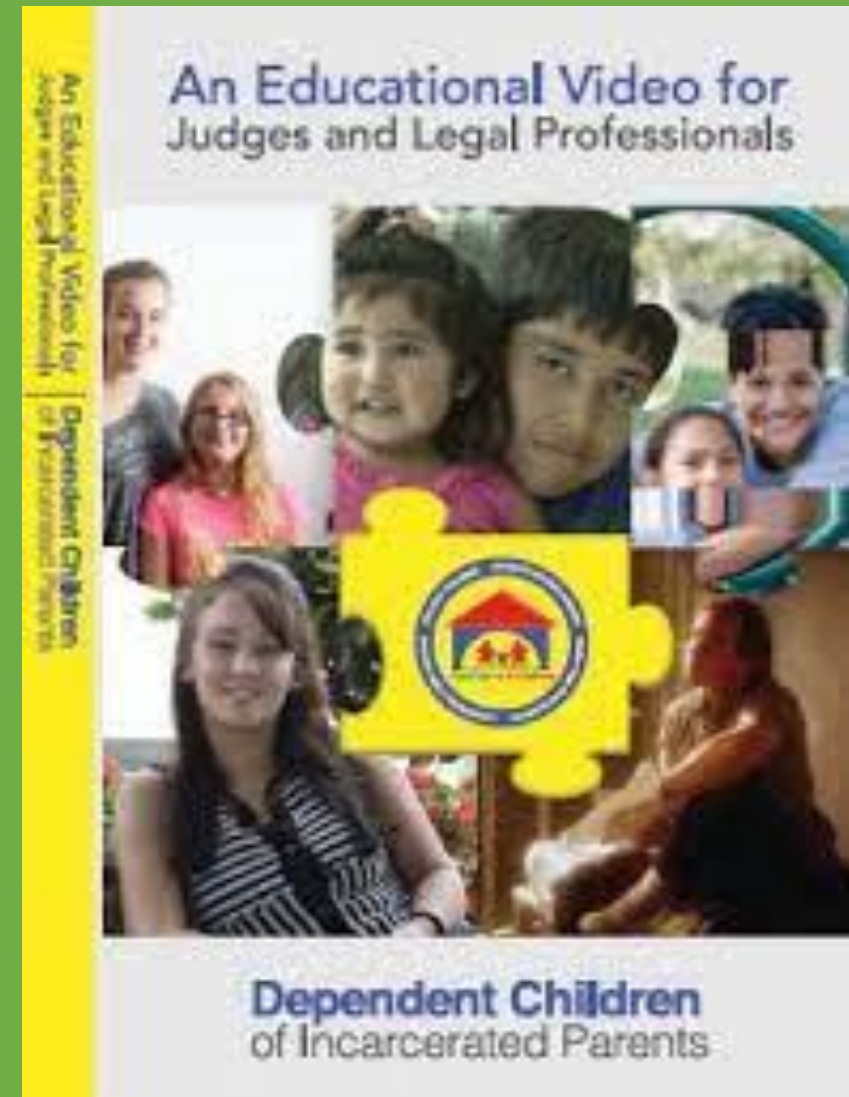
Success Stories



- Since 2015, 8 states passed caregiver mitigation laws (CA, IL, LA, MA, MO, OR, TN, WA)
- Since 2007, 5 states passed proximity laws (CA, FL, HI, NJ, NY)
- Since 2001, 15K children helped by the Get on the Bus program
- Since 2020, PA Dept Corrections offers free Zoom visits

Advocacy Action Plan/What YOU Can Do

- Call, write, e-mail, DM, and/or tweet the following people/organizations:
 - Federal Bureau of Prisons
 - State Departments of Corrections Directors
 - State legislative representatives
- Donate time & money to nonprofits



Thank you!

Contact me @

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