Serving Children of Incarcerated Parents

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Overview of Session
- The Problem
- CIP at School
- School Counselors and CIP

The Problem

The Problem: By the Numbers
5 million (1 in 14 or 6.9%) children in America will live with an incarcerated parent by the time they are 18.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race</th>
<th>Poverty Level</th>
<th>Age of Child</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>6.0%</td>
<td>Poor 12.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>11.5%</td>
<td>Low-income 9.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>6.4%</td>
<td>Not low-income 3.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>7.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Murphy & Cooper, 2015)
Bringing it Home: Missouri Statistics

20,744 inmates report having children, and 47,612 children are reported as dependents of these inmates.

The Missouri Department of Corrections estimates that approximately 100,000 children in our state have an incarcerated parent or caretaker.

More on impact of incarceration in MO:


Bringing it Home: Missouri Statistics

More than 5 million U.S. children have had a PARENT BEHIND BARS.
They’re more likely to have faced other potentially traumatic events:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Have had a parent incarcerated</th>
<th>Have not</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lived with someone with a substance abuse problem</td>
<td>&gt; 1 in 2</td>
<td>1 in 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experienced parental divorce or separation</td>
<td>&gt; 1 in 2</td>
<td>1 in 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Witnessed domestic violence at home</td>
<td>&gt; 1 in 3</td>
<td>1 in 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Was a victim of, or witnessed, neighborhood violence</td>
<td>nearly 1 in 3</td>
<td>nearly 1 in 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lived with a mentally ill or suicidal person</td>
<td>&gt; 1 in 4</td>
<td>1 in 14</td>
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</table>


The Problem: Impact on Well-Being

- Disruption to parental contact
- Changes in caregivers
- Financial impact
- Mental and physical health

CIP at School
CIP at School

- Challenges identifying CIP
- Secret keeping
- Safety concerns

CIP at School: Stigma

- “The apple doesn’t fall far from the tree.”
- Teacher stigma & potentially lowered expectations (Dalliere, Ciccono, & Wilson, 2010)
- Grade retention
  - CIP with incarcerated fathers were 1.47 times more likely to be retained between K-3rd grade than peers (Turney & Haskins, 2014)
- Peer stigma

CIP at School: School Performance

School and behavior problems
- Higher rates of suspension & expulsion (Johnson, 2009)
- Truancy and dropout (Cho, 2011; Nichols, Loper, & Meyer, 2016)

School success
- College graduation rate (Hagan & Foster, 2012)

Changing School Culture

Moving the conversation from “What’s wrong with that child?” to “What happened to that child?” to “What can happen now and who can help the child?”
School Counselors & CIP

Comprehensive School Counseling & CIP

- Structural Components/Foundation
  - ASCA Code of Ethics
- System Support
  - Responsive to student needs
- Responsive Services
  - Counseling, consultation, & referrals for CIP
- Program Evaluation
  - Use data to demonstrate effectiveness of services

Foundation: *ASCA Code of Ethics*

School counselors need to “understand how prejudice, privilege and various forms of oppression based on ethnicity, racial identity, age, economic status . . . and living situations (e.g., foster care, homelessness, incarceration) affect students and stakeholders” (ASCA, 2016, B.3.i).

System Support

Difficulties for CIP may come to the attention of professional school counselors through review of school data (e.g., suspension rates, retention rates, truancy, postsecondary planning, parent or guardian involvement, mental health needs).
Responsive Services

Counseling Services for CIP
• Need clinical conceptualization to approach counseling

<table>
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<tr>
<th>CIP Experience</th>
<th>CIP Need</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Loss of relationships and attachments</td>
<td>Supportive relationships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loss of acceptance (social stigma)</td>
<td>Acceptance without stigma or shame</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loss of control and stability</td>
<td>Validation of feelings</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Client Conceptualization

Ambiguous Loss Theory (Boss, 2004)

- Physical Absence & Psychological Presence
  - Examples: missing persons, absent parents in divorced families, incarceration
  - Psychological Absence (Emotionally or Cognitively) & Physical Presence
  - Examples: dementia, addiction, autism, brain injury, coma

- No possibility of closure
- Experience of loss plus ambiguity
- Relational and emotional processes freeze
- Family roles become confusing
- Stress is traumatizing and immobilizing

Disenfranchised Grief

- Occurs when people experience a loss that is not openly acknowledged, socially sanctioned, or publicly mourned.
- Correlates with higher levels of anger, guilt, & confusion (Doka, 2009)

Responsive Services: Interventions

- Individual counseling (validate psychological presence of incarcerated parent, focus on resiliency and coping skills rather than closure, process feelings of guilt/self-blame)
- Group counseling (peer support, process feelings)
- Classroom lessons (social justice curriculum to build empathy and acceptance)
Select Resources

- Books
  - *What Do I Say About That?* (Cook, 2015)
  - *Wish You Were Here* (Youth Communication)
  - *My Daddy is in Jail* (Bender, 2003)
  - *Empowering Children of Incarcerated Parents* (Burgess, Caselman & Casey, 2009)
  - Full list of books: https://www.nh.gov/nhdoc/fcc/documen.ts/fccbooklist01.pdf
- Sesame Street Toolkit
  [Link](http://www.sesamestreet.org/parents/topicsandactivities/toolkits/incarceration)

Select Missouri Programs & Resources

- Policies from MO Child Welfare Services:
  [Link](https://dss.mo.gov/cd/info/cwmanual/section4/ch7/sec4ch7attachb.htm)
- UM Extension Program - 4-H Life:
  [Link](http://extension.missouri.edu/4hlife/)
- Girls Scouts Beyond Bars:
- Amachi Mentoring:
  [Link](http://www.bbbsemo.org/approach/what-we-do/)

Program Evaluation

- How are you collecting and analyzing data to determine program effectiveness?
- Current lack of empirical evidence for interventions for CIP
- Evaluation Recommendations:
  - Track referrals for CIP
  - Track attendance, academic, & discipline data for CIP receiving responsive services
  - Pre/post measures with group counseling interventions

Tips for School Counselors

- Build your cultural competence
- Find ways to identify CIP in order to offer support
- Minimize risks to confidentiality
- Create opportunities for CIP to communicate with and support each other
- Identify college & financial aid resources for CIP
  - [Link](https://nccfi.camden.rutgers.edu/resources/college-and-coip-info/)
- Educate other educators about the needs of CIP
  - [Link](http://youth.gov/sites/default/files/COIP_TipSheet-Teachers_508.pdf)
- Collaborate with stakeholders
- Advocate for CIP - microlevel to macrolevel
## Advocacy Resource: Bill of Rights for CIP

The San Francisco Children of Incarcerated Parents Partnership (SFCIPP) developed a bill of rights for CIP in 2003.

**I HAVE THE RIGHT...**

1. To be kept safe and informed at the time of my parent’s arrest.
2. To be heard when decisions are made about me.
3. To be considered when decisions are made about my parent.
4. To be well cared for in my parent’s absence.
5. To speak with, see, and touch my parent.
6. To support as I face my parent’s incarceration.
7. Not to be judged, blamed, or labeled.
8. To a lifelong relationship with my parent.

Source: [http://www.sfcipp.org/](http://www.sfcipp.org/)

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## Conference Announcements

- For all conference related information, download the Conference Yapp App. The Yapp ID is MSCA17.
- Please complete the Workshop Evaluation: [http://tinyurl.com/mscaworkshop17](http://tinyurl.com/mscaworkshop17)
- Please complete the Full Conference Evaluation: [http://tinyurl.com/MSCAeval17](http://tinyurl.com/MSCAeval17)
- Support this year’s Annual Project through raffles, Monday reserved seating, Monday power hour, poker run, project walk, and service project.
- Visit exhibitors and the MSCA promotions booth in Windgate Hall.
- Make plans to participate in evening activities:
  - Hospitality from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m.
  - Dance Celebration beginning at 9:30 p.m.
- For more information on MSCA, like us on Facebook (mymsca) and follow us on Twitter (@myMSCA).

## Next Steps

- What are your reactions to the information presented today?
- How are you currently serving CIP at your school?
- How will you use this information in your work with CIP?

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## Questions?

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Resource list:  
[http://tinyurl.com/cipresources](http://tinyurl.com/cipresources)