

List of CHILDREN'S BOOKS dealing with Incarceration

(we do not condone or promote the following books, the list was compiled as we became aware of them)

- **A Boy Named Rocky: A Coloring Book for the Children of Prisoners** by Dr. Janice M. Beal and Judge Vanessa D. Gilmore www.4theloveofkids.com
- **A Visit to the Big House** by Oliver Butterworth *Grades K-3rd* Two young siblings and their mother go to visit their father, who is in prison for stealing. At first Rose worries that once she's in the prison, the guards won't let her out, while Willy worries that his father is a "bad man." *Ages 7- 10.* Publisher: Houghton Mifflin Company; Library Binding edition (April 1993)
- **A Visit with Daddy** by Frank M. Black This booklet helps the incarcerated dad assure to his children he is doing fine. It answers many of the questions that children have about dad's physical environment and how he keeps busy. It helps lessen the anxiety a child may be feeling and prevents their imagination from running wild.
- **A Visit with Mommy** by Frank M. Black
- **An Inmate's Daughter** by Jan Walker , Herb Leonhard (Illustrator). McNeil Island is a prison in the middle of Puget Sound. It's where Jenna's dad lives. Jenna isn't permitted to tell her new friends that her dad is in prison. It's her mother's rule. Raven Publishing, 2006.
- **Andy: Another New Dad-less Year** by Amanda Florence-Houk, July 2004, *Ages 3 – 5.* Andy is designed to be a self-help book for families experiencing parental incarceration. This is based upon current literature regarding paternal incarceration. This book can also be used as a tool to make others more considerate of the trials faced by children of incarcerated dads.
- **Breaking Out** by Barthe DeClements *Grades 5-8th* Life isn't getting any easier for Jerry--his father is back in prison and his mother has married a difficult man. But at least he has one good friend--Grace, a preacher's kid with problems of her own. Publisher: Demco Media; Reprint edition (August 1993)
- **Coping When a Parent Is in Jail** by John J. La Valle (Rosen Publishing Group). LaValle writes about how teenagers can deal with their emotions when a parent

is incarcerated, explains what happens in prison, the visiting process and reports on where teens can find support.

- **Can't Come To School, My Mom is in Prison-** by Kathleen Van Antwerp
- **Help for Kids! Understanding Your Feelings About Having a Parent in Prison or Jail** by Carole Gesme, MA, CCDP, with consultation from Michele Kopfmann (PinePress). Gesme, is a trainer for the Minnesota Child Welfare Training System in effective parenting skills and the effects of abuse and neglect on child development. *Ages 6 and older*
- **Dad's In Prison** by Sandra Cain & Margaret Speed
- **Daddy's Big House** by Corey Beauford and Marilyn Garin, *Ages 6 – 9*, November 2014. Little Jo Jo is your typical, fun-loving kid. He loves basketball, earns good grades and has plenty of friends in his Washington, D.C. neighborhood. Little Jo Jo's life, however, has changed tremendously since his father, Big Jo, moved away. To make matters worse, Little Jo Jo has no clue about his father's whereabouts. One day, Little Jo Jo's mother takes him to visit his father at his new "big house."
- **Doozie's Dad** by Richard Dyches. *Ages 4-7*. The story of a young boy and his sister whose father is sent to prison. It explores their feelings of loss, fear and frustration at not being told what's going on, until their mother finally takes them to see their dad. Publisher Children Left Behind, Inc. www.ChildrenLeftBehind.org, 2011
- **Empowering Children of Incarcerated Parents** by Stacey Burgess, Tonia Caselman & Jennifer Carsey. A book for counselors, social workers and teachers who work with children *ages 7 - 12* with a parent in jail or prison. Can be used one-on-one or in small groups.
- **Growing Up On 21st Street, Northeast Washington, DC : A Memoir** by Bryant Mayo, *Ages 10 – 18*, June 2015. This book tells the life story of Bryant Mayo, a young man growing up in Northeast Washington DC. It is an autobiography that describes his teen years. It is about growing up without a father. The book tells an honest story about his family, his friends, and his challenges.
- **Help For Kids: Understanding Your Feelings About Having a Parent in Prison or Jail**
By Carole Gesme *Ages 6-11* This workbook gives children information about prison or jail, lets them explore the feelings they have about having a parent in prison or jail, explores how they can take care of themselves, and has a section on related activities and games. Publisher: Pine Tree Press (October 1993)
- **I Know How You Feel Because This Happened to Me** by the Center for Children with Incarcerated Parents, Pacific Oaks College and Children's Programs, 714 West California Blvd., Pasadena, CA 91105

- **Incarceration: Before, During and After (A Journey of Change)** by J.M. Benjamin, *Ages 11 – 18*. Incarceration is a redemptive story about the power of change and how an ex-offender refused to become another statistic once he had paid his debt to society. Award Winning & Best Selling Author J.M. Benjamin, once considered a threat to the community, gives you an up-close and personal account of growing up on the west end part of Plainfield New Jersey. J.M. revisits his past and introduces you to life as he once knew it as a youth.
- **Jakeman** by Deborah Ellis *Grades 4-7th* Jake and his sister Shoshona have been in foster care since their single mother was arrested three years before Publisher: Fitzhenry and Whiteside; 1 edition (April 10, 2007)
- **Just for You - Children with Incarcerated Parents** by the Center for Children with Incarcerated Parents, Pacific Oaks College and Children's Programs, 714 West California Blvd., Pasadena, CA 91105.
- **Kennedy's Big Visit** by Daphne Brooks, May 2015. Little Kennedy is so excited to visit her father again. After she tries on her princess dress and a tutu, Kennedy's mother finds something pretty for her to wear. Finally, they are ready to take the long car ride to visit her daddy!
- **Kofi's Mom** by Richard Dyches.
- **KNOCK KNOCK My Dad's Dream for Me** by Daniel Beaty, illustrated by Bryan Collier. A father and son share a special bond and then one day dad does not come home and no one talks about it. Later, son receives a letter from dad. Their special relationship continues. A Coretta Scott King Award Winner book. Publisher Little, Brown and Company, 2013
- **Let's Talk about When Your Parent Is in Jail** by Maureen K. Wittbold More people are in prison today than at any other time in US history. Many prisoners have children. The impact of this situation on kids can be traumatic. This book takes kids through the stages of a parent's incarceration to help them understand and deal with their thoughts, fears and other feelings. This book offers well organized, truthful, and easy to understand explanations about the various aspects of having a parent in jail. Publisher- 1998 Rosen Publishing Group, Inc. *Ages 8-11*.
- **Mama Loves Me from Away-** by Pat Brisson, illustrated by Laurie Caple. The story of a young girl, now living with her grandmother, who looks forward to visiting her imprisoned mother every Sunday. Prison is never mentioned; the focus lies on the emotional bond between the two. Publisher Boyds Mills Press, www.boydsmillspress.com , 2004, *Ages 4-8*
- **Mami, Que Es una Carcel?** By Jackie Stanglin and Cierra Jade McGuckie, *Ages 3 – 5*. One day after visiting with friends who have both devoted parents in the home, this little girl blurted out to her mother in frustration, "What is jail anyway, and why can't Daddy be home with us?" What Is Jail,

Mommy? not only explains why the parent is incarcerated but what his/her life is like as an inmate.

- **My Daddy is In Jail** by Janet Bender *Grades K-5th/ages 5-10.* "My Daddy is in Jail" is a long overdue resource for helping children cope with the incarceration of a loved one. It includes a read-aloud story, discussion guide, caregiver suggestions and optional small group counseling activities. Publisher: YouthLight, Inc. (November 2003)
- **My Mother and I Are Growing Stronger** by Inez Maury. New Seed Press, PO Box 9488, Berkeley, CA 947099,
- **My Mom Went to Jail** by Kathleen Hodgkins and Suzanne Bergen, Illustrated by Lori O'Brien. This book is designed to be read to a child by an adult. It is perfect for 6-10 year old children and the parent's crime is non descriptive in order to be applicable to a wider audience
- **Nine Candles** by Maria Testa *Grade 1-4th* Seven-year-old Raymond makes his weekly visit to his mother, who is in a correctional facility for stealing money from the restaurant where she used to work. Publisher- Carolrhoda Books Inc.; Library Binding edition (January 1996)
- **Our Mom's (Living With Incarcerated Parents)** by Q. Futrell, November 2015. Meet Michael, Paul, Jennifer and Anna! All children are different in many ways, but all have one thing in common, their moms are in prison. Parental Incarceration affects children in many ways. This book will serve as a conversation starter for such a sensitive issue that impact nearly 3 million children in the US.
- **Queenie Peavey** by Robert Burch *Ages 8-12.* Queenie Peavey, an unhappy eighth grader at the county high school in Cotton Junction, is continually plagued by a group of classmates because her father is in jail. Publisher- Thomas T. Beeler Publisher (June 2003)
- **Ruby on the Outside** by Nora Raleigh Baskin, Ages 6 – 9, June 2015. Eleven-year-old Ruby Danes is about to start middle school and only her aunt knows her deepest, darkest, most secret secret: her mother is in prison.
- **The Night Dad Went to Jail; What to Expect When Someone You Love Goes to Jail** by Melissa Higgins, Publisher: Picture Window Books (August 1, 2011),
- **THE PRISON ALPHABET** by Dr. Bahiyyah M. Muhammad and Muntaquim Muhammad. This book is divided into two sections. The first section is a coloring book and uses the letters of the alphabet to explain in a child-friendly manner what life is like inside a prison using terms associated with incarceration. The second section contains a discussion guide to help caretakers and counselors explain parental incarceration to a young child by providing sample responses to children's commonly asked questions about life inside prison.

- **The Same Stuff as Stars** by Katherine Paterson. *Grades 5-8th* Angel Morgan's family is falling apart. Her daddy is in jail, and her mother has abandoned Angel and her little brother, Bernie, at their great-grandmother's crumbling Vermont farmhouse. Publisher- HarperTrophy (April 13, 2004)
- **Two in Every Hundred: a special workbook for children with a parent in prison-** Reconciliation, 702 51st Avenue North, Nashville, TN 37209. A workbook for children with incarcerated parents.
- **Waiting for Daddy** by Jennie Lou Harriman and Kylie Ann Flye. This is a story about a young girl, who wants more than anything to be with her father, but can't because he is in prison. She discovers many ways to cope with her loss through creative expression, the natural world, and play. Based on a true story with photographs. Self-published. Visit www.artwithjennie.com
- **Welcome Home: Mommy Gets Out Today** by Jamantha Williams Watson, June 2015, *Ages 6 – 9*. When Bernice and her favorite cousin, Malaika meet Mother Olivia - Bernice's mother - for the first time; the girls share similar emotions while forcing themselves to understand society, familial and gender issues. This story aids youth who are experiencing the return of a parent who has been incarcerated.
- **WHAT DO I SAY ABOUT THAT?** By Julia Cook, MS; Illustrated by Anita Dufalla. Helps children explore and understand the many thoughts and feelings that come with a having a parent in prison. *For ages 8 and up.*
- **What is Jail, Mommy?** By Jackie A. Stanglin *Ages 4-8* This book was inspired by a much-loved five-year-old whose father has been incarcerated most of her life. One day after visiting with friends who have both devoted parents in the home, this little girl blurted out to her mother in frustration, "What is jail anyway, and why can't Daddy be home with us? Author firmly believes it is incumbent on each of us to provide age-appropriate facts to young inquiring minds so they avoid blaming themselves. Publisher: Lifestart Publishing, Inc. (October 30, 2006)
- **WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO ME? Every night, approximately three million children go to bed with a parent in prison or jail. Here are their thoughts and stories.** By Howard Zehr and Lorraine Stutzman Amstutz, portraits by Howard Zehr. True stories and photos of children who have a parent in prison or jail. Publisher Good Books, 2011.
- **When a Parent Goes to Jail: A Comprehensive Guide for Counseling Children of Incarcerated Parents** by Rebecca Yaffe and Lonnie Hoade, Rayve Productions Inc., 2000. Book for children that brings them step by step through the process of losing a parent to incarceration. It focuses on the emotions that

children can expect to feel. This book could be used with individuals or small groups of children in therapeutic settings.

- **When Andy's Father Went to Prison** by Martha Whitmore Hickman Ages 9-12 This book illustrates the experience of a young boy whose father went to prison, including his life at home and at school. Publisher: Albert Whitman Pub. Date: June 1990
- **When Dad Was Away** by Karin Littlewood, Ages 3 – 5, February 2013. When Mum tells Milly that Dad has been sent to prison, Milly feels angry and confused. She can't believe her dad won't be at home to read her stories and make her laugh. But soon Mum takes Milly and her brother Sam to visit Dad in prison, and a week later a special package arrives at home - a cd of Milly's favorite animal stories, read especially for her by Dad. At Christmas the family goes to a party at the prison, and in the spring there's an even better surprise for Milly and Sam...
- **When I Miss You** by Cornelia Maude Spelman. *Grade Level: P and up* Series: The Way I Feel Books, Young children often experience anxiety when they are separated from their mothers or fathers. In this story a young guinea pig expresses her distress when her mother and father go away. But she eventually finds ways to deal with it.
- **When I Visit My Daddy We Dance (A Visit With My Daddy Book 1)** by Josiah Webber and John Webber, February 2015, Ages 3 – 5. This is a book of hope and encouragement for children with parents that are incarcerated, guilty or innocent. The whole world may seem dysfunctional at times, so don't be surprised if it knocks at your door one day. Be prepared to endure and look to the future with hope, patience and love. You may even want to do a happy dance, every time you overcome an obstacle or receive an unexpected blessing.
- **Wish You Were Here: Teens Write About Parents in Prison** by Autumn Spanne and Nora McCarthy, Ages 14 – 18, April 2010. These stories describe how teens kept in touch with their parents (or didn't) and the complicated feelings that come with reunification.
- **Visiting Day** by Jacqueline Woodson, James Ransome Ages 4 - 8 A young girl and her grandmother make the long bus trip every month to visit the girl's father in prison. On the ride they share food and hope and give comfort to others who make the trip with them. Publisher: Scholastic Press; 1st edition (October 1, 2002)
- **Zachary's New Home: A Story for Foster and Adopted Children** by Geraldine M. Bloomquist, MSW, Paul B. Bloomquist (Magination Press). Children in foster care and adopted children usually suffer painful separations from their families for reasons they may not understand. This story, which explores their experiences, problems and emotions, can be a useful tool for understanding and

helping these children to cope with their many losses and to feel happier and more optimistic. *Ages 3 - 8.*