

Children, Youth & Family Consortium

CYFC Monthly

CYFC Monthly – October 2013

Beyond the bars: Why parental incarceration should matter to you

Judy Meyers, MS, RN — Children's Mental Health Coordinator

In America today, an estimated 1 in 28 children have a parent who is incarcerated — that means there are more children with an incarcerated parent in this country than children with a diagnosis of autism or juvenile diabetes. This is a staggering percentage and yet the topic of parental incarceration and its impact on children remains largely misunderstood and rarely discussed. In 2010, the Pew Charitable Trusts published a report that stated that 2.3 million people were in jail or prison and of that number, more than 50% were parents of children under the age of 18. Considering the sheer numbers of families dealing with this issue, it is likely that many of the children who cross the thresholds of schools, after-school programs, religious education settings, and/or counseling centers everyday are struggling with having a parent behind bars. These children may live next door, attend our schools, play with our children — they are everywhere. What do we need to know so these children's needs aren't ignored or forgotten?

CYFC is committed to bridging research and practice relative to this issue, and is presenting *Unbarred: Strengthening Families Affected by Incarceration*, an all-day conference on November 14, 2013. The audience for this includes those who work with children and families and those who are uncertain how this issue relates to their work. The conference will be held at the McNamara Alumni Center on the University of Minnesota campus and broadcast to sites throughout Minnesota (see our registration page for specific sites) as well as several national sites. Registration is limited at the Metro location so please register early.

[Dr. Rebecca Shlafer](#), University of Minnesota Department of Pediatrics researcher and educator, who is receiving national attention for her extensive research on parental incarceration and its impact on children and families, will present the keynote. Erica Gerrity, a psychotherapist and licensed clinical social worker, will discuss Isis Rising, the doula program she helped to establish at the Shakopee Women's Prison. Lori Lofrano, a social worker and the Child Support Liaison with the [Minnesota Department of Corrections](#), will talk about a program called Mind the Gap and the challenges and successes of transitioning to life after incarceration. Warden Eddie Miles, a passionate and responsive corrections officer, will talk about his experiences working with incarcerated individuals and the possibilities and opportunities for rehabilitation. Deborah Jiang Stein, author of *Even Tough Girls Wear Tutus* and *Prison Baby: A Memoir* will share her own story of being born in prison to an incarcerated mother and some of the subsequent traumas she experienced.

The afternoon begins with the documentary film [Mothers of Bedford](#). A variety of breakout sessions will follow the broadcast film: a conversation with the film director, Jen McShane and Mona, one of the featured mothers; a discussion with facilitator Lee Buckley, Re-entry Coordinator for the [Minnesota Department of Corrections](#), about prison visitation policies and how to promote safe and interactive visits; presentations from Daniel Marcou, Corrections Librarian, [Hennepin County Library](#), and Rebecca Shlafer about several programs designed specifically for children including the new [Sesame Street materials](#) and the [Hennepin](#)

[County Read to Me](#) programs; and, a discussion about parenting education programs within the prison system with Ebony Ruhland, Director of Research and Evaluation at the Council on Crime and Justice, and Mona, one of the mothers who helped to develop the parent program at Bedford Prison in New York state. Two of these breakout sessions (the film discussion and the session with presentations about the Sesame Street materials and Hennepin County library programs) will be broadcast to sites in Greater Minnesota and in several other regions of the country. Please view our [website](#) for more information about the full day of events.

This event promises to be an in-depth and moving look at how we as a society can better respond to and support families who are affected by incarceration. Please join us in person for this exciting, transformative day, and join in on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#). To read more about children of incarcerated parents, check out our latest eReview, [Children with Incarcerated Parents — Considering Children's Outcomes in the Context of Complex Family Experiences](#) and [let us know what you think](#).

Consortium News

Register now for Lessons from the Field!

Unbarred: Strengthening Families Affected by Incarceration

Date: November 14, 2013

Time: 9:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Location: McNamara Alumni Center and broadcast live to sites in Greater Minnesota (**Faribault just added!**)

How does incarceration affect the youth and families that you work with everyday?

Sara Langworthy will be writing for the [Extension Youth Development Insight](#) blog this Wednesday, October 16th, 2013. In her post, Sara will discuss how youth and families are affected by parental incarceration and address the lack of public attention paid to this important issue despite the huge numbers of children and families who are impacted by incarceration.

Public Engagement in Contemporary Higher Education

CYFC Director Cathy Jordan will speak at the College of Education and Human Development Department of Post Secondary Teaching & Learning's Engaging Pedagogies Colloquium on October 17, 2013. Dr. Jordan will draw on her experience to address why engagement matters, how it corresponds with the work of higher education, and what outcomes and challenges participants face. The 2013-2014 series theme is community engagement in higher education. The event will take place at 3:30 p.m. in 227 Burton Hall.

University & Community Announcements

Nature Play: Risk and Reward Workshop

November 1, 2013

8 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Fee: \$59 per person

Minnesota Landscape Arboretum, Chaska

Minnesota Children and Nature Connection

Natural playgrounds are designed to include streams, trees, rolling hills, and/or other natural features in which children can interact and play. Some agencies have embraced these designs, while others may have questions related to the liability associated with these types of play structures.

This workshop will provide information on natural playgrounds, their features, and play benefits. William Mitchell Public Health Law Center will also provide data that will address the liability questions agencies and risk managers may have regarding this topic. This topic is geared toward parks and recreation professionals, educators, risk managers, landscape architects, and those with an overall interest in nature play. Join us! Click here for more information and for the mail-in registration form, or register online. [links no longer active]

How to Handle a Mental Health Crisis: A Parent's Guide

Hennepin County Children's Mental Health Collaborative Parent Catalyst Leadership Group

Date: November 2, 2013

Time: 9:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Location: Eisenhower Community Center, Hopkins, MN

Cost: Free but registration is requested. [Email](#) to reserve your space

During this workshop, participants will hear from Steven Wickelgren, Minnesota Crisis Intervention Team Officer's Association, Jessica Kisling, LPCC, Jennifer Infanger, LICSW, and Susan O'Neill, NAMI Hennepin County. They will discuss how to recognize and de-escalate a crisis, when and where to call for help, effective ways to communicate with crisis responders, how to prevent future crises, and tips and strategies from other parents who have experienced a child's mental health crisis.

Our Children's Experience of Stress, for Better and Worse

[MomEnough Podcast](#)

When does stress become toxic and undermine our children's longterm health and well-being? And what does this research mean for us as parents? [Listen](#) to this discussion with Dr. Megan Gunnar from the University of Minnesota's Institute of Child Development.

Fall 2013 Request for Proposals and Letters of Interest

Healthy Foods, Healthy Lives Institute

The Healthy Foods, Healthy Lives (HFHL) Institute has issued a request for proposals and letters of interest for the Community-University Partnership Grant Program and for the Planning Grant Program (for University faculty research teams). The Community-University Partnership Grant Program looks to fund community-university partnerships related to food, nutrition and health. Projects should include participatory action research or other creative strategies for addressing community-identified problems by bringing together academic and community partners. View and download the RFP and the HFHL Proposal Routing Form. Proposals are due November 15, 2013. The Planning Grant Program is designed to fund the development of interdisciplinary University faculty research teams related to food, nutrition and health. The expected outcome of this award is that teams prepare and submit a grant proposal to one of the major HFHL grant programs or other equivalent sources. Proposals are due November 11, 2013. View and download the Request for Letters of Interest. [links no longer active]

CURA Spring 2014 Community Research Request for Proposals

The Center for Urban and Regional Affairs (CURA)

CURA is requesting proposals for the spring 2014 semester for its Community Based Research programs: the Kris Nelson Community Based Research Program (Nelson Program) and the Community Assistantship Program (CAP). CURA Community Based Research Programs provide applied research assistance to community-based groups. Students are selected by and report to the community organization. Proposals are due October 30, 2013.

Minnesota Association for Children's Mental Health Fall Trainings: Conference All Star Series

Minnesota Association for Children's Mental Health

October 16, 2013: [Self Regulation: The Role of Responsive Caregivers](#)

November 4, 2013: [Utilizing an Understanding of the Mind-Body Connection and Mindfulness Based Practices in Mental Health](#)

November 6, 2013: [A Resilience Model of Supervision and Ethics](#)

Saturday Scholars: Working In The Achievement Gap

University of Minnesota College of Education + Human Development (CEHD)

Date: November 2, 2013

Time: 8:00 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

Location: McNamara Alumni Center, University of Minnesota

Cost: \$15-\$30

CEHD faculty members will lead [sessions](#) exploring what's working to improve student outcomes.

Understanding the many factors that affect a child's ability to learn is crucial to ensuring that every child has the opportunity to succeed. Participants will have the opportunity to share ideas and hear how research and outreach uniquely position the college as a leader in the effort to reduce the achievement gap in Minnesota.

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