

BEYOND THE BARS

THE VOICES OF CHILDREN WITH INCARCERATED PARENTS

ISSUE 4: RESPECTING CHILDREN'S HUMAN RIGHTS

Our 2016 issue briefs have addressed the critical issues of Arrest, Visitation, and Schools. But these aspects must be considered in context. Decisions affecting children with incarcerated parents must respect children's rights. They must reflect our shared humanity, and our shared goal of a healthy, happy future for all children.

Children's rights stay when a parent is away!

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child says that:

- Governments must "respect the right of the child who is separated from one or both parents to maintain personal relations and direct contact with both parents on a regular basis, except if it is contrary to the child's best interests." (Art. 9)
- "The child, for the full and harmonious development of his or her personality, should grow up in a family environment, in an atmosphere of happiness, love and understanding." (Preamble)
- Governments must "take all appropriate measures to ensure that the child is protected against all forms of discrimination or punishment on the basis of the status, activities, expressed opinions, or beliefs of the child's parents, legal guardians, or family members." (Art. 2)
- "In all actions concerning children [...], the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration." (Art. 3)
- As far as possible, the child shall have "the right to know and be cared for by his or her parents." (Art. 7)

The United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child (9/30/11) declared that:

- Governments should "ensure that the rights of children with a parent in prison are taken into account from the moment of the [parent's] arrest and by all actors involved in the process and at all its stages, including law enforcement, prison service professionals, and the judiciary."
- Governments should "ensure that children [with incarcerated parents] are protected from stigmatisation. These children have themselves not come into conflict with the law. Every child has the right to be with their parent as well as the right to family life and a social environment conducive to their development."

Learn more... and join the movement!

- Celebrate Human Rights Day 2016 (12/10)!
<http://www.un.org/en/events/humanrightsday/>
- Share this brief using #HumanRightsDay, #StandUp4HumanRights, and #CTCIP! Tag @CTCIPInitiative!
- Check out the CIP Bill of Rights!
www.sfcipp.org



The **Connecticut Children with Incarcerated Parents (CTCIP) Initiative** improves the quality of supports for children with incarcerated parents by informing public policy and practice. These briefs highlight some key issues in the field.