



RESOURCES FOR EDUCATORS SUPPORTING CHILDREN WITH INCARCERATED PARENTS (CIP)

Why is This Important?

- 1 in 14 U.S. youth has experienced parental incarceration.
- Youth with incarcerated parents face 3x more adverse childhood experiences (ACEs).
 - The CDC defines ACEs as potentially traumatic events that occur during childhood.

Impact of Parental Incarceration

- Economic strain, disrupted households, shifts in parenting, and declining parental health.
- Greater challenges for children in schools in disadvantaged urban areas.
- Increased anxiety, uncertainty, and loneliness in children.
- Academic Struggles: absences, misplacement in special education, grade retention, disciplinary actions, low test scores, and lower graduation/college attendance rates.



C.A.R.E.S. Approach for Resilience:

Create a safe space for conversation.

Acknowledge and validate concerns.

Reassure children they are not alone.

Encourage play and skill-building

Share age-appropriate information.

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Tips for Supporting Children with Incarcerated Parents

- Recognize parental incarceration as common and work to reduce stigma.
- Avoid singling out, judging, labeling, or blaming affected children.
- Refrain from making negative remarks about individuals in the criminal justice system.
- Provide CIP with resources like age-appropriate books and pamphlets on parental incarceration.
- Collaborate with mental health professionals to support students emotionally and connect them to additional resources.
- Use humanizing language to foster empathy and reduce stigma.
- Be mindful of trauma triggers, such as Mother's Day, and ensure students receive support rather than shame.

Supporting Positive Outcomes for CIP

- Collaborate with the child's caregiver to foster a supportive school environment.
- Help CIP reach their potential through academic and behavioral supports, self-regulation strategies, and high expectations.
- Recognize trauma-related behaviors and address areas of vulnerability.
- Advocate for CIP and educate colleagues on their unique needs.
- Engage with incarcerated parents, when possible.

Questions
or
Comments?

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