

Enhancing Community Health by Breaking the Cycle of Generational Incarceration

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PRESENTATION FORMAT: 15 minute oral presentation

TOPIC/TARGET AUDIENCE: Public Health professionals interested in incarcerated individuals, mental health, individual and social health determinants, social justice, incarcerated populations, families of incarcerated individuals.

ABSTRACT: The majority of men and women prison inmates are parents, many of whom lived with their children prior to incarceration. Most of these parents have some contact with their children and families while serving their sentences.

This presentation is based on research that utilized a randomized controlled trial of a parenting program designed for incarcerated parents that was conducted in Oregon prisons from 2003--2008. Results suggested that incarcerated fathers had a 23% higher predicted probability of completing the parenting program as the number of contacts with their child's caregiver increased, whereas incarcerated mothers had a 14% higher predicted probability of completing the parenting program as the number of contacts with their child increased.

Because of the explosive growth in the U.S. prison population, there has been renewed and vigorous interest from fields including public health, sociology, epidemiology, criminology, and social work, for finding ways to not only reduce recidivism, but also prevent incarceration in the first place, particularly among children with an incarcerated parent. The data set for the study, The Parent Child Study (Eddy, et al., 2008) is unique among studies of this population and the findings have important implications for policy makers, practitioners, and researchers.

OBJECTIVE(S): Participants will learn the current state of affairs regarding programs for incarcerated populations.

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