# Federal Probation







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## This Issue in Brief

***Estimates of Drug Use in Intensive Supervision Probationers: Results from a Pilot Study.***—Authors Eric D. Wish, Mary Cuadrado, and John A. Martorana present findings from a pilot study of drug use in probationers in the New York City Intensive Supervision Probation (ISP) Program, a study prompted by ISP staff need for on-site urine testing of ISP probationers. Confidential research interviews were conducted with 106 probationers in the Brooklyn ISP program, 71 percent of whom provided a urine specimen for analysis. The urine tests indicated a level of drug use strikingly higher than the level estimated by probation officers, who depended upon the probationers to tell them about their drug use. The authors contend that the costs of reincarcering drug abusers who fail probation are substantial when compared with the costs of a urine testing program. They conclude that ISP programs, with their small caseloads and emphasis on community supervision, provide a special opportunity for adopting systematic urine testing and for learning how best to intervene with drug abusing offenders.

***Felony Probation and Recidivism: Replication and Response.***—As a result of the Rand report on felony probation in California, probation supervision is attracting close attention. In the present study, author Gennaro F. Vito examines the recidivism rates of 317 felony probationers from three judicial districts in Kentucky and makes some direct comparisons to the Rand report. The general conclusion that felony probation supervision appears to be relatively effective in controlling recidivism rates is tempered by the limitations of both studies. The author stresses the need to closely examine the purpose and goals of probation supervision.

CONTENTS

# Addressing the Social Needs of Families of Prisoners: A Tool for Inmate Rehabilitation

BY JAMES D. JORGENSEN, A.C.S.W., SANTOS H. HERNANDEZ, PH.D., AND ROBERT C. WARREN, PH.D.*

FOR INCREASING numbers of offenders, incarceration is becoming a fact of life. In 1984, a record number of over 464,000 inmates were housed in state and Federal prisons: a 6.1 percent increase over the previous year and a 40 percent increase since 1980.[1] Nationally, the rate of incarceration now stands at 188 per 100,000 population, as high as it has ever been.[2] This rate is exceeded only by those of South Africa and the Soviet Union.[3]

Several factors account for these rising figures. Mandatory and lengthier sentences, reflecting a hardening of public attitudes, discourage and in fact prevent the granting of probation for many offenses, while they severely restrict the power of parole boards. In spite of the United States' leadership of the Western World in its inclination to punish by imprisonment, "soft headed" judges are under mounting pressure to get tough with offenders through the imposition of even lengthier sentences. One wonders just how much tougher we must become before we finally see the positive results intended by social controls imposed in this way.

If we should become no tougher and imprison offenders at the present rate, our state and Federal prisons will house a population of nearly two-thirds of a million people within the next 4 years. However, if the congress and state legislatures respond positively to public demands for stiffer punishment (the more likely scenario), the prospect is an even larger prison population.

The figures presented here are directly related to the subject at hand: social needs of *families* of prisoners. For in the wake of these impersonal numbers are families—inmates' families—tempting as it might be to ignore or forget them. As the number of prisoners increases, it is inescapable that the number of family members affected will also grow. For most inmates who face a prison term, their families will also begin a sentence: of physical, social, and psychological hardship. They will do so, in most instances, with a minimum of resources to draw upon and with little power to meet the additional demands on their trouble-plagued lives.

Who are these 464,000 people who have offended society to such a degree as to warrant the drastic measure of incarceration? Their demographies shed considerable light on the families they leave behind.

First of all they are young. Crime has been and continues to be a young person's occupation. Nearly two out of three inmates are under 30 years of age. If crime is a young person's pursuit, it is also overwhelmingly the business of males. Although the number of women behind bars grew 8.9 percent from 1983 to 1984, they still represent a mere 4.5 percent of the total incarcerated population.[4] At that, female inmates present a unique set of problems which will be discussed later in this article. Over half of all inmates are ethnic minorities, a reflection of higher conviction rates for minority offenders.

The nation's prison population is also poorly educated. Fifty-eight percent have less than a high school education. Not surprisingly, they are thus often unemployed, unemployable, and underemployed. Nearly 30 percent were unemployed prior to their arrest, while another 10 percent worked part-time. The consequence of this unemployment rate is poverty. Over 22 percent were without income prior to their arrest, while 49 percent earned less than $10,000 per year.

The figures indicate that a sizeable number of the families of inmates, economically at risk prior to the incarceration of their family members, are even more at risk during the post-incarceration period, although as we shall see, this is not always the case. From the standpoint of income, a small minority of families actually fare better when the breadwinner is imprisoned.[5]

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[1] U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, *Prisoners in 1984* (Washington. D.C., Government Printing Office, April 1985), p. 1.

[2] Op. cit., p. 2.

[3] "A Perspective on Crime and Imprisonment," National Moratorium on Prison Construction (Washington, D.C.), November 1975.

[4] U.S. Department of Justice, op. cit., p. 4.

[5] Donald P. Schneller, *The Prisoner's Family: A Study of the Effects of Imprisonment on the Families of Prisoners*, San Francisco, California: R. & E. Research Associates, 1976, p. 60.

Approximately half the men in Federal, state, and local jails are either married, widowed, or divorced. Schneller reported the percentage of married inmates in his study to be 45 percent.[6] Attachment to a family is critical to the positive outcome of the correctional process. A positive relationship exists between the maintenance of strong family ties while in prison and parole success.[7] Thus, society benefits from the protection of family life, not just for its own sake, but in terms of families of inmates, whose success is strongly linked to lower future recidivism on the part of their imprisoned family members. For that reason alone, corrections would seem to have some investment in and responsibility toward these families.

While this article is concerned with the social needs of families of prisoners, the term "social" is employed in its most generic context. Thus our concern encompasses the more obvious social problems that families of inmates present as well as the interrelated economic, environmental, and psychological aspects of their lives. The discussion is organized around the following questions:

(1) *What social changes occur in families as a result of imprisonment of a parent?*

(2) *What economic changes occur in families as a result of imprisonment of a parent?*

(3) *What behavioral changes occur in families as a result of imprisonment of a parent?*

(4) *What special problems are created in families when the incarcerated member is a woman?*

(5) *How is society responding to the problem of families of prisoners?*

### *Social Changes*

Perhaps most unsettling to the inmate's family is the crisis of information that accompanies imprisonment. From the point of arrest and arraignment through sentencing, institutionalization, and, finally, pre-release and parole, families experience a consummate lack of accurate information accompanied by a plethora of information that is confusing and, in some cases, unintelligible.

Beyond the need to decipher legalese, a common enough obstacle for English-speaking people, is the problem of the language itself for the non-English speaking individual. Lacking interpretation or language facility, one often doesn't know what questions to ask—if able to question at all. Even when questions are formulated, who has the answers to such common queries as: When can we visit? Who is his lawyer? What is a public defender? How do we reach the prison where he's located? What are the visiting regulations? What is parole? These concerns speak to the need for more agencies devoted to the dispensation of such information as is provided now in some communities by Justice Information Centers.

Assuming that information is forthcoming and the family is aware of what's happening, other problems now must be faced. As usual, children must be cared for and the missing parent's incarceration explained to them, often within an environment where they are being taunted by other children. The element of familial rejection makes its entrance as in-laws blame the spouse for the offender's problems and the spouse's parents encourage divorce. In the midst of all this, the inmate may still be attempting to continue the role of head of the family *in absentia*, while losing touch with day-to-day realities as visitations to distant prisons become a prohibitive luxury for the family. As the visits occur less frequently, the inmate becomes more prisonized.[9]

The adage, "you can't get there from here," aptly describes the location of many prisons, even the newer ones. Nagel, in surveying the construction of new prisons, learned that the average distance to the nearest large city—in most cases, the city where the inmate's family resides—is 172 miles. Public transportation to remote distances is often nonexistent, forcing visitors to rely on rides from other inmates' spouses or, if available, transportation provided by a human service agency.[10]

One of the phenomena observed in children of the incarcerated parent is a decline in school performance. Friedman and Esselstyn's study reporting these findings, while criticized because the children in this study weren't pre-tested, points to the assumption that girls suffer more than boys in this regard.[11] It is generally accepted that children from broken homes are more vulnerable to delinquency,[12] and in the authors' view, it would seem to be the better part of public policy for courts to consider, as one factor, the impact of incarceration on children left behind.

One study of families of imprisoned parents noted that the children in these families missed their parents and, not surprisingly, longed for their return. The children were observed to be more aggressive toward each other, less obedient, and more antisocial. The authors concurred with Friedman and Esselstyn's findings that school performance of these

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[6] Ibid.

[7] Norman Holt and Donald Miller, *Explorations in Inmate Family Relationships* (California Department of Corrections), 1972.

[8] Judith F. Weintraub, "The Delivery of Services to Families of Prisoners," *Federal Probation*, Vol. 40, No. 4, December 1976, pp. 28-32.

[9] Mary C. Schwartz and Judith F. Weintraub, "The Prisoner's Wife: A Study in Crisis," *Federal Probation*, Vol. 38, No. 4, December 1974, pp. 20-27.

[10] *The New Red Barn: A Critical Look at the Modern American Prison* (Published for the American Foundation, Inc., Institute of Corrections, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania). New York: Walker and Company, 1973.

[11] S. Friedman and T. C. Esselstyn, "Adjustment of Children to Jail Inmates," *Federal Probation*, December 1965, pp. 55-59.

[12] H. Weeks, "Male and Female Broken Home Rates by Types of Delinquency," *American Sociological Review*, August 1940, pp. 601-609.

children suffered while their attendance rates declined.[13]

In the above study, 17 of 31 families moved to a new location. The likelihood that the family will move shortly after the parent is sent to prison has the effect of leaving the remaining spouse further cut off from important social support systems. It is not particularly surprising that, within the first years of imprisonment, visiting declines in most cases, and divorce occurs in about a third of the marriages interrupted by incarceration.[14] One of the more severe problems occasioned by the absence of an imprisoned spouse is loneliness and emotional deprivation.[15]

### *Economic Changes*

The economics of incarceration are staggering. Depending upon the type of institution and region of the country where the inmate is confined, cost estimates range from $8,000 to $50,000 per year per inmate.[16] These costs in no way measure the related expenses which must also be borne by society in terms of financial assistance and other social and psychological services provided to families of inmates as a result of family breakup.

Imprisonment of the family provider has the effect of forcing dependents to rely financially on extended family, if available, or public assistance. Schneller noted that 60 percent of the families in his study reported reduced incomes following the incarceration of the breadwinner. It should be explained, however, that over 21 percent of the families reported a higher income as a result of the incarceration, a statement reflecting the economic marginality of these family units.[17]

Morris determined that over 78 percent of the wives of prisoners in Great Britain became dependent upon public assistance as a result of incarceration. Aside from housing, finances presented the most serious of the problems stemming from imprisonment.[18] Nearly half of the families of incarcerated women studied by Zalba required public financial aid, although this percentage was nearly as high prior to incarceration, indicating that female inmates' families were more likely to be economically at risk prior to, as well as after, incarceration.[19]

Generally it can be stated that the quality of life suffers for families of prisoners. Schneller revealed that over one in four of the families of his study experienced a post-imprisonment decline in the quality of their diet, and over half indicated they wore clothing of a poor quality.[20] Housing was reported as the most serious problem faced by the families in Morris' study. Over 28 percent of the families reported deterioration in this aspect of their lives.[21]

Imprisonment has been described by Hill as a "double crisis," that of "demoralization and dismemberment."[22] Schwartz and Weintraub view the crisis as an extended period between arrest and sentencing, where there is considerable upheaval over possible job loss, expenses for attorneys and bail, as well as the pressure of unpaid bills[23] It is, of course, the inmate's spouse who must ultimately face the creditors.

### *Behavioral Changes*

One subtle change that necessarily occurs during imprisonment is the replacement of the former head of household by the remaining parent. This creates an issue when the inmate insists on being involved in day-to-day decisions through correspondence or visits, only to be frustrated when he is unable to do so. It is further complicated when the inmate returns home to face strain and conflict as the decisionmaking role that goes with being head of household is either reoccupied or abandoned.

Regardless of the frequency of family visits (which should obviously be encouraged) and the conditions under which such visits are held (they could certainly be humanized), family visits are in fact quite artificial. They are closely monitored as a rule and lack the privacy in which family issues might be resolved. It is difficult to normalize family life when one of its members is incapacitated.

There is also the matter of how to interpret the parent's absence to his or her children. This explanation also falls on the at-home parent. Sack reports that this task is often avoided or, if handled at all, with some degree of deception, an indication that confronting this reality is painful[24] This pain is certainly not without basis, for to explain to children the true circumstances of a parent's imprisonment is to expose them to the insecurity surrounding the knowledge that that parent is helpless and impotent. For minority children, already questioning their self-image, this can be particularly devastating.[25]

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[13] William H. Sack, Jack Seidler, and Susan Thomas, "The Children of Imprisoned Parents: A Psychosocial Exploration," *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, October 1976, pp. 618-627.

[14] Op. cit., p. 626.

[15] Schneller, op. cit., p. 66.

[16] Samuel Walker, *Sense and Esnesnon about Crime* (Monterey, California: Brooks Cole Publishing Co., 1985), p. 60.

[17] Schneller, op. cit., p. 60.

[18] Pauline Morris, *Prisoners and their Families* (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1965), p. 80.

[19] Serapio R. Zalba, *Women Prisoners and their Families* (Los Angeles: Delmar Publishing Co., Inc., 1964), p. 118.

[20] Schneller, op. cit., p. 215.

[21] Morris, op. cit., p. 215.

[22] Reuben Hill, "Generic Features of Families under Stress," *Crisis Intervention*, Howard Parad (Ed.) (Family Service Association of America, 1965), p. 38.

[23] Schwartz and Weintraub, op. cit., p. 21.

[24] Sack, Seidler, and Thomas, op. cit., p. 621.

[25] Lennox Hindt, "Impact of Incarceration on Low-Income Families," *Journal of Offender Counseling Services and Rehabilitation*, Vol. 5, Nos. 3 and 4, Spring/Summer, 1981, pp. 8-9.

In a study of wives of inmates of the Kansas State Industrial Reformatory, Daniel and Barrett utilized an adaptation of the Burgess-Cotrell Marital Adjustment Scale. They asked women how often they missed 13 things which typify marital adjustment since their husbands' incarceration. Companionship, mutual understanding, fighting and making up, confidence, love, sharing the interest of the children, and a good sexual relationship emerged as the more important needs most likely to be unfulfilled. Their study also supported other studies in reporting the need for: (1) information about their husbands, (2) money, (3) other material needs, i.e. housing, clothing, and food, and (4) someone to talk to.[26]

Imprisonment has often been compared to death. Like death, it brings about a need for a period of mourning and grieving.[27] Thus the wife left behind is overrun by conflicting feelings of guilt, anger at spouse as well as self, and an overpowering sense of loss. Daniel and Barrett explored the degree to which prisoners' wives experienced 12 typical symptoms of grief, namely depression, jumpiness, fitful sleep, difficulty falling asleep, waking not rested, boredom, rapid mood fluctuations, headaches, feeling life is meaningless, poor digestion, shortness of breath, and accident-proneness. Nine out of 10 subjects reported that they experienced five or more of these symptoms regularly (sometimes, frequently, or always).[28]

Children separated from parents due to imprisonment present unique behavioral problems. While it is difficult to determine how many children are affected by this type of crisis, one report showed that in Oregon, 774 men newly imprisoned for felonies left behind a total of 988 children.[29]

Sack, in a study of six families of imprisoned fathers, reports that the children of families where divorce was pending were the most disturbed. In each family, however, he found behavior ranging from stealing, truancy, running away, breaking and entering, school failure, wetting and soiling, and fighting.[30] It would appear that children, as well as the remaining parent, react to the sudden absence of a parent in problematic ways.

### *Families of Incarcerated Women*

Although, as noted earlier, women do not constitute a large segment of the prison population, their incarceration does present unique problems to their families. An accurate figure of the percentage of female prisoners who have children cannot be reported, although estimates range from 42 percent to 80 percent.[31] Zalba's study of female inmates in the California penal system revealed that 520 incarcerated mothers had a total of 1,200 minor children.[32] In a society where the primary caregiver is the mother, her absence is a severe blow to children, often relegating them to the care of relatives or foster parents.

In some jurisdictions, correctional authorities encourage female inmates to relinquish their rights to their children. In others, the parent's rights may be legally terminated if the reason for imprisonment is adultery, child abuse, or non-support. In short, imprisonment can cause a mother to be considered an unfit parent, even though her questionable behavior is in the past and is not necessarily a predictor of future behavior.[33] In reality, imprisonment and unfitness to be a parent are not mutually exclusive, and the right to assume or resume parenthood on the part of the mother needs to be protected fully as much as the child's right to protection.

As an inmate population, women have generally experienced considerable disorganization in their lives prior to their incarceration. Zalba reports that a high proportion of these inmates had backgrounds including narcotics use, problem drinking, prostitution, suicide, and psychiatric problems accompanied by lengthy arrest records for other illegal behavior.[34] They came from unstable families, were often single parents, poor, and to a large degree questioned their own ability to care for their children.

### *Responding to the Problem: The State of the Art*

It would be easy enough to dismiss current efforts to assist families of inmates as "too little too late" or as "do-gooder" projects. Even if that were true, we can only suggest that doing good and doing little are better than doing nothing. Several of these programs, both within and outside of prison, merit further attention. Some of them are briefly described here.

### *Programs Within Prison*

*Experimental Marital Workshop.* Conducted by two mental health social workers at the Kansas State Penitentiary, this workshop involved selected inmates and their wives in an educational experience where they examined their relationships and formulated plans to improve communication. New behaviors, such as assertiveness and stress management, were taught.[35]

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[26] Sally W. Daniel and Carol J. Barrett, "The Needs of Prisoners' Wives: A Challenge for the Mental Health Professionals," *Community Mental Health Journal*, Vol. 7(4), Winter, 1981, pp. 310-322.

[27] Schwartz and Weintraub, op. cit., p. 25.

[28] Daniel and Barrett, op. cit., pp. 316-317.

[29] William H. Sack, "Children of Imprisoned Fathers," *Psychiatry*, Vol. 40, May 1977, p. 164.

[30] Op. cit., pp. 164-167.

[31] Lynn Sametz, "Children of Incarcerated Women," *Social Work*, Vol. 25, No. 4, July 1980, p. 298.

[32] Zalba, op. cit., p. 115.

[33] Sametz, op. cit., p. 300.

[34] Zalba, op. cit., p. 116.

[35] David Showalter and Charlotte Williams Jones, "Marital and Family Counseling in Prisons," *Social Work*, May 1980, pp. 224-228.

*Family Service Program—Idaho State Correctional Institution.* This program featured a child development classroom within the prison as well as a parent training class. Parents were taught, through active learning, to communicate more effectively with their children, while the children were taught how to interact in more positive ways. The results were promising in that parents who completed the program acquired better communication skills and became more adept at handling child behavior problems.[36]

*Family Education Center—Washington State Reformatory.* Featuring a weekly parent education class for inmates, a couples class for inmates and their wives, and a children's preschool, this program utilized volunteer inmates in the operation. The program provided inmates with opportunities for community college credit.[37]

### *Programs Outside Prison*

*Women in Crisis.* This program involved volunteers trained for a role in helping prisoners' families throughout the crises of imprisonment, including sentencing, the first visit, and the adjustment period of the husband's imprisonment, a period of 6 to 8 weeks. The program also sponsored personal growth classes for family members of offenders.[38]

*Friends Outside.* This is a California volunteer organization which served prisoners through 18 chapters, both in jails and prisons. It focused on keeping families of inmates together through providing transportation and other services. It distinguished itself in the manner in which it was accepted by correctional officials.[39]

### *Responding to the Problem: Future Directions*

The questions that naturally follow from our discussion are, what should be done and who should do it? Homer raises the question in the following excerpt:

> Why should criminal justice personnel concern themselves with the families of prisoners? While we can muster verbal sympathy with them as the "second victims of crime," the number and complexity of problems inherent and germane to our criminal justice system already appear overwhelming and insoluble. Why not let the social workers concern themselves with the prisoner's family?[40]

In all likelihood, most correctional administrators ask the same question as Homer. Indeed, where are the resources to work with families of inmates when the resources to develop programs for inmates themselves are in such short supply? Our response would be that the most important program for a sizeable portion of inmates would be a program aimed at their families. The family, as strongly linked as it is to parole success, should not be passed off to other social service professionals or to volunteers. Much that needs to be done and can be done should be initiated by the criminal justice system itself with appropriate auxiliary support from outside resources.

Some steps could be taken that would not be all that costly. One simple procedure could significantly reduce the effects of the information crisis, for example. Courts, probation departments, jails, prisons, and parole departments could develop bilingual printed material to define terms and to answer routine questions about visiting hours, general rules and regulations, transportation, and mail and telephone procedures. This alone would go a long way towards humanizing the process.

Beyond that, prisons could certainly justify and utilize an Office of Family Relations, through which family matters could be addressed. Confronting such critical problems as transportation, visiting, and other forms of communication between inmates and their families often makes the difference between maintaining contact and losing interest. This difference is an important one, often determining whether an inmate gives up on life outside, only to become a disciplinary or management problem inside, or continues to identify with the world outside the walls to which he will eventually return. In a circular way, this internal decision can become a factor in whether the family disintegrates or remains intact.

But a family relations office could do even more. By providing counseling for couples and families, making referrals to social services, mental health providers, and other community resources, the prison could become allied with the inmate's family and go a long way toward changing the adversarial nature of the relationship that now exists between the institution and the inmate's family.

The issue of visiting is yet another barrier to be overcome. The National Advisory Commission on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals urged prison officials to take a more proactive stance in encouraging family visits in prisons.[41] Although progress has been made in this regard over the past two decades, many institutions have made little or no progress in either the frequency or flexibility of the visits.[42]

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[36] Robert L. Marsh, "Services for Families: A Model Project to Provide Services for Families of Prisoners," *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology*, Vol. 27, No. 2, 1983.

[37] Helen L. Taylor and Barbara Durr, "Pre-School in Prison," *Young Children*, September 1977, pp. 27-32.

[38] Susan H. Fishman and Albert S. Alissi, "Strengthening Families as Natural Support Systems for Offenders," *Federal Probation*, Vol. 43, No. 3, September 1979, pp. 16-21.

[39] Ed Kiersh, "The Importance of Having Friends Outside," *Corrections Magazine*, Vol. 5, No. 3, September 1979, pp. 39-42.

[40] Eva Lee Homer, "Inmate Family Ties: Desirable but Difficult," *Federal Probation*, Vol. 43, No. 1, March 1979, p. 47.

[41] National Advisory Commission on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals, *Corrections*, Washington, D.C., U. S. Government Printing Office, 1973.

[42] N. E. Schafer, "Prison Visiting: A Background for Change," *Federal Probation*, Vol. 32, No. 3, September 1978. pp. 47-50.

How visits shall be managed is another issue which can only be addressed by prisons themselves. Conjugal visits have been discussed at length for some time and appear to have wide support in principle; however, in practice, they have not been implemented to any meaningful degree, except perhaps in the states of California and Mississippi. While legislatures continue to debate the morality of conjugal visits, sexuality remains a fact of life inside the walls as well as out. For those inside, sexual releases will be found, even if they are illegitimate and violent, but they are no substitute for more normalized sexual outlets that could be provided through conjugal visits or furloughs.

Mention has been made in this article of the distance problems which must be conquered if families are to meet regularly with inmates. The cost of bus tickets, meals, hotel rooms in some cases, and babysitters in others, associated with traveling to and from a prison, is prohibitive for a family living on or below the poverty line. We are convinced that prisons, even though unable to publicly finance transportation, could, through an Office of Family Relations, take initiatives to solicit monies from private sources or orchestrate car pools. For many families, such assistance could be the pivotal point of family stability.

There is little question that prisons could do much more to facilitate the parenting skills of inmates. It has been proposed that prison reforms for women be initiated to provide for a delivery room and nursery within the prison, so that mothers can give birth to and care for their infants in prison.[43] Keve proposes that a halfway house arrangement be developed to provide a means of programming for many female inmates and their young children.[44] For those women who intend to return to their children upon release, as the greatest share of them do,[45] it makes sense to prepare them for this event by training them to provide quality child care.

Beyond the prison environment is the question of how community resources can be mobilized on behalf of prisoners' families. Scott proposes that community centers be utilized as natural service outlets for families of offenders.[46] While this may be a good setting for families of offenders who have not reached prison, we believe that the above-described Office of Family Relations within the prison, where the inmate and family meet, would be in the best position to relate to the needs of families, make referrals to community agencies, and monitor the families' progress in negotiating the social service network.

Since children are prime sufferers in the phenomenon of separation from their parents, prison-sponsored Family Relations Offices would be in an ideal position to refer children to school social workers, child guidance clinics, health stations, and mental health centers. Such offices would also be strategic in referring spouses to social service and mental health agencies. Nash proposes that working with families of inmates requires that the family be challenged with tasks of growth as well as mere survival. In order to facilitate this, he stresses that mental health workers employ both micro and macro interventions.[47]

In the latter context, it should be pointed out that inmates' families are logical candidates for self-help groups and other mutual aid networks. In fact, they already appear to be utilizing this type of service on an informal basis. If mental health workers intend to reach these families, their service delivery approach must be comprised of more than just psychotherapy, an intervention many of them consider irrelevant. They will have to become enablers, brokers, mediators, advocates, and guardians.

### *Conclusions*

In assisting families of inmates, we are dealing with severely disjointed, weakened, often demoralized family units, in which the incarceration of a family member is the culminating event in a long history of adversity. Efforts to help them maintain their familial boundaries will recognize their need to overcome the crisis of a death-like loss: incarceration.

Although—and perhaps because—their present problems are formidable, these families warrant greater attention from those of us who work in corrections and human services, because the resolution of those problems offer the prospect of salvaged families, the possible bonus of inmates turned away from further crime, and correctional programs with peripheral vision—that see inmates in the context of family, community, and society as a whole.

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[43] Sametz, op. cit., p. 30.

[44] Paul Keve, *Prison Life and Human Worth* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press), 1974.

[45] Ann M. Stanton, *When Mothers Go to Jail* (Lexington, Massachusetts: Lexington Books, 1980, p. 111.

[46] Janet Scott, "The Forgotten Family," *Journal of Offende.· Counseling,* April 1983, pp. 34-39.

[47] Kermit B. Nash, "Family Interventions: Implications for Corrections" (Keynote Address presented at the Joint Meeting of the 110th Annual Meeting of the American Association of Mental Health Professionals in Corrections), August 17-21, San Diego, California.