



***Family Relations: Interdisciplinary Journal of Family Studies***

**Children with an Incarcerated Mom at Greatest Risk, Study Finds** *Study Examines Impact of Maternal, Paternal Incarceration*

**Williamsburg, Va. – December 10, 2007** - A new study published in *Family Relations* finds that adult children with a mother in prison are 2.5 times more likely to be jailed than those with incarcerated fathers. In particular, adult children of drug-using mothers in prison appear to be especially at risk of incarceration.

Mothers in prison are also more likely to have other family members in jail than are fathers, and their minor children are significantly more likely to be in foster care or in orphanages.

It is estimated that one-in-forty American children has a parent in prison. Contextual risks factors, such as ethnicity and large family size are also found to increase the chances of adult children of imprisoned parents being incarcerated. Having both parents in jail is found to predict an even higher likelihood of adult child imprisonment.

The study suggests that understanding the increased risk of imprisonment facing children with a mother in prison could lead to meaningful interventions. “These interventions need to include services for the incarcerated parent, their children as well as the caregiver. Skills training in parenting education, drug rehabilitation and job training could benefit the family, as could teaching children effective, developmentally appropriate coping strategies,” says study author Danielle H. Dallaire.

**This study is published in the December issue of *Family Relations*. Media wishing to receive a PDF of this article may contact [journalnews@bos.blackwellpublishing.net](mailto:journalnews@bos.blackwellpublishing.net).** Danielle H. Dallaire, Ph.D., is an Assistant Professor of Psychology at The College of William & Mary. She can be reached for questions at [dallaire@wm.edu](mailto:dallaire@wm.edu).



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