

The Effects of Paternal Incarceration on Children

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When I think about the more than two million American [children](#) who have a parent behind bars, I wonder what kind of profound emotional impact that has on these children. Fathers account for 90% of incarcerated parents. Needless to say, millions of children are growing up in this country without fathers.

Although many fathers lose contact with their children when they are incarcerated, they can seek an experienced [family law](#) attorney when they leave prison to strategize a plan of reunification with their children to meet their best interest, and seek legal custody and visitation rights in court.

The impact of parental incarceration can be devastating for children and can put them at-risk for anti-social and delinquent behavior.

The effect of [father absence](#) may include negative school-related outcomes, increased stress and anxiety on children.

There is also a degree of humiliation related to the incarceration of a parent that children must deal with, along with the economic effects resulting from the loss of income from the incarcerated parent.

We should all advocate for appropriate child-parent visitation by educating service providers and incarcerated fathers about their rights, responsibilities and options for maintaining contact with their children during and after incarceration.

Incarcerated fathers have an immense responsibility to their children. Let's provide them with the opportunities and resources they need to fulfill this responsibility.

Children have a right to be heard and cared for while their parents are in prison, and their safety and well-being must be provided for regardless of where their parents are.

"...the hole a man leaves when he abandons his responsibility to his children is one that no government can fill."

President Obama

Jeffery Leving

National Fathers' Rights Examiner



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