

## REFORM THE PRISON NOW, CURE-NIGERIA TELLS GOVERNMENT



Mr. Sylvester Uhaa, the Executive Director of CURE-Nigeria, has called on the Federal Government to take urgent steps to reform the justice and prison systems now, as well as reduce the number of women that are sentenced to prison, particularly nursing mothers and pregnant women.

He made this call on Saturday on Gender Agenda, an AIT program dedicated to advancing the rights and welfare of women in Nigeria. While answering questions, Mr. Uhaa maintained that the justice and prisons systems in Nigeria were in need of urgent reforms, stressing that a justice system that sends everyone to prison, including those who commit minor offences, is dangerous to the inmates, their families and society at large, and called for the use of alternatives to

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## TOP 10 WORST PRISONS IN NIGERIA



If you are reading this article you are probably a free man, woman, youth or child. You're also probably reading this from the comfort of your bedroom, sitting room, office or somewhere comfortable with little or no idea of what a prison looks like.

You are indeed lucky to be a free person. I say lucky because not all the people in prison are responsible for the crimes they were accused of...they were just found guilty. The last place

you would ever want to be boxed in, is a Nigerian prison. Let's enlighten you a little about Nigerian prisons.

Many prisons in Nigeria are worse than tombs! Think about it for a second, if a government is struggling to pay salaries, build roads, equip hospitals and renovate schools etc. What do you think that State's prison would look like?

You need to go to Nigerian prisons....as a visitor... to get a proper understanding of what we mean. As bad as the majority of prisons are in Nigeria, some are worse.

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## PRISONERS AND FAMILIES: PARENTING ISSUES DURING INCARCERATION

*From Prison to Home: The Effect of Incarceration and Reentry on Children, Families, and Communities.*

Prisoners and Families: Parenting Issues During Incarceration

The preservation and strengthening of families has a longstanding history as a United States public policy priority and as a major objective of governmental agencies and not for profit service organizations. Social welfare policies and programs that help families protect, nurture and care for their children and adult family members are recognized by the nation's political leaders as a social investment and many formal and informal efforts are directed toward that end. Notwithstanding the millions of families affected by incarceration on any given day, the wellbeing of prisoners families and children has not been an important part of this social policy agenda.

Similarly, services and activities that assist prisoners in carrying out family roles and responsibilities have seldom been included in the strategic plans of social services agencies or corrections departments.

Several recent developments are challenging the historical treatment of prisoners' families in public policy discourse and decision making. Among these factors are a United States correctional population numbering over two million and growing, unprecedented increases in the number of women prisoners, disproportionate numbers of imprisoned African American males, high recidivism rates, and the community reentry of hundreds of thousands of prisoners annually. Also relevant are efforts to

address the tremendous cost of maintaining large numbers of children in foster care placements and of providing welfare assistance to poor women and children. These pressing issues have led politicians and social scientists alike to examine more closely the consequences of the nation's war on drugs and, in so doing, to discover that incarceration has an impact that extends far beyond the men and women who are imprisoned. Consequently, questions are now being raised about the impact of imprisonment on children and families and the extent to which prisoners' families might be resources and assets, rather than liabilities, in promoting safer, resourceful communities. Recognition that the majority of women and men in prison are parents

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'CRUEL,  
INHUMANE  
AND DEGRADING'

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POLICEMAN  
STRIPS TAXI  
DRIVER NAKED

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DONATION OF  
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of dependent children and concerns about intergenerational crime and children at risk have placed parenting issues at the center of these discussions.

This paper provides an overview of family matters during incarceration as one means of informing public debate and actions in this emerging area of social policy and practice. The problems that families face when a parent is incarcerated and the strategies they use to manage those problems are described. The relevance of the maintenance of prisoners family and parental relationships to societal and family goals are discussed and the ways in which social policies and administrative practices hinder or support family maintenance are examined.

#### The Importance of Family Matters

Social scientists and program providers define the significance of families and family ties to prisoners and to the achievement of social goals in numerous ways. The impact of incarceration on families has been conceptualized as a form of family crises (Fishman, 1990), loss and demoralization (Schneller, 1976) and victimization of children (Bloom and Steinhart, 1993). More recent work has focused on social capital and the impact of social disinvestment in prisoners' families and communities (Hagan and Coleman, 2001) and on the unintended and intended consequences of social policy (Hairston, 1998; Hairston, in press).

Studies using theoretical perspectives which focus on the positive roles and functions that families serve as opposed to the problems that they experience indicate that families are important to prisoners and to the achievement of major social goals, including the prevention of recidivism and delinquency. Hairstons (1988; 1991a) review of research on prisoners family relationships yielded two consistent findings; male prisoners who maintain strong family ties during imprisonment have higher rates of post release success than those who do not and men who assume responsible husband and parenting roles upon release have higher rates of success than those who do not. Dowden and Andrews (1999) analysis of research on female offenders identified family process variables as the strongest predictors of female offenders' success and Slaght (1999) found family relationships to have a significant influence on relapse prevention among parolees. Social scientists and practitioners have used these findings to surmise that programs including family members in prisoners' treatment during incarceration and after their release can produce positive results for prisoners, families, institutions, and communities (Jeffries, Menghraj, and Hairston, 2001; Wright and Wright, 1992).

Practitioners providing or advocating for parenting programs in prison offer the perspective that incarcerated parents involvement with, and attachment to, their children can prevent intergenerational crime and that parenting programs can teach and help parents become better parents. Although the effectiveness of these programs in achieving that objective has not been soundly demonstrated, the reasoning behind program intervention has a strong research and theoretical base. The importance of family relationships and parenting practices in child development and the prevention of delinquency is a recurring finding in studies of delinquency (Tolan, Guerra, and Kendall, 1995) and the maintenance of family ties for incarcerated individuals has been found to be important for juveniles as well as adults (Borgman, 1985). The more nurturing aspects of parenting, or absence thereof, i.e., parental involvement, attachment and rejection have also consistently shown a strong association with delinquency (Larzelere and Patterson, 1990).

Moreover, research indicates that the effects of parental criminality on delinquency are indirect and mediated by parental attachment and parental discipline style (Larzelere and Patterson, 1990).

#### Family Definitions

Most studies of prisoners' families define families as married couples and study the wives of incarcerated husbands and their children or define families as single mothers who are assumed to be the sole care givers for their children. Studies by Bakker, Morris and Janus, 1978; Carlson and Cervera, 1991; Daniel and Barrett, 1981; Fishman, 1990; Schneller 1976; and Swan, 1981 are examples of the former and Baunach, 1985; Bloom and Steinhart, 1993; Hairston, 1991b and Hungerford, 1993 are examples of the latter. Fathers and their children (Hairston, 1989; 1995; Lanier, 1991, 1993; Martin 2001) and the caregivers of children of incarcerated mothers (Bloom and Steinhart, 1993; Poe, 1992) have also been studied but these are far less popular topics in prisoner family studies.

Surveys of prisoners indicate that prisoners' family networks are far more complex than these subgroups suggest. The majority of fathers and mothers in prison are not married (Mumola, 2000) and many have parented children with more than one partner (Hairston, 1995). Fathers' provider and nurturing roles differ for their different children. Some children lived with them at the time of arrest; others they saw regularly and supported financially and others they neither saw nor supported. Children who lived with their fathers were the fathers' youngest child or children. Fathers supported these children financially and shared caregiving with the childrens mothers who were also household members. Fathers consider their children to be family but do not regard the mothers of their children as such if they are not in a committed relationship with these mothers. (These mothers are not insignificant in family life, however, as they control fathers' access to their children before, during, and after imprisonment.) On the other hand, they may consider the children of women with whom they lived prior to incarceration and/or have a romantic attachment as family though they are not the biological fathers of those children.

Many mothers do not function in the single parent roles typically depicted in stories about single parent homes. Prior to incarceration, substantial numbers of mothers in prison shared caregiving responsibilities with children fathers, other family members and/or close friends (Mumola, 2000). Forty percent of incarcerated mothers in a national survey had relinquished responsibility for the physical care of their children to others, usually kin or individuals who were the same as kin (Mumola, 2000). Some mothers had none of their children living with them at the time of arrest; some had all of them and some had some of their children living with them. Many mothers who do not have responsibility for the care of their children still see them regularly (Hairston, 1991b). Others do not see their children at all because the children are under the custody of the child welfare department and/or mothers' parental rights have been terminated.

Prisoners' mothers are the central family figure in prisoners' lives, a finding that is not surprising given the high percentage of African American prisoners in most studies and the central role of mothers depicted in sociological descriptions of African American families. (See, for example, Martin and Martin, 1995.) Mothers are male and female prisoners' most important sources of support, their most frequent visitors and, in the case of incarcerated mothers, the caregivers for their children (Hairston, 1992, 1995). Yet, the impact of incarceration on these mothers and the

mothers influences on their grandchildren and incarcerated children have not been a research focus. Similarly, studies have looked only superficially at extended kinship networks though the social and behavioral sciences literature on African American families identifies these networks as crucial in understanding African American family structure, adaptability and functioning. (See, for example, Martin and Martin, 1996.)

#### Financial Difficulties

Most families experience financial losses as a result of parental incarceration and the loss is greatest for those families who try to maintain the convicted individual as a family member. There are the costs of maintaining the household, the loss of income of the imprisoned parent who was contributing to the household, legal fees associated with criminal defense and appeals, the costs associated with maintaining contact during imprisonment and the costs of maintaining the prisoner while he is in prison. At first glance, it appears that since many prisoners were not employed and a high percentage had drug problems they were drains on family income rather than contributors and that their imprisonment places families in a better, rather than worse, financial position. This is no doubt the case in some situations.

Although there are no published research reports of the numbers of families who are in a worse, as opposed to better, financial position when a family member is incarcerated, there are several indicators that the majority of families are affected negatively. Surveys of wives whose husbands are in prison identify financial problems and the loss of spousal income as a major problem (Daniel and Barrett, 1981; Fishman, 1990; King, 1993, Schneller, 1976). Some of the mothers of children to who fathers in prison are not married, but were paying financial support or contributing in other ways such as providing child care, also experience financial losses as a result of the incarceration of those fathers. Parental incarceration probably has no, or very limited, financial impact on children and family members who were not a part of fathers lives prior to their arrest.

Grandparents and other relatives, who take care of the children of incarcerated mothers, certainly incur additional financial expenses. The mothers are not able to provide financial support and if they were receiving welfare benefits prior to incarceration, those monies are not automatically awarded to the grandparents. If grandparents are eligible for welfare benefits, they still suffer a financial deficit because these benefits do not cover the full cost of providing care. Some caregivers must discontinue their paid employment in order to assume child care responsibilities, thereby resulting in further income losses. Studies of grandparents raising grandchildren affirm that financial problems are one of their main difficulties in caring for their grandchildren (Altschuler, 1999; Bloom and Steinhart, 1993; Petras, 1999; Poe, 1992).

Relatives caring for the children of prisoners incur additional financial expenses if they promote the maintenance of parent-child relationships. Allowing children to converse with their incarcerated parents by phone is a very expensive endeavor. Depending on the prison, a thirty minute phone call once a week could put a \$125 or higher dent in the family's monthly budget. Prison visits are also not a cost free endeavor; monies must be budgeted to cover transportation, usually to geographically remote locations, meals and vending machine snacks during visits, and, sometimes, overnight lodging.

Relatives find that providing money and other items to their imprisoned relatives is a byproduct of maintaining family contact. Many basic items that prisoners need or want are not furnished by

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correctional institutions and pay for prison work is generally too meager to purchase them. Families either voluntarily, or by request, send money to the prisoner for toiletries, reading materials, stamps, food and clothing. They also pay involuntarily for prison medical visits and health care, institutional fines and child support when corrections departments collect money from prisoners for those services/items by placing a levy on all monies that are deposited in prisoners financial accounts.

#### Parent-child Relationships and Childrens Care

The protection, care, and nurturance of prisoners' children is a primary concern of prisoners and their families. When parents go to prison, most children go, or continue, to live with relatives (Bloom and Steinhart, 1993; Mumola, 2000). Children's care arrangements provide love, connections to kin, and a sense of belonging, but they are not ideal. There is a marked physical absence of men and father figures in the daily lives of prisoners' children as women carry the primary, and often sole, responsibility for caregiving for the children of both imprisoned men and women (Bloom and Steinhart, 1993; Hairston, 1991, 1995; Mumola, 2000). In addition to having limited financial resources, many grandparent caregivers of the children of incarcerated mothers are elderly, have health problems, and were not planning to take on new child care responsibilities (Bloom and Steinhart, 1993; Petras, 1999).

Neither child's custodial nor imprisoned parents are adequately prepared to address children's needs arising from parental incarceration. Parents are ambivalent about children's visits with their incarcerated parents and about what to tell children about their parents' incarceration. Some children do not know that their father or mother is in jail because relatives have told them the parent is away for other reasons such as the army, school or work. If the child did not live with the parent and their time together was sporadic, the child may not be told anything about the parents' absence (Hairston, 1991b).

Some parents do not want their children to visit them in prison and/or make no effort to contact their children. They do not believe children's custodial parents will welcome such contact, don't know where their children are, or think such visits will be too emotionally painful. Some parents in jail reason that they will be away only a short time and that there is no need for children to visit (Hairston, 1991b). Other parents mistakenly believe that there is little that they can do for their children from prison and that they can make it all up to them once they are released. Mothers and fathers in prison report that their children's other parents also limit or deny communication between them and their children and frequently cite conflict between the parents and/or with other family members and limited financial resources as major factors (Hairston, 1991; 1995; Nurse, 2001). Research providing the perspectives of children's other parents, namely the women to whom incarcerated fathers are not married, is not a part of the current knowledge base.

Children's custodial parents and other care givers are not the only ones opposed to children's communication with their incarcerated parents. Both corrections and social services professionals raise questions about the wisdom of children's visits to prison, citing concerns about the oppressive prison environment and children's acceptance of incarceration as normal. Others have questioned if contact between prisoners and their children should be encouraged for prisoners in general (given assumptions about their criminality, dangerousness, etc.) or for certain groups of criminals, namely fathers who have been violent with children's mothers. There is no body of

theory or research that would support prohibiting prisoners' communication with their children as a matter of social policy and practice; on the contrary scientific studies point to the positive aspects of children's ongoing involvement with and attachment to adults who care about them and to the negative effects of father absence and family disruption. There are well established practice principles to guide professional decision-making and protect children from individual situations that may be harmful to them and a professional obligation to remove prison visiting environments as obstacles to parent child relationships.

Although most mothers and a substantial number of fathers plan to reunify with their children upon their release, they worry that their children will be taken from them or that someone else will take their place in their children's lives (Hairston, 1991b, 1995; Koban, 1983; Lanier, 1991). The fear that children will be taken by the state or that their parent-child bonds will be legally severed is harbored by fathers and mothers (Baunach, 1985; Hairston, Wills and Wall, 1997).

Prisoner's personal situations and child welfare policies and practices indicate that these fears are not unfounded. Although visiting increases the prospects for reunification of separated families, most parents in prison never see their children. Each parental prison term reduces the likelihood that children will reside with their mothers upon release and recidivism is quite high (Hairston, 1991b). Most fathers do not have a legal or emotional bond with their children's mothers (Hairston, 1995; Mumola, 2000; Nurse, 2001) that might be expected to support reunification of households. In addition, communication between these mates or former partners is more often contentious than cordial (Hairston, 1995; Jeffries, Menghraj and Hairston, 2000; Nurse, 2001). Though one might expect married prisoners to be in a position that protects or supports their relationships with their children, many marital relationships are strained and end during imprisonment (Hairston, 1991; Lynch and Sabol, 2001; Sharp and Marcus-Mendoza, 1998).

Incarcerated parents whose children are under the custody of the state definitely have reasons to be concerned about the legal and permanent severance of parent-child bonds. Parental rights can be terminated in some states solely on the basis of criminal activity and incarceration. Termination can also occur if parents fail to communicate regularly with their children or fail to adhere to prescribed treatment program plans. Furthermore, a relatives ongoing contacts with an incarcerated parent has resulted in the state agency's disapproval of that relative as an acceptable foster and adoptive parent.

The Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997 (ASFA), enacted with the intent of achieving permanency for children, has the strong potential to lead to less, rather than more, stability in the lives of prisoners children. There are no published research reports of the impact of the law on parents who are prisoners or reports of the analyses of the approaches states are using to apply the law to incarcerated parents. Johnston (2001) reports, however, that her preliminary analysis of data obtained in a study of children of prisoners in long term foster care shows increased parental rights terminations following passage of the legislation.

Theoretically, few prisoners are able to meet the requirements of the law. The average prison stay is longer than the period in which termination procedures are required to begin and it is very difficult for parents in prison to comply with child welfare mandates. Prisoners have little or no control over their contact with their children or over their ability to participate in treatment

programs. In addition, correctional institutions and child welfare departments do not have a history of collaboration or systems in place to address prison parenting issues when parents are in prison and children are wards of the state.

Though parental concerns about parental rights are grave, there is perhaps an even more pressing social issue and concern about children's futures. A fundamental question that remains to be answered is what will happen to these children once their parents' rights are terminated. If large numbers of parents will no longer be legally responsible for their children, then who will be their parents? Will prisoners' children become permanent wards of the state who then move from one foster care placement to another? Who and where are the families waiting in line to adopt prisoners children, especially given the pervasiveness of a like father, like son public attitude and scholars declarations that children of prisoners are five or six times more likely to become criminals themselves (Reed and Reed, 1997)? Is ASFA predicated on the assumption that it is better to have no one to call mom or dad than it is to have a parent who is a convicted criminal? Or have the implications of this law for prisoners' children simply been overlooked in the political debates.

#### Emotional and Social Issues

Prisoners and their families experience a tremendous sense of loss when incarceration occurs and that loss is compounded when children are involved. Couples are usually denied sexual intimacy and are unable to engage in the day to day interactions, experiences and sharing which sustain marital and other intimate, adult relationships. Loneliness and missing each other and a host of other feelings about the separation, justice system, criminal activity, and each partner's honesty and faithfulness are common. Guilt and a sense of relief that a troublesome relative has finally been sent away are also among the emotions experienced by prisoners' kin. Difficulties in adjusting to separation and loss have led to depression and other mental health problems among prisoners and their families (Daniel and Barrett, 1981; King 1993; Lanier, 1993).

Incarcerated mothers cite separation from their children as one of the most difficult aspects of imprisonment (Baunach, 1985; Hairston, 1991b) and incarcerated fathers and mothers worry about what is happening to their children during their absence (Hairston, 1991; Hairston, 1995; Lanier, 1993; Martin, 2001). Parents believe their children are in safe living situations and are not being abused or neglected; nevertheless, they worry about their children's well-being and about their guidance and supervision (Hairston, 1992, 1995). Some worries may be attributed to the fact that parents in prison have limited contact with their children and rely on relatives and friends for information about their children.

Prisoners' children and families must also deal with feelings of shame and social stigma. Imprisonment is not a reason for celebration or a reason to be proud. It is not the goal one seeks for oneself or ones children. Many family members do not tell even their closest friends about a relative's incarceration and go to great lengths to protect the prisoners' children from the consequences of revealing this family secret. Depending on the crime and the prevalence of imprisonment in the neighborhood in which they live, family members may not be the objects of social stigma or hostility in that neighborhood (Schneller, 1976). There is, nevertheless, a social stigma which families experience from other elements of society. The spouse, parent or child of a prisoner may not experience stigma directly until they reveal the incarcerated relatives status to a child's teacher or to a prospective landlord or until the family moves to

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a prison town (Fishman, 1990; Koenig, 1985).

#### Information Needs

Families' lack of understanding and access to information, about criminal justice processing provides yet another challenge to normal family functioning. Often close relative's knowledge of the prisoner's crime and sentence amounts to little more than She's doing time for drugs. Unless they are regular visitors to a correctional institution and/or have a lot of savvy and connections with prison family support groups, their knowledge of correctional system policies and procedures is not that extensive either.

Information about prison operations is obtained primarily from other families and through frustrating experiences. The dissemination of formal policies and regulations to families is not a standard correctional practice. If rules governing family communication are posted at prison facilities, they are often outdated and/or may require considerable use of visiting time to read and digest. In addition, family members are generally not able to speak with anyone in authority who is either able or willing to provide information about the prisoners' status or to explain or provide a rationale for rules, their varying interpretations or the most recent changes in policy application. With few exceptions, useful information is not available to families via handbooks or public websites either. The absence of information dissemination is not one of capacity, however, since numerous departments of corrections use their public websites to provide registries of prisoners and former prisoners pictures and criminal histories.

Uncertainty about the prisoners situation and questions about the corrections departments rules and policies that are intertwined with that uncertainty, are one of the greatest concerns of prisoners families (Ferraro, Johnson, Jorgensen, and Bolton, 1983; Fishman, 1990). Families seeking benefits and services for children cite similar confusion and frustration in understanding child welfare rules and regulations and the eligibility requirements and operating procedures of other human service systems (Petras, 1999; Poe, 1992).

#### Prisoner-Family Communication

Communication between prisoners and their families provides the most concrete and visible strategy that families and prisoners use to manage separation and maintain connections. Families visit their imprisoned relatives at the institutions where they are held, talk with them by phone, and exchange cards and letters as a means of staying connected. These contacts allow adults and parents and children to share family experiences and participate in family rituals, e.g., birthday celebrations, religious observances, etc. and help them to remain emotionally attached. They help assure incarcerated parents that their children have not forgotten them and children that their parents love and care about them. They allow prisoners to see themselves, and to function, in socially acceptable roles rather than as prison numbers and institutionalized dependents.

Departments of corrections permit these type communications between prisoners and their kin and encourage the maintenance of family ties, in theory, as desirable correctional practices. In actuality, the supports for prisoners' family relationships vary considerably from one jurisdiction to another and within jurisdictions from one facility to another. As a rule, prisons allow families and children to visit though prisoners in administrative segregation or super maximum prisons may be restricted to tele-video and other types of noncontact visits. Some jails allow only non-contact visits and/or prohibit children from visiting. Six states permit prisoners to have private family visits on prison grounds

with their spouses and children; a few allow non-violent women prisoners with infants to reside in alternative community residences. Most prisons for women, and a few for men, provide parent education courses and a few offer other parenting supports including counseling, parent support groups, and special visiting areas and programs for parents and their children. (See Bates, 2001 and Jeffries, Menghraj, and Hairston, 2001 for descriptions of parenting programs).

The correctional policies and practices that govern contact between prisoners and their families often impede, rather than support, the maintenance of family ties. The security and safety rationale that dominates the prison environment is obvious in some policies. The primary intent of others, e.g. the rate structure for prisoner telephone systems, seem to be to subsidize prison budgets and generate profits and /or to exert social control, not only over prisoners, but over their kin as well. Rules frequently bear little relevance to correctional goals and are insensitive to prisoners' family structures, cultural differences and children's needs. Many rules appear to be arbitrary; others are inconsistently interpreted and applied by different staff members and with different visitors (Fishman, 1990; Jeffries, Menghraj, and Hairston, 2001). Policy obstacles to the maintenance of parent-child relationships include policies requiring children's custodial parents to escort them on visits, limiting children visitors to those for whom birth certificates listing the prisoner as the biological parent are produced and placement of prisoners in locations hundreds or thousands of miles from their homes.

For many families and friends of prisoners, the visit to a prison is a lesson in humility, intimidation and frustration and a highly charged and anxiety producing event (Fishman, 1990; Girshick, 1996). It is not unusual for visitors, the majority of whom are women and children, to endure many indignities. Among the problems noted in the Florida Legislatures report of prison visiting in that state were long waits sometimes in facilities without seating, toilets and water; the lack of nutritious food in visiting room vending machines and the absence of activities for children (Taylor, 1999). Body frisks and intrusive searches, rude treatment by staff, and hot, dirty and crowded visiting rooms are the norm in many prisons. Visitors may be denied entry to the prison for diverse reasons including constantly changing dress codes, no identification for children, and ion drug scanners that inaccurately signal that a visitor is carrying drugs.

#### Pitching in and Helping

Family members rely primarily on each other, rather than on formal organizations to maintain family connections and address children's and adult family members' problems related to parental incarceration. When the protection of children and the maintenance of parent-child relationships are involved, many incarcerated parents and their relatives are wary of formal organizations, avoid them when they can, and find them to be less than helpful (Beckerman, 1994; Hairston, Wills and Wall, 1997; Bates, 2001).

Families engage in a process of role change and adaptability that can be referred to as pitching in and helping out. Some relatives pitch in by taking full or major responsibility for something the prisoner used to do. The grandmothers, sisters, and aunts who take on child rearing responsibilities for dependent children of single mothers and fathers in prison are examples. The spouses of men and women in prison who take on new roles in financially supporting their children and new decisions making roles are other examples. Some relatives help out with

new responsibilities that families acquire as a result of incarceration, e.g. negotiating with the prison system, accepting collect phone calls from the prisoner and then serving as an emissary between the prisoner and his/her children and other relatives or arranging for and paying the costs of prison visits.

Prisoners who maintain family connections also adapt to new family roles. Incarcerated parents are not in a position to make significant financial contributions to their family, no matter the presence of child support orders, nor are they able to physically take care of or protect their children. Family role expectations of prisoners, therefore, center on demonstrations of caring and concern for children or other family members or participation in decision-making about select family issues. Prisoners participate in family life by sending cards to acknowledge birthdays and other events of family relevance, calling home or the place where other family members have gathered on holidays, writing letters to inquire about and encourage children's progress in school and giving advice on how to handle different problems.

Pitching in and helping out, like so many aspects of incarceration, are not without problems. Pitching in can raise feelings and family tensions among relative helpers who are concerned about having to help out again or having an unfair share of the burden. It can also be taxing and burdensome, especially when prisoners make selfish demands or when relatives feel the incarcerated individual had already burned his/her bridges before incarceration. Many prisoners also experience difficulties adjusting to new roles and expectations. Prisoners who were accustomed to being independent and the family provider, for example, express strong feelings about occupying a less central and more dependent role in the family pecking order (Fishman, 1990).

Some families do seek assistance--Medicaid, relative foster care payments, or public assistance welfare benefits from human services organizations as an alternative or supplement to family help. They do so at great emotional and social costs as help seeking from organizations exposes the family to external scrutiny, raises the risk of children being removed from the homes of relatives or friends and placed in foster care, and exposes families to the shame and stigma that having a relative in prison can bring. When seeking help they may, therefore, choose not to reveal that parental incarceration is the precipitating factor. Some needy families do not seek help because they are not aware of their eligibility for benefits and do not have information that would help them access those resources (Bloom and Steinhart, 1993). Others see little reason to engage in organizational efforts that will be of little benefit to them and could exacerbate the prisoner's situation. It is hardly worth the effort to seek child support if the money will go to the state's coffers or the prisoner is not making any money. It is ludicrous to do so when family members are the primary contributors to the prisoners trust account. Furthermore, most communities do not have services to help families address needs specific to incarceration (Bates, 2001; Jeffries, Menghraj, and Hairston, 2001).

#### Policy Directions and Strategies

The preservation and strengthening of prisoners' family ties and parent-child relationships will require vision and direction from the highest levels of public policy decision making and a fundamental shift in the prevailing system responses to prisoners' children and families. It is not reasonable to place the responsibility for the creation of family oriented prison environments and system-wide change on individual prison administrators and directors of

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corrections departments. In the face of escalating prison budgets and priorities focused on safety and security, few will make family matters and post release success major goals or priorities.

The administrators who have maintained comprehensive parenting programs at New Yorks Sing Sing and Bedford Hills correctional institutions for several years are the exceptions rather than the rule.

Congressional bodies and state legislatures must take ownership of family related incarceration issues as a matter of national interest and make prisoners family matters an integral part of the discussion on criminal justice and family policy. Sentencing policies, alternatives to corrections, prison locations and funding for family programs and services are legislative issues. It is equally important for legislators to exercise oversight over correctional policies and practices and to use the power of the law to remove obstacles to children and families well-being. The correctional environment and what goes on in prison are not internal matters to be left to the discretion of prison administrators. They are instead public concerns with relevance to broad social welfare goals and of importance to different community constituencies.

It is important for child welfare and correctional leaders and professional associations to develop principles and national standards covering parents in prison and their children and to adopt these standards as a part of the accreditation process for child welfare agencies and correctional institutions. When parents are in prison and their children are under the custody of the state, families and children experience unique problems and corrections and child welfare staff is faced with unique challenges. Most states do not have child welfare policies or procedures to address parenting issues during

incarceration and workers are left, more or less, to their own problem solving initiative and ingenuity. Child welfare-corrections system partnership models, family oriented policy directives and agency protocols are necessary components of serious efforts to meet the best interests of the child.

New York has devoted resources to address criminal justice- child welfare collaborations and the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services has a staff liaison who handles situations involving children whose mothers are in prison. Development, replication and evaluation of approaches such as these and dissemination of products and program reports will prevent reinvention of the wheel and enhance agencies ability to meet children's needs.

Research on prisoners family roles and relationships and family matters in the criminal justice system must be conducted and the findings incorporated in policy and program development and implementation. No federal agency or foundation has provided funding to launch a comprehensive program of research on families and the correctional system or identified this topic as a research priority. Most research studies have been one shot efforts with few ongoing programs of research covering any aspect of prisoner family functioning. Consequently, there are many unanswered questions and untested assumptions about the impact of parental criminality on children, the impact of parental attachments and responsibilities on adult recidivism, and other crucial areas. Knowledge of the impact of major human services and corrections policies, e.g., ASFA, community reentry legislation, and welfare reform, on prisoners' families is also limited and the true outcomes of policy directives and reforms for families and children must be inferred.

Information about and understanding of program processes and outcomes must also be among the objectives of a knowledge development agenda. It is important to assess the current state of the field. These type assessments enable program designers and practitioners to build on the pioneering research and program efforts that have already been undertaken and on the day-to-day work and experiences of program providers, families and children. The Vera Institute of Justice review of programs serving fathers in prison and the community (Jeffries, Menghraj, and Hairston, 2001) and the University of Illinois study of programs serving children and families of prisoners (Bates, 2001) provide examples of these type reviews.

#### Conclusions

The ability and motivation to keep trying under the most difficult of circumstances that prisoners' families display and the sense of kinship and obligation that they have for a member who has been publicly sanctioned are solid strengths. These actions, and the nation's general interest in protecting children and strengthening families, provide sound reasons to promote and adopt policies which help prisoners maintain family ties and help families carry out their family obligations and responsibilities for their children. A social investment in prisoners' families and children will require the adoption of more positive views of prisoners' families and family relationships, better understanding of family needs and societal responses, and dedicated attention to changing the prevailing system responses.

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*Source: [osaspeinfo@hhs.gov](mailto:osaspeinfo@hhs.gov)*

## 'CRUEL, INHUMANE AND DEGRADING': FEMALE PRISONER KEPT SEGREGATED IN 'SQUALID' CELL FOR FIVE YEARS

A prison has been criticized for detaining a female prisoner in segregation in a "squalid" cell for more than five years.

The discovery was made during an unannounced visit by the chief inspector of prisons, Nick Hardwick, to HMP Bronzefield women's prison near Ashford, Surrey.

In the inspection report, Mr. Hardwick said: "We were dismayed that the woman who had already been in the segregation unit for three years in 2010 was still there in 2013. Her cell was unkempt and squalid and she seldom left it."

Mr Hardwick said her prolonged detention in the segregation unit amounted to "cruel, inhumane and degrading treatment - and we use these words advisedly".

"Although more activities had been organized for her and better multi-disciplinary support was available, she still had too little to occupy her," he said.

Despite successfully tackling a range of challenges thrown up by its "complex population" of inmates, the prison still faces issues that need to be dealt with at a national level, Mr Hardwick said.

The way women were transported to and from the prison was also unacceptable, according to the inspectors. Women were carried in vehicles containing men and spent long periods in the van, possibly because they had to wait while male prisoners were dropped off first, and some complained they felt unsafe during the trip.

Frances Crook, chief executive of the Howard League for Penal Reform, described the case as "shocking" and said the woman's treatment "appears to amount to torture". Cases such as this happening in an English prison "should shame ministers who tolerate the over-use of custody for women and consequent poor treatment," they added.

"The treatment and conditions of other women held for long periods in segregation was little better. Much of this was outside the prison's direct control and required a national strategy for meeting the needs of these very complex women - as exists in the male estate. However, Bronzefield itself needed to do more to ameliorate the worst effects of this national failure."

There are 446 women on remand or serving sentences ranging from a few weeks to life at the prison. It has a small number of "restricted status" women, some of whom have severe personality disorders.

HMP Bronzefield is run by Sodexo Justice Services. The report calls for a policy to help manage women "with complex needs who cannot be supported in the prison's normal location". This should include providing a humane and properly resourced environment and regime for those women, as well as for restricted status women in this category, it says.

Ms Crook said: "Her Majesty's chief inspector is absolutely right that specialist care outside of the prison walls needs to be developed for the

handful of women who pose particular challenges."

Practical resettlement services were rated very good, but could be helped by better co-ordination of offender management, and work to support women in keeping strong relationships with their families was underdeveloped, the report said.

In contrast, the inspectors ranked the reception, first night and induction arrangements as good across the board and there was very good support for women with substance misuse problems throughout their prison stays.

Support for those with alcohol problems was particularly impressive and there had been no self-inflicted deaths at the prison and the number of self-harm incidents had reduced dramatically year on year, it was found.

The most vulnerable women got sensitive but effective support and the staff had a good knowledge of the women in their care.

Much-improved health care and being allowed a reasonable amount of time out of the cells, along with different activities, were also among the positives identified by the inspectors.

The inspectors said the areas which remain of most concern are outside the prison's direct control.

The inspection took place whilst the Government was conducting a review of the women's custodial estate. Mr. Hardwick said: "HMP Bronzefield illustrated some of the challenges the review would need to address.

"It is a credit to the managers and staff at Bronzefield that they meet these challenges as well as they do. There is more that can be done locally, but some of the issues identified in this report require a fundamentally different approach to the imprisonment of women at national level."

Michael Spurr, chief executive of the National Offender Management Service, said: "This report shows the good work that the director and her staff are doing with the complex population at Bronzefield."

"I am pleased that the chief inspector recognizes

the very good support that is being offered to the women, which is helping to play a key role in their rehabilitation.

"I recognize the importance of looking at our national approach to women in prison and a review was commissioned earlier in the year into the women's custodial estate, the outcome of which will be announced in due course."

Juliet Lyon, director of the Prison Reform Trust, said: "The Chief Inspector reports that staff are doing their best to respond to the needs of women at Bronzefield, many of whom are in poor mental and physical health, addicted to drugs

and drink and traumatized by separation from their children.

"But why in this day and age are women with such complex needs transported like cattle and dumped in prison, where one of the most damaged women is left to rot in some form of solitary confinement for five years?"

"We are quick to condemn cruel, inhumane and degrading treatment of people in prison in other countries, now government must act to put right failings in our own women's justice system."

Source: [www.independent.co.uk](http://www.independent.co.uk) > News > UK > Home News

## 10. SULEJA PRISON, NIGER STATE



The number one problem of most Nigerian prison is congestion. Many of these prisons have exceeded three times their capacity. Suleja prison in Niger State, is a clear definition of this. The situation is so bad that the stench from the prison causes a few warders to wear face masks while going about their duties.

Some critics have posited that many of the inmates at Suleja prison are people who were arrested and thrown in prison for offenses that

should not warrant imprisonment. One of such cases is that of a nursing mother who was being held in the prison alongside her 8-month old baby. Of course many have been held for years without trial.

## 9. ABAKALIKI PRISON, EBONYI STATE

Goodness, gracious! The state of the Abakiliki prison! It's just horrible, to say the least. One remarkable feature of Nigerian prisons is that they manage to keep the outdoor environment clean and serene; but step in and see the condition of inmates; you would most likely shed tears.

In Ebonyi State Nigeria, the condition of the prison has deteriorated to the level of being seen as one of the worst prisons in Nigeria. This August, it was reported that there was an attempted jail break at the Abakiliki prison which left a lot of inmates and warders injured.

It was however discovered that it was not a jailbreak but a revolt by inmates who have gotten fed up of the poor living standards which they have been subjected to for years.

## 8. MAIDUGURI MAXIMUM PRISON, BORNO STATE

For a prison located in a State that has turned into a haven for terrorists, you'd most likely know what to expect. The Maiduguri maximum prison is so bad that inmates lose their minds out of sheer suffering.

The congestion at the Maiduguri maximum prison is a horrible level of its own. Feeding and

hygiene are so bad that we cannot begin to describe it.

The prison has a capacity of 1600 inmates but the population of inmates are approximately three times that number. Deranged inmates yell loudly into the night, disrupting the sleep of other inmates. It got so bad that some terrorists who

were previously arrested were given amnesty and released to help in decongesting the prison, however, the situation remains dire. The Maiduguri maximum prison is simply in few words, hell on earth.

## 7. ENUGU MAXIMUM SECURITY PRISON, ENUGU STATE



We once went to visit a relative who was awaiting trial but was being remanded at the Enugu prison, we were reduced to tears because some prisons make men cry...make that wail. The prison was overly congested, to say the least. Our perception of the place was more like an ancient torture arena than a prison.

We carried out a brief research on the prison and discovered that this prison was built in 1915...yup!...originally designed to hold just over 600 inmates. Since then, the prison had undergone just a handful of renovations but still deteriorated almost to rubble.

Currently, over 2000 inmates are crammed into a 600 capacity prison. Imagine the condition of inmates in such a situation.

The Enugu maximum security prison needs a quick face lift, however, at the moment, that prison is one of the worst in Nigeria.

## 6. KURMAWA PRISON, KANO

The Kurmawa prison in Kano is as old as old can be. The prison was built by the British-led colonial government in the 19<sup>th</sup> century (and we thought Enugu maximum security prison was old). The prison is small one when compared to

others on our list, but just like the rest of the bunch, it is overly congested. The prison is meant to hold just about 40 inmates but over a hundred inmates are now being crammed into the tiny prison rooms.

Inmates are subdued to all sorts of inhumane treatment. You probably wouldn't feed your dog with the food being given to inmates in this prison.

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## 5. JIGAWA PRISON, JIGAWA STATE

Honestly, the worst thing that can happen to any Nigerian is to be incarcerated in any Nigerian prison, especially the Jigawa prison. The congestion in this prison is simply off the chain. It is reported that some friends and relatives moan

and wail when they visit and see the horrific condition of their loved ones in this prison.

Extortion of prisoners by warders for small favors is not a new trend. Inmates sometimes suffocate and die in this prison due to congestion. Earlier

this year it was reported that an inmate by name 'DaminaJauroAudu' had died of sheer suffocation due to congestion in the Jigawa prison. The Jigawa prison is definitely one of the worst prisons in Nigeria.

## 4. GORON DUTSE PRISON, KANO STATE



There are about 15 prisons in Kano State, however, the worst of the bunch is the GoronDutse prison. Congested, deplorable infrastructure, poor feeding and living condition are a few of the characteristics that best describes the GoronDutse prison.

It appears the government has absolutely

forgotten that such a prison exists in Kano State, due to how deplorable the place have become. It has been reported that this prison holds over 2000 inmates crammed into a prison that is supposed to hold less than 800. The GoronDutse prison in its current state is nothing but a hell hole in Nigeria.

## 3. KADUNA CONVICT PRISON, KADUNA STATE

Well, here's another horrific prison in Nigeria. The Kaduna convict prison is one place with the ability to radically transform hardened criminals into saints due to how horrible the place has become. Built in the early 1900s, the prison was

meant to hold 500 inmates, but you can guess, from Nigerian prisons trend, how much it holds today.

News about the detestable condition of the Kaduna prison filtered to president Buhari and he

gave a directive to all state governors asking them to look into the conditions of prisons in their state with immediate effect. The Kaduna prison is as bad as all the above-listed prisons, maybe worse.

## 2. PORT HARCOURT PRISON, RIVERS STATE

And here's another! What can we say about the Port Harcourt prison that hasn't already been said? The place should be closed down already...if we had our way.

The Port Harcourt prison is renowned for being the prison with the most inmates awaiting trial. Built in 1918, the Port Harcourt prison was built to hold 800 prisoners but now holds over 3000

inmates. Words will fail to describe what inmates go through in that prison.

## 1. KIRIKIRI PRISON, LAGOS STATE



The badest of the badest, the Kirikiri prison in Lagos is arguably the worst of the bunch. Big, dilapidated, congested and horrifying are not enough adjectives to adequately qualify the state of the Kirikiri prison.

The issue here is that warders have resorted to all sort of underhand activities such as bribery and other shady businesses to make ends meet.

There's reportedly a gate fee charged before friends and relatives can go in to visit their loved ones who are incarcerated. 'Palm-greasing' has become a popular phenomenon; inmates have to give bribes before they are allowed basic rights such as seeing a doctor and so on.

Well, if you're as horrified as we are, you would run as far away from crime as your legs can carry you. The state of many Nigerian prisons are disheartening. Yes, many argue that after all, they are criminals but then again, they are human beings too! We urge the government to look into these prisons with focus not on the crime but on human dignity.

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<https://idonsabi.com/2016/09/10/top-10-worst-prisons-in-nigeria/>

## 9. UNITED NATIONS RULES FOR THE PROTECTION OF JUVENILES DEPRIVED OF THEIR LIBERTY.

*Cont. from last edition*

E. Education, vocational training and work

38. Every juvenile of compulsory school age has the right to education suited to his or her needs and abilities and designed to prepare him or her for return to society. Such education should be provided outside the detention facility in community schools wherever possible and, in any case, by qualified teachers through programmes integrated with the education system of the country so that, after release, juveniles may continue their education

without difficulty. Special attention should be given by the administration of the detention facilities to the education of juveniles of foreign origin or with particular cultural or ethnic needs. Juveniles who are illiterate or have cognitive or learning difficulties should have the right to special education.

39. Juveniles above compulsory school age who wish to continue their education should be permitted and encouraged to do so, and every effort should be made to provide them with

access to appropriate educational programmes.

40. Diplomas or educational certificates awarded to juveniles while in detention should not indicate in any way that the juvenile has been institutionalized.

41. Every detention facility should provide access to a library that is adequately stocked with both instructional and recreational books and periodicals suitable for the juveniles, who should be encouraged and enabled to make full

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use of it.

42. Every juvenile should have the right to receive vocational training in occupations likely to prepare him or her for future employment.

43. With due regard to proper vocational selection and to the requirements of institutional administration, juveniles should be able to choose the type of work they wish to perform.

44. All protective national and international standards applicable to child labour and young workers should apply to juveniles deprived of their liberty.

45. Wherever possible, juveniles should be provided with the opportunity to perform remunerated labour, if possible within the local community, as a complement to the vocational training provided in order to enhance the possibility of finding suitable employment when they return to their communities. The type of work should be such as to provide appropriate training that will be of benefit to the juveniles following release. The organization and methods of work offered in detention facilities should resemble as closely as possible those of similar work in the community, so as to prepare juveniles for the conditions of normal occupational life.

46. Every juvenile who performs work should have the right to an equitable remuneration. The interests of the juveniles and of their vocational training should not be subordinated to the purpose of making a profit for the detention facility or a third party. Part of the earnings of a juvenile should normally be set aside to constitute a savings fund to be handed over to the juvenile on release. The juvenile should have the right to use the remainder of those earnings to purchase articles for his or her own use or to indemnify the victim injured by his or her offence or to send it to his or her family or other persons outside the detention facility.

#### F. Recreation

47. Every juvenile should have the right to a suitable amount of time for daily free exercise, in the open air whenever weather permits, during which time appropriate recreational and physical training should normally be provided. Adequate space, installations and equipment should be provided for these activities. Every juvenile should have additional time for daily leisure activities, part of which should be devoted, if the juvenile so wishes, to arts and crafts skill development. The detention facility should ensure that each juvenile is physically able to participate in the available programmes of physical education. Remedial physical education and therapy should be offered, under medical supervision, to juveniles needing it.

#### G. Religion

48. Every juvenile should be allowed to satisfy the needs of his or her religious and spiritual life, in particular by attending the services or meetings provided in the detention facility or by conducting his or her own services and having possession of the necessary books or items of religious observance and instruction of his or her denomination. If a detention facility contains a sufficient number of juveniles of a given religion, one or more qualified representatives of that religion should be appointed or approved and allowed to hold regular services and to pay pastoral visits in private to juveniles at their request. Every juvenile should have the right to receive visits from a qualified representative of any religion of his or her choice, as well as the right not to participate in religious services

and freely to decline religious education, counselling or indoctrination.

#### H. Medical care

49. Every juvenile shall receive adequate medical care, both preventive and remedial, including dental, ophthalmological and mental health care, as well as pharmaceutical products and special diets as medically indicated. All such medical care should, where possible, be provided to detained juveniles through the appropriate health facilities and services of the community in which the detention facility is located, in order to prevent stigmatization of the juvenile and promote self-respect and integration into the community.

50. Every juvenile has a right to be examined by a physician immediately upon admission to a detention facility, for the purpose of recording any evidence of prior ill-treatment and identifying any physical or mental condition requiring medical attention.

51. The medical services provided to juveniles should seek to detect and should treat any physical or mental illness, substance abuse or other condition that may hinder the integration of the juvenile into society. Every detention facility for juveniles should have immediate access to adequate medical facilities and equipment appropriate to the number and requirements of its residents and staff trained in preventive health care and the handling of medical emergencies. Every juvenile who is ill, who complains of illness or who demonstrates symptoms of physical or mental difficulties, should be examined promptly by a medical officer.

52. Any medical officer who has reason to believe that the physical or mental health of a juvenile has been or will be injuriously affected by continued detention, a hunger strike or any condition of detention should report this fact immediately to the director of the detention facility in question and to the independent authority responsible for safeguarding the well-being of the juvenile.

53. A juvenile who is suffering from mental illness should be treated in a specialized institution under independent medical management. Steps should be taken, by arrangement with appropriate agencies, to ensure any necessary continuation of mental health care after release.

54. Juvenile detention facilities should adopt specialized drug abuse prevention and rehabilitation programmes administered by qualified personnel. These programmes should be adapted to the age, sex and other requirements of the juveniles concerned, and detoxification facilities and services staffed by trained personnel should be available to drug- or alcohol-dependent juveniles.

55. Medicines should be administered only for necessary treatment on medical grounds and, when possible, after having obtained the informed consent of the juvenile concerned. In particular, they must not be administered with a view to eliciting information or a confession, as a punishment or as a means of restraint. Juveniles shall never be testees in the experimental use of drugs and treatment. The administration of any drug should always be authorized and carried out by qualified medical personnel.

#### I. Notification of illness, injury and death

56. The family or guardian of a juvenile and any other person designated by the juvenile have the right to be informed of the state of health of

the juvenile on request and in the event of any important changes in the health of the juvenile. The director of the detention facility should notify immediately the family or guardian of the juvenile concerned, or other designated person, in case of death, illness requiring transfer of the juvenile to an outside medical facility, or a condition requiring clinical care within the detention facility for more than 48 hours. Notifications should also be given to the consular authorities of the State of which a foreign juvenile is a citizen.

57. Upon the death of a juvenile during the period of deprivation of liberty, the nearest relative should have the right to inspect the death certificate, see the body and determine the method of disposal of the body. Upon the death of a juvenile in detention, there should be an independent inquiry into the causes of death, the report of which should be made accessible to the nearest relative. This inquiry should also be made when the death of a juvenile occurs within six months from the date of his or her release from the detention facility and there is reason to believe that the death is related to the period of detention.

58. A juvenile should be informed at the earliest possible time of the death, serious illness or injury of any immediate family member and should be provided with the opportunity to attend the funeral of the deceased or go to the bedside of a critically ill relative.

#### J. Contacts with the wider community

59. Every means should be provided to ensure that juveniles have adequate communication with the outside world, which is an integral part of the right to fair and humane treatment and is essential to the preparation of juveniles for their return to society. Juveniles should be allowed to communicate with their families, friends and other persons or representatives of reputable outside organizations, to leave detention facilities for a visit to their home and family and to receive special permission to leave the detention facility for educational, vocational or other important reasons. Should the juvenile be serving a sentence, the time spent outside a detention facility should be counted as part of the period of sentence.

60. Every juvenile should have the right to receive regular and frequent visits, in principle once a week and not less than once a month, in circumstances that respect the need of the juvenile for privacy, contact and unrestricted communication with the family and the defence counsel.

61. Every juvenile should have the right to communicate in writing or by telephone at least twice a week with the person of his or her choice, unless legally restricted, and should be assisted as necessary in order effectively to enjoy this right. Every juvenile should have the right to receive correspondence.

62. Juveniles should have the opportunity to keep themselves informed regularly of the news by reading newspapers, periodicals and other publications, through access to radio and television programmes and motion pictures, and through the visits of the representatives of any lawful club or organization in which the juvenile is interested.

#### K. Limitations of physical restraint and the use of force

63. Recourse to instruments of restraint and to force for any purpose should be prohibited, except as set forth in rule 64 below.

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64. Instruments of restraint and force can only be used in exceptional cases, where all other control methods have been exhausted and failed, and only as explicitly authorized and specified by law and regulation. They should not cause humiliation or degradation, and should be used restrictively and only for the shortest possible period of time. By order of the director of the administration, such instruments might be resorted to in order to prevent the juvenile from inflicting self-injury, injuries to others or serious destruction of property. In such instances, the director should at once consult medical and other relevant personnel and report to the higher administrative authority.

65. The carrying and use of weapons by personnel should be prohibited in any facility where juveniles are detained.

#### L. Disciplinary procedures

66. Any disciplinary measures and procedures should maintain the interest of safety and an ordered community life and should be consistent with the upholding of the inherent dignity of the juvenile and the fundamental objective of institutional care, namely, instilling a sense of justice, self-respect and respect for the basic rights of every person.

67. All disciplinary measures constituting cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment shall be strictly prohibited, including corporal punishment, placement in a dark cell, closed or solitary confinement or any other punishment that may compromise the physical or mental health of the juvenile concerned. The reduction of diet and the restriction or denial of contact with family members should be prohibited for any purpose. Labour should always be viewed as an educational tool and a means of promoting the self-respect of the juvenile in preparing him or her for return to the community and should not be imposed as a disciplinary sanction. No juvenile should be sanctioned more than once for the same disciplinary infraction. Collective sanctions should be prohibited.

68. Legislation or regulations adopted by the competent administrative authority should establish norms concerning the following, taking full account of the fundamental characteristics, needs and rights of juveniles:

(a) Conduct constituting a disciplinary offence;

(b) Type and duration of disciplinary sanctions that may be inflicted;

(c) The authority competent to impose such sanctions;

(d) The authority competent to consider appeals.

69. A report of misconduct should be presented promptly to the competent authority, which should decide on it without undue delay. The competent authority should conduct a thorough examination of the case.

70. No juvenile should be disciplinarily sanctioned except in strict accordance with the terms of the law and regulations in force. No juvenile should be sanctioned unless he or she has been informed of the alleged infraction in a manner appropriate to the full understanding of the juvenile, and given a proper opportunity of presenting his or her defence, including the right of appeal to a competent impartial authority. Complete records should be kept of all disciplinary proceedings.

71. No juveniles should be responsible for disciplinary functions except in the supervision of specified social, educational or sports activities or in self-government programmes.

#### M. Inspection and complaints

72. Qualified inspectors or an equivalent duly constituted authority not belonging to the administration of the facility should be empowered to conduct inspections on a regular basis and to undertake unannounced inspections on their own initiative, and should enjoy full guarantees of independence in the exercise of this function. Inspectors should have unrestricted access to all persons employed by or working in any facility where juveniles are or may be deprived of their liberty, to all juveniles and to all records of such facilities.

73. Qualified medical officers attached to the inspecting authority or the public health service should participate in the inspections, evaluating compliance with the rules concerning the physical environment, hygiene, accommodation, food, exercise and medical services, as well as any other aspect or conditions of institutional life that affect the physical and mental health of juveniles. Every juvenile should have the right to talk in confidence to any inspecting officer.

74. After completing the inspection, the inspector should be required to submit a report on the findings. The report should include an evaluation of the compliance of the detention facilities with the present rules and relevant provisions of national law, and recommendations regarding any steps considered necessary to ensure compliance with them. Any facts discovered by an inspector that appear to indicate that a violation of legal provisions concerning the rights of juveniles or the operation of a juvenile detention facility has occurred should be communicated to the competent authorities for investigation and prosecution.

75. Every juvenile should have the opportunity of making requests or complaints to the director of the detention facility and to his or her authorized representative.

76. Every juvenile should have the right to make a request or complaint, without censorship as to substance, to the central administration, the judicial authority or other proper authorities through approved channels, and to be informed of the response without delay.

77. Efforts should be made to establish an independent office (ombudsman) to receive and investigate complaints made by juveniles deprived of their liberty and to assist in the achievement of equitable settlements.

78. Every juvenile should have the right to request assistance from family members, legal counsellors, humanitarian groups or others where possible, in order to make a complaint. Illiterate juveniles should be provided with assistance should they need to use the services of public or private agencies and organizations which provide legal counsel or which are competent to receive complaints.

#### N. Return to the community

79. All juveniles should benefit from arrangements designed to assist them in returning to society, family life, education or employment after release. Procedures, including early release, and special courses should be devised to this end.

80. Competent authorities should provide or

ensure services to assist juveniles in re-establishing themselves in society and to lessen prejudice against such juveniles. These services should ensure, to the extent possible, that the juvenile is provided with suitable residence, employment, clothing, and sufficient means to maintain himself or herself upon release in order to facilitate successful reintegration. The representatives of agencies providing such services should be consulted and should have access to juveniles while detained, with a view to assisting them in their return to the community.

#### V. PERSONNEL

81. Personnel should be qualified and include a sufficient number of specialists such as educators, vocational instructors, counsellors, social workers, psychiatrists and psychologists. These and other specialist staff should normally be employed on a permanent basis. This should not preclude part-time or volunteer workers when the level of support and training they can provide is appropriate and beneficial. Detention facilities should make use of all remedial, educational, moral, spiritual, and other resources and forms of assistance that are appropriate and available in the community, according to the individual needs and problems of detained juveniles.

82. The administration should provide for the careful selection and recruitment of every grade and type of personnel, since the proper management of detention facilities depends on their integrity, humanity, ability and professional capacity to deal with juveniles, as well as personal suitability for the work.

83. To secure the foregoing ends, personnel should be appointed as professional officers with adequate remuneration to attract and retain suitable women and men. The personnel of juvenile detention facilities should be continually encouraged to fulfill their duties and obligations in a humane, committed, professional, fair and efficient manner, to conduct themselves at all times in such a way as to deserve and gain the respect of the juveniles, and to provide juveniles with a positive role model and perspective.

84. The administration should introduce forms of organization and management that facilitate communications between different categories of staff in each detention facility so as to enhance co-operation between the various services engaged in the care of juveniles, as well as between staff and the administration, with a view to ensuring that staff directly in contact with juveniles are able to function in conditions favourable to the efficient fulfillment of their duties.

85. The personnel should receive such training as will enable them to carry out their responsibilities effectively, in particular training in child psychology, child welfare and international standards and norms of human rights and the rights of the child, including the present rules. The personnel should maintain and improve their knowledge and professional capacity by attending courses of in-service training, to be organized at suitable intervals throughout their career.

86. The director of a facility should be adequately qualified for his or her task, with administrative ability and suitable training and experience, and should carry out his or her duties on a full-time basis.

87. In the performance of their duties, personnel of detention facilities should respect and protect the human dignity and fundamental human rights of all juveniles, in particular, as follows:

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(a) No member of the detention facility or institutional personnel may inflict, instigate or tolerate any act of torture or any form of harsh, cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment, punishment, correction or discipline under any pretext or circumstance whatsoever;

(b) All personnel should rigorously oppose and combat any act of corruption, reporting it without delay to the competent authorities;

(c) All personnel should respect the present Rules. Personnel who have reason to believe that a serious violation of the present Rules has

occurred or is about to occur should report the matter to their superior authorities or organs vested with reviewing or remedial power;

(d) All personnel should ensure the full protection of the physical and mental health of juveniles, including protection from physical, sexual and emotional abuse and exploitation, and should take immediate action to secure medical attention whenever required;

(e) All personnel should respect the right of the juvenile to privacy, and in particular should safeguard all confidential matters

concerning juveniles or their families learned as a result of their professional capacity;

(f) All personnel should seek to minimize any differences between life inside and outside the detention facility which tend to lessen due respect for the dignity of juveniles as human beings.

Source: <http://www.eccourts.org/.../international-in-trustments-in-juvenile-justice-by-jean-zer>

## POLICEMAN STRIPS TAXI DRIVER NAKED FOR ALLEGEDLY VIOLATING TRAFFIC LAW



A policeman stationed at the Anyaa police station in Accra, Ghana, on Tuesday, May 2, physically assaulted a taxi driver for allegedly jumping red traffic light.

The policeman Gabriel Tabiri accosted the cab driver identified as one Kwabena Danso at a Fuel Station after allegedly jumping the light and ended up tearing apart his clothing.

"Frequent users of that Anyaa stretch of the highway know that particular traffic light is faulty. It is usually on amber or switches to red and within a blink of an eye it turns green then amber then red," Danso explained to StarFM and has been corroborated by drivers who use that road often.

"I was surprised the police officer came all the way to the filling station and said I was under arrest. I explained to him that the light doesn't

work and it's a fact and even pointed it to him, but he insisted I have flouted traffic regulations.

"He kept pressing that we should go to the police station and I said he should sit in my car so we go together. However, he refused on the basis that there was someone already in the car. But I told him I can't walk to the station when there is a vehicle which could make our journey faster and easier.

"This resulted in an altercation and suddenly he held my shirt and began pulling and squeezing me by the neck. I restrained myself because of his uniform, but he went beyond his boundaries when I realized my dress was torn in the process. I was expecting him to give me some level of respect when it was left with my boxer shorts on, but he didn't and kept stretching that too until I was stark naked in public," Danso narrated his ordeal.



**According to the civilian;  
“when I realised I was being disgraced, I decided to defend myself and that resulted in a physical brawl before I could gain my freedom. It took the intervention of the boys around to free me from his grips.”**

Danso had to go to a nearby shop to get a new attire to cover his nakedness. He said he is currently suffering some pains on his forehead, chest and neck after struggling with the police officer. The law enforcement agent left the scene and never pursued the case again, Danso added.

He has since reported the case to the Police Intelligence and Professional Standards (PIPS) Directorate.

Source: [Lindaikaji's blogs](#)



# EDUCATION IN PERIL: DURUMI II PRIMARY SCHOOL ROOFS BLOWN OFF

By Promise Izugbara



Photo by Promise Izugbara

We first reported this in December, 2016. But nothing has been done about it. We call on the FCT Administration and other authorities concerned to take immediate action.

## REFORM THE PRISON NOW.

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incarceration as provided for in the ACJ Act, 2015, adding that most people are in prison for alleged offences that do not warrant imprisonment, and others for offences they neither committed nor knew anything about. He gave an example of an elderly woman who is standing trial in Makurdi Prison for killing her only son through witchcraft and other women who are detained in Kirikiri Female Prison in Lagos for begging. He urged women rights groups in the country to defend the rights and dignity of women

in prison, saying that most of them are innocent of the alleged offences.

Responding to the question on the abuse of women in prison by some warders as reported in the media, he said that the same protection that exists for women outside the prison applies fully for women in prison, and that any prison or law enforcement officer found to have abused a woman must be made to face the full wrath of the law.

Mr. Uhaa condemned the payment of money to prison officers by inmates in order to be taken to court as reported in the media, and called on the Prison System and the Minister of Interior to investigate the allegations and punish those found guilty of the practice. He wondered while such practice will take place when the Federal Government recently approved the purchase of over 300 vehicles to prisons country-wide to deal with the problem of lack of vehicles to take inmates to courts.

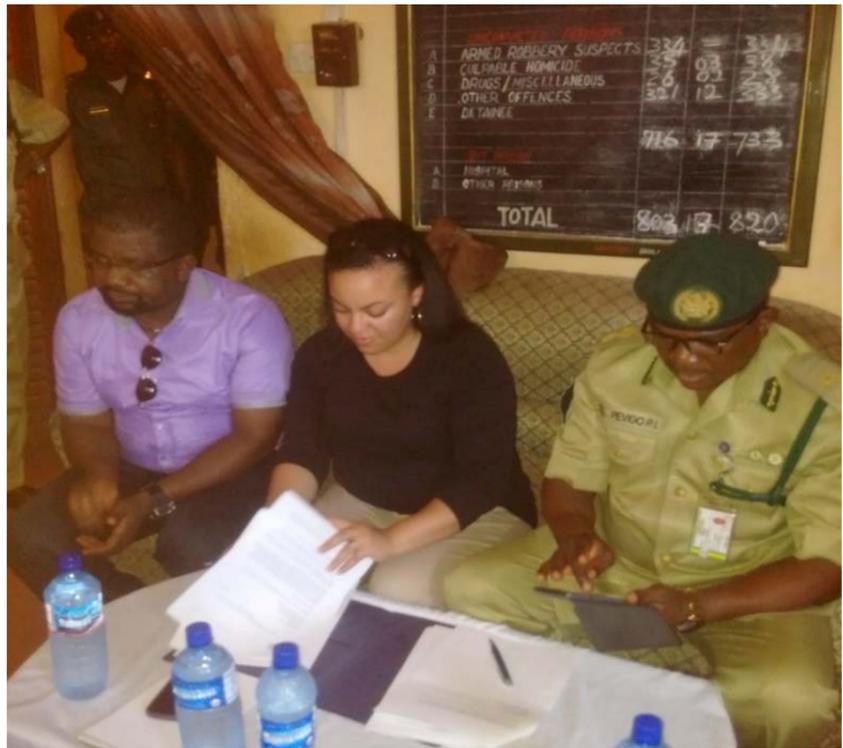
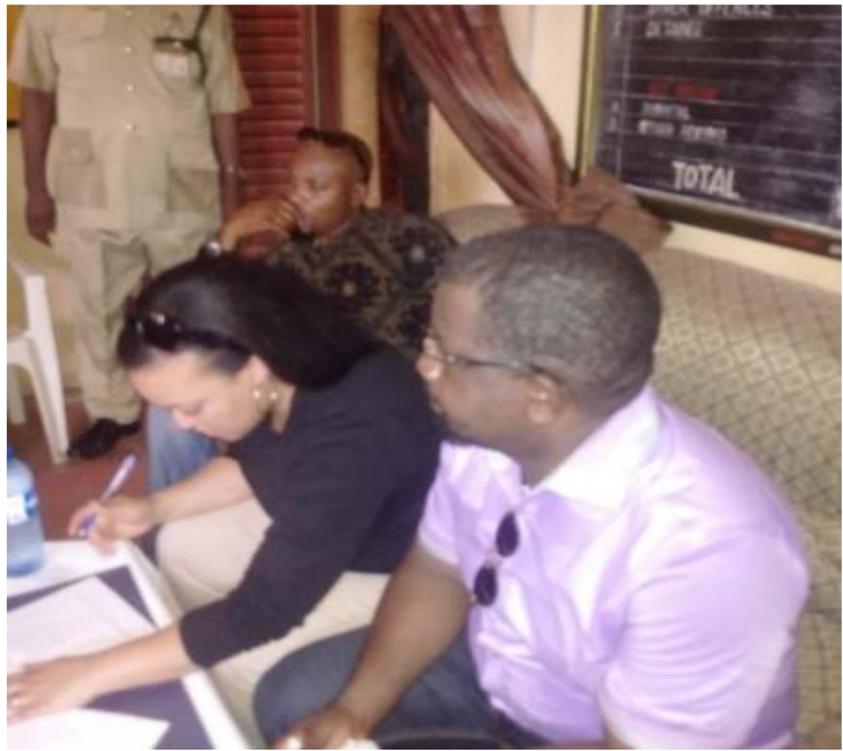
## DONATION OF EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS TO PRISONS IN BENUE STATE.



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# DONATION OF EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS TO PRISONS IN BENUE STATE.

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