

Facilitating Lactation Among Incarcerated Women

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prison
birth
project

Healthy babies. Bonded mothers.



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Objectives

- Female Incarceration
 - Oklahoma
- Lactation Programs in Corrections
- Costs and Benefits
- In Her Own Words

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700% The rate of increase of female incarceration over 30 years



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75% The proportion of incarcerated women who are mothers. Two-thirds are mothers to children 18 and younger.



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\$13,890

Median Income Of Women Prior To Incarceration



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90%

The proportion of incarcerated women who experienced physical or sexual trauma early in life.



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48 Hours

The typical length of time incarcerated mothers have with their babies before separation.



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Females Incarcerated in Oklahoma

- Mental diagnoses
- Majority non-violent
- Majority first time convictions
- High rate of intimate partner violence
- Nationally, 94% of women who are incarcerated are released eventually

Recidivism

- Connection to children and family members
- Major depressive disorders

Lactation Programs In Corrections



Life Saving Benefits of Breastmilk

- Reduces risks of infant mortality (death in first year of life)
 - SIDS
 - Gastrointestinal infections
 - Respiratory Infections
 - Meningitis
 - Leukemia
 - Provides important immune protection
- Reduces chronic illnesses which are costly
 - Diabetes, asthma, ear infections
- Reduces maternal risks of
 - Breast Cancer
 - Ovarian Cancer
 - Osteoporosis
 - Hypertension



Practical Benefits of Lactation Program



- Safety and Security
 - Trauma informed care - evidence based
 - Better mental health outcomes = better behavior
 - Better hormonal regulation among mothers = better behavior
- Health cost savings per child
 - One study using 1995 health care costs estimated \$475 in first year of life per child*
- Health cost savings per mother
- Increased likelihood of recruiting future breastfeeders
- Prison culture change
- Along with other interventions, increased connection to children = lower recidivism rates



Costs of Lactation Program

- Implementation - \$4100
 - Space
 - Pumps
 - Sink
 - Lockers
 - Freezer
- Yearly maintenance costs- \$5200
 - Staff time
 - Shipping
 - Supplies
- For a smaller jail, these costs would be much lower, and many of the supplies can be donated by community



*Thomas M. Ball and Anne L. Wright
Pediatrics April 1999, 103 (Supplement 1) 870-876;

