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PARENTAL INCARCERATION: THE CHILDS RIGHTS AND NEEDS

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A Capstone Project submitted in partial fulfillment of the

requirements for the Master of Science Degree in

Counselor Education at

Winona State University

Spring, 2019

Winona State University
College of Education
Counselor Education Department

CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

CAPSTONE PROJECT

Project Title

This is to certify that the Capstone Project of
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Has been approved by the faculty advisor and the CE 695 – Capstone Project
Course Instructor in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
Master of Science Degree in
Counselor Education

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Abstract

The population of minor children with an incarcerated parent has grown by 80% since 1991 (Glaze & Maruschak, 2008). Often referred to as the forgotten population, children of incarcerated parents can exhibit many setbacks, socially and psychologically. The effects of the trauma related to having a parent incarcerated include isolating functions, anxiety, low concentration in school, problems sleeping, juvenile incarceration, criminal behavior, depression, and vulnerability towards peer pressure. Without proper intervention, these children have a 70% chance of following their parents into incarceration which leads to a trend as intergenerational incarceration. When a parent is incarcerated, the child faces several changes in their life which are present in the home, community, and school setting. The changes these children face can cause a frightening range of challenges; coping with a loss of a caregiver, adjusting to new home environments, familial, economic hardships, change in the primary caregiver, as well as developmental regression such as bedwetting.

To counteract the traumatic impacts of this forgotten population in the school system, school counselors can provide several data-based intervention strategies. To begin, implementing group-based interventions that focus on trauma. For example, Springer, Lynch, and Rubin (2000) created a solution-focused group that used techniques from solution-focused theorists, mutual-aid interventions, and techniques that focused on enhancing self-esteem. Secondly, a prevention program can be used to address behaviors that are linked to delinquency, violence, and socially withdrawn behaviors. In accordance, there have been many revelations in how to help this population; the ones mentioned are only a few that have been developed.

Within the context of this paper, others, as well as the effects of incarcerated parents, will be discussed.

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Introduction

The United States currently holds the world's highest incarceration rate with over 2.2 million people in prisons and jails. This represents an increase of over 500% over the past 40 years (Glaze & Maruschak, 2008). An often-overlooked set of data are the cascading effect of incarceration on the children. It is frequently underreported, but it is believed that nearly two million children have at least one parent in prison or jail (U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2000). These children can exhibit emotional effects of parental incarceration by isolating themselves, anxiety, trouble creating interpersonal relationships, concentration problems, sleep difficulties, being withdrawn from friends and family members, substance use or dependence, and feelings of shame, secrecy, sadness, anger, guilt, fear, and depression. At the current trend, this population is threatened with long-term psychological and emotional functioning problems (Manning, 2011). Additionally, if there are no interventions, 70% of this population will follow the footsteps of their parents and begin a trend known as intergenerational incarceration (Huebner and Gustafson, 2007).

The result of the psychological risks associated with incarcerated parents, the cascading impacts associated with school performance, and mental health are factors that need to be acknowledged. The effects of these risks can impact the child's ability to concentrate academically which would cause lower grades and a possibility of dropping out, lower attendance as a result of the stigma related to having a parent arrested, and the mental health impacts that result in higher anxiety, depression, and at-risk behaviors (Lopez & Bhat, 2007).

Huebner and Gustafson (2007) found that parental incarceration is responsible for increasing the child's chances of future criminal justice involvement by three-fold and that these children are three times more likely to be incarcerated than children without an incarcerated

parent. This conclusion was confirmed by a meta-analysis done by Murray and Farrington (2008), and they added that the effects were intensified when the child did not have additional protective factors such as supportive communities, therapeutic outlets, or strong familiar supports.

Children of incarcerated parents experience many material and emotional insecurity. They are more likely to receive public assistance, interrupted phone or utility service due to non-payment, and residential insecurity through missed rental or mortgage payments (Geller, Garfinkel, Cooper, & Mincy, 2009). These insecurities show the more considerable disadvantage of the socioeconomic status of the United States and the general population of these children. Additionally, after parental incarceration, these conditions begin to worsen, and the arrest can rip to shreds the family. Recent research state that children of incarcerated parents are less likely to live in a home with both parents and are placed in foster care, indefinitely, while the incarcerated parents are placed in distant correctional facilities. The distance of these facilities creates travel and visitation difficulties for families with limited financial and transportation options available (Geller, Garfinkel, Cooper, & Mincy, 2009; Manning, 2011).

As this population continues to become unnoticed, the life-long effect of parental incarceration will impact the populace in an everlasting scope of their lives and interrelationships. To begin, this forgotten population falls through the cracks of the establishments of school, government, and community. There has been very little research on what community health agencies and school counselors can do to help during these traumatic life events, but through research, there have been recent studies that narrow the scope of interventions and community/government abilities to help (King, 2002).

Review of Literature

The Scope of Parental Incarceration

Previously, parental incarceration affected the lives of only a tiny fraction of Americans, but it has increased dramatically since 1999 (Glaze & Maruschak, 2008). Children who face parental incarceration experience an increased risk for behavior disruptions, academic failures, and unhealthy coping strategies later in development. The research gathered on the effects of parental incarceration concur that the child experiences many behavioral and emotional problems throughout the incarcerated and reunification periods. According to Simmons (2000), several small-scale studies suggest that the effects of parental arrest and incarceration on a child's development are profound.

Because of the federal and state governments inability to help this population, the children have been relatively invisible. The corrections systems view male and female inmates as undeserving of having contact with their children (Jefferies, Menghraj, & Hairson, 2001). Although a small number of children are in foster care (5 to 10%; U.S. DOJ, 2000), the children of inmates are not considered the responsibility of any traditional governmental organization, such as child well-fare, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration (SAMHSA), or the juvenile court (Eddy & Reid, 2002).

The number of female inmates who were the primary caregivers for their children has drastically increased over the past two decades. The crimes that mothers were involved in were mostly non-violent crimes that include drug use, prostitution, and theft (Miller, 2006). This data shows that the arrests of these mothers have contributed to an unprecedented number of children

with an incarcerated parent within the school system. The population of minor children with an incarcerated parent has grown by 80% since 1991 (Glaze & Maruschak, 2008).

Concerns: Children of the Incarcerated

As a result of their arrest, incarcerated parents expose their children to profound psychosocial difficulties (Murray & Farrington, 2005). Huebner and Gustafson (2007) state that the most substantial risk is the probability of their children to continue the cycle of the intergenerational cycle of crime and incarceration. Other risks include academic failure, mental health deterioration, alcohol or drug dependency, pregnancy, feelings of sadness, anger, guilt, fear, and depression; behaviors that these children can exhibit include truancy, sleep difficulty, concentration problems, developmental regression, aggressive, reactive behaviors, premature termination of relationships, criminal behavior, disorganization, distant behaviors, and attention deficiencies.

The outcome of these behaviors, such as truancy and attention difficulties, is an academic failure, inability to create attachments with others primarily with peers, disciplinary tendencies, an ability to recover from new traumatic events, and incarceration (Simmons, 2000). The research on these outcomes has shown that the traumatic experience of having an incarcerated parent, either mother or father, has an everlasting impact on the development of the child. Specifically, it continues the intragenerational incarceration trend (Simmons, 2000). This trend states that having a parental figure with an incarceration record increases the risk that their children will end up in either a federal or state penitentiary, and the children's children will follow the pattern of incarceration (Mayo-Swimeley & Bertilson, 2009).

The consequences from the effects of parental incarceration, in the school setting, may include the child to have feelings of abandonment and lack of trust with adults. These feelings can manifest into actions of neglect towards school rules, classroom instructions, and the safety of others. According to Mazza (2002), the adverse conditions during the parental incarceration period (before, during, or after) may create emotional trauma in children. Additionally, the environmental risk factors coupled with stressors outside of the home can cause children an inability to cope, have maladaptive behaviors to stressful events, and lower school attendance (Adalist-Estrin, 2006). Researchers have determined that children of incarcerated parents are more likely to exhibit externalizing behaviors such as aggression and hyperactivity and internalizing behaviors that include depression and social withdrawal (Kinner, Alti, Najman & Williams, 2007).

Poehlmann (2005) interviewed caregivers and incarcerated mothers regarding their children. The mothers and caregivers described their children as detached, apprehensive, disoriented and depressed. Coupled with the increased vulnerability to peer pressure, this can lead to negative and risky behaviors that lead to truancy, juvenile incarceration, and criminal behavior (Hanlon, Blatchley, Bennet-Sears, O'Grady, Rose, & Callaman, 2005). Additionally, children often struggle with the separation after parental incarceration (Poehlmann, 2005). As described by Arditti (2005, p. 253), "The separation of a parent represents the social death of the one loved one, in turn, other family members may experience an intense sense of loss." Children with incarcerated mothers can show their grief or feelings of despair with crying and sadness, developmental regressions, and sleeping problems (Poehlmann, 2005). "The developmental regressions include thumb-sucking, loss of personal hygiene, and primarily lack of toilet training" (Poehlmann, 2005, p. 687)

"Consistent with their high-risk status, most (63%) children were classified as having insecure relationships with mothers and caregivers" (Poehlmann, 2005 p. 679). This is more prevalent in cases of maternal incarceration than paternal, because mothers, most of the time, are the primary caregiver (Dallaire, 2007). As the child develops the sense of self through early family interactions and experiences, the traumatic family life events prevent meaningful relationships (Toth, Maughan, Manly, Spagnola, & Cicchetti, 2002). The continued separation of the mother from the child only enhances this inability of the child to create healthy social and emotional developmental pathways.

When a parent is incarcerated, the child faces several changes in their life; these changes occur from school movements, home life, and quality of care. According to Kampfner (1995), many children report not having someone to talk to about these changes. After the incarceration, the new caregivers bring a host of behaviors that influence the child. Some caregivers do not share information about the incarceration with educators and will not allow the child to speak about their parent's incarceration (Nesmith & Ruhland, 2008). Relatives are likely not prepared to care for the child's needs. Grandparents or extended family members often experience stress associated with caring for the incarcerated parent's child.

Quality of care that children receive may strongly impact how children cope with parental incarceration (Myers, Smarsh, Amlund-Hagen, & Kennon, 1999). In many situations, the incarceration leads to a single parent household. The children's abilities to adjust to the restructuring of the family depends heavily on their mothers coping skills (Lowenstein, 1986). To give an example, the children's maladjustment to the father's incarceration includes lower school performance, more unsatisfactory peer and adult relationships, criminal behaviors; this

was linked with younger mothers that had lower education achievement, inadequate family support, and a lack of coping skills (Lowenstein, 1986).

Children who witness their parents' arrests experience trauma that can cause them to view law enforcement officials in a negative light, seeing them as crooks instead of protectors (Murray & Farrington, 2005). Unlike adults who might put their emotions inside when experiencing violence, children are more likely to express their feelings outward in an attempt to regain control of their world.

Clopton and East (2008) concluded that residential instability is an issue for this forgotten population. Over one-third of the children attending a summer camp for youth with a mother in prison reported having moved in the past year and have changed school (Mackintosh, Myers, & Kennon, 2006). Phillips and colleagues concurred with Mackintosh, as they found that children who have mothers in the criminal justice system were significantly more likely to have experienced four or more moves in five years (Phillips, Erkanli, Keeler, Costello, & Angold, 2006). The instability at home paired with the uncertainty of being reunified with parental figures causes behavioral and emotional disturbances.

Simmons (2000) determined by caregivers surveyed, 30% of children with incarcerated parents experienced learning and school problems, and 28% experienced behavioral problems. The behavioral consequences include emotional withdrawal, low self-esteem, failure at school, anti-social behavior, and delinquency. When compared to their peers, children of incarcerated parents face a higher level of developmental insults, lower level of family support, and higher poverty (Johnston, 2006).

Children with incarcerated parents face a frightening range of challenges. Smith, Krisman, Strozier, & Marley (2004) examined when mothers are incarcerated; these children are more likely to cope with the loss of their primary caregiver while simultaneously adjusting to new home environments, such as living with relatives or in foster homes. Other caregivers include the other parent, grandparents, and foster homes. Moreover, these children are vulnerable to an array of negative emotions which include, sadness, anxiety, fear, anger, depression, and guilt (Adalist-Estrin, 2003). In addition to the negative emotions, these children exhibit problematic behaviors that include defiance, aggression, anti-social behavior, trouble sleeping, and attachment disorders (Simmons, 2000). Lastly, the population of children who are unable to recover from the trauma as a result of parental incarceration often display aggressive behaviors and problems in attention and concentration. This leads to academic and disciplinary problems in school, which generally appear in ages nine and ten (Johnston, 2006).

Racial Discrepancies of Incarceration

As with any population, the children and families cultural and racial identities, as well as the world view they share, are essential in understanding the society's view of incarceration and criminal behavior. As society's view of incarceration and criminal behavior may be different depending on culture and racial identities, the disproportionate rate of incarceration of minorities in the United States can easily be viewed. Krisberg and Engel-Temin (2007) share that "African American children are nine times more likely to have an incarcerated parent than white children. Latino Children are three times more likely to have an imprisoned parent than white children" (2007, p.185).

African American and Latino youth have higher arrest rates and commit higher homicides than any other group in the United States (Pattillo, Weiman, and Western, 2004). Children of parents who are in prison tend to show negative behaviors which can lead to imprisonment. These children are likely to belong to lower Socio-economic status (SES) and live in areas that have a high incarceration rate and minority population.

The discrepancy between ethnic groups that Krisberg and Engel-Temin (2007) discovered has grown with the parental incarceration rates over the past decades. With higher populations of African American and Latino Americans in prison, one can only presume that the population of children with an incarcerated parent has followed the growing trend. This, in turn, can allow school counselors to observe a higher portion of the school population to show maladaptive coping strategies, emotional turmoil, and academic difficulties (Simmons, 2000).

Burdens of the Family

A variety of damaging family and environmental conditions can affect children's ability to develop resiliency when facing the traumatic experience of parental incarceration (Jaffee, Caspi, Moffitt, Polo-Tomas, & Taylor, 2007). These factors include poverty, exposure to violence, child abuse, substance abuse and mental illness (Dallaire, 2007). Often time these factors are present before the parent's arrests and imprisonment.

The potential effect of incarceration on a family's well-being is thoroughly established. Financial support is dependent on residential and custody status. The life of the family goes into a tailspin once a parental figure is incarcerated. The impacts range throughout the family unit and affect the caregivers. The caregiver of the new home environment may exhibit changes in parenting style, financial stability, and family structure changes. The effects of incarceration on

the family are discussed to bring light on the traumatizing event of parental incarceration (Hairson, 2007).

Economic research estimated that the earnings and employment affected by incarceration were dramatic (Kling, 2006). As a result of the impact on finances, marital stress and social stigma placed couples at severe risk of divorce and separation (Lopoo, Pettit & Western, 2006). These researchers found that it is plausible to correlate incarceration with the growing inequality across American families, this joint event among the poor impacts more than half of African American children with low-education parents (Wildeman, 2009). According to Petersilia (2003) and Western, Lopoo, and Pettit (2006), the incarcerated population is young, minority, and poorly educated. This puts the children of these parents at an even more disadvantage when compared to their peers.

The incarceration of parents places extreme stress on families and makes parenting more difficult. Evidence from Martinez and Forgatch (2001) indicate that positive parenting practices can mediate the impact on the child's behavior such as academic functioning, behavioral disruptions, and emotional adjustment. The results from Capaldi and Patterson (1991) suggest that the effect of transitions on anti-social behavior was impacted through maternal behavior and unskilled parenting practices. Furthermore, the incarcerating of parents' places stress on the methods of parenting, which in turn impact children's behavior, emotional adjustment, and academic success.

The family structure can change in several ways during maternal or paternal incarceration. During maternal incarceration, 25% of children live with father; children typically live with a grandmother (51%), some live with another relative (20%), a few live with a family

friend (4%), or in foster care (11%); (DOJ, 2000). Additionally, “when a mother is incarcerated, children experience at least one change in placement or caregiver (Gabel & Johnston, 1995, p. 83).” When compared with paternal incarceration, children commonly live with their mother. Furthermore, when children live with a grandparent-caregiver, the family will be burdened with financial problems that cause devastating effects on the family unit. As most aging adults live on a fixed income, this limits the children. Children may worry about the health of their caregiver in which can limit the quality of care a child receives (Dallaire, Ciccone, & Wilson, 2010, p. 284).

Caregivers after incarceration often receive little to no services and funding from governmental and social agencies. Though children exhibit, quite often, emotional and physical behaviors to the change in family structure, the limited financial resources that new caregivers receive can cause the quality of life for children to lower dramatically because the caregivers tend to live in unsafe or dangerous neighborhoods (Chipman, Wells & Johnson, 2002). “Kinship caregivers may face emotional, physical, and financial difficulties when they take on the care of an incarcerated relative’s children” (Young & Smith, 2000 p. 134). Besides, grandparents often deal with additional emotional and physical stress when the child has physical disabilities, academic troubles or developmental delays (Grant, 2000). These struggles may cause caregivers to harbor negative attitudes towards incarcerated parents, and this leads to ambivalence in who the child is more loyal to (Adalist-Estrin, 2006).

Group Work and Intervention Strategies

Group Intervention

Although there is countless relevant research on children's development of problem behaviors and parenting interventions, the literature has not been used systematically to help these children. However, the literature has provided, caregivers, school counselors, administrators, and other caring adults with information about how to care for this high risk, but neglected population. Some strategies to positively influence this group can include group work, parental visitations, and school-based prevention programs.

Despite the sharp increase in incarcerated parents, there are a few programs that are targeting the needs of these children in school settings. Springer, Lynch, and Rubin (2000) created a solution-focused group that lasted six weeks. "Using techniques from solution-focused theorists and mutual-aid interventions, they delivered their group plan to elementary school students and focused on enhancing self-esteem" (Lopez & Bhat 2007, p. 144). Conducting pre- and post-tests measured self-esteem of participants and resulted in significantly increased scores on self-esteem.

It has been stated that groups are essential in improving the need for social support and providing structured settings. The group experience provided students with social support where they could safely discuss thoughts and feelings regarding the incarceration of a loved one (Springer, Lynch, and Rubin, 2000). As Yalom (1995) states, establishing a sense that members were not alone in their suffering would be provided in a group format. "The person-centered group was created for third through fifth-grade students that were struggling to cope, displaying

negative reactive behavior such as defiance, aggression, antisocial behavior, or loss of self-esteem after the parent incarceration (Lopez & Bhat 2007, p. 143).”

As leadership style is a crucial variable regarding groups, the literature cautions that support groups are not a lightweight intervention and the group requires leadership that is skillful and experienced from the leaders (Johnston, 2005). It takes skilled leadership to facilitate a support group without bringing up traumatizing or retraumatizing memories or information of group members. The facilitator or co-facilitators should remember to provide structure, consistency and firm limits for groups; this provides members the environment that they lack at home. “Many children lack consistency having moved so many times from caregiver to caregiver and school to school, many home environments that have little structure or support” (Lopez & Bhat 2007, p. 145).

As the population of children of incarcerated parents has increased and continue to expand exponentially, school counselors and other school personnel have to address this group of students. The school staff must provide information and responsive services to assist this forgotten population of students. The research from Lopez and Bhat (2007) outline a structure and theoretically based intervention plan that benefits the lives of children of the incarcerated.

The group focused on self-esteem and provided an environment where children of incarcerated can share feelings, experiences, and supportive relationships. “The reviewed journal notes provided feedback on the group showed that they had found the experience helpful, the responses were heartening, and showed an improvement to adjustment” (Lopez & Bhat 2007, p. 151). The researchers provided a breakthrough method that school personnel can do to

address the needs of the children of incarcerated parents. This should be considered when working with the children of the incarcerated population.

Linking the Interests of Families and Teachers (LIFT)

Linking the Interests of Families and Teachers (LIFT) is a prevention program that was designed to address behaviors that are believed to be the most relevant during the development of adolescent delinquent and violent behaviors such as child oppositional, defiance, and socially withdrawn behavior (Eddy, Reid, & Fetrow 2000). There are three components to LIFT, classroom-based child social and problem skills training, playground-based behavior modification, and group-based delivered training. According to Eddy, Reid, and Fetrow (2000), during the three year follow up analysis the intervention delayed the time that participants first patterned alcohol use, first marijuana use, and first police arrest.

The classroom component has classroom instructors meet with students for one hour twice a week for ten weeks. Each session has a general format: short lecture and role play on social and problem-solving skills, a small and large group skills practice, unstructured free play on the playground, and skills review and daily rewards. The lessons for the following week include a class problem-solving session and a review accepted behavior and problem-solving skills (Eddy, Reid, & Fetrow 2000)

The playground component takes place halfway through the free play portion of the classroom phase. By playing the Good Behavior Game (GBG; Barrish, Saunders, & Wolf, 1969), children are actively encouraged to create positive peer relations. The children are split into two groups, in the classroom, and engage in various situations that demonstrate particular problem solving and prosocial skills. When students demonstrate positive behavior, the

members earn rewards for themselves, the entire class, and their group (Eddy, Reid, & Fetrow 2000).

The immediate impact of LIFT showed substantial changes in targeted child behaviors. To date, research has shown that children of parents incarcerated exhibit aggressive, anti-social, and withdrawn behaviors. “A significant impact was shown in three domains relevant to future youth problem behavior: child physical aggression toward classmates on the school playground, parent aversive behavior during family problem-solving discussions, and teacher impressions of child positive behaviors with classmates” (Eddy, Reid, & Fetrow 2000, p. 171).

Access to Literature

While a school’s educational staff has to create an inclusive environment, staff should create trust between themselves and the caretakers. “Educators should be aware of the issues associated with parental incarceration, their personal views about the issue, and how they portray individuals who commit criminal offenses” (Clopton & East, 2008, p. 197). Nesmith and Ruhland (2008) suggest having developmentally appropriate information about incarceration may allow them to open if they are having this experience.

Having books available for children to read about having a parent in prison is one method of supporting children and families. Literature can be used as a gateway to allow children to be encouraged to share about their situation; these books potentially can remove the social stigma that comes with having a parent incarcerated (Clopton & East, 2008). Children can worry about how to answer questions about their parent or feel discouraged about sharing family information in class which leads to anti-social and disruptive behaviors. There is an abundance of children literature that can relieve the stress that is shared by this population. To name a few, they are;

When Andy's Father Went to Prison by Martha Whitmore, Or *Gracie Aunt* by Jacqueline Woodson, *Nine Candles* by Maria Testa, and *Far Apart, Close in Heart: Being a Family when a Loved One is Incarcerated* by Becky Birtha.

Many programs that target this goal and to maintain a bond between parent and child. One such program is called Aunt Mary's Storybook Project which began in 1993 (Clopton & East, 2008). This involves mothers who pick out books for children and record themselves reading the book. The book and audiotape are then sent to the child. Another program is Fathers Read created by Journeying Together, Inc. The program sends books to children of incarcerated parents every month (Clopton & East, 2008).

Visitation in Prison

Many families see inmates, and research shows that consistent visits in prison can be helpful for children and parents (Reed & Reed, 1997).

Contact visits allow children and parents to interact with each other physically, often in a designated visiting room. Some facilities offer contact visits as the standard form of visiting for all incarcerated people, but it is more commonly offered specifically to parents as part of a larger family strengthening program. Extended family visits allow children and immediate family members longer visits, which may last overnight in facilities designated for this purpose (Cramer, Goff, Peterson, & Sandstrom, 2017, p. 3).

The research on the effectiveness of visitation is limited, but many scholars believe that these visits that are placed in supportive, safe, and child-friendly environments are the best option to help most families mitigate the traumatic impacts of parental incarceration (Cramer, Goff, Peterson, & Sandstrom, 2017). Hairson (2007), believes that spending time together as a family

through play, discussions, or sharing meals can help mitigate the child's feelings of abandonment and anxiety. Parents and children can use activities during visitations to work on relationships, establishing new bonds, or repair the relationship that has been strained (Tasca, Mulvey, & Rodriguez, 2016).

When visiting, children and parents are enabled to create or continue healthy relationships during parental incarceration (Newby, 2006). Even though research indicates the benefits of visiting parents in prison, many families do not visit for several reasons. They include that the visitation process can be strenuous and upsetting for both caregivers and children (Arditti, 2003). Many families live across counties, because of the distance, visiting the incarcerated parent more than likely is financially straining as well as physically exhausting for families (Greenberg & Pascual-Leone, 2006).

Prisons typically have long wait periods for a short visit with the parent (Arditti, 2005). The waiting areas are also normally unwelcoming and uncomfortable, which can cause heightened behavior and emotions of the family. Children are not allowed to bring toys and often are asked to be quiet and physically still while waiting to see their incarcerated parent (Arditti, 2005). Additionally, most prisons have regulations that cause children unable to hug their parent during visitations, and this can lead to the child to be upset and confused (Greenberg & Pascual-Leone, 2006). To heighten the stress of visitation, inmates can refuse to see visitors, including their children. Children may not understand why they are not allowed to see their parent and could react by externalizing or internalizing behaviors (Kinner, Alti, Najman & Williams, 2007).

The way children cope through strategies may be counterproductive, verbalizing their thoughts and reactions with counselors can be beneficial. By exploring feelings of anxiety or doubt using toys, drawings, or games, the children can cope with these feelings and decrease the behaviors that result from separation due to incarceration (Kinner, Alti, Najman & Williams, 2007).

Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT)

The effects of incarceration on the interrelationships between the family members, environments, and society all play in effect that incarceration may produce multiplicative harms on children and the family (Arditti, 2005). These harms include strained parent-child relationships, difficulties associated with traveling to and visiting centers, community reactions of reentry, and stigma all have the potential to reinforce and be linked with one another. As a result of parental arrest, children experience various trauma-related symptoms such as depression, attachment issues, emotional withdrawal, sleep disturbances, cognitive delays, and relationship difficulties. These symptoms mirror those found in traumatic grief, loss, and post-traumatic stress disorder (Manning, 2011).

The aim of Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT) is to reduce trauma-related symptomatology in children who experience such symptoms individual and family therapy (Cohen, 2006). According to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration, trauma-focused cognitive behavioral therapy is a therapy that has effective outcomes for some treatment conditions and shows promising for all other conditions within its national registry. In several studies, TF-CBT has shown to reduce trauma symptomatology significantly (Konanur, Muller, Cinamon, Thornback, & Zorzella, 2015). In the meta-analysis

studies of Jenson (2014) and Cohen, Mannarino, Kliethermes, and Murray (2012), showed improved outcomes for PTSD, depression, anxiety, behavioral, cognitive, relationship, and other problems. Arellano (2014) determined that this therapy was effective at treating highly vulnerable populations such as children who are at risk for violence, suicidality, psychosis, and substance abuse. TF-CBT is associated with improved client and caregiver outcomes (Arellano, 2014). TF-CBT has three phases; the first is the stabilization phase; the second, the trauma narrative phase; and the third, the integration or consolidation phase.

During the stabilization phase, the counselor and client discuss the trauma-related events; this usually occurs between sessions one through nine. During nine sessions the client practices mindfulness practices, explore the meaning of the event and focus on behavioral disturbances to accurately identify the client's feelings (Morgan-Mullane, 2017). The mindfulness practices used during these sessions include focused breathing techniques. Breathing techniques can be used to calm down when provoked, and the client would generally result in either a flight or fight response. This regression in the developmental ability to flight or fight is a common occurrence when one experiences trauma, using guided meditation as a useful and effective tool to help regulation skills. This enables the client to recount the trauma and begin to process what they experienced. Cognitive processing is an integral element of this phase (Morgan-Mullane, 2017).

The second phase, trauma narrative, builds off of the first in which the client starts to understand the trauma and experiences that led to the parent being incarcerated. The client is instructed to write about the event of the arrest and what they experienced while separated. Between sessions ten and twelve, the client is instructed to deliver their narrative to the incarcerated parent (Morgan-Mullane, 2017). By sharing their written narrative, the client may experience less severe symptoms of behavior that is associated with trauma. It is vital for the

client to include feelings to add emotional and powerful meaning to it. During this phase, the client can confront their fears and continue to practice the mindfulness practices from phase one (Morgan-Mullane, 2017). One of the biggest goals during this phase is to unpair thoughts, reminders, or discussions of the traumatic event from overwhelming negative emotions such as terror, horror, helplessness, shame, or rage (Cohen, 2006).

The third phase, integration or consolidation, is the final phase of treatment. The client continues to enhance overall communication while simultaneously creating and practicing a safety plan to combat social and emotional behaviors. The sharing process can facilitate trust between the child and caregiver which would enable the client to share true feelings (Morgan-Mullane, 2017).

Conclusion or Discussion

The literature reviewed overwhelmingly suggests that involving the child and the caregiver in joint and individual psychotherapy with outside community resources would provide the necessary interventions to limit the behaviors and stop the intergenerational trend among the population of incarcerated parents. There have been several recent journal articles that allow those in a position to help the insight on how to address the number of impacts of having a parental figure in prison. First and foremost, it is necessary to understand the worldview of the child. This can be done by taking a person-centered approach to counseling sessions. Although children of incarcerated parents face many risks that could increase chances for continuing the cycle of crime and incarceration, several factors can lessen the likelihood of the cascading negative impacts of the traumatic event of having an incarcerated parent.

However, there is a lack of both quantity and quality of research of this population. Future research should incorporate a perspective on development, family process, and comparison groups in longitudinal assessments. What research does not tell us is the impact, in severity, of this event on the child and family. Further tests should be used to help discover if the child's problematic behaviors following the imprisonment of a parental figure are influenced more by traumatic experiences of the event itself, or by the environments of the child's life before incarceration.

Some limitations of the research discussed include small statistical comparisons which show a less reliable study. The insight of problems before the parental incarceration and after,

future research should look into the behaviors of children before the event and after, this would allow a much richer conclusion of the impacts of parental incarceration. Additionally, the association between incarceration and race, researchers and those positioned to help this population need to be aware of issues around culture and acknowledge these differences to maximize therapeutic response.

The research that suggests the implication of interventions and school-wide lesson plans were based on several data points, but mostly they were based on small studies using small groups, one-on-one intervention, and classroom literature. Though they showed promise in helping this forgotten population, additional and larger research must be conducted to understand further what else can benefit them.

In conclusion, there have been strides made in understanding the impacts of the traumatic event of parental incarceration and that research has shown to have the foundation to start making an impact lessening the impacts of this event. Though is a lot to do in research to provide a framework to lessen the effects effectively, the research that has been published delivers remarkable interventions that allow for the need to continue to look for more effective intervention and responses.

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