

# Parental Incarceration and Child Wellbeing

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## An Annotated Bibliography

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## INTRODUCTION

This annotated bibliography focuses on quantitative research on the consequences of paternal and maternal incarceration for children that (1) attempts to control for selection using standard statistical techniques, (2) uses broadly representative data, and (3) differentiates consequences of paternal incarceration from consequences of maternal incarceration. Although this bibliography focuses primarily on research in the United States, a small number of studies using data from European countries are also included (and many additional studies in that vein are also included in the further readings section so that interested readers will be able to read more in this area).

The bibliography is organized as follows: The first section includes descriptive work showing how common paternal and maternal incarceration is and what the characteristics of children with incarcerated parents are. The second section briefly reviews the few studies on maternal incarceration. The third section considers the broader consequences of paternal incarceration for family structure and functioning. The fourth section considers the consequences of paternal incarceration for children who have not yet hit adolescence, and the fifth section considers the consequences of paternal incarceration for adolescents and young adults. All sections have been organized alphabetically, although it might also be appropriate to read the articles by the year in which they were published. I have organized them instead by author so that readers can most easily recognize the contributions of specific authors working in this field. Hyperlinks have been included for all articles, although many of these articles are paywalled.

Although the goal of this annotated bibliography is first and foremost to provide a nearly complete list of quantitative research in this area that relies on broadly representative data and attempts to deal at least partially with selection into incarceration (meaning that it tries to statistically differentiate the effects of the factors that led to parental incarceration from the effects of the incarceration itself), it is worth mentioning briefly four ways in which research could move forward in this area. First, and most importantly, there is, simply put, a pressing need for research that uses an experimental design. Depending on the design, this raises obvious ethical issues, and I do not mean to act as though these issues are not salient. Nonetheless, absent a very strong research design where criminally active parents are randomized into probation or incarceration, for instance, and they and their families are followed to see how being incarcerated instead of being put on probation affected their outcomes, it is difficult for us to know for sure the degree to which incarceration affects child wellbeing. To highlight this pressing need, consider that although many of the strongest studies reviewed here have research designs that get us close to a causal estimate, the vast majority—all studies where I do not explicitly note how strong the research design is—should be considered associational. Second, more work needs to simultaneously consider effects on different types of outcomes and different individuals within the family, as this method provides the best opportunity for seeing when incarceration is harmful, when it is beneficial, and when it has minimal effects. Third, there is a pressing need to better understand how the conditions of confinement (including, longer term prison incarceration versus shorter term jail incarceration) and the amount of time the parent is incarcerated affect families, something we currently know very little about, unfortunately. Finally, more research should examine the relationship between maternal incarceration and child wellbeing.

At the end of this document, there is an extensive list of further readings that includes (1) qualitative research, (2) quantitative research that does not use broadly representative data or attempt to isolate average effects, and (3) reviews on mass incarceration and American family life. Each of these three sections have been highlighted in order to make it easy for the reader to identify the further readings that will be most appropriate for them. Summaries for these works have not been included, however, in the interest of keeping this document relatively concise.

## **DESCRIPTIVE WORK**

Descriptive research on the prevalence and correlates of parental incarceration shows three main things. First, the risk of paternal and maternal incarceration have both increased dramatically since the onset of the prison boom in the early 1970s, with risks of paternal incarceration far higher than risks of maternal incarceration. Second, African American children and children whose parents did not complete high school are especially likely to experience this event. Third, children of incarcerated mothers and fathers were exposed to a host of other risk factors for poor outcomes before experiencing paternal or maternal incarceration and show high levels of a host of behavioral problems (although descriptive work does not provide insight into whether these behavioral problems are due to paternal or maternal incarceration or something else).

**Geller, Amanda, Irwin Garfinkel, Carey E. Cooper, and Ronald B. Mincy. 2009. "Parental Incarceration and Child Well-Being: Implications for Urban Families." *Social Science Quarterly* 90:1186-2012.**

Using the three-year data from the Fragile Families and Child Wellbeing Study (FFCW), which is representative of children born around the year 2000 in cities with over 200,000 residents, this article shows that paternal and maternal incarceration are both prevalent among children in this study, as 42% of fathers and 7% of mothers had ever been incarcerated (although not necessarily during the child's lifetime). The results also show that children of ever-incarcerated mothers and fathers are disadvantaged in a host of domains, although at this survey wave, the descriptive differences between these children and other children in terms of behavioral problems is small.

**Glaze, Lauren E., and Laura M. Maruschak. 2008. *Parents In Prison and Their Minor Children*. Bureau of Justice Statistics Special Report. U.S. Department of Justice. Washington, DC.**

This report provides an important update to Mumola's (2000) classic descriptive portrait using data from the most recent Survey of Inmates in State and Federal Correctional Facilities. (Mumola's [2000] report relied on the 1997 survey; this report relied on the 2004 survey.)

**Johnson, Rucker C. 2009. "Ever-Increasing Levels of Parental Incarceration: The Consequences for Children." Pp. 177-206 in *Do Prisons Make Us Safer? The Benefits and Costs of the Prison Boom*, edited by Steven Raphael and Michael A. Stoll. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.**

Using the Panel Study of Income Dynamics (PSID), this study shows that roughly 20 percent of African American children and about 10 percent of White children will have a father who ever

lived with the mother incarcerated, which is broadly consistent with research including all fathers (not just ones who lived with the mother), although the estimates for White children are higher than results using nationally representative data, which suggests a possible overestimate for White children. The results also demonstrate a stronger descriptive association with children's poor developmental outcomes throughout childhood than does work by Geller and colleagues (2009), which could be driven by age differences or by the sample of fathers being limited to men who had lived with the mother of their child at some point in the PSID but not the FFCW.

**[Mumola, Christopher J. 2000. \*Incarcerated Parents and Their Children\*. Bureau of Justice Statistics Special Report. U.S. Department of Justice, Washington, DC.](#)**

The first descriptive article on this topic using broadly representative data and absolutely essential reading for anyone working in this field. Shows, most importantly, that just over 2.1% of American children had a parent currently imprisoned in 1999, with rates far higher for African American children (at 7.0%) than White children (at 0.8%). Also shows that just under half of imprisoned fathers and roughly two-thirds of imprisoned mothers were living with their children immediately prior to their imprisonment. A wealth of additional information is also included.

**[Wildeman, Christopher. 2009. "Parental Imprisonment, the Prison Boom, and the Concentration of Childhood Disadvantage." \*Demography\* 46:265-280.](#)**

Takes the same data used to be produce daily risks of paternal and maternal imprisonment in Mumola (2000) to estimate what percentage of African American and White children will ever have a parent imprisoned between their birth and their 14<sup>th</sup> birthday. Finds that 25.1% of African American children and 3.6% of White children will ever have their father imprisoned; also finds that 3.3% of Black children and 0.2% of White children will ever have their mother imprisoned. For African American children whose fathers did not complete high school, the risk of paternal imprisonment is 50.5%. Robustness checks using different methods and different data confirm these high cumulative risks of paternal imprisonment for African American children.

**Wildeman, Christopher, and Sara Wakefield. 2014. "The Long Arm of the Law: The Concentration of Incarceration in Families in the Era of Mass Incarceration." *Journal of Gender, Race, and Justice* 17:367-389. (Note: No hyperlinked version of this article is currently available. But this document will be updated when it is.)**

Uses data from the Project on Human Development in Chicago Neighborhoods (PHDCN) to show that children of incarcerated parents are more likely to have other relatives incarcerated than other children, showing that researchers must be aware that many of these children may be simultaneously managing the loss of multiple different family members due to incarceration.

## **EFFECTS OF MATERNAL INCARCERATION ON CHILDREN**

Research on the relationship between maternal incarceration and child wellbeing is far more contentious than is research on the consequences of paternal incarceration for family life and children's outcomes. In general, studies in this area using less extensive controls or considering effects on older children find broad evidence of harms, while studies using more extensive

controls or considering effects on younger children find minimal evidence of harm. This is not to say, of course, that children with incarcerated mothers are not struggling, on average, relative to children who do not experience this event. Instead, it suggests that the struggles these children face may be due not to the actual incarceration experience but to the many other disadvantages these children faced [even] prior to having their mother experience incarceration. Two areas in this subfield in which there is little debate involve (1) the consequences of high levels of female imprisonment for foster care caseloads, and (2) how the stigma attached to having a mother imprisoned affects teacher expectations of children. However, all other areas are hotly contested.

**[Cho, Rosa M. 2009a. "The Impact of Maternal Imprisonment on Children's Probability of Grade Retention: Results from Chicago Public Schools." \*Journal of Urban Economics\* 65:11-23.](#)**

Using linked administrative data and very rigorous methods, this study shows that children with incarcerated mothers were actually slightly less likely to be held back in school than were other children (at least in some of the many model specifications). As with the other excellent article by Cho reviewed below, however, there is some concern that the reference group used may not be ideal, as some models compare children of mothers incarcerated for only a short period of time—less than a week or less than three days, depending on the article—as the reference group.

**[Cho, Rosa M. 2009b. "The Impact of Maternal Incarceration on Children's Educational Achievement: Results from Chicago Public Schools." \*Journal of Human Resources\* 44:772-797.](#)**

Using the same excellent data used in the article reviewed above, this article shows that maternal imprisonment has no negative consequences for children's standardized tests scores. The data and methods are, again, excellent, and a possibly inappropriate reference cell is the sole concern.

**[Dallaire, Danielle H., Anne Ciccone, and Laura C. Wilson. 2010. "Teachers' Experiences with and Expectations of Children with Incarcerated Parents." \*Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology\* 31:281-290.](#)**

An incredibly important contribution to research on the consequences of maternal imprisonment on children, and the one study in this area that uses an experimental design to test for effects. Shows using an experimental manipulation that having a mother absent from the household due to imprisonment is more stigmatizing than almost any other reason for maternal absence (including, for instance, absence due to being in drug rehabilitation), as shown by the significantly lower expectations teachers have of children with currently imprisoned mothers.

**[Foster, Holly, and John Hagan. 2013. "Maternal and Paternal Imprisonment in the Stress Process." \*Social Science Research\* 42:650-669.](#)**

Especially impressive for its nuanced theoretical setup, this article uses data from the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health (Add Health) to consider the consequences of maternal and paternal imprisonment for children's mental health and substance use problems in young adulthood. Also tests effects of chronicity and timing of parental imprisonment. As with all

studies using these data, it is difficult to pin down a causal explanation. But this article is one that everyone should read (especially because there are so many findings it is difficult to summarize).

**Hagan, John, and Holly Foster. 2012a. "Children of the American Prison Generation: Student and School Spillover Effects of Incarcerating Mothers." *Law and Society Review* 46:37-69.**

Again using Add Health, this article is especially interesting because it suggests both direct and indirect effects of maternal imprisonment on student outcomes. Although the indirect effects of going to a school in which a large number of children have an imprisoned parent are the focus of the article, the key finding in terms of the direct effects is that having a mother imprisoned at any point between birth and age 18 is associated with a roughly .35 decrease in cumulative high school GPA. Comparable associations are found for schooling completed, including college completion. Whether this association is causal or not is difficult to tell because of the research design, but the extensive controls suggest that this association may indeed be causal.

**Huebner, Beth M, and Regan Gustafson. 2007. "The Effect of Maternal Incarceration on Adult Offspring Involvement in the Criminal Justice System." *Journal of Criminal Justice* 35:283-296.**

Using the children of the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth 1979 (NLSY79), this study shows a very strong association between maternal imprisonment and children's contact with the criminal justice system (including not only prison or jail incarceration, but also lower level encounters such as arrest). Although knowing the strength of this association is vital, the small number of children with ever-imprisoned mothers in this study (<30) and the relatively small number of family background factors the authors can adjust for make it hard to know whether this association is causal. Nonetheless, this is an essential article for showing this association.

**Swann, Christopher A., and Michelle Sheran Sylvester. 2006. "The Foster Care Crisis: What Caused Caseloads to Grow?" *Demography* 43:309-335.**

The only article included in this annotated bibliography that is not centrally concerned with parental incarceration, it is nonetheless easily among the most important, as it shows that approximately 30% of the doubling of foster care caseloads in the United States between 1985 and 2000 was due to increases in female imprisonment. Features a very strong research design.

**Turney, Kristin, and Christopher Wildeman. Forthcoming. "Detrimental for Some? The Heterogeneous Effects of Maternal Incarceration on Child Wellbeing." *Criminology and Public Policy*. (Note: No hyperlinked version of this article is currently available. But this document will be updated when it is.)**

Building on Wildeman and Turney (2014) and using the same data and logic of analysis, this article shows that although there are no average effects of maternal incarceration on children's developmental outcomes (even though the sample of mothers experiencing incarceration at some point is far larger than in any of the other studies except for Wildeman and Turney [2014], so a small sample is not driving this lack of a finding), maternal incarceration does appear to do

substantial harm to children with mothers who have a low risk of experiencing incarceration (as indicated by a complex statistical technique breaking women up into three different risk groups). This article is interesting because it helps explain why studies such as the NLSY79 and Add Health could consistently show substantial negative associations between maternal incarceration and children's outcomes and studies such as FFCW could consistently show no effects.

**Wildeman, Christopher, and Kristin Turney. 2014. Positive, Negative, or Null? The Effects of Maternal Incarceration on Children's Behavioral Problems. *Demography*. 51:1041-1068.**

Using the FFCW data, this article shows that maternal incarceration is not associated with 19 of 21 behavioral outcomes considered after adjusting for the family context prior to the mother experiencing incarceration. Indeed, according to the results for this study, after adjusting only for the economic situation of the family prior to the mother's incarceration, all negative associations between maternal incarceration and child wellbeing completely disappear. Because of the very strong research design relative to other research on maternal incarceration, this study casts doubt on earlier work showing effects of maternal incarceration on children—and even tentatively suggests some possibly beneficial effects for children (especially children of White mothers).

#### **EFFECTS OF PATERNAL INCARCERATION ON FAMILY LIFE**

Although the primary goal of this annotated bibliography is to summarize research on the paternal incarceration-child wellbeing relationship (because that is where the vast majority of the research using a strong design has been conducted), it also very briefly summarizes some of the research on the mechanisms through which paternal incarceration could harm children, focusing on effects of parenting quality, family structure, maternal mental and physical health, and housing instability. As will be the case with most of the research on paternal incarceration and child wellbeing, nearly all of the research on the consequences of paternal incarceration for children's family contexts finds consistent evidence of negative effects, although very little of the research in this area uses a sufficiently strong research design to establish causality.

**Dumont, Dora M., Christopher Wildeman, Hedwig Lee, Annie Gjelsvik, Pamela Valera, and Jennifer G. Clarke. Forthcoming. "Incarceration, Maternal Hardship, and Perinatal Health Behaviors." *Maternal and Child Health Journal*.**

Relies on data from the Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System (PRAMS). Although the research design used in this article makes it very difficult to tease out whether the incarceration of the father of a child actually causes these poor outcomes, the key finding from this article is that women with partners incarcerated in the recent past had a host of risk factors for poor birth outcomes including exposure to domestic violence and starting prenatal care late.

**Geller, Amanda. 2013. "Paternal Incarceration and Father-Child Contact in Fragile Families." *Journal of Marriage and Family* 75:1288-1303.**

A very strong descriptive article considering father-child contact using the FFCW data that provides support for a number of conclusions. First, children of nonresident fathers were more

likely to experience paternal incarceration than were children of resident fathers. Second, roughly one-third of children experiencing paternal incarceration had lived with their father at some point (even if they were not living with him immediately before his incarceration). Third, incarceration diminishes father-child contact both directly (through incapacitation during his incarceration) and indirectly (through increasing the risk of union dissolution upon release).

**Geller, Amanda, and Allyson Walker Franklin. 2014. "Paternal Incarceration and the Housing Security of Urban Mothers." *Journal of Marriage and Family* 76:411-427.**

Similar to Wildeman (2014), although this article focuses on all mothers in the FFCW data and includes a broader range of outcomes. Most importantly, the results from this study suggest that paternal incarceration increases housing insecurity among urban mothers and that these effects are especially strong for mothers who were living with the father prior to his incarceration.

**Geller, Amanda, Irwin Garfinkel, and Bruce Western. 2011. "Incarceration and Support for Children in Fragile Families." *Demography* 48:25-47.**

Using the FFCW data, this article considers how much incarceration reduces the financial contributions fathers make to their children as a result of the decreased earnings and increased union instability they face as a result of their incarceration. The results suggest that fathers with incarceration histories contribute about \$1,300 less to their children annually than do other men, representing about 25% lower contributions than otherwise similar never-incarcerated fathers.

**Lee, Hedwig, Christopher Wildeman, Emily Wang, Niki Matusko, and James S. Jackson. 2014. A Heavy Burden? The Health Consequences of Having a Family Member Incarcerated. *American Journal of Public Health*, 104: 421-427.**

Using the National Survey of American Life (NSAL), this article considers how the incarceration of a family member is associated with women's physical health, with possible implications for child wellbeing. Although the cross-sectional nature of the data make it difficult to tease out a causal story, the associations are strong, suggesting that children with incarcerated fathers also have mothers who may disproportionately struggle with health concerns as a result of this event.

**Lopoo, Leonard M., and Bruce Western. 2005. "Incarceration and the Formation and Stability of Marital Unions." *Journal of Marriage and Family* 67:721-734.**

In one of the earliest and most statistically rigorous tests of the relationship between incarceration and family life, this article uses data from the NLSY79 to show that having ever been incarcerated has no significant effects on the chance of marrying or, contingent on marrying, divorcing. But men are very unlikely to marry and very likely to divorce while they are actually incarcerated, suggesting substantial effects of incarceration on family structure.

**Schwartz-Soicher, Ofira, Amanda Geller, and Irwin Garfinkel. 2011. "The Effect of Paternal Incarceration on Material Hardship." *Social Service Review* 85:447-473.**

Using the FFCW data and a strong research design that takes material hardships occurring before

the father's incarceration into account, the results from this article show that father's incarceration strongly increases material hardships—defined as experiencing things like having the electricity turned off or not having enough money to make rent—with obvious implications for children.

**Sugie, Naomi F. 2012. “Punishment and Welfare: Paternal Incarceration and Families’ Receipt of Public Assistance.” *Social Forces* 90: 1403-1427.**

Similar to Schwartz-Soicher, Geller, and Garfinkel (2011) in that the focus is on financial need as a result of a father's incarceration, this article shows a marked uptick in reliance on public assistance as a result of a father's incarceration. This is interesting not just because of what it means for the financial wellbeing of children, but also for the double costs associated with incarcerating fathers, where there are costs not just of locking them up but also providing additional financial support to their families as a result of diminishing paternal contributions.

**Swisher, Raymond R., and Maureen R. Waller. 2008. “Confining Fatherhood: Incarceration and Paternal Involvement Among Nonresident White, African American, and Latino Fathers.” *Journal of Family Issues* 29:1067-1088.**

One of the earliest articles to test the consequences of a father's incarceration for the quality of family life using the FFCW data, the core contribution of this article is showing just how much current incarceration diminishes the amount of contact fathers have with their children. The results considering race-specific differences in these associations are also provocative, as are the findings regarding how incarceration shapes formal and informal child support agreements.

**Turney, Kristin. 2014a. “The Consequences of Paternal Incarceration for Maternal Neglect and Harsh Parenting.” *Social Forces* 92:1607-1636.**

Interesting especially in light of Turney and Wildeman's (2013) and Wakefield's (Forthcoming) parallel research showing that the incarceration of a father has relatively small effects on positive parenting behaviors among mothers and other caregivers, this article uses propensity score models (which match mothers who have and don't have the fathers of their children incarcerated) to show that paternal incarceration dramatically increases the risk of neglect and physical aggression toward the child on the part of the mother. This article is also provocative since it suggests a mechanism through which paternal incarceration could increase the risk of a child being placed in foster care (see Andersen and Wildeman *Forthcoming* for an analysis).

**Turney, Kristin. Forthcoming. “The Intergenerational Consequences of Mass Incarceration: Implications for Children's Co-residence and Contact with Grandparents.” *Social Forces*.**

An especially nuanced and careful account of how a father's incarceration can change family dynamics, this article shows that the incarceration of a father significantly reduces the contact paternal (but not maternal) grandparents have with their grandchildren. This result is especially interesting since there is no attendant uptick in involvement with maternal grandparents as a result of the father's incarceration, implying a different, yet also complex, family support system.

**Turney, Kristin, Jason Schnittker, and Christopher Wildeman. 2012. "Those They Leave Behind: Paternal Incarceration and Maternal Instrumental Support." *Journal of Marriage and Family* 74:1149-1165.**

An important addition to the research showing that mothers who have the father of their child incarcerated struggle with more financial need, this article uses FFCW data to show that these mothers also feel that they have fewer friends and family members they can call on for support. This is an interesting finding since it suggests that these women may simultaneously be in greater financial need but also feel that they are less able to call on the support that they require.

**Turney, Kristin, and Christopher Wildeman. 2013. "Redefining Relationships: Explaining the Countervailing Consequences of Paternal Incarceration for Parenting." *American Sociological Review* 78:949-979.**

In one of the few articles that simultaneously considers consequences of paternal incarceration for mothers and fathers, this research uses data from the FFCW and a strong research design to show that paternal incarceration dramatically decreases paternal involvement among fathers living with the child prior to their incarceration, with small and statistically insignificant effects of fathers not living with their child prior to incarceration. Virtually all of the relationship for formerly residential fathers is driven by changes in the relationship with the child's mother. Interestingly, paternal incarceration has no effect on mother's positive parenting behaviors.

**Wakefield, Sara. Forthcoming. "Accentuating the Positive or Eliminating the Negative? Paternal Incarceration and Caregiver-Child Relationship Quality." *Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology*. (Note: No hyperlinked version of this article is currently available. But this document will be updated when it is.)**

Using data from the PHDCN, this project finds very similar results to those previously discussed by Turney (2014) and Turney and Wildeman (2013). Taken together, these three studies confirm strongly that although caregivers increase their negative parenting behaviors as a result of paternal incarceration, there is no attendant decrease in positive parenting behaviors as a result.

**Wildeman, Christopher, Jason Schnittker, and Kristin Turney. 2012. "Despair by Association? The Mental Health of Mothers with Children by Recently Incarcerated Fathers." *American Sociological Review* 77:216-243.**

This article uses the FFCW to show that paternal incarceration is linked with worse mental health outcomes for the mothers of their children. This is especially relevant for this annotated bibliography because of the negative effects of poor maternal mental health on child wellbeing.

## **EFFECTS OF PATERNAL INCARCERATION ON YOUNG CHILDREN**

Whether considering consequences for the mortality risks of very young children, the housing instability of children about to enter kindergarten, or the behavioral, mental health, and physical health problems of slightly older children, all signs point toward the incarceration of a father doing harm to children. There are, however, important caveats here, as some work in this area

demonstrates that these consequences are limited to fathers who had not engaged in domestic violence and were not convicted of a violent crime, with some evidence also suggesting that the consequences are most severe for children living with their fathers prior to his incarceration.

**Craigie, Terry-Ann. 2011. "The Effect of Paternal Incarceration on Early Child Behavioral Problems: A Racial Comparison." *Journal of Ethnicity in Criminal Justice* 9:179-199.**

Consistent with other studies using the FFCW data (Geller et al., 2012; Wildeman 2010), this article shows that paternal incarceration appears to increase children's externalizing behaviors but not their internalizing behaviors, although the evidence here is slightly weaker than with some other articles because the analysis did not adjust for pre-existing behavioral problems.

**Geller, Amanda, Carey E. Cooper, Irwin Garfinkel, Ofira Schwartz-Soicher, and Ronald B. Mincy. 2012. "Beyond Absenteeism: Father Incarceration and its Effects on Children's Development." *Demography* 49:49-76.**

This is an extremely comprehensive analysis of the behavioral consequences of paternal incarceration for children right on the cusp of starting school using the FFCW. The key finding of this article, consistent with parallel work (Wakefield and Wildeman 2011; Wildeman 2010), is that paternal incarceration substantially increases the externalizing behavioral problems of young children and that these consequences are most pronounced for children living with the father prior to his incarceration. Finds no significant effects for internalizing behavioral problems or intelligence (measured as PPVT scores), which is an important set of null effects to consider.

**Haskins, Anna R. 2014. Unintended Consequences: Effects of Paternal Incarceration on Child School Readiness and Later Special Education Placement. *Sociological Science* 1:141-157.**

Most noteworthy for the ties it makes between paternal incarceration and children's school readiness (and inequalities therein), this article finds that paternal incarceration diminishes children's behavioral school readiness but not their intellectual readiness. This study also finds that these behavioral problems explain much of these children being placed in special education.

**Turney, Kristin. 2014b. "Stress Proliferations Across Generations? Examining the Relationship between Paternal Incarceration and Childhood Health." *Journal of Health and Social Behavior* 55:302-319.**

One of the few articles in this area that considers the consequences of paternal incarceration for children's health and the only article to consider a health outcome other than infant mortality (Wildeman 2012), this article uses data from the National Survey of Children's Health (NSCH) to show that having a formerly-resident father incarcerated is associated with a whole host of poor mental and physical health problems. Although the research design makes it hard to tease out causal effects, these associations nonetheless suggest an entirely new research area.

**Turney, Kristin, and Anna R. Haskins. Forthcoming. "Falling Behind? Children's Early**

**Grade Retention after Paternal Incarceration.” *Sociology of Education.***

This article uses data from FFCW to show that children with incarcerated fathers are far more likely to be held back a grade in elementary school and that teacher perceptions of the child’s academic proficiency, not children’s behavioral problems or test scores, drive this relationship.

**Wakefield, Sara and Christopher Wildeman. 2011. “Mass Imprisonment and Racial Disparities in Childhood Behavioral Problems.” *Criminology & Public Policy* 10:793-817.**

In addition to considering the macro-level consequences of mass imprisonment for childhood inequality, this article also includes key estimates from the PHDCN that show that paternal incarceration is linked with increases in internalizing and externalizing behavioral problems. The fact that these results also show significant effects on internalizing behavioral problems is quite important since other research shows different effects with young children (Geller et al. 2012).

**Wakefield, Sara, and Christopher Wildeman. 2013. *Children of the Prison Boom: Mass Incarceration and the Future of American Inequality.* New York, NY: Oxford University Press.**

A more developed series of analyses than those presented in the standalone works that form its empirical core (Wakefield and Wildeman 2011; Wildeman 2009, 2010, 2012, 2014), this is the only quantitative book that seeks to assess the consequences of mass imprisonment for children.

**Wildeman, Christopher. 2010. “Paternal Incarceration and Children’s Physically Aggressive Behaviors: Evidence from the Fragile Families and Child Wellbeing Study.” *Social Forces* 89:285-309.**

Using the FFCW data, this article shows that paternal incarceration increases children’s physical aggression. Noteworthy both for being the first article in this area to use a placebo regression to confirm its core finding (and strong empirical design, more broadly) and for showing that all effects of paternal incarceration on children’s physical aggression are driven by fathers not incarcerated for violent offenses or who were not violent toward the mother of their children.

**Wildeman, Christopher. 2012. “Imprisonment and Infant Mortality.” *Social Problems* 59:228-257.**

Although this article lumps paternal and maternal incarceration together—a noteworthy limitation that most studies in this annotated bibliography do not suffer from—this article provides important insights by linking parental incarceration with elevated risks of infant mortality using the PRAMS. It also includes a macro-level analysis linking increases in state imprisonment rates with increases in infant mortality rates (especially for African Americans).

**Wildeman, Christopher. 2014. Parental Incarceration, Child Homelessness, and the Invisible Consequences of Mass Imprisonment. *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 651: 74-96.**

This article is a complement to Geller and Franklin's article (2014), as it shows that paternal incarceration increases the risk of child homelessness and that these effects are most pronounced for African American children (although the analysis does not indicate why this is).

**Wildeman, Christopher, Signe Hald Andersen, Hedwig Lee, and Kristian Bernt Karlson. 2014. Parental Incarceration and Child Mortality in Denmark. *American Journal of Public Health* 104:428–433.**

Using administrative data from Denmark on all children born in 1991, this article shows that paternal incarceration significantly increases the risk of child mortality for boys but not girls.

### **EFFECTS OF PATERNAL INCARCERATION ON OLDER CHILDREN**

Although the research designs for studies considering the consequences of paternal incarceration for older children (including adolescences, young adults, and even adults in their 40s in some instances) tend to be weaker than those considering the consequences of paternal incarceration on young children, research in this area paints a mostly consistent portrait of negative effects. Because most of the studies that make it possible to follow the children of incarcerated parents into later life are from countries other than the United States, it is less clear how representative the studies briefly reviewed in this section are of the children of the American prison boom.

**Andersen, Signe Hald, and Christopher Wildeman. Forthcoming. “The Effect of Paternal Incarceration on Children’s Risk of Foster Care Placement.” *Social Forces*.**

As the only study in this area that uses a natural experiment to consider the consequences of paternal incarceration for child wellbeing, the results from this study are especially important (although since they are based on Danish data, they may not be representative of the experience of American children). The results show strong effects of paternal incarceration on children's risk of foster care placement across a host of different model specifications. This study is included in this section because most foster care placement in Denmark happens in adolescence.

**Foster, Holly, and John Hagan. 2007. “Incarceration and Intergenerational Social Exclusion.” *Social Problems* 54:399-433.**

Using the Add Health data, this pioneering study shows that paternal incarceration increases the risk of social exclusion in early adulthood, finding that these effects are driven primarily by what the authors call educational detainment. This is an especially important study because of the key theoretical development and the various outcomes (such as homelessness) that it considers.

**Foster, Holly and John Hagan. 2009. “The Mass Incarceration of Parents in America: Issues of Race/Ethnicity, Collateral Damage to Children, and Prisoner Reentry.” *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 623:179-194.**

Again using Add Health, this article is distinctive primarily because it uses a propensity score model (which matches children whose fathers did and did not experience incarceration) to consider the association between paternal incarceration and children's high school GPA. One

especially interesting result is that the father's likelihood to experience incarceration has far larger effects on the child's GPA than does whether the father experienced incarceration.

**Hagan, John and Holly Foster. 2012b. "Intergenerational Educational Effects of Mass Imprisonment in America." *Sociology of Education* 85:259-286.**

Similar in structure to Hagan and Foster (2012a), this article shows both direct and indirect effects of paternal incarceration on a host of educational outcomes (including, but not limited to, cumulative high school grade point average and high school graduation) using the Add Health.

**Lee, Rosalyn D., Xiangming Fang, and Feijin Luo. 2013. The Impact of Parental Incarceration on the Physical and Mental Health of Young Adults. *Pediatrics* 131:e1188-e1195.**

This article uses Add Health data to consider the association between paternal (and maternal) incarceration and children's mental and physical health outcomes. The relationship between paternal incarceration and children's health outcomes is far stronger for mental health conditions than for physical health conditions, with the exception of HIV/AIDS. (Because this study reports only odds ratios, however, differences in magnitude should be interpreted with caution.)

**Murray, Joseph and David P. Farrington. 2005. "Parental Imprisonment: Effects on Boys' Antisocial Behaviour and Delinquency Through the Life-Course." *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry* 46:1269-1278.**

Using data from the Cambridge Study in Delinquent Development (CSDD), which is a longitudinal study of 411 boys born in working-class London in the early 1950s, this study shows a strong association between paternal imprisonment and a host of poor outcomes in early adulthood. Although this study is excellent in many regards, the fact that the sample is composed of British men now entering their 60s makes it difficult to know how well these results apply to American children coming of age. Still, among the most important studies in this area to date.

**Murray, Joseph, Rolf Loeber, and Dustin Pardini. 2012. "Parental Involvement in the Criminal Justice System and the Development of Youth Theft, Marijuana Use, Depression, and Poor Academic Performance." *Criminology* 50:255-302.**

Using the Pittsburgh Youth Study (PYS), this article considers how parental arrest, conviction, and incarceration affect children's theft, marijuana use, depression, and academic performance. Interestingly, the study finds no association between parental arrest or conviction and any of the four outcomes and an association between parental incarceration and theft but not the other three outcomes. This article is interesting in so small part because of how many null effects it finds.

**Porter, Lauren C., and Ryan D. King. Forthcoming. "Absent Fathers or Absent Variables? Reconsidering the Relationship between Paternal Incarceration and Delinquency." *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency*. (Note: No hyperlinked version of this article is currently available. But this document will be updated when it is.)**

This article uses Add Health data and a placebo design that provides a strong test to consider the relationship between paternal incarceration and children's delinquency. The results show that the effects of paternal incarceration on children's less serious forms of delinquency are driven by pre-existing differences between families in which the father experiences incarceration at some point (rather than the incarceration of the father itself), while the effects for more serious forms of delinquency remain even when using their unique placebo design.

**Roettger, Michael E., and Jason D. Boardman. 2012. Parental Incarceration and Gender-based Risks for Increased Body Mass Index: Evidence From the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health in the United States. *American Journal of Epidemiology*, 175: 636-644.**

Using the Add Health data, this article shows that paternal incarceration increases the body mass index (BMI) of female children but not male children and that this increase may be due to higher levels of internalizing behaviors among girls of incarceration fathers. This result is especially interesting because of the consequences of obesity for cardiovascular disease and other illnesses.

**Roettger, Michael E. and Raymond R. Swisher. 2011. "Associations of Fathers' History of Incarceration with Sons' Delinquency and Arrest among Black, White, and Hispanic Males in the United States." *Criminology* 49:1109-1147.**

The precursor to Porter and King's (*Forthcoming*) study reviewed earlier, this article shows strong associations between paternal incarceration and contact with the criminal justice system for male children. Although the research design makes it difficult to establish causality, this article is exceptionally important because it shows using the broadly representative Add Health data the strong intergenerational transmission of contact with the criminal justice system.

**Roettger, Michael E., Raymond R. Swisher, Danielle C. Kuhl, and Jorge Chavez. 2011. "Paternal Incarceration and Trajectories of Marijuana and Other Illegal Drug Use from Adolescence into Young Adulthood: Evidence from Longitudinal Panels of Males and Females in the United States." *Addiction* 106:121-132.**

Using the same data set and a similar series of models to Roettger and Swisher (2011), this article shows that paternal incarceration is associated with significantly higher illegal drug use. This applies not only to "softer" drugs like marijuana, but also to "harder" drugs, which is troubling.

**van de Rakt, Marieke, Joseph Murray, and Paul Nieuwebeerta. 2012. "The Long-Term Effects of Paternal Imprisonment on Criminal Trajectories of Children." *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency* 49:81-108.**

Using the Criminal Career and Life Course Study (CCLS), which is representative of all Dutch men convicted in 1977, the authors show that paternal imprisonment is weakly—although statistically significantly—related to children's convictions through early adulthood. Effects are especially pronounced if the child was less than 12 years old when the father was imprisoned. As with the other studies using data from outside of the United States and from a different era,

however, it is difficult to know how well these results translate to the United States context.

## **FURTHER READINGS (NOTE: HYPERLINKS NOT INCLUDED IN THIS SECTION)**

### **Qualitative Research**

- Arditti, Joyce A. 2012a. *Parental Incarceration and the Family: Psychological and Social Effects of Imprisonment on Children, Parents, and Caregivers*. New York, NY: New York University Press.
- Arditti, Joyce A., Linda Burton, and Sara Neeves-Botelho. 2010. "Maternal Distress and Parenting in the Context of Cumulative Disadvantage." *Family Process* 49:142-164.
- Braman, Donald. 2004. *Doing Time on the Outside: Incarceration and Family Life in Urban America*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan.
- Clarke, Jenniger G., Eli Y. Adashi. 2011. "Perinatal Care for Incarcerated Patients: A 25-Year-Old Woman Pregnant in Jail." *JAMA* 305:923-929.
- Comfort, Megan. 2008. *Doing Time Together: Love and Family in the Shadow of the Prison*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago.
- Giordano, Peggy C. 2010. *Legacies of Crime: A Follow-Up of the Children of Highly Delinquent Girls and Boys*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.
- Nurse, Anne M. 2002. *Fatherhood Arrested: Parenting from Within the Juvenile Justice System*. Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University Press.
- Siegel, Jane. 2011. *Disrupted Childhoods: Children of Women in Prison*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.
- Turanovic, Jillian J., Nancy Rodriguez, and Travis C. Pratt. 2012. "The Collateral Consequences of Incarceration Revisited: A Qualitative Analysis of the Effects on Caregivers of Children of Incarcerated Parents." *Criminology* 50:913-959.

### **Select Samples**

- Hanlon, Thomas E., Robert J. Blatchley, Terry Bennett-Sears, Kevin E. O'Grady, Marc Rose, and Jason M. Callaman. 2005a. "Vulnerability of Children of Incarcerated Addict Mothers: Implications for Preventive Intervention." *Children and Youth Services Review* 27:67-84.
- Hanlon, Thomas E., Kevin E. O'Grady, Terry Bennett-Sears, and Jason M. Callaman. 2005b. "Incarcerated Drug-Abusing Mothers: Their Characteristics and Vulnerability." *American Journal of Drug and Alcohol Abuse* 1:59-77.
- Phillips, Susan D., Alaattin Erkanli, Gordon P. Keeler, E. Jane Costello, and Adrian Angold. 2006. "Disentangling the Risks: Parent Criminal Justice Involvement and Children's Exposure to Family Risks." *Criminology & Public Policy* 5:677-702.
- Poehlmann, Julie. 2005. "Children's Family Environments and Intellectual Outcomes During Maternal Incarceration." *Journal of Marriage and Family* 67:1275-1285.

### **Reviews**

- Arditti, Joyce A. 2012b. "Child Trauma Within the Context of Parental Incarceration: A Family Process Perspective." *Journal of Family Theory and Review* 4:181-219.
- Comfort, Megan. 2007. "Punishment Beyond the Legal Offender." *Annual Review of Law and*

- Social Science* 3:271-296.
- Hagan, John, and Ronit Dinovitzer. 1999. "Collateral Consequences of Imprisonment for Children, Communities, and Prisoners." *Crime and Justice* 26:121-162.
- Johnson, Elizabeth I., and Beth Easterling. 2012. "Understanding Unique Effects of Parental Incarceration on Children: Challenges, Progress, and Recommendations." *Journal of Marriage and Family* 74:342-356.
- Johnston, Denise. 2006. "The Wrong Road: Efforts to Understand the Effects of Parental Crime and Incarceration." *Criminology and Public Policy* 5:703-720.
- Murray, Joseph and David P. Farrington. 2008. "Effects of Parental Imprisonment on Children." *Crime and Justice* 37:133-206.
- Murray, Joseph, David P. Farrington, and Ivana Sekol. 2012. "Children's Antisocial Behavior, Mental Health, Drug Use, and Educational Performance After Parental Incarceration: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis." *Psychological Bulletin* 138:175-210.
- Western, Bruce, and Christopher Wildeman. 2009. "The Black Family and Mass Incarceration." *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 621:221-242.
- Wildeman, Christopher, Sara Wakefield, and Kristin Turney. 2013. "Misidentifying the Effects of Parental Incarceration? A Comment on Johnson and Easterling (2012)." *Journal of Marriage and Family* 75:252-258.
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