

PRIMARY CAREGIVER LEGISLATION

SB 813, SEN. DAVID SATER
(R-BARRY)

HB 1291, REP. DAVID EVANS
(R-HOWELL)

HB 2216, REP. MARY ELIZABETH COLEMAN
(R-JEFFERSON)

Primary caregiver legislation permits community-based sentencing for parents and other primary caregivers who have committed nonviolent offenses.

- **Reducing Missouri's prison population and providing appropriate community-level supervision and treatment:** Approximately **7,500 people** who are in Missouri prisons due to **nonviolent or drug offenses** are parents to minor children. Mothers are more likely to complete substance use treatment programs if they remain with their children.
- **Reducing recidivism for parents and the risk that their children will be incarcerated when they are older:** An early study of Washington state's Parenting Sentencing Alternative found that participants in the program were **71% less likely** to be convicted of a new felony in the two years after their release. Children of parents who have ever been incarcerated are more likely to have spent time in jail and to have a felony charge as adults.
- **Saving the state money:**
 - In the U.S., the estimated cost per year to treat health problems linked to a family member's incarceration is **\$346 million for minor children** and **\$22.5 billion for adult children**.
 - Parental incarceration costs the state an average of **\$21,480 per inmate annually**. Foster care costs the state more than **\$10,000 per child annually**.
- **Reducing the number of children in foster care:** As of 2015, **10% of foster care children** in Missouri (approximately 1,200 children) had entered foster care due to parental incarceration.
- **Reducing childhood poverty:** Prior to their arrests, **more than half** of mothers and fathers in state prisons were their children's main financial support. Parental incarceration puts young children at an increased risk of food insecurity and homelessness.
- **Improving children's physical, behavioral, and mental/emotional health:**
 - Children of incarcerated parents are at increased risk for mental health problems such as post-traumatic stress disorder, anxiety, and clinical depression, as well as greater risk for drug abuse, behavioral problems, and delinquency. Individuals who have experienced parental incarceration are on average **2.5 times more likely** than children whose parents have not been incarcerated to attempt suicide at some point.
 - Children whose parents have been incarcerated are **more likely** to repeat grades and **less likely** to graduate high school and develop the social and attention skills they need in school.
 - **Parental incarceration is correlated with** asthma, migraines, high cholesterol, and an increased likelihood of cancer and heart attacks later in life.



PARENTAL INCARCERATION
costs the state an **average of**
\$21,480
per inmate annually

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