

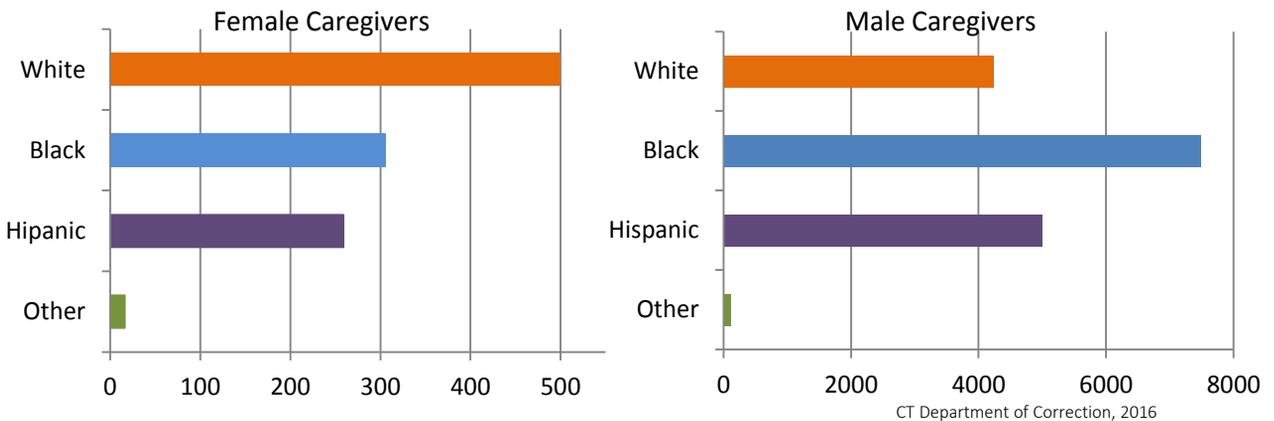


A Shared Sentence: Incarceration of Caregivers and Its Impact on Connecticut's Children



In Connecticut as of April 1, 2016, 53.67% of those currently incarcerated reported being a caregiver - leaving over 17,000 dependents in our state with a caregiver behind bars. An additional 5,000 dependents have a caregiver in a Department of Correction supervised community program (e.g., parole, house arrest).

Number of Dependents in Connecticut with an Incarcerated Caregiver by Race/Ethnicity



Black children are 7.5 times more likely to have a parent behind bars than white children. Additionally, 1 in 9 African American children (11.4%), 1 in 28 Hispanic children (3.5%) and 1 in 57 white children (1.8%) have an incarcerated parent in the United States. In our state specific data, we see that among female caregivers, white women have the highest number of dependents (500), while among male caregivers, black men have the most dependents (7,496).

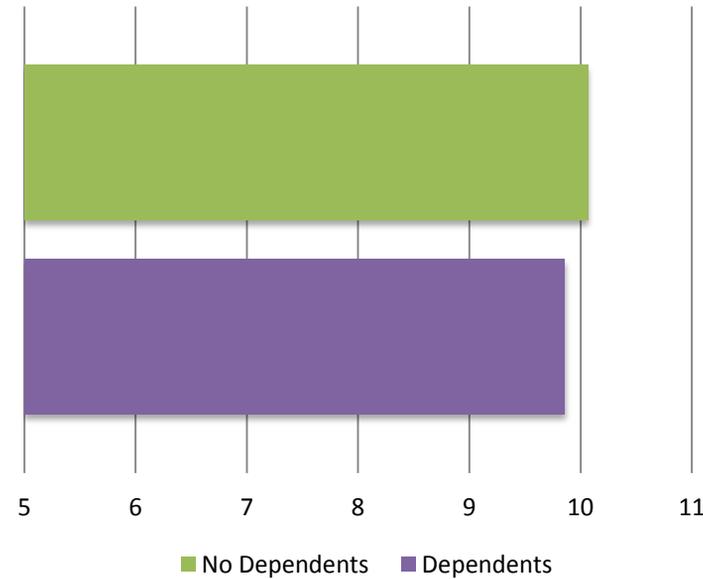
Dependents from Single Parent Homes in Connecticut



■ Married (23%) ■ Single Parent (77%)

Currently, only 23% (3,658) of dependents have an incarcerated caregiver who reports being married. Over 12,000 dependents with a currently incarcerated caregiver are from single parent homes. The White House recently produced a report explaining that the probability of a family living in poverty increases by nearly 40% when a father is incarcerated. Furthermore, a recent study found that 65% of families with a member in prison or jail had difficulty meeting basic needs – food, utilities, rent, etc.

Average Sentence Length for Those With & Without Dependents (years)



CT Department of Correction, 2016

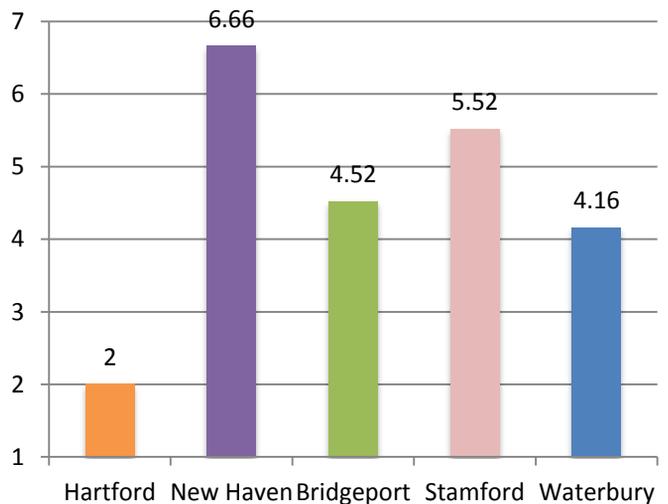
With this data, we do not know the nature of the crimes committed, but we do know that studies show parental incarceration is independently associated with learning disabilities, behavioral problems, and developmental delays, as well as many other issues in CIP. That is why we believe that Family Impact Statements (FIS) are important to consider when judges are determining the sentence for an adult caregiver. FIS support the efforts of the courts, judges, prosecutors, public defenders and probation officers to make sentencing or supervisions decisions that promote public safety without imposing undue harm.

Did you know ?

- 16% (96 out of 600) of those incarcerated at Manson Youth Institution report having at least one dependent
- 50.9% (519 out of 1,019) of women incarcerated at York Correctional Institution report being a caregiver to at least one dependent
- 2,342 dependents have a caregiver at Osborn Correctional Institution – this is the largest number of dependents connected to a facility in Connecticut

Average Round Trip Public Transit Travel Time to Correctional Facilities (hours)

Visiting schedules and lengths are different at every facility. If families use public transportation, visiting hours and transportation schedules may not correlate. Even with a car, the drive to a correctional facility is likely to be longer than the actual visit time. Using the five largest cities in Connecticut as our starting point, we determined average round trip travel time to all of the facilities. Unfortunately, public transportation does not go to every facility, so some families need to seek out non-profit agencies that provide transportation. It is also safe to assume that living in smaller towns will increase travel time.



What's Next?

A vast body of nationally published research has found that children with incarcerated parents (CIP) are more likely to suffer a range of emotional, physical and behavioral issues. These issues include anxiety, depression, underachievement in school, aggression and alcohol/substance abuse. Furthermore, separation due to parental incarceration can be just as painful as other forms of parental loss and are often more complicated because of the accompanied stigma, ambiguity and lack of compassion or other social supports.

This first report is a snapshot covering what we currently know about CIP in our state. Although this is an insightful first glance, it leaves us wanting to know more! The Connecticut Association for Human Services (CAHS) and the Connecticut Children with Incarcerated Parents (CTCIP) Initiative have developed broad goals that we, along with partners, would like to accomplish over the next few months so that informed state specific policy recommendations may be introduced for the next Legislative Session.

GOALS:

- 1) Access and collect data that includes:
 - a) City/Town of Arrest and/or City/Town of Residence
 - b) Speaking directly with individuals impacted by incarceration to learn about specific needs and struggles
 - c) Specific data about number of dependent children
- 2) Create a task force consisting of state and local agencies to support existing and new programs and policies that connect youth to their incarcerated loved ones, promote family stability, and help youth to thrive
- 3) Produce a legislative agenda and policy recommendations informed by populations experiencing the incarceration of a parent or loved one for the 2017 Legislative Session



Notes

For further information, questions, or to become involved, please contact:

Erica Dean, Policy Analyst, Connecticut Association for Human Services (CAHS)

E: edean@cahs.org; P: 860-951-2212 x243

Aileen Keays Yeager, Project Manager, Connecticut Children with Incarcerated Parents (CTCIP) Initiative

E: keaysaik@ccsu.edu; P: 860-832-1873

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