



## Social Supports and Hazardous Alcohol Use Among Mothers With an Incarcerated Co-Parent

Eman Tadros, Syracuse University

Taking loved ones out of the home creates a **disturbance in family routine and structure**. Incarcerated individuals account for **25%** of the world's population. Between the years 1978 to 2014 the incarceration rate rocketed by **408%** in America. Families face **financial, emotional, and social** setbacks due to imprisoned family members. Research shows that imprisonment **increases forgoing strains** among romantic partners and parenting structures, with especially unique challenges facing non-incarcerated mothers with an incarcerated co-parenting partner. These challenges are only exacerbated by alcohol use and varying social support, and further research is needed to provide clarity on the unique barriers incarcerated parents phase.

Mothers that share co-parenting responsibilities with imprisoned dads are normally known to deal with **additional and new responsibilities** as they are now the sole financial providers for their offspring. Women with imprisoned male partners often experience greater probabilities of **drug and alcohol use** when their partner is imprisoned. **National Fragile Families and Child Wellbeing** confirmed that low-income mothers were significantly associated with increased substance use. Studies show people are affected by their environment thus, an individual who resides with another individual who participates in drug activity was linked to **increased harmful alcohol consumption**. With this, an increase in alcohol consumption was also linked as a way to managing flooding undesirable emotions of **mothers of imprisoned male individuals**. Depending on the type of narcotic preference, mothers of imprisoned male partners who had a history of substance use were found to **relapse between 40% and 60%**. **Race and gender** were found to have a connection in alcohol intake along with female individuals with poor academic backgrounds. For example, a connection between partner imprisonment and drug use was found among Black mothers, however not for Hispanic, white, or other women of color.

An increase in family and communal encouragement would decrease harmful alcohol intake among mothers with a male incarcerated coparent. **Social encouragement** was noted to be an effective part of rehabilitation for individuals who have been imprisoned. Children of imprisoned fathers have been shown to have more positive and improved attitudes due to social encouragement. Female partners of imprisoned male individuals have shown to have better spirits due to positive communal encouragement and or negative well-being outcomes due to the absence of communal encouragement or support. Additionally, an **increased connection** between parents raising children has been linked to improved communications between domestic members.

Furthermore, **low-income mothers** who are familiar with violence in their communities were considerably expected to experience concerning amounts of drug and alcohol consumption. The psychological well-being of imprisoned parties has revealed harmful impacts on families in multiple ways such as: learning, job-related fulfillment, early childbirth, lawbreaking, and other damaging impacts. Those incarcerated deal with levels of disgrace, corresponding with thoughts of distrust, neglect, and nonacceptance from society. American culture

has condemned people who are imprisoned along with anyone who is connected to someone imprisoned, while research shows that familiar connections are important for people who are imprisoned's well-being.

Research that seeks to address the challenges that imprisoned parents face should pay close attention to how co-parenting interactions may differ as youth around the ages of 8 years old were measured versus with teenagers. It should also take into account relationships outside of mothers who support imprisoned fathers and take into account other family member's insights. The importance of the incarceration process at different phases and family involvement during those different phases should also be further examined.

**Read more:**

**Angela Bruns and Hedwig Lee, "Partner incarceration and women's substance use." *Journal of Marriage and Family* 82, no. 4 (2020): 1178-1196.**

**Megan Comfort, Tasseli McKay, Justin Landwehr, Erin Kennedy, Christine Lindquist and Anupa Bir, "The costs of incarceration for families of prisoners." *International Review of the Red Cross*, 98 no. 903(2016): 783-798.**

**Dana DeHart, Cheri Shapiro, and Stephanie Clone, "'The pill line is longer than the chow line': The impact of incarceration on prisoners and their families." *The Prison Journal*, 98, no. 2 (2018):188-212.**

**Laura Lander, Janie Howsare and Marilyn Byrne, "The impact of substance use disorders on families and children: From theory to practice." *Social Work in Public Health* 28, no. 3-4 (2013): 194-205.**