

166449

LIVING APART AND GETTING TOGETHER:  
INMATE MOTHERS AND ENHANCED VISITATION THROUGH GIRL SCOUTS

Kathleen J. Block and Margaret Potthast

University of Baltimore

Presented at the Annual Meetings of the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences

March, 1997

Supported under award #94-IJ-CX-K013 from the National Institute of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice. Points of view in this document are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official position of the U.S. Department of Justice.

LIVING APART AND GETTING TOGETHER:  
INMATE MOTHERS AND ENHANCED VISITATION THROUGH GIRL SCOUTS

Kathleen J. Block and Margaret Potthast, University of Baltimore

ABSTRACT

The majority of incarcerated women are mothers of minor children. Most were their children's primary caretakers prior to their incarceration and intend to resume that responsibility upon release. In support of the mother-child relationship, the Girl Scouts Beyond Bars Program in Maryland was designed as an enhanced visitation program for inmate mothers and their daughters. This paper profiles participating inmate mothers and daughters, their relationship, and their concerns. The extent to which the program "enhances" visitation is examined through a comparison of the visitation records of program participants and a matched group of inmate mothers who are not program participants.

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

As has long been the case, the majority of incarcerated women are young, single, economically disadvantaged women of color with children (McGowan and Blumenthal, 1978; Grossman, 1984; Feinman, 1986; Chesney-Lind, 1992; Hungerford, 1993). Prior to their incarceration, most were the primary caretakers of their children (Grossman, 1984; Feinman, 1986; Hungerford, 1993) and expect to reunite with them upon their release (McGowan and Blumenthal, 1978; Datesman and Cales, 1983; Grossman, 1984; Baunach, 1985; Bloom and Steinhart, 1993). Those who retain legal custody during their period of incarceration typically find their children placed with relatives, though some live with foster families (Grossman, 1984; McGowan and Blumenthal, 1978; Hungerford, 1993; Baunach, 1985; Bloom and Steinhart, 1993). Over the past two decades, researchers have examined the effects of incarceration on inmate mothers, their children and their relationship, finding mothers experiencing difficulties in maintaining their relationships with their children due to generally diminished communication

and limited or infrequent prison visits (Stanton, 1980; Bloom and Steinhart, 1993).

Studies report finding mothers grieving the loss of the child (Hairston and Lockett, 1985), and experiencing guilt and lowered self-esteem as a parent (Radish, 1994; Baunach, 1982, 1985; McGowan and Blumenthal, 1978; Hairston and Lockett, 1985). Separation engenders in mothers a feeling of helplessness and a loss of control over their children's welfare (Hairston and Lockett, 1985; Baunach, 1982, 1985; McGowan and Blumenthal, 1978; Bloom and Steinhart, 1993). Anxious about their future reunification (Datesman and Cales, 1983; Stanton, 1980), mothers fear that their children may resent them, or that the children may bond too well with their guardians (Baunach, 1985). Many worry that their relationship with their children will have disintegrated by the end of the incarceration period (Rocheleau, 1987; Bloom and Steinhart, 1993).

While the exact number of children who have incarcerated parents is unknown, estimates place it at one and a half million children in 1994 (Johnston, 1994). In some cases, the mothers played a relatively minor role or no role in their lives, hence their imprisonment may go unnoticed and unattended by their children. For many others, the separation by prison is the first break in a strong and nurturing relationship. For still others, the mothers' imprisonment is another disruption in a long series of traumas (Bloom and Steinhart, 1993; Adalist-Estrin, 1994). Johnston (1994) concludes from considerable research on the children of incarcerated persons that for many children growing up in poverty and chaos, the parent-child separation is particularly devastating.

Many children of inmates experience problems during their parent's incarceration period, including placements in unfamiliar environments, being separated from siblings, and being

moved from place to place (Stanton, 1980; Fritsch and Burkhead, 1982; Zalba, 1964; McGowan and Blumenthal, 1978; Henriques, 1982; Hungerford, 1993). Many children express feelings of abandonment, loneliness, sadness, anger and resentment (McGowan and Blumenthal, 1978; Henriques, 1982; Hungerford, 1993). Many dislike school and their home situation (Henriques, 1982) and describe the trauma associated with adjusting to new schools, peers and caretakers (Stanton, 1980; McGowan and Blumenthal, 1978; Hungerford, 1993). They sometimes perform poorly in school and engage in disruptive behaviors in school (Stanton, 1980; Zalba, 1964; Henriques, 1982; Hungerford, 1993). They feel stigmatized (Stanton, 1980; Henriques, 1982; Hungerford, 1993) and may manifest physical problems, such as eating and sleeping disorders (Rocheleau, 1987). They express an immediate anxiety about prison visits and a long-term concern about their reunification with their parents after prison (Stanton, 1980; Hungerford, 1993).

Johnston (1995) contends that the relationship of the daughter's caregiver to the mother and child prior to the mother's incarceration may affect the likelihood of problems developing. Traumas induced by the incarceration of the mother may be less when the caregiver is a relative with whom the child lived prior to the mother's incarceration than when the caregiver is a stranger to the child. Whatever the prior relationship, the caregiver plays an important role in furthering the mother-child relationship, often having the power to decide whether the relationship will continue.

The standard visitation practices in most prisons exacerbate the anxieties experienced by incarcerated parents and their young children (Bloom and Steinhart, 1993; Johnston, 1994). Typical visiting rooms are uncomfortable and inappropriate for children. They are settings for

adult conversation, providing the opportunity for little quality communication between the inmate mother and her child (Simon and Landis, 1991; Baunach, 1982; Logan, 1992; Bloom and Steinhart, 1993). Visits are often infrequent because prisons may be located far from the child's home, and guardians may be unable or unwilling to transport the child to the prison for a visit (Kiser, 1991; Hadley, 1981; Henriques, 1982; Feinman, 1986; Hungerford, 1993). In a 1991-1992 National Council on Crime and Delinquency (NCCD) study of inmate mothers in eight States and the federal system (Bloom and Steinhart, 1993), 54% of the mothers reported that they never received visits from their children. This is a significantly higher percentage of mothers going without visits when compared with the 2% of mothers who reported no visits in a comparable 1978 NCCD study (Bloom and Steinhart, 1993). According to the 1991-1992 mothers, their visitation experience was related to their prior living situation. Forty-six percent of those who lived with their children prior to prison or jail had no visits in comparison with 72% of the mothers who did not live with their children prior to prison or jail. The two main reasons given for not receiving visits from their children were the distance between the children's homes and the prison or jail, and the children having caregivers who did not want the children to visit the mother in prison or jail.

Some caregivers extend themselves considerably to ensure that the children will be able to visit their mothers (Fuller, 1993). Many feel that viewing the restrictive nature of confinement may be educational for the children. However, some may refuse visitation because the institutional setting is too severe and may be too frightening or, in some cases, too much like a "country club" and may not be frightening enough (Datesman and Cales, 1983). Other caregivers feel that the mother is not a healthy influence on the child and denies visits to

discourage the mother-child relationship (Bloom and Steinhart, 1993).

In her review of programs for women prisoners, Pollock-Byrne (1990:94) observed that programs that increase the quantity and quality of visits with children are "in the greatest demand by women inmates." This observation was echoed by the inmates mothers in an Ohio institution studied by Hungerford (1993). When asked what would help them become better mothers upon release, the inmate mothers outlined a child visitation program with prolonged visits, and close interaction with the children that would allow the mothers to take responsibility for their activities. "Taking responsibility" for activities is not a typical inmate role; however, it is an important role for inmate mothers to be able to play with their children. The notion that enhanced visitation may be productive is supported by the finding that States with enhanced child visitation programs (transportation provided, child-oriented location, close interpersonal contact) have witnessed strengthened mother-child relationships (Bloom and Steinhart, 1993; Logan, 1992; Feinman, 1986) and, in some jurisdictions, decreased recidivism and improved prison discipline (Jose-Kampfner, 1991; Hairston, 1991; Stumbo and Little, 1991; Howser, Grossman, and Macdonald, 1984). Additionally, inmates who receive regular visits from families and friends, and who maintain their family ties, are more successful upon release than are those who do not maintain this outside contact (Homer, 1979; Hairston, 1988).

It is against this backdrop that the Girl Scout Beyond Bars Program (GSBB) was developed. Surveys of the resident population of Maryland's Correctional Institution for Women (MCIW), conducted in 1991 and 1992 by Maryland Governor's Office for Children, Youth and Families, disclosed that more than 80% of the MCIW inmates were mothers of at least one child. The mothers averaged three children: 34% of preschool age (less than 6 years old), and 55% of

school age (6-18 years old). Three-fourths lived with their children prior to their incarceration, 70% with primary caretaker responsibility. Almost all mothers (94%) planned to reunite with their children upon their release, although a quarter noted that obstacles might interfere with reunification. During their mothers' incarceration, six of ten children had grandparents or other relatives serving as their guardians. The rest were cared for by their fathers (19%), nonrelatives (9%), or were in foster care (5%). Almost six of ten reported that their children reacted negatively to their incarceration, citing emotional problems (56%), behavioral problems (22%), discipline problems (10%), learning/grade problems (9%), and hyperactivity (3%). Communication with children was primarily through telephone calls (43%) and letters (41%). Three of ten reported that they had no personal contact with their children while incarcerated. Slightly more than a third received fewer than one visit per month from them.

After sentencing scores of mothers in her court and observing the mother-child separation, the Honorable Carol A. Smith, a Baltimore Circuit Court Judge, contacted the National Institute of Justice to inquire about possible programs to reunite inmate mothers with their daughters during incarceration. NIJ's Program Manager Marilyn Moses contacted the Girl Scouts of Central Maryland (GSCM) who agreed to establish a Girl Scout troop for daughters of women incarcerated in MCIW, the State's facility which houses women committed by the criminal courts to the Division of Corrections with sentences of six months and a day or greater. The proposed troop would hold meetings in the correctional facility and involve the mothers as adult troop members. MCIW Superintendent Melanie Pereira (now Deputy Commissioner of Corrections) supported the idea. The first troop was established in November, 1992.

The designed goals, structure, membership, and activities of the Girl Scouts Beyond Bars

Program juxtapose traditional Scouting with the needs and requirements of the special at-risk population served, incarcerated mothers and their daughters. The program objectives for mothers were to enhance visitation with their daughters, to preserve or enhance the mother/daughter bond, to reduce the stress of separation from her daughter, to reduce reunification problems following release from MCIW, and, ultimately, to help decrease failure following release from MCIW. The program objectives for the daughters were to preserve or enhance the mother/daughter bond, to enhance the daughter's sense of self, to reduce the daughter's school and home behavior problems, and to reduce reunification problems following the mothers' release from MCIW. The Program developers hoped to achieve these objectives through enhanced visitation and the involvement of the girls in traditional Girl Scout activities inside and outside the prison.

The Girl Scouts Beyond Bars Program was structured as a regular Girl Scout troop within the Girl Scouts of Central Maryland. A professional GSCM staff member was assigned primary responsibility for overseeing the troop, its membership and activities planning. The GSCM staff member worked alongside a designated MCIW staff member. Because of the special requirements of prison security, and drawing membership from a prisoner population, the tasks of the GSCM staff were more complicated and demanding than the usual troop oversight tasks. Volunteer Girl Scout leaders assisted the leadership in the planning and operational activities of the troop. Volunteers received the customary training associated with Girl Scout leadership. In addition, they were classified as "volunteers" in prison, hence, underwent the volunteer training required by Maryland Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services. In addition to the customary Girl Scout volunteer tasks, the volunteers' responsibilities included delivering

messages concerning meetings to homes without phones, and adjusting group activities to meet the security requirements of MCIW.

The Girl Scouts Beyond Bars Program opened its troop membership to mothers of daughters between the ages of seven and seventeen who resided in Baltimore City. Membership criteria included being infraction free for thirty days, remaining infraction free, and not having a conviction for an offense against children. Once released from MCIW, the daughters were permitted to remain in the community program or transfer to another troop.

On alternate Saturday mornings, twice per month, the troop held two-hour meetings in the MCIW gymnasium. During the troop meetings, the mothers and daughters engaged in a variety of activities following fifteen minutes of private conversation between the mothers and daughters and the traditional recitation of the Girl Scout pledge. They worked on badges, developed special educational projects over the course of several weeks, and focused on issues confronting today's girls, such as teen pregnancy and drug use, discussed through role playing skits. Other activities, such as watching The Lion King, simply gave mothers and daughters time to enjoy being together.

Separate mothers meetings were held in the morning on the same day as the general GSBB meetings. For the most part, they were devoted to general discussions of child rearing issues and GSBB Program plans. A licensed social worker led many of the meetings and directed the discussion toward parenting issues. On other occasions, a GSBB staff member or volunteer led the discussion.

On alternate Saturdays, the girls met in community troop meetings in Baltimore City. They worked on projects begun in MCIW or initiated projects to take into MCIW. Additionally,

the GSBB staff and volunteers provided the girls with many activities enjoyed by other Girl Scout troops. The girls participated in sleep overs, field trips and multi-troop Girl Scout gatherings. They went skating and lunched at restaurants which donated their food and service. In general, the variety of the girls' experiences in the GSBB troop approximated that of girls in other Girl Scout troops, though cost factors precluded full parallel implementation. For example, Girl Scout uniforms were too costly to provide the members, so T-shirts were substituted.

Transporting the girls to and from the meetings was a central component of the GSBB Program. Each meeting Saturday, two buses provided door-to-door service for the daughters who had been contacted during the week by GSBB staff. The guardians' role was to have the girls ready and waiting.

The Girl Scouts Beyond Bars Program was designed to be relatively small, accommodating a maximum of thirty mothers and forty daughters. Program length was not fixed, entrances were staggered, and exits were relatively unpredictable. A charter troop of twenty-three mothers and twenty-seven daughters was established in November, 1992. The number of Girl Scout mothers fluctuated over time, dropping from the original twenty-three to twelve two years later. By summer of 1994, a total of forty-two mothers and forty-seven daughters had participated in the program. The average length of participation by mothers was 6.3 months, with a range of one month to nineteen months. To increase the likely length of participation, GSBB modified its entrance criteria to require applicants to have at least eighteen months, rather than twelve months, remaining on their sentences. In 1994, GSBB began to admit daughters from outside Baltimore City, though requiring them to provide their own

transportation to meetings. A year and a half after its inception only two charter members remained in the program.

Because Maryland's Girl Scouts Beyond Bars Program was the first of its kind, we proposed to study various features of the Program and its participants. The research goals were (1) to develop a profile of the GSBB mothers, daughters, guardians, and the mother-daughter relationship; (2) to describe the Program's implementation: its process and structure, and its evolution as a partnership; (3) to examine the outcomes of the Program to determine the extent to which the Program is meeting its stated goals; and (4) to ascertain from Program participants their satisfaction with the Program, their perceptions concerning its strengths and weaknesses, and their recommendations for the future of the Program. This paper reports the study findings relative to (1) the profile of the mother, daughter, their relationship, and concerns while separated by imprisonment, and (2) the extent to which the program enhances visitation quantitatively and qualitatively.

## METHODOLOGY

The data sources utilized in this study include GSCM records, Maryland's Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services files, MCIW inmate files, MCIW computerized visitation records, and the interviewed program participants. The profile of GSBB mothers, daughters and guardians is based upon data collected from the MCIW base files and from the interviews of the mothers, daughters, and guardians. The analysis of visitation enhancement is based upon interview data, base file data and MCIW's computerized visitation records.

Profiling the Mother, Daughter, and the Mother-Daughter Relationship. In profiling the inmate mother, we were interested in her life situation before, during and after incarceration; her

feelings and worries about her daughter, her reunification expectations and experiences. In profiling the daughter, we were interested in her life situation before, during and after her mother's incarceration; her self-esteem; her feelings about her mother; her school interests, problems and peers; and her reunification expectations and experiences. With respect to the mother-daughter relationship, we were interested in the congruence of their perceptions and their feelings about one another.

The GSBB mothers formed the cornerstone of the data set of thirty-five interviewed mothers, thirty-two interviewed daughters and twenty-two interviewed guardians. Because of our interest in persons with program experience, we defined as "GSBB mothers" those women who had been admitted to the GSBB troop and who had attended at least one meeting. Seventy-four women met the criteria. We attempted to locate all of them to obtain permission to interview them, their daughters and their daughters' guardians for this study. We interviewed nineteen active GSBB members and eighteen former members, ten of whom were MCIW residents and eight of whom were living in the community. Only six mothers declined to be interviewed, three active and three former members. The remainder were not located or did not complete interviews after agreeing to participate in the study. Some mothers agreed to be interviewed, but not to have their daughters or guardians interviewed. In a few cases, the guardian and/or the daughter refused the interview when contacted.

Almost all interviews were conducted in person, either at MCIW, at one of the two Prerelease Centers in Baltimore City, at the interview subject's home, at the site of the community GSBB meeting, or, in one case, at the subject's place of employment. A few telephone interviews were conducted with interviewees who had moved out of State. The

interviews were designed to obtain self-report information concerning the perceptions, feelings and experiences of the mothers, daughters and guardians. The interviews were structured utilizing a predetermined set of questions which was presented to all interviewees by interviewers who recorded the responses on a data form. The interview schedules included closed questions, open-ended questions, and four instruments: Conners' Parent Rating Scale (Conners, 1990), Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale (Piers, 1984), a modified Hudson Parent-Child Attachment Scale (Hudson, 1982), and a Worry scale developed by Fessler (1991).

The Conners' Parent Rating Scale-48 (CPRS-48) measures children's behavior patterns as perceived by the children's caregivers. It includes five subscales: the Conduct Problem Scale, the Learning Problem Scale, the Psychosomatic Scale, the Impulsive-Hyperactive Scale, and the Anxiety Scale. Because previous studies identified behavior problems among children of incarcerated persons, we were interested in discovering whether the girls in the GSBB program would exceed the norm in behavioral difficulties. The mothers and the guardians completed the CPRS-48 during their interviews.

The Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale (Piers, 1984) provides a global self-concept measure and six clusters derived from factor analysis. The Behavior cluster measures the individual's identification of problem behaviors. The Intellectual and School Status cluster represents the individual's satisfaction and expectations regarding school as well as her evaluation of her intellectual and academic skills. The Physical Appearance and Attributes cluster reflects the individual's assessment of her physical appearance as well as of her expressive and leadership skills. The Anxiety cluster measures the individual's sense of emotional problems including depression, worry, sadness and fear. The Popularity cluster

assesses the individual's perception of being popular with classmates and friends and of having the ability to make new friends with ease. The Happiness and Satisfaction cluster represents the individual's general happiness and satisfaction with life. We were interested in the girls' global self-concepts and in the various dimensions tapped by the cluster scores. The daughters completed the Piers-Harris instrument during their interviews.

To assess the quality of the mother-daughter relationship, we asked mothers and daughters to complete a modified Hudson Parent-Child Attachment Scale which was developed by Hudson (1982) and applied by Hungerford (1993) in his exploratory study of incarcerated mothers and their children. To assess the types of issues that worry incarcerated mothers and the extent to which they worry about them, we employed a scale developed by Fessler (1991) in her study of incarcerated mothers in Massachusetts. The mothers are presented with fourteen statements concerning the daughter's present life situation (schooling, friends and home), the daughter's feelings about the mother, and reunification following release from prison. The mother's respond by indicating how often they worry about the specific issues.

GSBB and Enhanced Visitation To examine the extent to which the GSBB Program enhanced mother-daughter visiting, we collected both quantitative and qualitative data. We reviewed the visitation records of GSBB mothers and a comparable group of inmate mothers who were not in the GSBB program. Two specific questions were addressed: (1) whether the GSBB mothers regular visitation patterns differed significantly from those of women who could be in the GSBB program but were not; and (2) whether the GSBB inmates' regular visitation patterns changed in relation to their participation in the GSBB program.

MCIW's computerized visitation logs, begun in 1994, record the dates of visits and the

names and addresses of visitors, including those associated with forty-five GSBB members who were inmates after January 1, 1994. The comparison group consisted of women who met the GSBB membership criteria, but who were never in the GSBB Program. They were inmates who were the mothers of a girl between five and seventeen residing in Baltimore City during the period of interest. They had not been convicted of a child-related offense, had a sentence of at least one year, and were infraction free for at least sixty days.

To generate the comparison group, base files were initially selected utilizing a systematic selection procedure with a random start and MCIW's list of 802 residents. Reviewing only the files of women whose entry to MCIW was prior to October, 1995, a search of approximately 325 inmate base files produced a list of thirty-seven inmates. Once the current files were exhausted, files of 1995 and 1994 releases were pulled at random until thirteen more women were identified.

Once the matched group was identified their base files were reviewed for the following information: their DOC numbers, their offense, age, sentence length, race, dates of MCIW entry and exit (if appropriate), security status, adjustment record, number of qualifying daughters, and their daughters' ages. The mothers' and daughters' names were recorded to permit locating them in the computer file only. They were replaced by identification numbers for data analysis.

Interview questions concerning visitation patterns and perceptions supplement the visitation log data. Interviewers questioned the mothers, daughters, and guardians about their visitation experiences and how the GSBB Program affected them. The interview data permit another glimpse into the relationship between the Program and prison visitation.

## MOTHER AND DAUGHTER PROFILE

Table 1 presents many characteristics of the inmate mothers who participated in the Girl Scouts Beyond Bars Program and the inmate mothers surveyed in 1992. The general profile outlined is consistent with that found in the literature. They are predominantly young, undereducated, unmarried, unemployed women of color. The number of children per mother ranged from one to seven, though most (81%) had three or fewer children. Prior to their incarceration, more than three-fourths of the mothers (78.6%) lived with all of their children, and another 7% lived with some of their children. Only 14% did not live with any of their children immediately prior to their current involvement in the criminal justice system.

Many mothers were convicted and incarcerated for multiple offenses. Noting only the most serious offense, approximately 43% of the women had been convicted of a violent crime, another 22% for a form of larceny/theft, and the remaining 35% for possessing, distributing or smuggling a controlled dangerous substance. Illegal drugs played a role in 54% of the crimes.

The sentences ranged from one year to life. Excluding the lifers, the average sentence length was slightly more than seven years. Most of the women had previous experience with the criminal justice system--84% with prior arrests, and almost 83% with prior convictions. They averaged 6.6 arrests and 2.8 convictions per person.

The data on the family experiences of the MCIW mothers and the GSBB mothers reveal that more of the GSBB mothers than MCIW mothers had been married (20% and 14% respectively). Among those not married (at the time of the survey in the case of the 1992 study or at the time of incarceration in the case of the GSBB study), a higher percentage of GSBB mothers (39% in contrast with 24%) had been married. While most mothers in both groups

Table 1

## Characteristics of MCIW Mothers and GSBB Mothers

		MCIW Mothers	GSBB Mothers
Age:	Range (in years)	n.a.*	17 - 43
	Mean, Median	29.5, n.a.	28.5, 28
Race:	African-American	66.8%	86.2%
	White	26.1%	13.8%
	Other	07.1%	00.0%
Residence:	Baltimore City	45.0%	89.9%
Education:	1 - 8 Years	09.3%	06.6%
	9 - 11 Years	52.5%	59.0%
	12 Years/GED	21.8%	26.2%
	13+ Years	15.1%	08.1%
Employed at Arrest:		34.5%	30.2%
Marital Status:	Married	13.9%	20.3%
	Never Married	61.8%	40.6%
	Widowed	02.5%	31.3%
	Divorced/Separated	21.8%	07.8%
Number of Children:	Range	1 - 7	n.a.
	Mean, Median	2.35, n.a.	2.7, 3
Living with Children:		73.6%	85.7%
Offense:	Homicide	n.a.	20.6%
	Aggravated Assault	n.a.	06.3%
	Robbery	n.a.	15.9%
	Larceny/Theft	n.a.	22.2%
	Drug Offense	n.a.	34.9%
Drug Involvement:		n.a.	54.1%
Prior Convictions:	None	n.a.	17.5%
	One	n.a.	22.2%
	More Than One	n.a.	60.3%
	Range	n.a.	0 - 9
	Mean, Median	n.a.	2.8, 2.0
Sentence:	Range	1 - Life	1 - Life
	Mean, Median (excluding life)	6.39, n.a.	7.1, 5

\* Not available

The GSBB mothers were typical of MCIW mothers in some respects, and atypical in others. The average age of GSBB mothers was very slightly lower than the average age of MCIW mothers in general (29.5). The proportion of mothers who were African-American is considerably higher: 86% of GSBB mothers were African-American in comparison with 66% of the MCIW mothers in general. Additionally, almost 90% of the GSBB mothers and 45% of MCIW mothers were from Baltimore City. The GSBB membership criteria may help to account for these difference. To join the Program, mothers must be young enough to have girls of Girl Scout age and, at least initially, they must be from Baltimore City, which has a higher African-American population than does the State in general.

The educational status and employment status of both sets of mothers was rather similar. The educational attainment level was within the range of completing some or all of their secondary education (74% of MCIW mothers and 85% of GSBB mothers). Regarding employment status, 65% of MCIW mothers and almost 70% of GSBB mothers were unemployed at the time of their arrest.

Though most mothers lived with their children prior to their incarceration, the percent who did was higher for GSBB mothers (86%) than for MCIW mothers (74%). Additionally, almost 69% of the MCIW mothers reported that they had primary child care responsibilities prior to their incarceration in comparison with 73% of the interviewed GSBB mothers.<sup>2</sup> Finally, whereas 94% of the MCIW mothers stated that they planned to reunite with their children following their incarceration, all of the GSBB mothers anticipated such a reunion.

Profile of GSBB Daughters At the time of their first interview, the girls averaged 10.6 years old and ranged from five to nineteen. On average, they were 7.25 years old when their mothers

entered MCIW (the youngest were one year old and the oldest were sixteen). For 70% of the girls, this separation was their first caused by their mothers' incarceration. Slightly more than 80% of the girls said that their mother was their primary care provider prior to her incarceration.

Another 7% named their mother and father, and the remainder named another relative. All of the girls whose mothers were incarcerated at the time of the interview said that they expected to be reunited with them.

During their mothers' incarceration, all of the girls interviewed lived with caretakers to whom they were related. Eighty-seven percent (twenty-six girls) had one primary caretaker: a grandparent (sixteen girls), a father (four girls), an aunt (four girls), or a cousin (two girls). Primary responsibility for four of the other six girls was shared by an aunt and a grandmother. In two cases, the father shared responsibility with another relative: an aunt in one case and a grandmother in the other. Over 90% of the girls had siblings, 2.9 on average. Most (79.3%) reported living with at least some of their siblings during their mothers' incarceration. Almost two-thirds of the girls (65.6%) lived with the same people throughout the entire incarceration period. Eleven changed homes and primary caretakers.

At the time of their first interview, all but one of the girls attended school. Their grade levels ranged from pre-school to the 12th grade, with 50% between preschool and fifth grade. Most of the girls interviewed said that they had attended more than one school during their academic careers, most frequently a part of the normal progression through the school system's grade structure (six cases). Five girls reported changing schools when their families moved homes. Five other girls changed schools because of disruptions in their family situations--they transferred schools when they changed families.

Most girls spoke positively about classes, teachers, activities and friends in school. Seventy-five percent of the girls named a favorite teacher, and all but three named a favorite subject. Almost half (48.4%) said that they participated in an extracurricular school group or activity, such as choir, a reading club, swimming or tennis. Two-thirds reported that they were not experiencing problems at school. Of the eleven girls who reported difficulties, half mentioned problems with school work, and the other half mentioned problems with other students teasing them or with school authorities because of their own disruptive behavior.

Following up on their in-school experiences, we asked the girls about their friends and their routine activities outside school, specifically where they spent their time, and what they and their friends liked to do. Most of the girls (27) reported having "best friends" in school and most (26) spent leisure time with friends in the neighborhood. A majority of the girls (19) said that they spent most of their nonschool hours at home. Smaller numbers could be found most often at the homes of other family members (5), at friends' homes (2), or elsewhere (5). Asked what they and their friends liked to do outside of school, the girls reported rather typical activities for girls their ages. Younger girls listed such activities as jumping rope, playing, swimming and talking on the phone. The teens added hanging out, going to the mall or to movies, to talking on the phone.

To assess the girls' support systems, we asked them if there was an adult and/or a peer to talk to if they had a problem. All of the girls named an adult, most frequently their mother (12). Eleven named another adult relative, such as the grandmother or aunt (but not their father). The remaining nine girls named someone outside the family: a teacher or principal, a counselor or a pastor. All those who named someone other than their mothers were living apart from their

mothers at the time of the interview due to their mothers' incarceration in MCIW or a prerelease center. Most of the girls (25) had someone closer to their own ages to talk to as well. Most often named were friends or classmates (18), then relatives: cousins, aunts and sisters (7).

As measured by the Piers-Harris Self-Concept Scale, the daughters' overall self-concepts fell within a "normal" range with a mean t-score of 56.83 (s.d.=6.91). However, variation in scores, as indicated by the ranges presented in Table 2, suggests while most GSBB girls are similar to the school girls who served as the population from which the norms were developed, some of the girls possess clinically low self-esteem.

Table 2

Piers-Harris Self-Concept Scores (N=29)

Subscale	Mean Stanine	S.D.	Minimum	Maximum
Popularity	5.21	1.52	3	9
Anxiety	5.34	1.59	3	8
Behavior	5.86	2.17	1	8
Intellectual	6.34	1.47	3	9
Happiness & Satisfaction	6.34	1.54	3	8
Physical Appearance	6.93	1.62	2	9

Five pairs of subscales were significantly correlated. There was consistency in the girls' evaluation of their physical appearance and their evaluation of their intellectual capabilities (.474,  $p=.009$ ). Low anxiety among the girls was significantly correlated with a positive sense of their intellectual capabilities (.559,  $p=.002$ ) and their sense of being popular with their peers (.546,  $p=.002$ ). Their general state of happiness and life satisfaction was positively associated with self-approval of their physical appearance (.452,  $p=.014$ ) and good behavior (.507,  $p=.005$ ).

The results from the Conner's Parent Rating Scales as completed by both the mothers and the guardians complement the Piers-Harris findings. The group's average t-scores fell within the "Average" range (45-55) for all but two cluster scores. The mothers' rating of the daughters' Impulsive-Hyperactive behavior was within the "Slightly Above Average" range (56-65) as was the guardians' rating of the daughters' average Conduct Problem behavior. As Table 3 reveals, the presence of high maximum scores suggests that some mothers and guardians perceived their girls to have problems in certain areas.

We examined the correlations of the guardians' cluster scores and the mothers' cluster scores to assess the consistency of their perceptions regarding the daughters in question. We

Table 3

Conner's Parent Rating Scale Scores

Cluster	GSBB Mothers (N=25)				GSBB Guardians (N=17)			
	Mean	(S.D.)	Min.	Max.	Mean	(S.D.)	Min.	Max.
Anxiety	52.52	(10.09)	40	75	49.82	(08.15)	40	72
Learning Problem	49.00	(11.51)	38	78	53.18	(13.90)	38	80
Psychosomatic	47.52	(08.74)	42	72	53.94	(18.60)	42	95
Impulsive-Hyper.	58.40	(14.55)	34	87	55.35	(14.30)	34	83
Conduct Problem	55.36	(16.98)	39	99	58.88	(19.43)	35	98

also examined the correlation of their ratings with the daughters' ages. The mothers' and guardians' scores were not significantly correlated on any cluster. Thus, it is fair to state that their views regarding the daughters' problems differed. However, the mother's perception of the daughter's anxiety level was significantly correlated with the guardian's view of the daughter's hyperactivity (.699,  $p=.004$ ), conduct problems (.549,  $p=.034$ ), and learning problems (.599,

p=.018). Testing whether the daughter's age affects her mother's perceptions and her caretaker's perceptions, we correlated the daughter's age with their rating scores. Age was a factor in only one of the ratings, the guardian's perception regarding psychosomatic problems experienced by the daughter (.554, p=.021).

Profile of the Mother-Daughter Relationship Two important aspects of the mother-daughter relationship are the feelings that the mothers and daughters express about one another and the stress they experience due to imprisonment. All of the relevant data are derived from the interviews of the mothers, daughters and guardians.

Mother-Daughter Attachment The Hudson Parent-Child Contentment Scale was employed to assess the mothers' feelings for their daughters and the daughters' feelings for their mothers. Both were asked to indicate how often they experienced certain feelings about each other. Summaries of the results reveal very positive feelings between the mothers and daughters, suggesting the presence of a strong mother-daughter bond.

As may be seen in Table 4, with a possible range of 1 (Never) to 5 (Always), the mean scores on most items exceed 4 (Most of the time). The scores are highest on the items referencing liking one another, enjoying each other's company, and trusting one another. While still high, the scores on some specific feelings or role tasks are slightly lower, suggesting that the interviewees were not simply providing socially desirable responses. Daughters express that occasionally they are embarrassed by their mothers. Some mothers feel that they do not always understand their daughters, or have proper patience with them. Some mothers find their daughters too demanding at times.

Table 4

## Hudson Parent-Child Attachment Scale Scores

<u>Item Statement</u>	<u>Mean Score</u>	<u>S.D.</u>
I get along well with my mother	4.42	1.06
I get along well with my daughter	4.78	0.61
-----		
I feel that I can really trust my mother	4.69	0.70
I feel that I can really trust my daughter	4.53	1.08
-----		
My mother's behavior embarrasses me*	3.93	1.36
My daughter is well-behaved	4.00	0.84
-----		
My mother puts too many limits on me*	4.55	1.00
My daughter is too demanding*	3.44	1.29
-----		
My mother is very patient with me	4.38	1.07
I am very patient with my daughter	3.91	1.17
-----		
I really like my mother	4.75	0.84
I dislike my daughter*	4.97	0.18
-----		
I like being with my mother	4.75	0.84
I like being with my daughter	4.97	0.18
-----		
I feel very proud of my mother	4.63	1.07
I think my daughter is terrific	4.91	0.30
-----		
My mother understands me	4.69	0.74
I feel I do not understand my daughter*	3.94	1.44
-----		
I can really depend on my mother	4.61	0.80
I feel I can trust my daughter	4.53	1.08

\* Scores reversed from negative to positive number.

In addition to summarizing the scores, we correlated the matched pairs from the mother's questionnaire and the daughter's questionnaire (N=32) to assess the congruence of their scores.

None of the correlations were significant. We examined the correlations from the total group

and from four subgroups: current GSBB members, former GSBB members, incarcerated mothers, and nonincarcerated mothers. In all subgroups, the scores are comparable to those in Table 4. No matched pairs correlated at a significant level in any of the groups. What may be surmised from this is that the feeling patterns are not affected by whether the mother is imprisoned, nor by current GSBB involvement.

Daughter's Stress To discover whether the daughters experienced any specific problems in relation to their mothers' imprisonment, we included items focusing on this issue in the interviews of the mothers and the guardians. Seventy percent of the mothers reported that their daughters did experience difficulties in relation to their imprisonment, listing emotional problems and related behavioral and school problems. The emotional problems included depression and sadness expressed through crying and withdrawing from others, and anger expressed in acting out behavior, rudeness, fighting, and disobedience. Several reported that these behavioral manifestations carried over from the home to the school, resulting in dropping grades and, in one case, the daughter being suspended from school. Two of the mothers who reported that their daughters did not experience difficulties said that the daughters were too young at the time, and another reported that the daughter was "used to it" because the mother had been in MCIW previously.

A slight majority of the guardians (52.4%) reported that the daughters experienced some emotional or behavioral problems in relation to their mothers' incarceration. Two daughters were described as having been sad and depressed, another as distanced, and two as angry. They "cried a lot," or acted out, often fighting with siblings or peers. One began a period of bed wetting. Another girl became very protective of her mother, tried not to upset her, and

attempted to convince others of her innocence. Two guardians reported that their girls were teased by other children. Three reported that the girls received professional counseling for their problems.

The guardians who stated that the daughters did not experience any problems in relation to their mothers' incarceration offered two explanations. In some cases, the daughters were described as have been well-adjusted girls who continued to be well-adjusted. In others, the daughters were described as having been too young to fully appreciate what was happening. One guardian said that the daughter was a bit sad, but that her living situation was better during her mother's incarceration than it was before her incarceration.

Mother's Stress Utilizing Fessler's (1991) scale of worries, we presented mothers with fourteen statements and asked them how often they worried about them. Table 5 summarizes the data for the mothers, listing the topics in rank order by the mean scores obtained. The range of scores is 1 (Never worry about it) to 5 (Worry about it all the time). Both the percentages and mean scores indicate that the mothers' main worries concern some of the daughter's feelings (anger, missing mother), aspects of the daughter's living situation (schooling, friends), and the mother's ability to support her daughter when she is released from prison. Fewer mothers express substantial concern about the daughter's home situation, her affection for her mother, and her desire to communicate with her mother in prison. These scores suggest that the mothers are confident in their relationship with their daughters. However, they also suggest that they worry about two products of their own imprisonment: the emotional harm that they may have caused their daughters and possible damage to their relationship.

Table 5

## Worry Scale Scores For GSBB Mothers\*

<u>Item Statement</u>	<u>% Who Worry</u>	<u>Mean Score</u>
I worry about:		
Whether daughter is angry with mother	76.5	3.8
About daughter's schooling	89.5	3.7
Whether daughter misses mother	81.6	3.6
How mother will support daughter outside	81.1	3.4
About daughter's friendships	76.3	3.0
Whether mother can take over mothering outside	58.3	2.6
How mother will discipline daughter outside	66.6	2.5
Whether daughter will listen to mother outside	41.2	2.3
About daughter's living situation	42.1	2.3
Whether daughter cares about mother	43.6	2.2
Whether daughter will accept mother outside	37.8	2.1
That daughter will grow fonder of guardian than mother	42.1	2.1
That children will be on their own when mother is released	29.7	1.9
That daughter doesn't want to keep in touch with mother	23.7	1.3

\* The n's are unequal because numbers of women who responded to the items varied.

## GSBB AND ENHANCED VISITATION

Asked why they joined the GSBB Program, the mothers offered two primary reasons: to spend quality time with their daughters (with or without mentioning the objective of strengthening their relationship with their daughters), and to give their daughters the Girl Scout experience. Some of the mothers had been Girl Scouts as youths, so knew what to expect. Others said that they knew little more than that they would be seeing their daughters regularly. At a minimum, the Program offered mothers the possibility of spending four additional hours with their daughters each month.

The visitation records of the GSBB mothers and those of a matched group of MCIW mothers were examined to assess: (1) whether the GSBB mothers' regular visitation patterns

differed significantly from those of women who could be in the GSBB program but were not; and (2) whether the GSBB mothers' regular visitation patterns changed in relation to their participation in the GSBB Program. We employed three "visitation" measures. The first is whether the mother received any visits from her daughter(s) at any time during the study period. Of those who did receive visits, the second measure is the average number of visits she received from her daughter per month. The third measure is the percent of her total months at MCIW during which she received at least one visit from her daughter(s). This was computed only for those who did receive visits. While not independent of one another, the latter two measures address slightly different aspects of the visitation patterns over the course of the mother's incarceration. The average number of visits per month provides an overall measure of the number of visits between the daughter and mother. The percent of months with visits provides a measure of the distribution of the visits over the study period, ie., the consistency or stability of the visitation pattern.<sup>3</sup> The two visitation measures were highly correlated when we considered both groups together (.859,  $p < .001$ ,  $N=53$ ), the GSBB mothers alone (.849,  $p < .001$ ,  $N=29$ ), and the matched group alone (.868,  $p < .001$ ,  $N=24$ ).

Comparing the two groups, we found that a higher percent of GSBB mothers received visits from their daughters than did the matched group (see Table 6). Though the difference is not statistically significant, it is more than slight: 64.4% of the GSBB mothers and 49% of the matched group had received at least one visit from their daughters. Rephrased, one-half of the matched group of mothers had received no visits in comparison with approximately a third of the GSBB mothers.

The differences between the two groups with respect to the other two variables are

Table 6

## Visitation Patterns: GSBB Mothers Versus Matched Group

		GSBB Mothers	Matched Group	Significance
Received Visits:	% Yes	64.4	49.0	n.s.
	% No	35.6	51.0	
Visits/Month:	Mean	.969	.512	.045 two-tailed t-test
	Median	.571	.250	
	Range	.036 - 4.045	.042 - 2.6	
% Months Visited:	Mean	48.3	31.6	.034 two-tailed t-test
	Median	42.1	25.0	
	Range	36.0 - 92.9	.01 - 100	

statistically significant. The GSBB mothers averaged more visits per month than did the matched group. The GSBB mothers averaged almost one visit per month, with half of the GSBB mothers receiving at least bimonthly visits. The average number of visits for the GSBB mothers ranged from a low of one visit every three months to slightly more than four visits per month. The matched group averaged one visit every two months, with half being visited once every four months.

Examining the percent of months with visits, we found a similar pattern. On average, the GSBB mothers received visits from their daughters during almost half of the months available, while the matched group received visits in slightly more than thirty percent of the months available. The medians for the two groups were 42.1% and 25% respectively.

We examined the correlation of the two visitation measures with several factors to explore other possible patterns in the visitation data. The factors examined in relation to both

the groups' visitation patterns were: the mother's age at the time of entry to MCIW, the daughter's age, the conviction offense, the length of time spent in MCIW, and the length of sentence. Two additional factors were examined for the GSBB mothers only: city residence, and the length of time spent in the GSBB program. These variables were selected because of the possible effect that they may have on the visitation pattern. The data revealed that none of the factors was significantly related to either visitation measure.

Responding to the second question, the visitation records of the GSBB mothers were examined in relation to GSBB program participation to ascertain if: (1) higher percentages of "before," "during," or "after" mothers received visits from their daughters; and (2) the daughters' visitation patterns varied by the GSBB stage. Table 7 presents the findings.

Table 7  
Visitation Patterns Before, During and After GSBB Program

		Before	During	After
Received Visits:	Yes	68% (17)	53.6% (22)	63.2% (12)
	No	32% (08)	46.4% (19)	36.8% (07)
Visits/Month:	Mean	.727 (30)	.520 (53)	.528 (26)
	Correlation Before	--	.766, p<.001 (30)	.613, p=.026 (13)
	Correlation During	--	--	.753, p<.001 (19)
% Months Visited:	Mean	.399 (30)	.280 (53)	.247 (26)
	Correlation Before	--	.844, p<.001 (30)	.655, p=.015 (13)
	Correlation During	--	--	.658, p=.002 (19)

The "before" group of mothers contains the highest percentage of mothers who receive visits from their daughters (68%). The percentage is lowest among the mothers during GSBB Program participation (53.6%). While the findings must be viewed cautiously because we do

not have "before" data for all mothers, they suggest that for some mothers the GSBB Program visits replaced the regular visits.

Regarding visitation patterns, the number of visits per month before joining the GSBB Program are significantly correlated with the number of visits during the Program and after the Program. Similarly the number of visits during the Program are significantly correlated with the number of visits after Program participation. The same is true in the case of the percent of months during which the daughter visits her mother. These strong correlations reflect a consistency in the visitation patterns that is relatively untouched by GSBB Program participation. Thus, for those mothers receiving visits from their daughters, the GSBB visits are an addition to the regular visits.

To explore other possible patterns in the visitation data, we examined correlations between both the number of visits per month and the percentage of months with visits (before, during and after GSBB Program participation) and the mother's age at the time of entry to MCIW, the daughter's age, the conviction offense, city residence, the length of time spent in MCIW, sentence length, and the length of time spent in the GSBB Program. One of the factors significantly influenced the visitation pattern--the daughter's age. The daughter's age was negatively associated with the percent of months with visits for the period before GSBB participation ( $-.388, p=.04, n=29$ ). Thus the older the daughter the fewer the months during which she visited her mother in prison before joining the GSBB Program.

The qualitative data accumulated via interviews provide a picture of mother-daughter communication generally and in relation to the GSBB Program. More than 85% of the mothers, daughters, and guardians reported that the mothers and daughters communicated with one

another prior to their involvement in the GSBB program, most commonly utilizing a combination of phone calls and letters. The age of the daughters affected this pattern somewhat, as did whether or not phone calls were long distance. As might be expected, younger daughters were less likely to send letters, and after a time, a few homes did not accept long distance phone calls from the mothers. In those cases, the guardians stated that they could not afford the phone bills generated by MCIW calls.

More than 85% of the mothers, daughters and guardians reported that the daughter visited the mother in prison at least once. Regarding the frequency of visits, the majority (58% of the mothers, 77% of the daughters, and 81% of the guardians) reported mother-daughter visits occurring more often than once a month. In most cases, the guardian or a close relative transported the daughter to prison where she visited her mother along with the person who provided the transportation.

For a majority of the mothers interviewed (52.9%), participation in the GSBB Program had no effect on the regular visitation patterns. However, the rest stated that the Program either brought the daughters closer to the mothers and increased their regular visits (26.5%) or substituted for regular visits which declined once the Girl Scout participation began (20.6%). Guardians mentioned that daughters who had been apathetic or disinterested in visits prior to GSBB became excited about visits after joining.

In sum, the visitation data portray the mothers and daughters who enter the GSBB Program as having more frequent personal contact with one another before their GSBB participation than the matched group of mothers and daughters who met the GSBB entrance criteria but who were not GSBB members. For almost all mothers, the GSBB program does

enhance visitation quantitatively. This occurs in two ways. For the majority, the regular visits with their daughters remain the same and the GSBB visits are additions. For another fourth of the mothers interviewed, program participation enhanced the relationship and increased the number of regular visits. The interview data present a similar portrait.

## CONCLUSIONS

In many respects, the mothers and daughters in the Girl Scouts Beyond Bars Program are representative of the incarcerated mothers and their daughters described in the literature. The majority of the mothers are young women with prior criminal records and limited employment histories and educational backgrounds. Most lived with their children prior to their incarceration and intended to reunite with them when released to the community. While incarcerated, they reported experiencing the stress accompanying their separation from their daughters, including worrying about them and about their relationship. Similarly, the daughters appear to have suffered many of the separation problems identified in the literature. The interviews highlighted some of the daughters' emotional and behavioral problems associated with the mothers' incarceration, and the Piers-Harris and Conners' data suggested the presence of a small subset of girls who may have profound emotional, self-esteem and behavioral problems. However, the majority of the GSBB daughters appear to be physically and emotionally healthy individuals maturing at an appropriate rate. They have friends, enjoy school and participate in typical age-related social activities.

In some important ways, the GSBB group is distinguishable from the larger population of incarcerated mothers and their daughters. It contains a higher percentage of mothers who lived with their daughters prior to their incarceration and were their primary caretakers. A higher

percentage of the mothers lived with their daughters' guardians as well, most of whom were related to both the mother and the daughter. Their visitation patterns suggest that the mothers, daughters and guardians were committed to maintaining the mother-daughter relationship during the incarceration period irrespective of GSBB involvement. The interview data reinforces the view that the GSBB mothers and daughters had a relatively strong bond prior to GSBB Program participation. However, this was not true in all cases. A few daughters were raised almost entirely by the guardians, with the mothers coming to know their daughters through the GSBB Program. All of the interviewed mothers, daughters and guardians anticipated a mother-daughter reunification following the prison term.

Four features of the GSBB Program may help to explain finding this particular group of mothers, daughters and guardians in the GSBB Program. First, joining the Program requires a certain level of motivation on the mother's part. Membership in the GSBB Program is voluntary, and to qualify, inmate mothers must establish a lengthy infraction-free record. The interviewed mothers identified two motivations for seeking membership--seeing their daughters and giving their daughters the Girl Scout experience. The literature identifies mothers with poor pre-prison relationships with their children (Baunach, 1985; Bloom and Steinhart, 1993) who may not be interested in such a program nor be sufficiently motivated to qualify for membership.

Second, the MCIW Girl Scout meetings bring the daughters into prison. Prior studies indicate that while most inmate mothers want their children to visit them in prison, some inmate mothers do not want to expose them to the prison environment, so do not request visits from them (Datesman and Cales, 1983). It seems reasonable to expect that this subset of inmate mothers might be among those who do not receive regular visits from their daughters and among

those who would not be interested in the GSBB Program.

Third, GSBB Program participation requires at least minimal cooperation by the daughter's guardian. Some daughters' caregivers do not permit the daughters to visit their mothers in prison because they are in competition with the mother for the child or because they want to protect the daughters from undesirable mothers (Johnston, 1995; Bloom and Steinhart, 1993). In this study, a few guardians reported that they only reluctantly permitted the daughters to participate in the GSBB Program. While they felt that the mothers were undesirable, they felt that they should not prevent some contact between the mother and daughter. Additionally, a few mothers who were admitted to the Program could not develop full membership because the guardian did not cooperate.

Fourth, GSBB Program participation requires the daughter's willing cooperation. While a few girls stated that they joined because their mothers "signed them up," most stated that they joined to see their mothers or to participate in the Girl Scout activities. A few of those who left the Program early or who refused to attend any meetings said that they did so because they lacked interest in the Program or in seeing their mothers. A few who left after considerable Program involvement said that they left because they became too old, either according to GSBB rules or according to their own definition of what was age-appropriate behavior.

In summary, as structured, the Girl Scout Beyond Bars Program appears to be directed toward a particular inmate family unit, one of many types found among prisoners. It is one in which the mother, daughter and guardian are sufficiently interested in the welfare of either the mother, the daughter, and/or the mother-daughter relationship to participate in a prison-based program that they perceive will benefit the mother, the daughter, and/or enhance that

relationship. While it is probably often the case that the families of community Girl Scout troop members share this level of interest, it is difficult to imagine a community Girl Scout troop equivalent to the Girl Scout Beyond Bars troop. The closest might be a troop comprised of mothers and their daughters who do not live together. The daughters would live with their guardians and visit their mothers only occasionally and for short periods of time. To complete the scenario, a separation caused by something comparable to imprisonment would be required. Clearly, the Girl Scouts Beyond Bars troop is unique as an inmate group and as a Girl Scout troop.

The Girl Scouts Beyond Bars Program has concluded its fourth year and is continuing to evolve. Some of the mechanisms put in place initially, such as the membership criteria, have been altered; and others, such as door-to-door transportation, have established themselves as essential. At the conclusion of the data collection period, the GSCM and MCIW personnel were revisiting the program's parameters and were planning GSBB activities for the coming year. Similar planning is very likely occurring in the Girl Scouts Beyond Bars Programs that have been established in detention centers, prisons, and pre-release centers throughout the country (Moses, 1995).

## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> The program's original name was the Girl Scouts Behind Bars Program. In May, 1995, the name was changed to the Girl Scouts Beyond Bars Program.

<sup>2</sup> Because most of the experiential data emerged from interviews, we wanted to know if our group of interviewed mothers differed significantly from the larger group of GSBB mothers. To address the possibility of systematic bias in our samples of located and interviewed mothers, we compared them to those not located and those not interviewed on the mother's age at the time of entry to MCIW; her residence, marital status, employment status, and education status prior to entry to MCIW; her daughter's age, the number of children she has, the number of prior separations from her children due to incarceration, whether she lived with her children prior to her incarceration, her offense type, whether her offense was drug-related, her sentence length, the year of her release from MCIW, the number of her prior arrests, prior convictions, prior drug convictions, and length of time spent in the GSBB program. Only two variables differentiated the mothers who were located from those who were not, and those who were interviewed from those who were not. The variables were the year the mother was released from MCIW and the number of months she spent in the GSBB program.

As one would expect, the greater the time lapse between the release year and the study, the smaller was the percentage of mothers located for possible inclusion in the study. Eight of the fourteen mothers (57%) whom we could not locate and for whom we have release dates left MCIW in 1992 or 1993, and four more left in 1994 (29%). In contrast, 55% of the 38 located women for whom we have release dates left MCIW in 1995 or 1996. Another 22% left in 1994, and 26% left in 1992 or 1993. Comparing those interviewed with those not interviewed, we found a similar pattern. Fifty percent of the 26 women not interviewed for whom we have release data left MCIW in 1992 or 1993, and another 27% in 1994. In contrast, 62% of the interviewed women for whom we have release data left MCIW in 1995 or 1996. Another 19% left in 1994, and 19% left in either 1992 or 1993.

Locating and interviewing the mothers was associated with a longer average number of months participating in the GSBB program. Most of the mothers who were not located had spent little time in the GSBB program before they were released from MCIW or transferred to the Prerelease Center and then to the community. They averaged 4.6 months in the GSBB program in comparison with an average of 8.7 months for those who were located. The difference was similar for those interviewed and those not interviewed. Those interviewed an average of 10.5 months in the program and those not interviewed averaged 4.7 months in the program.

In all, six women who were located for possible interviews declined to participate in the study. Three were current members, three were former GSBB members. Five of the women who declined were in MCIW when invited. A comparison of this small group with those who agreed to be interviewed uncovered a few differences related to offense type, length of sentence and prior separations from their daughters. Four of the five were serving sentences for criminal homicide, and averaged longer sentences than did those who agreed to be interviewed. Two were serving life sentences, one was serving a twenty year sentence, and two were serving ten

year terms. Excluding the lifers, the average sentences were 13.33 years for those who declined to be interviewed and 7.25 years for those who agreed to be interviewed. None who declined participation had experienced a prior separation from her daughter due to incarceration.

Regarding the other variables, many which might be important in understanding the profile of the GSBB Program participants, however, we found little difference between those located and those not located, nor between those interviewed and those not interviewed.

<sup>3</sup> Though it may seem highly likely that the two variables would be highly correlated, consider three scenarios. In all three, the mother receives thirty-six visits in a twelve month period, thus an average number of three visits per month. Scenario One: she receives nine visits in each of four months. Scenario Two: She receives six visits in each of six months. Scenario Three: She receives three visits in each of twelve months. The percent of months with visits will be 33.3%, 50%, and 100% respectively.

### REFERENCES

- Adalist-Estrin, Ann. 1994. "Children of incarcerated parents," Family and Corrections Network Report 3: 1-2.
- Baunach, Phyllis Jo. 1982. "You Can't Be a Mother and Be in Prison...Can You?" In B. Price and N. Sokoloff (eds.), The Criminal Justice System and Women. NY: Boardman.
- Baunach, Phyllis Jo. 1985. Mothers in Prison. NJ: Transaction Books.
- Bloom, Barbara and David Steinhart. 1993. Why Punish the Children: A Reappraisal. NJ: National Council on Crime and Delinquency.
- Chesney-Lind, Meda. 1992. "Putting the Brakes on the Building Binge," Corrections Today 54 (6): 30, 32-34.
- Conners, Keith C. 1990. Conners' Rating Scales Manual. NY: Multi-Health Systems, Inc.
- Datesman, Susan K. And Gloria L. Cales. 1983. "I'm still the same mommy': Maintaining the mother/child relationship in prison," Prison Journal 63, 2: 142-154.
- Feinman, Clarice. 1986. Women in the Criminal Justice System. NY: Praeger Publisher.
- Fessler, Susan Raikovitz. 1991. Mothers in the Correctional System: Separation from Children and Reunification after Incarceration. SUNY, Albany: Ph.D. Dissertation.
- Fritsch, Travis A. and John D. Burkhead. 1982. "Behavioral reactions of children to parental absence due to imprisonment," Family Relations 30, 1: 83-88.
- Fuller, Lisa G. 1993. "Visitors to women's prisons in California: An exploratory study," Federal Probation 57, 4: 41-47.
- Gibbs, C. 1971. "The Effects of Prison on Women and their Children," British Journal of Criminology 11: 1131-30.
- Grossman, Jody. 1984. Female Commitments 1982: The Family. Report prepared for the New York Department of Correctional Services.
- Hadley, Judith. 1981. Georgia Women Prison Inmates and Their Families. Emory: M.A. Thesis.
- Hairston, Creasie Finney and D. Lockett. 1985. "Parents in Prison," Child Abuse and Neglect 9: 471-477.
- Hairston, Creasie Finney. 1991. "Family Ties During Imprisonment: Important to Whom and For What?" Journal of Sociology and Social Welfare 18 (1): 87-104.

- Hairston, Creasia Finney. 1988. "Family ties during imprisonment: Do they influence future criminal activity?" Federal Probation 52, 1: 48-52.
- Henriques, Zelma W. 1982. Imprisoned Mothers and Their Children: A Descriptive and Analytic Study. Washington, D.C.: University Press of America.
- Homer, Eva Lee. 1979. "Inmate-Family Ties: Desirable but Difficult," Federal Probation 43, 1: 47-52.
- Howser, James, Jody Grossman and Donald Macdonald. 1984. "Impact of family reunion program on institutional discipline," Journal of Offender Counseling, Services and Rehabilitation 8, 1/2: 27-36.
- Hudson, W. 1982. The Clinical Measurement Package: A Field Manual. Chicago: IL: Dorsey.
- Hungerford, Gregory P. 1993. The Children of Inmate Mothers: An Exploratory Study of Children, Caretakers and Inmate Mothers in Ohio. Ohio State: Ph.D. Dissertation
- Johnston, Denise. 1995. "The care and placement of prisoners' children," 103-123 in Katherine Gabel and Denise Johnston (eds.), Children of Incarcerated Parents. New York: Lexington Books.
- Johnston, Denise. 1994. "What we know about children of offenders," Family and Corrections Network Report 3: 3-4.
- Johnston, Denise and Katherine Gabel. 1995. "Incarcerated parents," 3-20 in Katherine Gabel and Denise Johnston (eds.), Children of Incarcerated Parents. New York: Lexington.
- Jose-Kampfner, Christina. 1991. "Michigan Program Makes Children's Visits Meaningful," Corrections Today 53 (6): 132-134.
- Kiser, George C. 1991. "Female inmates and their families," Federal Probation 55, 1: 56-63.
- Logan, Gloria. 1992. "Family Ties Take Top Priority In Women's Visiting Program," Corrections Today 54 (6): 160-161.
- McGowan, Brenda and Karen Blumenthal. 1978. Why Punish the Children: A Study of Children of Women Prisoners. NJ: National Council of Crime and Delinquency.
- Moses, Marilyn. 1995. "Keeping Incarcerated Mothers and their Daughters Together: Girl Scouts Beyond Bars," National Institute of Justice Program Focus. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice.
- Piers, Ellen V. 1984. Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale: Revised Manual 1984. Los Angeles, CA: Western Psychological Services.
- Pollock-Byrne, Joycelyn M. 1990. Women, Prison, and Crime. CA: Wadsworth.
- Radish, Kris. 1994. "Mothers Behind Bars: The pain of separation never goes away," The Milwaukee Journal Nov. 6: 11-15.
- Rocheleau, Ann M. 1987. Joining Incarcerated Mothers with their Children: Evaluation of the Lancaster Visiting Cottage Program. MA: Massachusetts Department of Corrections.
- Simon, Rita J. and Jean Landis. 1991. The Crimes Women Commit: The Punishments They Receive. Lexington, Massachusetts: Lexington Books.
- Stanton, S. 1980. When Mothers Go To Jail. MA: D. C. Heath.
- Stumbo, Norma J. and Sandra L. Little. 1991. "Campground Offers Relaxed Setting for Children's Visitation Program," Corrections Today 53 (6): 136-144.
- Zalba, Sarapio. 1964. Women Prisoners and Their Families. CA: Delmar Publishers

