

WOMENS PRISON NETWORK



ISSUE #24 ~ FALL 2021

Editor's Note:

Welcome to Issue #24 of Women's Prison Network, a magazine by and for women, trans and youth prisoners in Canada.

This is a safe space to share art, poetry, news, thoughts, conversation, connections ...

We send copies into all Women & Youth prisons in Canada.

Send your art, poems, short stories, comments, articles, etc, to Women's Prison Network if you would like to be a part of the next Issue. - Thanks!

Women's Prison Network
PO Box 39, Stn P
Toronto, ON, M5S 2S6

'Women's Prison Network' is published 4 times per year.
It is sent out for free to Women, Trans & Youth in Prisons in Canada.

If you are on the outside or part of an organization, please consider a donation!!!

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Cover Artwork:

Mary Tremonte

Artists:

Cover Artists will receive a \$25.00 donation.
Thank you so much for your work!
Let us know how & where you would like the donation sent to & where you would like your art returned to.
Please note: this magazine is for women, trans and youth from all cultures, so please do not send religious imagery.
Thank you for your art!

Writers:

One column is only 300 words, so do choose your words carefully.
It must be short & to the point.
Poems that are tight & give space for others are the preferred.
Thank you for your words!

< Funding for this Issue >

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David W, Charles K & A Reader !

Ancestral Territorial Acknowledgment:

We respectfully acknowledge that the land on which Prison Free Press operates is the Traditional Territory of the Wendat, the Anishnaabeg, Haudenosaunee, and the Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation.

≈ 'Dish With One Spoon' Wampum ≈

A Reader, Writes:

Women's Prison Network is an essential vehicle for the words, emotions, thoughts, sorrows, tears, rage, humour and pain, courage of women behind bars, cells, walls, silences, alone, fearful, angry.

Do I as a reader, on the outside, feel the lives of those on the inside more acutely now because of the pandemic?

Many people I've known for years told me they were going into a small bubble.

I had, have no bubble.

Even family members, walking a distance away, told me "No, we see no one".

My ideological 'friends' vanished.

For the first year I shared time with 3 women for meals and song on a regular basis.

We are one year older. Lives have changed. I have changed, too. Less eager to venture.

Becoming used to less company, I feel a loss of energy. I will take a bus now.

Before the 2nd pandemic year, I chose to walk. I am tired. I will lie down and often fall asleep with my clothes and shoes on. I wear the same clothes day in and day out. Where to go to refresh wardrobe? Nowhere.

I see our city. The sadness of closed shops and frightened people. Stress and worry on faces.

So many 'cast offs' on our streets, in parks, ravines, in tents or just stretched out against a wall. No water. No toilets. How to be clean?

Soon you lose your sense of being a part of a world.

You become a part.

Far apart.

Where to go? Where to hide?

Do we not feel like prisoners?

Outlets for life-giving camaraderie, smiles, laughing, conversation.

No touch. No hug.

Some manage better than others.

(Answer for writer's question: On Aug 11, 2021, the Chiefs of member First Nations of Nishnawbe Aski Nation have chosen Derek Fox to be the next Grand Chief. Tel: 807.623.8228 Toll Free: 1.800.465.9952 Hope this helps, any other needs? And, thanks so much for the donation!

- Respect.)

Average Annual Cost of Housing One Person

\$110,230 - Correctional Facility

\$25,200 - Homeless Shelter

\$18,000 - Community Criminal Justice Supervision

\$7,356 - Social Housing

The institutionalization of individuals with mental health issues is as costly as it is ineffective at promoting community safety. In 2019, the average cost per day for incarcerating an individual in Ontario was \$302, resulting in an average yearly cost of \$110,230.

Between 2016 and 2017, the average cost per day for an individual in segregation, in a federal institution, was over \$1,269, totalling an average of \$463,185 per year.

In contrast, the cost of Community Resources and Social Services are significantly less expensive. In 2018, the average cost for Community Criminal Justice Supervision was \$50 per day or \$18,000 per year.

Between 2016 and 2017, the average cost per day for Social Housing was \$20, averaging a total of \$7,356 per year.

Additionally, the average cost per day for a Homeless Shelter bed was \$70, averaging a total of \$25,200 per year.

- YES to Corporate Profits - NO to Social Justice -



**IF WE WANT TO TEAR
DOWN MONUMENTS
TO RACISM
WE SHOULD START
WITH PRISONS**



B.C. ombudsperson labels youth confinement in jail 'unsafe,' calls for changes

A three-year investigation by British Columbia's ombudsperson concludes the provincial government's practice of placing jailed youth in solitary confinement is "unjust and unsafe."

Jay Chalke, whose office investigates complaints against provincial and local authorities, says in a release that the confinement also disproportionately impacts Indigenous youth.

Chalke says B.C.'s laws should be changed to boost oversight abilities and to set a maximum of 22 hours that the youth, aged 12 from to 17, can be placed in solitary.

B.C. has two youth custody centres in Prince George and Burnaby, and the study found the average duration of confinement increased over a three-year period, including in one case when a youth spent 78 out of 81 days in solitary.

The report makes 26 recommendations, ranging from amending B.C.'s Youth Justice Act to providing better care for prisoners with mental health issues.

In response to the report, Children and Family Development Minister Mitzi Dean says B.C. is developing a framework to improve and modernize its youth justice system.

Dean says the ministry accepts the "spirit and intent of the recommendations" and will incorporate them into its youth justice framework.

"Both the child welfare system and the justice system are overly involved in the lives of Indigenous people, children and families. It is part of the damaging colonial legacy that continues to this day - and as part of our commitment to reconciliation, we need to address it head on," she says in a statement.

Chalke says he's encouraged that the ministry has accepted the recommendations but the lack of urgency by government is concerning.

"It is time to give these issues - and these young people - the priority they need," Chalke said in a statement.

Despite a drop in the number of youths being placed into the province's two detention centres from 2017 to 2019, the report notes the duration of isolation rose and Indigenous youth accounted for more than half of the solitary confinement incidents.

"These practices of isolation can create a self-reinforcing cycle in which the harmful effects of isolation make it harder for a person to be in a non-isolated environment, and so isolation is more likely to continue," the report says.

The Canadian Press
Jun 15, 2021

Canada locks up Black immigrants, asylum seekers longer than other detainees

Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International say Canada detains thousands of asylum seekers every year in often abusive conditions where people of colour appear to be held for longer periods.

The two leading human rights organizations documented in a joint report how people in immigration detention, including those fleeing persecution and seeking protection in Canada, are regularly handcuffed, shackled and held with little to no contact with the outside world.

The secretary general of Amnesty International Canada said the country's abusive immigration detention system is in stark contrast to the rich diversity and the values of equality and justice that Canada is known for.

There should be no place in Canada for racism, cruelty and human rights violations against people coming to this country seeking safety and a better life, said Ketty Niyabandi.

On its website, the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) said that individuals may be detained for a number of reasons, including if they have criminal convictions, if they lack "ties to the community," or if they may be a danger to the public or the security of Canada.

It said a national immigration detention framework introduced in 2016, with a five-year investment of \$138 million, created a "better, fairer" system that supports the "humane and dignified treatment of individuals while protecting public safety."

Groups call on Canada to phase out its system

Niyabandi said Canada should sign and ratify the United Nations' Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture to further prevent violations and open detention sites for international inspection.

Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch are calling on the Canadian authorities to gradually end immigration detention in Canada, she added.

The 100-page report said people can be held for months or years on immigration-related grounds. Detainees who are from communities of colour, particularly Black detainees, appear to be held for longer periods, often in provincial jails.

The report said Canada locked up 8,825 people between the ages of 15 and 83, including 1,932 in provincial jails, between April 2019 and March 2020.

During the same period, 136 children were put in detention to avoid separating them from their detained parents, including 73 children under age six.

Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International found that Canada has held more than 300 immigration detainees for longer than a year since 2016.

'I felt like a dog'

The report includes 90 interviews with former immigration detainees and their relatives, mental health experts, academics, lawyers, civil society representatives and government officials. The names of most of the detainees were withheld to protect them from reprisals by immigration authorities, the report said.

"I didn't feel like a human in there: I felt like a dog. The guards would just open the latch to feed me," said one former detainee, who was held in an Ontario jail in 2020.

"When we mixed with Canadian inmates in jail, they asked us why we are there. They thought we were Taliban. We explained that we are fleeing the Taliban," said another former detainee, who was held in a Nova Scotia jail after coming to Canada in 2017. "I chose Canada because I thought it was welcoming to refugees. I thought Canada was better than this."

The two organizations' researchers also reviewed relevant reports, UN documents, and unpublished government documents obtained through 112 access-to-information requests.

Many asylum seekers are held in provincial jails with the regular jail population and are often subjected to solitary confinement, the report said, and those with psychosocial disabilities or mental health conditions experience discrimination.

Samer Muscati, associate disability rights director at Human Rights Watch, said Canada is one of

the few countries in the global north where people seeking safety risk being locked up indefinitely.

Muscati said immigration authorities discriminate against people with disabilities by making the conditions of their detention harsher and the terms of their release more onerous than for many other detainees.

The two organizations found that many immigration detainees develop suicidal thoughts as they begin to lose hope that they will be released, and those fleeing traumatic experiences and persecution are particularly affected.

They said many former immigration detainees continue to live with the effects of psychosocial disabilities they developed during incarceration months and even years after their release.

The CBSA remains the only major law enforcement agency in Canada without independent civilian oversight, which repeatedly resulted in serious human rights violations in the context of immigration detention, the advocacy groups said.

COVID-19 presents 'a real opportunity'

"Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020, Canadian authorities have released immigration detainees at unprecedented rates," Muscati said.

"Instead of returning to business as usual as the pandemic comes under control in Canada, the government has a real opportunity to overhaul its immigration and refugee protection system to prioritize mental health and human rights."

With files from CBC's Emma Paling
The Canadian Press - Jun 17, 2021



Ontario loses appeal of \$30M payment in solitary confinement class action ruling

A \$30-million class-action award against Ontario for its mistreatment of inmates in solitary confinement will stand, the Court of Appeal ruled on Wednesday.

In its decision, the court dismissed the province's challenge to an earlier finding that its system of administrative segregation was negligent and violated the prisoners' constitutional rights.

The court also rejected Ontario's arguments that it could not be held liable for what it described as a policy decision, and that legislation passed in 2019 made it immune to claims of negligence.

"Ontario cannot turn a blind eye to overwhelming evidence of the unconstitutionality of its actions," the Appeal Court said. "Damages for the charter breaches were an 'appropriate and just' remedy."

Administrative segregation in Ontario is used when inmates pose a safety risk to themselves or others, or have committed a serious breach of the rules. Evidence was that 43% of inmates placed in solitary had mental health alerts on file.

"Administrative segregation in Ontario consists of isolation in a small cell for 22 hours or more with no meaningful human contact," the court noted. "Evidence shows that the cells are often filthy and covered in bodily fluids."

Conrey Francis, an inmate with serious mental illness, launched the class action in 2017. Francis spent more than two years at the Toronto South Detention Centre before being acquitted of bank-robbery charges.

Francis was placed in isolation twice for refusing to take medication he said had nasty side-effects. Authorities decided doing so amounted to a "refusal to follow an order."

The solitary experience, the court said, was "excruciating," leaving Francis feeling "terrorized" and in a "state of delirium and shock." His mental health worsened to the point where he had suicidal thoughts and auditory hallucinations. The class action was certified with Ontario's agreement in September 2018 and applied to situations between April 20, 2015, and September 18, 2018. The class comprised inmates with serious mental illness placed in solitary as well as those left in segregation for at least 15 days.

In April 2020, Superior Court Justice Paul Perell awarded \$30 million in damages after finding segregation violated principles of fundamental justice. The province had been "systemically and routinely" negligent in running the solitary confinement regime, he ruled.

Solitary confinement, Perell noted, is widely known to cause serious mental harm, and its effects are grossly disproportionate to the purposes. As such, he ruled it to be cruel and unusual punishment.

The appellate court agreed with Perell, also rejecting Ontario's claim that it was immune from liability for what it characterized as policy decisions. Instead, the court said segregation could be characterized as "operational."

Ontario's interpretation of what constituted policy was too broad, the Appeal Court said. Adopting the province's approach would mean almost every government decision could be deemed policy, it said.

"To adopt Ontario's expansive meaning would require a conclusion either that the attorney general at the time did not understand the effect of the legislation being introduced, or that she misled the legislature as to its intention and effect," the Appeal Court said.

Lawyer James Sayce, who acted for Francis, said the court had made an important ruling in terms of immunity from liability.

"Government negligence has been an important part of Canada's legal landscape for decades," Sayce said. "This decision shows that it cannot be so easily legislated away."

The Francis lawsuit was similar to other successful ones that ultimately forced the federal government to change its practices regarding administrative segregation.

Ontario's ombudsman has also slammed the province's use of solitary, particularly with regard to those inmates who are mentally ill.

The Appeal Court ordered Ontario to pay \$50,000 in legal costs.

Colin Perkel
The Canadian Press
Mar 31, 2021

Don't be yourself – be someone a little nicer.
- Mignon McLaughlin

Federal prison service eavesdropped on inmate calls with lawyers

Federal prison staff intercepted conversations between an inmate and their lawyer without approval in 10% of cases reviewed, amounting to possible breaches of solicitor-client privilege, an internal audit reveals.

The newly released Correctional Service of Canada audit also discovered that a lack of guidance and training led to other "significant compliance issues," including failure to support or document grounds for snooping on prisoners' communications.

In addition, there were insufficient safeguards to ensure legal and policy obligations were met with respect to later notifying inmates that their communications had been intercepted.

The audit says the issues went largely undetected due to poor quality assurance and a lack of monitoring and reporting.

The prison service has legal authority in many instances to intercept inmate communications - including letters, telephone calls and conversations during the course of a visit - without receiving prior authorization from a court.

It says lawful monitoring of inmate communications is sometimes necessary in order to maintain the safety and security of prisons.

The auditors stress that given the implications for an inmate's privacy, it is essential the prison service have an effective framework in place to ensure interceptions respect the law.

"We found that several of the key activities associated with the communication intercept process were not always compliant with requirements," the April 2021 audit report says.

The Correctional Service agreed with the audit findings and recommendations and prepared a detailed plan to address the various issues. The plan is slated for full implementation by the end of this month.

The reviewers visited federal institutions in different parts of the country, interviewed staff and examined samples of intercepted communications. The first phase focused on intercepts that were approved and completed from Jan. 1, 2017, to June 22, 2018. A second phase looked at ones between Nov. 1, 2018, and April 12, 2019.

Prison officials are not permitted to intercept privileged communications unless specific legal requirements are met. Privileged communications include correspondence and conversations between inmates and legal counsel, the correctional investigator, various elected politicians, consular officials, the federal human rights commission, and the information and privacy commissioners.

In the first phase of the audit, telephone communication between an inmate and their lawyer "was intercepted without approval" in eight of 79 files reviewed, just over 10 per cent, "resulting in a potential breach of solicitor-client privilege."

The auditors suggest problems stemmed in part from confusion over the need to ensure lawyers' phone numbers were excluded from lists related to potential intercepts.

The second-phase review of such phone intercepts demonstrated "a slight improvement," but again highlighted a need to implement quality-assurance processes, the audit says.

John Struthers, president of the Criminal Lawyers' Association, called the prison service's unauthorized interceptions involving legal counsel systemic abuse of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

"Anybody who countenanced this, knew about it, permitted it or encouraged it should be removed from their position immediately," said Struthers, whose organization has 1,700 members and serves as a voice for criminal justice and civil liberties.

"It is critically important that people who are charged with crimes have the right to retain and instruct counsel without delay, in privacy."

The Correctional Service of Canada said it is committed to ensuring the privacy of offenders in compliance with laws, policies and guidelines.

Any breach of an inmate's personal information is subject to reporting under the prison service's guidelines for privacy breaches, said spokeswoman Marie Pier Lecuyer.

"As part of this process, CSC has communicated with offenders who were identified to explain any breach of their personal information and inform them of their right to file a complaint."

Jim Bronskill
The Canadian Press
Jun 03, 2021

Family Ties

Stronger by the day
 Nothing is getting in my way
 My eye now on the prize
 That's my babies
 No problem any size
 Can compromise
 Those family ties
 So please step aside
 Bow out or join me in my ride
 In this journey to success
 Screw a gurney
 My life ain't over yet!

KZeb

Untitled

Feelings are too high to get over
 Too deep to get under
 Too big to go around
 But most of all, feelings are too hard to go
 through alone
 So the best thing to do is to bring a friend along
 to lend a helping hand.

Tammy Marquardt

Breezy

I'll never let being behind these bars define me
 I can't wait till I get to put this all behind me
 It's been a rough few years
 And the end is finally near
 I just have to keep moving forward
 And have No Fear
 Fear, that I won't do things right
 Fear, that I'll never get to make it into the light
 The light of where everything's mostly happy
 The light of life where nothing's usually crappy
 It's gonna be hard
 No one said it'd ever be easy
 I just need to keep on moving forward
 And do what I can to make life Breezy!

Taylor Gallagher

Home

Things have Got to change
 We're all stuck inside this sickening game
 A game so evil even the devil doesn't like to play!
 Struggling every day to get enough pay
 But as much as we hate it,
 We love it just the same
 Taking everything from us
 You'd think that'd be enough
 Enough to just say No
 And look the other way
 Every day is a struggle
 So please listen when I say
 We're in this forever
 But we're in it together
 We can make it out alive & together
 We'll always strive
 Just remember, you're not alone
 And one day we'll finally find
 Our way home

Taylor Gallagher

Words of Escape

Locked up 22 hours a day
 Thinking about the rumours
 And what my enemies got to say
 Feeling that guilt so heavy
 Sittin' on me like a 2 ton Chevy
 Wish I could erase the past
 It all came down so fast
 I got tears in my heart
 Thinking back to the start
 Buyin' single butts at Smart Mart
 Boostin' a whole cart
 Gettin' high, fallin' asleep with a half-eaten
 butter tart
 Burn holes in the blanket
 Popped a pill, just sank it
 Methadone, I drank it
 Now I'm thinkin' 'bout my future
 See nothin' but success
 Please god save me from sinnin' like before
 I don't want to be laid to rest
 My life ain't over yet

Karrissa Z

Cost of moving on from criminal past is too high

Denise Durette got out of prison in 2002. She tried to work at a call centre, a burger restaurant, anywhere to stay off social assistance.

But her criminal record got in the way, and she could not afford the \$1,000 cost of a record suspension.

"For many years I was on social assistance," she said.

Now, she's advocating a more affordable record suspension application, so people don't have to keep paying for a crime after they're paid their dues by serving time in jail or prison.

"Employers should give people a chance," she said.

People who have been convicted of crimes can apply for a record suspension, previously called a pardon, 10 years after they're released if they committed an indictable offence, and five years if it was a lesser, summary, conviction.

The application costs about \$1,000, and the final decision is up to the Parole Board of Canada. The wait time for this process is six months to more than a year. The criminal record is restored if a person commits a crime again.

The Elizabeth Fry Society has been trying to raise awareness about the economic and psychological impact on people, women in particular, who have difficulty getting their records put aside.

The society is raising money to help cover the cost of record suspensions for women in need of help, including the \$657 base fee, and the cost of fingerprinting, obtaining record checks, court information sheets, local police checks, identification and postage.

These costs are prohibitive for people who are coming out of incarceration, unable to get a job, and relying on social assistance, said Judy Murphy, executive director of the Elizabeth Fry Society of Saint John.

"These women and gender diverse people we work with are really tenacious and committed to moving on with their lives," she said. "It just saddens us that this whole situation has to happen."

Murphy said the cost of a record suspension used to be \$25.

"I would like to see this whole system changed and looked at and made accessible for people who have a record," she said.

Murphy said housing and employment are the two main factors required for reintegration to society, and a criminal record is a barrier to both.

"Even now, landlords are asking for criminal record checks. So it's even more difficult to get housing. And, of course, the cost and the availability is another factor."

'Everybody's issue'

Murphy said she wants people to be aware of the impact on society when people who get out of jail or prison are forever followed by a record.

"It's everybody's issue," she said.

Durette said she never wanted to be on social assistance but was forced into relying on it because of her inability to get a job. If she could work, she said, she could have stayed off assistance and saved taxpayers thousands of dollars.

"We want to get out of that circle. It's really hurtful," she said.

Rachel Cave
CBC News
Aug 16, 2021

So Much More

A prisoner now, yes we may be
But there's so much more to life
That we should try and see
We should get back to our families
To be happy and more
And take any chance we get
To break away from this deadly war
This is Not who we are
Or who we must become
So let's get back to life
And try to start having some fun
A new fun just simply living
This thing called Life & along our way
We can work to make everything right
Right for ourselves & Right as we might
So just take things one day at a time
And continue the fight!

Taylor Gallagher

Review of federal prison isolation units 'not adequate'

A study has found shortcomings with the process intended to serve as a check on new units for isolating federal prisoners from the general jail population.

In response to criticism of solitary confinement, the government ushered in "structured intervention units" for inmates requiring isolation to allow better access to programming and mental-health care.

Prisoners transferred to the units are supposed to be allowed out of their cells for four hours each day, with two of those hours engaged in "meaningful human contact."

According to the Correctional Service, personnel known as independent external decision makers review inmate cases on an ongoing basis, and provide binding recommendations related to their conditions and length of confinement.

However, a new study by academic experts says the reviews are "not adequate," and it points to a lack of information about the nature of the information used by the decision makers, the logic behind their findings and the timing of the implementation of their decisions.

The study, made public Monday, was prepared by criminologists Anthony Doob and Jane Sprott and law professor Adelina Iftene using data provided by the Correctional Service.

The prison service said it was reviewing the report.

"We continue to work hard to help inmates take advantage of the opportunities for time out of cell and meaningfully engage in diverse activities and programs, especially during the pandemic," said spokeswoman Isabelle Robitaille.

As of this week there were 188 inmates in a structured intervention unit at federal prison facilities across Canada, representing about 1.5 per cent of the inmate population, she said.

An earlier report by Doob and Sprott, released in February, said 28 per cent of the stays in the units could be described, given international standards, as solitary confinement and 10 per cent could be considered to be torture.

The latest study examined data dealing with decision makers' reviews of the length of a unit stay.

It found cases were often referred to decision makers within 67 days. However, there were

105 cases in which the person stayed in a unit for at least 76 days with no record of the case ever being sent to a decision maker.

The study also found:

- Although the decision maker may have "independent" authority to decide that someone should be released from a unit, the prison service can arrange the timing of that release to meet its own needs;

- Black prisoners' stays in units were longer than the stays of other groups;

- The review process did not help remove those with mental-health issues more quickly.

The study concluded that the decision makers' reviews "as they currently exist are not adequate."

"Without access to considerably more information about the manner in which these reviews are carried out, it is difficult for us to know whether this system of oversight can be made adequate," the authors wrote.

"Most disturbing to us, however, is not the fact that we were not able to examine in detail how the (decision makers') process actually works, but that nobody seems to be doing this."

Based on the new findings and previous analysis of data about the units, "it is clear that change is desperately needed," the study said.

"Our findings also point to the importance of there being an oversight body that can look systematically not only at the kind of data that we, as volunteers, have been looking at, but also at other more detailed data related to the operation of the (units) and the practice of solitary confinement."

Robitaille said the prison service is working with stakeholders and values their feedback on ongoing enhancements to the new model.

"While there is more work to do, we remain strongly committed to the successful implementation of SIUs as we work to safely and successfully rehabilitate offenders."

Jim Bronskill
The Canadian Press
May 10, 2021

You reach a certain point that,
when you've been through enough crap,
you know what you want when you see it.
- Kelly Murdock-Billy

Book Clubs for Inmates (BCFI)

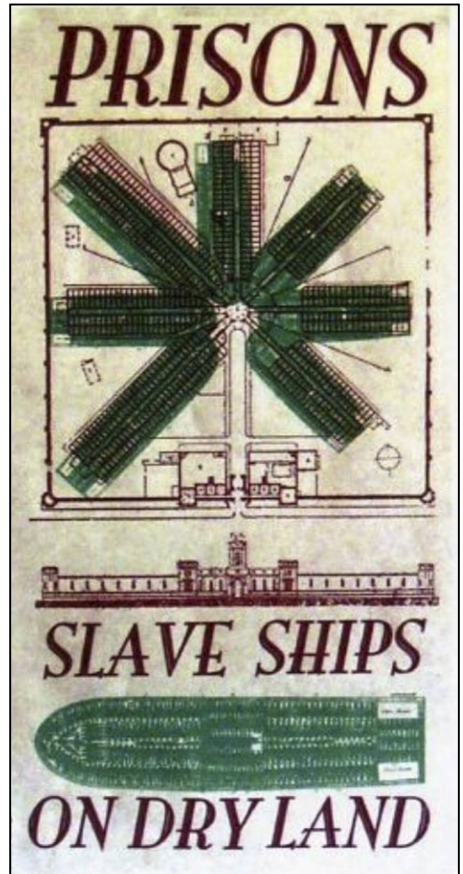
Book Clubs for Inmates (BCFI) is a registered charity that organizes volunteer-led book clubs within federal penitentiaries across Canada. Currently, BCFI is facilitating 30 book clubs from Nova Scotia to British Columbia.

BCFI runs French and English language book clubs for men and women incarcerated in minimum, medium, and maximum security facilities. Book clubs are usually made up of 10-18 members who meet once a month to discuss books, both fiction and non-fiction of literary merit.

Every month, hundreds of inmates participate in book clubs across the country and each year thousands of brand new books are purchased, read, and discussed.

Book Clubs for Inmates
720 Bathurst St.
Toronto, ON, M5S 2R4

PRISONS WILL NEVER PREVENT THE REASON FOR CRIME



For the master's tools will never dismantle the master's house.

They may allow us temporarily to beat him at his own game, but they will never enable us to bring about genuine change.

- Audre Lorde

All through the ages the African people have made efforts to deliver themselves from oppressive forces.

It is important that a critical mass of Africans do not accept the verdict that the world tries to push down their throat so as to give up and succumb.

The struggle must continue.

- Wangari Maathai

Toll-Free Support Line for SK Prisoners

For prisoners in Provincial jails & Federal prisons in Saskatchewan.

Funds will be used to help inmates purchase call packages to keep them connected to their family, help out with canteen for necessary things & for transportation home. Maintained by prisoner advocacy groups Beyond Prison Walls Canada and Inmates for Humane Conditions.

☎ 1-866-949-0074 ☎

Jail Accountability and Information Line (JAIL) for prisoners in OCDC

The Jail Accountability and Information Line takes calls from prisoners and their loved ones from 1:00pm to 4:00pm Mon to Wed. This line tracks issues experienced by people incarcerated at the Ottawa Carleton Detention Centre.

☎ 613-567-JAIL (5245) ☎

Jail Hotline for MCC, TSDC & VCW

The Toronto Prisoners' Rights Project (TPRP) is launching the Toronto South Detention Centre, Vanier Centre for Women and Maplehurst Correctional Complex Jail Hotline. This hotline is run by volunteers. It will take calls on:

*Monday, Wednesday, Friday & Saturday
9-11am & 2-4pm - 416-755-9329*

Why a Jail Hotline?

Prisons and jails carry out human rights abuses every day because they do not think anyone is watching. We are here in solidarity and struggle with prisoners.

Who Should Call This Hotline?

Please share the hotline with your loved ones inside. We cannot accept calls from other prisons or jails or from people in the community.

If you need to contact us outside of the line, you can message us on social media or an email to:

TorontoPrisonersRightsProject@gmail.com

☎ 416-755-9329 ☎

Prison Visiting Rideshare Project

The Prison Rideshare is an ongoing project of Bar None to connect people with rides to visit their friends and loved ones who are in prison in Manitoba.

If you or someone you know is interested in getting a ride to visit one of southern Manitoba's prisons, if you are interested in volunteering, or for more info contact: barnone.wpg@gmail.com

Rides can also be arranged by phone or text message: 204-599-8869 (It's ideal to request a ride at least 5-7 days in advance).

Incarcerated in Canada? Need Information?

Write On! is an all-volunteer group whose goal is to support prisoners in Canada by researching the information you need, such as:

General legal info, prison rules & policies, resources, programs, services, etc.

Write to us at:

Write ON!

*234-110 Cumberland St,
Toronto, ON, M5R 3V5*

You may encounter many defeats, but you must not be defeated.

In fact, it may be necessary to encounter the defeats, so you can know who you are, what you can rise from, how you can still come out of it.

- Maya Angelou

It's hard to argue against cynics - they always sound smarter than optimists because they have so much evidence on their side.

- Molly Ivins

Children of Inmates Reading Program (ChIRP)

"Reading aloud is the single most important thing a parent or caregiver can do to help a child prepare for reading and learning"

"Reading is the gateway to future success in life and in school"

BCFI's commitment to the successful re-integration of inmates and to stronger, healthier communities includes the development of Children of Inmates Reading Program (ChIRP). The mandate of ChIRP is to build and enhance a healthier parent/ child relationship, develop literacy and listening skills, increase vocabulary and attention spans for children and promote a love of learning in children through the consistent presence of a parent and books.

For the past 10 years, Carla Veitch, a children's educator, has been successfully developing and operating a parent/child reading initiative. Twice a month, Carla, along with another volunteer, enter the institution and offer men the opportunity to select a book for their child and then read that book into a recording device. The book and recording are then mailed to the child. This initiative provides a direct connection for the child with his or her incarcerated parent. In addition to the opportunity of hearing a parent's voice, the reading initiative underscores the value of reading and the importance of books. For a number of the participants, reading aloud to their child has not been part of their pattern of parenting, nor was it modeled for them as part of their early childhood years.

Children are never responsible for their parents' choices. At the same time, they are the hidden victims not only in the justice and correctional system, but also within our larger community.

Book Clubs for Inmates
720 Bathurst St.
Toronto, ON, M5S 2R4
www.BookClubsForInmates.com

Always be nice to your children because they are the ones who will choose your rest home.

- Phyllis Diller

Penpal Program for Gay, Queer, Trans Prisoners

The Prisoner Correspondence Project runs a penpal program for gay, lesbian, bisexual, transsexual, transgender, and queer prisoners in Canada, pairing them up with gay and queer and trans people outside of prison for friendship and support.

We also coordinate a resource library of information and resources related to health, sexuality, and prisons - get in touch with us for a list of resources we have, or for details.

If you want to be paired up with a penpal, please send a short description of yourself & interests to:

Prisoner Correspondence Project
c/o QPIRG Concordia
1455 de Maisonneuve W.
Montreal, QC, H3G 1M8

Please indicate French or in English. Veuillez svp nous indiquer anglais ou en français.



Nov. 20 is Transgender Day of Remembrance

Transgender Day of Remembrance (TDoR), is an international event commemorating people killed due to anti-trans violence. In the last year, 369 trans or non-binary people have been killed globally.

And it's a Canadian problem too: 74% of trans youth in Canada have been harassed at school, and 37% have experienced physical violence.

Facts about HIV and HCV

With some exceptions, HIV and HCV infection is generally more prevalent among women than men in prison, particularly among those who have a history of injection drug use.

In a study of provincial prisons in Quebec, the HIV and HCV rate among incarcerated women was, respectively, 8.8 and 29.2 percent, compared to 2.4 and 16.6 percent among male prisoners.

In a study of female prisoners in British Columbia (B.C.), self-reported rates of HIV and HCV were 8 percent and 52 percent, respectively.

In a 2007 nationwide survey by CSC, the HIV and HCV rate among federally incarcerated women was 5.5 and 30.3 percent, compared to 4.5 and 30.8 percent among federally incarcerated men. Aboriginal women reported the highest rates of HIV and HCV, at 11.7 and 49.1 percent, respectively.

While the majority of women in prison are voluntarily tested for both HIV and HCV, the provision of pre- and post-test counselling has been reported to be poor, and in some cases, non-existent.

Women in prison are more likely than women in the general population to have faced violence and abuse; therefore, counselling accompanying HIV diagnosis is particularly important. Women in prison have concerns about the privacy and confidentiality of their HIV status.

Women have reported being forced to draw unwanted attention. Women (37.0%) reported being HCV-positive. Aboriginal women were identified as a particularly high-risk group because they reported the highest rates of HIV (11.7%) and HCV infections (49.1%).

These data highlight the need to ensure that culturally appropriate, effective interventions that decrease risk-behaviours and increase utilization of harm-reduction measures are offered to meet the needs of Aboriginal women.

Important Hep C Update!

New treatments with excellent success rates are now available!

These are in pill form and have little or no side effects. The downside is the cost of course: \$1000+ per pill.

Vosevi is a combination of sofosbuvir, velpatasvir and voxilaprevir. These three drugs are combined into one tablet. It is taken once a day with food for 12 weeks.

Federal Prisoners: *Great news, now you can start your treatment while inside!*

Provincial/Territorial Prisoners: *Only BC & ON provide treatment. Elsewhere, you will have to wait till you get out.*

- When released, get right on welfare or disability.
- Federal health care programs like NIHB & IFH may cover costs.
- Go to a Clinic and get your blood test done so you can get into a Treatment Program at no cost to you.

There are 2,700 with chronic hep C in Federal prisons.

There are 4,380 with chronic hep C in Prov/Terr prisons.

All Federal prisoners with hep C are now eligible for treatment.

BC & ON Prov prisoners with hep C are now eligible for treatment.

Hep C = 18-30% of prisoners
HIV = 1-5% of prisoners

Do Not Share or Re-Use:
needles, ink, ink holders, rigs,
- anything in contact with blood! -

**BLEACH DOES NOT
KILL HEP C**



K.I.P. Canada - Family Visitation

Kids with Incarcerated Parents (K.I.P.) was founded in 2011 to support the needs of the over 15,000 children in the Greater Toronto Area that have a parent in the criminal justice system.

K.I.P.'s Family Visitation Program provides weekend transportation from Toronto to correctional facilities in Southern Ontario for children and families to visit imprisoned loved ones.

During our trips, K.I.P. provides free snacks and refreshments, offers a variety of games and activities, and plays movies.

Our bus is a place where youth and families have a chance to talk about their experiences of having a loved one inside and receive support from mentors and other riders.

Our Family Visitation Program is free for anyone 18 years old and younger. If you are interested in participating in our program, please call or email K.I.P. to register today.

For more information or to book a seat on the bus please contact Jessica or Derek Reid by email at:

*info.kipcanada@gmail.com
or by phone at: 416-505-5333*

A Child of an Incarcerated Parent

The Reality

- Every year over 150,000 adults are remanded into custody which results in approximately 180,000 innocent children who suffer from the traumatic effect of parental incarceration
- Over 5,000 children are impacted by parental imprisonment in the GTA
- The number of children affected by parental incarceration only increased with the passing of the Crime Bill C-10

The Need

- Despite the growing prevalence of these innocent victims the resources available are minimal
- The cost and lack of accessibility to correctional facilities restrict child-parent visits. Consequently, some children can never visit their incarcerated parents

The Impact

- Children of incarcerated parents grieve the loss of their parent
- These children are four times more likely to be in conflict with the law
- Social stigma of incarceration causes some families to avoid discussing the absence of a parent

Research suggests that parental incarceration has a detrimental impact on children. These innocent children suffer the traumatic experience of being separated from their parent. Following parental imprisonment, children are faced with a myriad of challenges including:

- feelings of shame, grief, guilt, abandonment, anger
- lowered self-esteem
- economic instability
- social stigma and isolation
- disconnection from parent
- insecurity in familial and peer relationships
- school absenteeism, poor school performance
- difficulty in coping with future stress & trauma
- compromised trust in others including law enforcement

www.kipcanada.org ~ 416-505-5333

Prison Radio

- Halifax – CKDU 88.1 FM
Black Power Hour – Fri 1:30-3 pm
Youth Now! – Mon 5-6:30 pm
- Montreal – CKUT 90.3 FM
PRS – 2nd Thurs 5-6 pm & 4th Fri 11-noon
- Guelph – CFRU 93.3 FM
Prison Radio – Thurs 10-11 am
Call-in 519-837-2378
- Vancouver – CFRO 100.5 FM
Stark Raven – 1st Mon 7-8 pm
- Kingston – CFRC 101.9 FM
Prison Radio – Wed 7-8 pm

This program features content produced by CFRC volunteers and by other campus and community radio broadcasters, including CKUT Montreal's Prison Radio and Vancouver Co-op Radio's Stark Raven programs.

The last Wednesday of each month, CPR features 'Calls From Home', sharing letters, emails, voice messages and music requests by and for prisoners and their loved ones.

Prisoners and their loved ones are invited to contribute music requests, messages and suggestions for the program.

Write: CPR c/o CFRC, Lower Carruthers Hall, Queen's University, Kingston, ON, K7L 3N6
Email: CFRCprisonradio@riseup.net
Call: 613-329-2693 to record a message or music request to be broadcast on-air.

PRISONERS JUSTICE DAY

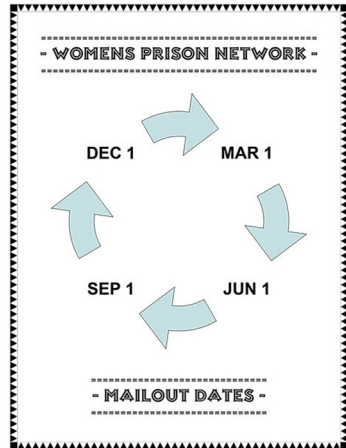
☞ In Remembrance ☞
- August 10 -

There are more than 200 Unnatural
Prisoner Deaths in Canada.
- Each and Every Year -

We maintain a PJD 'In Remembrance' page on our website for Prisoners who have died in Federal and Provincial Prisons, Remands, Lock-ups and Parole in Canada.

If you wish to have someone remembered there, send us a note or email and we will honour your request.

PJD@PrisonFreePress.org



Women's Prison Network
Fall 2021 - Issue #24

PO Box 39, Stn P
Toronto, ON, M5S 2S6

info@WomensPrisonNetwork.org

visit, download, print, donate!
WomensPrisonNetwork.org

Winter Issue #25 is mailed out:

Dec 1, 2021

Send in your work before:

Nov 1, 2021

Women, Trans & Youth Prisoners:
Wish to receive 'Women's Prison Network'?
Contact us & we will add you to the mailing list!
Please let us know if you move.
This magazine is by and for you.
Thank you for sharing!
