

# WOMENS PRISON NETWORK



ISSUE 25 WINTER 2021/22

*Editor's Note:*

Welcome to Issue #25 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

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*Cover Artwork:*

Katie C.

*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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Nobody !

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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 ≈

'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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Canada's prison system needs to provide more rehab options for drug addiction

Canada's prison system provides too few resources or programs for people suffering from drug addiction - all it does is make the situation worse.

Prisons exist to punish those who've committed crimes and to prevent them from being a further harm to society. However, prisons also exist to rehabilitate prisoners and to deter them from offending again.

While Canada's correctional system may fulfil the first two functions, they're failing in the latter two. Those currently within Canada's prison system often aren't dangerous murderers, but people suffering from drug addiction and mental illness. Their charges may include drug possession, theft, or property crime to fuel their addiction.

Let's say an individual becomes addicted to crack cocaine. Like others addicted to hard drugs, they're probably struggling with other issues, causing them to use and eventually abuse to cope. They often can't fund their addiction, finding resources illegally through crime - usually minor property crimes, such as car break-ins.

The Canadian prison system can provide barely any treatment options for their addiction. Minor crimes mean entry into the provincial prison system, with a 60- to 90-day serving sentence.

Most of these people can't make bail due to court order breach or a previous criminal record.

While they wait for their trial, they are put in remand centres until they plead out. Often, many end up finishing their sentence in the remand centre because of the complicated transfer process to a provincial prison.

Although provincial prisons offer very few resources for rehabilitation, remand centres offer absolutely nothing. The court even recognizes how awful remand centres are, mandating that 1.5 credit be given, meaning that a 15-day sentence would be shortened to 10, for example.

When they get out of prison or a remand centre, these folks have fewer job prospects than before due to their criminal record. While they may have been clean for the duration of their sentence, many people turn back to drug addiction and end up right back in prison.

The past decades saw the launch of Canadian drug treatment courts in response to the mass incarceration of offenders for drug-related

offences. These courts create programs to support people suffering from drug addiction. While this initiative is a good starting point, the program doesn't receive enough support or resources. Unfortunately, not many get to benefit from the program.

The circumstances create a never-ending cycle in which people suffering from drug addiction go in and out of prison, never given a proper chance to improve their condition. While it will be a long and difficult process, the Canadian government must take further steps towards providing more rehabilitation programs within the prison system.

Nathan Carter  
The Queen's Journal  
Oct 7, 2021

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Nova Scotia court to prohibit 'dry celling' practice in prisons

A Nova Scotia court will prohibit the federal prison practice of dry celling within six months unless Ottawa amends laws authorizing the restrictive search method to make it less discriminatory against women.

Under present laws, prison staff can place a prisoner in a dry cell when they are suspected of harbouring drugs or other contraband in a body cavity.

A dry cell lacks running water, preventing prisoners from flushing evidence. Prison staff monitor the prisoner 24 hours a day under constant illumination as long as it takes for the contraband to be expelled.

"Solitary confinement in any form is torture," said Emma Halpern, executive director of the Elizabeth Fry Society of Mainland Nova Scotia. "However this particular form of solitary confinement is the most inhumane and the most harmful."

Ms. Halpern acted as co-counsel for Lisa Adams, a New Brunswick mother who spent 16 days in a dry cell at Nova Institution last year because prison staff suspected she was carrying drugs in her vagina. By the fifth day, her mental health had declined so precipitously that she became incoherent while experiencing hallucinations and suicidal thoughts.

Throughout the ordeal, Ms. Adams admitted she had smuggled a cigarette into the Truro, N.S.,

prison, but denied she was harbouring drugs in her vagina. Body scans taken before she was admitted showed balloon-like packages concealed in Ms. Adams' vagina, the court heard. She asked the courts to intervene through a habeas corpus motion. By the time a judge heard the matter, however, a doctor conducting a pelvic examination confirmed Ms. Adams' denials and she was released from the dry cell.

The Correctional Service of Canada, or CSC, initially argued that the release made the habeas corpus application moot. The argument failed to convince Justice John Keith, who wrote that Ms. Adams "remained an inmate and vulnerable to the uncertainties of the dry cell process identified in this proceeding," in a decision released on Friday.

Ms. Adams' lawyers argued that her duration in the dry cell was unlawful for violating several sections of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Crown lawyers conceded the placement was unlawful, but for much different reasons.

The Corrections and Conditional Release Act, or CCRA, authorizes dry cell detention where there's an "expectation that the contraband can be expelled." The caveat meant that the law only applied to suspected rectal contraband, the Crown argued, because there "can be no reasonable expectation that contraband could be expelled by a vagina."

In the Crown's interpretation, Ms. Adams' unlawful detention was an error by prison staff, not unconstitutional legislation.

Justice Keith rejected the Crown's argument. He observed that the CCRA specifically defines a body cavity as the "rectum or vagina" and dismissed the suggestion that a vagina cannot expel.

"The predominantly involuntary menstrual process by which bodily fluids or waste (including contraband) might be expelled through the vagina is not as frequent as through the digestive tract," he wrote. "As such, women may become subjected to longer periods of dry cell detention where reasonably suspected of carrying contraband in a vagina – as was the case with Ms. Adams."

Menopause increases those risks, he added, because the detention in dry cell is "potentially indeterminate."

The law, he ruled, infringes the Charter's protection against discrimination based on sex.

Justice Keith suspended the validity of his decision for six months to give Parliament time to remedy the legislative defect.

CSC spokesman Kyle Lawlor said the federal jailer is "closely examining" the decision and that it "takes seriously its obligations to provide safe, secure, and humane treatment while assisting offenders to become law-abiding citizens."

The Ottawa-based Canadian Association of Elizabeth Fry Societies lauded the decision, but said it didn't go far enough. "It is an opportunity for the government and the new minister to remedy this and rewrite the legislation to get rid of dry celling," said Emilie Coyle, the group's executive director. "It's an inhumane practice and there's no reason that it needs to continue to be on our books."

Patrick White  
Globe and Mail  
Nov 15, 2021

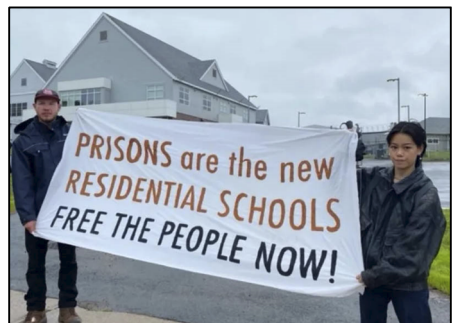
#### Stark Raven - Prison Radio Vancouver

Our show went on a bit of a break during the pandemic (the radio station was closed, etc. etc.) but we're back on the air now!

1st Monday of the month from 7-8pm on CFRO 100.5 fm and on the web at [coopradio.org](http://coopradio.org)

Write to us and share poems, stories or anything that we can read on our show:

Stark Raven c/o Vancouver Co-op Radio  
370 Columbia St.  
Vancouver, BC, Coast Salish Territory  
V6A 4J1



Out of the residential schools, into the prison and foster care systems

Today has been designated as a National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, but it's hard to reconcile the injustices faced by Indigenous communities in the past when the effects of that trauma are still being felt so acutely.

Take the survivors of residential schools. The last residential school closed in 1997 and if the youngest survivors were between six and 10 years old at the time, they would now range in age from 30-35. Many of them are living in First Nations communities, which have some of the highest crime rates in the country and are plagued by high rates of incarceration, suicide and large numbers of children placed into foster care.

These are inter-related, as we transitioned our children out of residential schools and into federal and provincial institutions, such as prisons and foster homes. There was no transition or support services in place for children going from residential schools back to their homes. Not only did children face abrupt life changes, they were also coping with the abuses and neglect they endured at the schools.

As a result of these traumas, Indigenous people now account for more than 30% of inmates in Canadian prisons. The numbers are even higher on the Prairies - Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta - where Indigenous-Canadians make up 54% of the prison population. This is alarming given that Indigenous people make up just 5% of the country's population.

Factors contributing to high incarceration rates include poverty and systemic inequities. Indigenous offenders are more likely to be sentenced to maximum terms. They are also more likely to be placed in maximum-security facilities and to serve more of their sentences before they are granted parole.

Female Indigenous prisoners currently represent 42% of the inmates in Canadian prisons. They face some of the harshest parole conditions, which makes it more challenging for them to return to their lives on the outside. And even when they are released, they often end up on reserves with limited social services and mental health supports, which is why we see so many repeat offenders.

Just as residential schools fell under the radar for so many decades, there is no accountability from the federal government about the over-representation of Indigenous people in the prison system and the harms that stem from it.

Another sad statistic is the number of Indigenous children in foster care. In Canada, 52.2% of children in the foster care system - around 15,000 kids - are Indigenous. It's hard to see how this is all that much different from a system that took children away from their families and placed them into residential schools.

Governments need to create clear and transparent systems for family reunification, to make it easier for parents to reunite with their children. We cannot continue to be over-represented in these systems. We have seen the trauma caused by residential schools and it did not get better, it got worse.

One of the biggest contributors to these statistics is poverty. Thirty-eight percent of Indigenous children live in poverty. If we do not start addressing poverty on and off reserves, we are going to have even bigger issues in the future. Jobs and training opportunities for Indigenous people should be part of a national plan to stimulate the economy and get Canadians back to work, not siloed under an Indigenous affairs department.

Flags at half-mast are not going to change the situation. Taking pictures at an Indigenous grave site is not going to bring the 15,000 displaced children home. Concrete actions are needed to reduce the number of Indigenous people in the prison and foster care systems.

Today, I will be honouring and remembering my grandmother and every child who stepped into a residential school. I will be telling my grandmother's story in hopes that my message will connect the government's past failures to the issues we are facing today.

We cannot create a better future if we do not acknowledge that our current problems stem from one single event in our history: residential schools. We must not allow history to repeat itself. Perhaps this is the true meaning of reconciliation.

Melissa Mbarki  
National Post  
Sep 30, 2021



How a local charity helps inmates in Canada and the U.S., one book at a time

For nearly two decades, Books 2 Prisoners Ottawa has sent free books to incarcerated people across Canada and their impact has reached the U.S.

The initiative began in 2003 out of the Ontario Public Interest Research Group at Carleton University with students collecting book donations and mailing them out to correctional facilities.

According to Jeffrey Bradley, a PhD student in legal studies at Carleton, who also co-chairs the group, it works like a penpal system.

"They send us a letter and basically they'll have a description of what types of books they like," Bradley told CBC Radio's Ottawa Morning.

"From there, we will look into our library or book supply and see how we can best match that request and then we will send it out to them and we also usually respond back with a letter," he said.

Bradley said he wanted to get involved because he "thought that this would be a very tangible way to be able to support people that are incarcerated and help them meet their objectives to eventually be reintegrated back into society."

U.S. inmates can have more books

The challenge arises when it comes to figuring out different policies and restrictions around book programs at different institutions.

Bradley said restrictions in the U.S. are looser, with some institutions allowing prisoners to receive two books per month, which is how they

are able to send books to inmates in California and Texas.

It wasn't until last fall, however, that the group was able to get books to the Ottawa-Carleton Detention Centre.

While Bradley says the organization did drop off boxes of books at the Ottawa jail when they started out, factors like staff changeover made it harder for them to keep going. When he joined the group two years ago, the goal was to re-establish the relationship between Books 2 Prisoners and the jail.

"One of our volunteers was ... a retired probation officer and he had kind of helped me connect and the group connect with the librarian at the Ottawa-Carleton Detention Centre," he explained.

Now, after having gone through the proper approvals, the librarian emails the group with requests for different types of books, which volunteers then drop off in the security area of the detention centre.

Books 2 Prisoners helped inmate learn to read

Jane Crosby, who also co-chairs the group, said the most common book requests from inmates include dictionaries, nutrition books, and a variety of fiction genres such as romance and mystery.

Crosby, who has been with the group for 10 years, says she can see the impact of the book donations.

"What really caught me was that people were waiting for my mail," she said.

Growing up as the daughter of a chaplain at the Springhill Penitentiary in Nova Scotia, she said she understands how important it is for inmates to connect with someone on the outside.

"When I joined ... there were people that were writing [to us] like every month. So you got to know the people because they got really personal with you through letters ... they would write to people specifically saying how they appreciated our books."

Curtis Copeland was a prisoner in Texas who used Books 2 Prisoners for years. Crosby said she remembers getting letters from Copeland over the years and she noticed the change in his tone.

"I really enjoyed [the books]. They kept me from losing my mind. I learned how to read and educate myself," he said.

"I know prisoners who don't have anything to read. They have no money or family to buy them anything. So these organizations are a great blessing and a great help to all the prisoners across the world."

In California, Crosby says there's an old man who they've been sending books to "forever."

"He's blind. He's in a wheelchair. He's like 80 years old ... so I always make sure that he gets books," she said.

Four years ago, Crosby started sending inmates Christmas cards along with the books.

"The letters we got back were always, 'Oh, that's the only Christmas card I got,' and 'thank you so much for remembering me,'" she said.

"The personal connection to me is what really is important when you're serving your time."

Anchal Sharma

CBC News

Oct 23, 2021

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### My Life

I have a ton of fears, some are not logical

Yet they plague my brain just the same

I wish that I could place them in a jar

And bury them in the yard

That somehow, that would help me

I feel like a child who is afraid of their own shadow

You cannot enjoy the light without it attaching

itself to the bottoms of your feet

So I stay in my dark corner hoping it won't touch me today

Depression is a bitch to live with

- Katie C.

---

### Inner Growth

You took my world & flipped it upside down

Then left me to deal with the mess on my own

Normally I'd be upset but you've shown me

How much I've grown

I was able to sort out my pain with a poem or two

So I guess you didn't win

If you think I'll let you do it all once more

My dear, please, think again!

- Katie C.

### The Storm

I am a tsunami

A break in the foundation of my soul comes unexpectedly

You sit peacefully on the shore, innocent &

brilliant, enjoying your view

I am the ocean you watch

I roll in & out with the tide

Gentle most of the time but I have my rages

You sit still despite my rages

Loving me through them

Seeing beauty in a way I cannot

I am dangerous

The break that has so deeply affected my core is rising

You stand by me

Admiring what's left of me

Thinking my tide is just out again

I attack without warning

Even I was unaware of the force

The power I held

You sit there drowning

Losing all you have

Shocked at the wave you never deserved

I am a life ruiner, I am a tsunami

You are a survivor, you will rebuild

You are stronger than me

In the wake of my disaster

I leave behind a beautiful sunset

If only one day you'll look up

You will see, I was simply a storm

Even I can get back to being that peaceful ocean of wonder

I have learned from the break

And will never rage again

Life will not be smooth sailing

But never again will I be that terrible storm

- Katie C.

---

All oppression creates a state of war.

- Simone de Beauvoir

Where there is oppression,  
there will be resistance.

- Assata Shakur

If you are silent about your pain,  
they'll kill you and say you enjoyed it.

- Zora Neale Hurston

It's Dark

It's so dark  
I'm alone, but not scared  
No one by my side  
Not one to care

Death is upon me  
This I see  
For I feel it  
It's so dark, it surrounds me

Through these eyes  
I've seen sorrow & pain  
Darkness & suffering  
But it was knowledge gained

Cuz now I look at a spider  
That I once feared  
Now only see its beauty  
And what it's endeared

All beings merge into one  
And all of my bad karma  
Now feels like a ton

I need to cleanse  
Both my body & mind  
To erase all the bad  
I've done over time

To do that I must  
Have compassion for all  
And let my ego go  
Or the lower realms I will fall

With the clarity I have  
And a new purpose in sight  
I've opened all my petals  
And now the pure one shines bright

With no resistance & bad karma  
And lots of good merit to share  
My heart is filled  
With nothing but care

I highly suggest  
For you to search from within  
To find your own light  
Then help friends & your kin

>>>

At that point  
Your darkness will fade  
And all of your bad karma  
Will have been paid

- Angela Wood

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Christmas with Covid

The holiday season is upon us  
Trees & gifts are a must  
But what is that beneath my tree?  
A big box of covid with new vaccines!

- Katie C.

---

I Feel

I feel awakened  
From deep within  
And dis-attached from all  
Yes even my sin

I feel enlightened  
And compassion for all  
No longer the lower realms  
I will fall

I feel so blessed  
To be one with all  
I'm to share my knowledge  
The creator has called

I feel the earth  
Through my body & mind  
And the energy of beings  
It helps my soul unbind

I feel with this wisdom  
This realm I shall pass  
And become a supreme being  
For eternity at last

- Angela Wood

---

Power should not be concentrated in the  
hands of so few,  
and powerlessness in the hands of so many.  
- Maggie Kuhn



## Untitled

*I get a rush when you kiss me  
I get drunk off your laugh  
I get lightheaded breathing you in  
I go on the nod just hearing your heart beat  
You are my drug of choice*

- Mary Keeping

---

## Burning

*I'm wrapped in a blanket of fire  
On the edge of a cliff to nowhere  
I could roll around blindly until the fire goes out  
& risk falling forever  
Or I can let it burn, in the hopes of being born  
anew like a mighty phoenix  
To rise from the ashes of my old life  
Like a magnificent creature  
Better than before  
I think I'll learn to fly*

- Katie C.

---

## Untitled

*Get your sentence  
Live in repentance  
Only going up  
Like a filled cup  
Looking down on my haters  
Yellin' 'Sup'?  
I'm going to prove them wrong  
Won't take long  
Vanier trip, got me wanting to live right  
My future hopefully bright  
Just had a baby boy  
I need to get home to buy him a toy  
And experience the joy  
My kids are my reminder to rehabilitate  
Get out, walk through that gate  
The tears I cry every night  
Just ain't right  
I want smiles  
As long as miles  
I won't give up as long as I want to sometimes  
When it gets hard I'll just sit down  
And continue to write these rhymes*

- Karrissa Zahrybelny

---

## Third Christmas

*It's time for Christmas here in jail  
No family, friends or cabs to hail  
E-Fry gifts on Christmas Eve  
To all the women, even if they don't believe  
It's a hard day for all to be in here  
It's no wonder there's so little holiday cheer*

- Katie C.

---

## Supreme Being

*My Chakras all open  
The light in me shines  
No more re-births  
Or the negative that binds*

*I'll be free from this body  
And this place called earth  
Which is hell  
It's time for my soul to go  
This I can tell*

*With my last dying breath  
And the knowledge I've gained  
I whisper to you  
At last no more pain*

*Each suffering I've endured  
Has given both wisdom & pain  
As well to be able to obtain liberation  
And go back to where I first came*

*Both heaven & hell  
Exists here on earth  
The only way out  
Is to find yourself & your worth*

*You came in this world  
A pure & true you  
So to be a supreme being  
You now know what you must do*

*Good luck with your journey  
For it's one special path  
To obtain liberation  
And not ever come back*

- Angela Wood

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## Parenting from Prison

One of the hardest things I have to undertake throughout the years of my incarceration would be, without a doubt, attempting to co-parent from prison. This responsibility is a never-ending emotional roller-coaster that has proven to be tremendously overwhelming at times.

The harsh reality for most imprisoned parents, men and women alike, is the fact that many children become ashamed of their imprisoned mothers and fathers and as a result of that shame, most children tend to alienate their parents or become estranged as some sort of coping mechanism. I have come to understand and accept that my daughter is entitled to form her own opinions surrounding mine and her relationship. This was difficult for me to fathom in real time - partly due to the pre-carceral relationship we had. She is no longer the 6 year old I left physically fatherless when I got locked up (that hurts to say but it's the truth). She actually turned 18 years old today. As I write this reflection, I felt it was only right for me to write about her, in specific, on her special day. I am just grateful to even be able to play a role in her life, irrelevant of the estrangement between us.

At a certain point, my daughter started to form her own personal opinions about the way I lived my life in the past. At the time, I couldn't understand where she was coming from. I felt like she was being influenced by sources outside our relationship. However, after much ruminating on the subject, I was able to humble myself and realize that she has all rights to feel the way she does. Throughout the vast majority of my daughter's life, her mother and I told her what we thought was best for her, in hopes of protecting her feelings and stability as a child. So as a consequence of that practice, she felt betrayed and lied to as she got older. I also feel that my daughter's view of me as her father became tainted when she realized I had a "not so perfect" past. A past that has been dragged through the mud by the media and the Toronto Police.

As parents we do our best to protect our children regardless of our individual circumstances. The lifestyle I was living at the time of my daughter's birth was not a lifestyle conducive for raising a child, but I did my best as her father, under the

circumstances. As we say in the hood "I was getting it how I lived."

Nevertheless, the truth is, I was damned if I did and I would have done much more irreversible damage if I didn't.

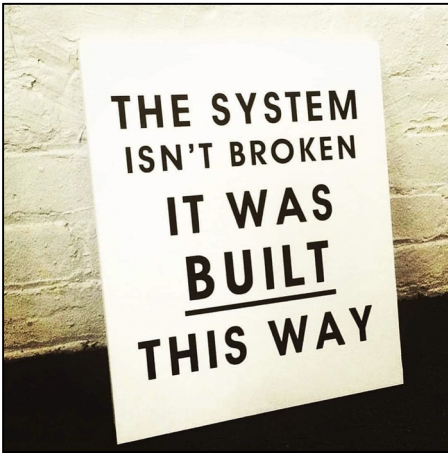
I can unambiguously say, "most" parents in prison, young and old, can concur with the narrative that they were doing their best under the circumstances (emphasis on most). Similar to the physically free world, there are people who are delusional regarding the realities that surround their lives. And in life, very few people successfully play the cards they are dealt. Similar to a game of Black Jack, the house (system of government) always wins. Very few people have enough courage to admit their misgivings and separate them from their misfortunes. We all make choices in life, but as parents, we subject our children to the rewards and repercussions of said choices. Our kids don't choose us we chose them (out of millions, they're the ones that made it). There are many men that I have been incarcerated with over the years who choose not to take part in their children's lives for whatever reason(s), sometimes these guys think they are doing their children a favour by not putting them through the perils of imprisonment that affect families and friends of the imprisoned i.e.; constant scrutiny from staff when they come to visit, ion scan testing positive because your visitor touched money or smoked a little weed, the constant resending of documents to upkeep visitor applications, the attitude/disrespect given to visitors when they call to book visits or when they arrive for one, the "lost" letters sent by friends and family, the abuse family members have to endure vicariously through the imprisoned whether physical, verbal or mental, the tactical "administrative" delays, denied appeals, denied parole hearings and the long list of feelings of resentment that families feel towards their imprisoned loved ones for not being there in the physical to help with everyday life problems.

The lack of physical interactions could never be replaced by phone calls. There is a profound disconnect with phone calls. As human beings we yearn for physical contact with people, especially those we love and attempt to maintain relations with. Nonetheless, as an active imprisoned parent, you take what you can get when you get it. The reality will forever remain the same, there

aren't any consolation prizes for the men and women that are attempting to make, forge or upkeep relations with their children. Our children are owed that right, and a lot of imprisoned parents take the easy way out, which creates an irreparable amount of damage to their children. From abandonment issues to hatred and enormous amounts of anger. So regardless of how difficult it gets at times, it's a no brainer for me. Step up and stand up for what's yours. Stand up for what matters, the future, our children.

Real talk;  
from a real inmate;  
doing real time;  
in a real systemically racist system.

Christophe Lewis  
Apr 19, 2021



What you need is sustained outrage ...  
there's far too much unthinking respect given  
to authority.  
- Molly Ivins

You've got to rattle your cage door.  
You've got to let them know that you're in  
there, and that you want out.  
Make noise. Cause trouble.  
You may not win right away,  
but you'll sure have a lot more fun.  
- Florynce Kennedy

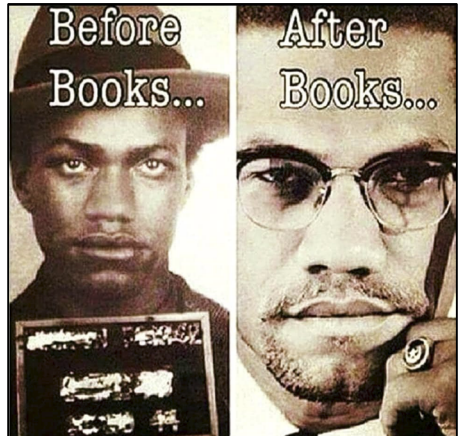
## Book Clubs for Inmates (BCFI)

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



I have often reflected upon the new vistas that reading has opened to me.  
I knew right there in prison that reading had changed forever the course of my life.  
As I see it today, the ability to read awoke inside me some long dormant craving to be mentally alive.  
- Malcolm X

I abide where there is a fight against wrong.  
- Mary Harris Jones (Mother Jones)

### 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**

Women will not simply be mainstreamed into the polluted stream.

Women are changing the stream, making it clean and green and safe for all: every gender, race, creed, sexual orientation, age, and ability.

- Bella Abzug

Jails and prisons are designed to break human beings, to convert the population into specimens in a zoo - obedient to our keepers, but dangerous to each other.

- Angela Davis

## 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](http://www.BookClubsForInmates.com)

If I fall, I'll fall five feet four inches forward in the fight for freedom.  
 I'm not backing off.  
 - Fannie Lou Hamer

## 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](http://www.kipcanada.org) ~ 416-505-5333

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## 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 – 2<sup>nd</sup> Thurs 5-6 pm & 4<sup>th</sup> 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 – 1<sup>st</sup> 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](mailto:CFRCprisonradio@riseup.net)*  
*Call: 613-329-2693 to record a message or music request to be broadcast on-air.*

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### PRISONERS JUSTICE DAY

☞ In Remembrance ☞  
- August 10 -

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

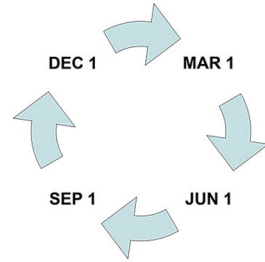
*We maintain a PJD 'In Remembrance' page on our website for Prisoners who have died in Federal and Provincial Prisons, Remands, Lock-ups and Parole in Canada.*

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

[PJD@PrisonFreePress.org](mailto:PJD@PrisonFreePress.org)



- WOMENS PRISON NETWORK -



- MAILOUT DATES -

Women's Prison Network  
Winter 2021/22 - Issue #25

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

[info@WomensPrisonNetwork.org](mailto:info@WomensPrisonNetwork.org)

visit, download, print, donate!  
[WomensPrisonNetwork.org](http://WomensPrisonNetwork.org)

Spring Issue #26 is mailed out:

Mar 1, 2022

Send in your work before:

Feb 1, 2022

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!

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