



JEDIDIAH

Empowering Lives And
Building Broken Dreams

Volume 1 Issue 2

Chikurubi Female Inmates receiving Pep Talk on Mental Health Awareness and Wellbeing



Our Aim

Empowering and promoting the success of children and their caregivers who have been negatively impacted by parental incarceration.



MOTHERING BEHIND BARS

By Lovemore Chikwanda (Jedidiah Trust Executive Director)

Women who are separated from their children due to maternal incarceration experience subjugated loss. This type of complex loss also denies a woman her identity as a 'mother'. It appears entirely valid that an incarcerated mother would experience considerable difficulty and distress concerning her child's welfare and changes to their relationship. The mother can no longer fulfil her parenting responsibilities. In this case, she goes through a psychosocial crisis, emotional trauma, stigmatised identity, to subsequent suicidal thoughts through continuing grief. The biggest risk being that these feelings may develop into more-serious stress reactions such as PTSD. What perpetuates the problem is the degree of uncertainty in the situation - the fact that the end point might be long. It's as if one has lost a child to a car accident, and does not know if the child is alive or not. The longer the mothers are kept apart, the more permanent the damage is going to be. The women suffer a lot on the journey and they think its over when they are released yet when they get on the outside, that's where the most painful part of the journey begins.

On the Presidential Amnesty; the silent voices!

The release of more than 4,000 prisoners on Presidential Amnesty was received with mixed emotions. No one could hear the silent voices of the child who had been left behind by the women who had gone through incarceration. Children are disproportionately affected with the effects of mother-child separation due to incarceration disrupting caregiving patterns and depriving them of emotional development that comes with parental bonding. Once again, no one could hear the children's silent voices in considering the process by which offender mothers and their children re-unite when granted amnesty, the way mothering is influenced by imprisonment and ways in which the criminal justice system can address issues relating to offender mothers and their children. Was Presidential Amnesty entirely a wrong move? Not at all, it gave mothers a new lease of life and more importantly an opportunity to mend and foster positive connections with their children left behind.



Shamiso Masokovere-Magoko
Women and childs rights advocate



A Message from Jedidiah Trust Chairperson Dr. Gertrude Mandizvidza

Children are a gift from God and being a mother, is a blessing that no-one can take away from you. Happiness is when you go through positive stress of seeing your child playing, crawling, eating, well dressed and going to school. Once you are a mother and have your child in prison, all these privileges are unavailable. There is no conducive environment for children to grow in prison. Little time to play and extremely stressful for the mother who needs to worry about being in prison and at the same time taking care of her child under harsh environment. I have witnessed mothers who are always in tears because of their situation and also their children's predicaments. I have witnessed children whose parents are in prison and they are not going to school.

As Jedidiah Trust, we work with ZPCS to ensure that the children who were left behind are in school and also we try our best to assist them with clothing and food.

I appeal to everyone who has a relative in prison to visit and show love to our brothers and sisters who are incarcerated as well as to their children who are silent victims.



Jedidiah Chairperson and the Executive Director, together with ZPCS Officers at Chikurubi Female Prison

Did You Know?

80-85% of incarcerated women are mothers who were breadwinners and were convicted for non-violent crimes

What is the role of community versus a parent in supporting children of incarcerated parents?

Protecting and supporting vulnerable children is something that every community does all of the time. The challenge when it comes to children of incarcerated parents is to be able to identify them without stigmatizing them, to understand the challenges they face and the specific needs they have, and to reach out to them and accompany them through this difficult time for them.

Why should we help people who are incarcerated and their children?

Assisting children with mothers in prison can also persuade the mothers with convictions to reappraise their self-identities and in turn encourage them to desist from crime in the quest to create a new family-focused role thus reducing reoffending.



Donations to Mothers with children @ Chikurubi Female Prison in partnership with

Child:

POEM CORNER!

Why?

Day after day I hope to see my mother walk through
that door

I curl up in a corner every night crying for more
Crying over if she misses us or does she enjoy the
cold floor

I've failed to embrace the pain of my thoughts at
war

The day she left feels like it was yesterday
Whenever my siblings ask about her I don't know
what to say

I don't even remember what happened, it was a
blurry day

How do I tell them she suffers behind bars as a
price to pay

I've experienced endless humiliation
Diagnosed with depression
And lured into extreme temptation
We were banned from visiting after she was sent to
isolation

What more could exceed such horrible tension?

If life gave me one wish till I die
I'd wish she comes back and says "hie"
I'd wish that whenever they ask me where my
mother is, I don't have to lie
I'd wish I never have to say goodbye
Yes, three in one, I'd do anything, I have to try...

Why,
Does life have to be so painful?...

This poem was written by Nomusa Mbalaka, an
aspiring poet. She is passionate about writing
poems that capture the hearts of many. If you are
interested in working with her, contact her using
the following details:

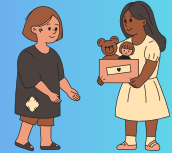
Call/Whatsapp: 0771084904
Email: nmbalaka68@gmail.com
Instagram: [tinae_y127](https://www.instagram.com/tinae_y127)
Facebook page: Pure Black Poetry

DONATE

Help us to help them!

We accept donations in cash or kind! Get in
touch with us with your donation!

Donations can be in the form of new or used
clothes for all age groups; groceries
(perishables or non-perishables); even just a
bar of soap, a packet of pads or packet of sugar
can help change someones life!



Remember, no gift is too small!!!



GET IN TOUCH WITH US TO SPONSOR
A CHILD!

We have a wide database of children in
need of support through school fees
payment, purchase of stationery and
uniforms.

SPONSOR A CHILD

Pay school fees for a child
Purchase stationery
Buy uniforms

SUBSCRIBE



+263716497900



[jedidiahtrustz1](https://twitter.com/jedidiahtrustz1)



[jedidiah trust zim](https://www.instagram.com/jedidiah_trust_zim)



jedidiahtrustzim@gmail.com



[jedidiahtrustzim](https://www.facebook.com/jedidiahtrustzim)



Meaning of Mothers Day to Children of Incarcerated Parents

By Betsy Machoko

For many people, Mother's Day is a time of celebration. It is a time to honor mothers and those who play a maternal role. Some will celebrate the mother in their lives by bringing them breakfast in bed, treating them to brunch or braai, and others may offer handwritten but heartfelt cards. While this is often a moment of joy, for some, it is also a time of anguish. It's common to have sympathy or even empathy for mothers who have lost a child or vice versa. However, what is less appreciated is the pain of mothers who are incarcerated and the hurt of the children they left behind. It's a pain that is difficult to describe: mourning, lamentations, anger and anxiety.

"I know these feelings well," reiterates Bernard, an 18 year old Highfield teenage boy with an incarcerated mother. His mother was given a lengthy 10 year sentence for a fraud charge. Like most children with mothers in prison, Bernard and his young siblings live in perpetual fear that talking about their mother's incarceration will be met with judgment. "We usually face that fear by remaining silent. When others talk about their mothers or their career milestones, we wish we could chime in and share our own mother's success stories, narrates a teary Bernard. When someone asks us how our mother is faring or her profession, we sweat thinking through how we will answer the question."

"It's very difficult living in the "ghetto" whilst your parent is behind bars. I think it's far worse than incarceration itself. You are labelled and there is so much stigma associated with us as if we have ourselves committed a crime. Instead of the communities we live in bearing with us in the absence of our torch bearer, breadwinner, source of hope and strength, our mother, they laugh and mock us" laments Bernard. "Personally, I am deeply hurt with all this and wish mom was here. I believe also that our story may be different with other children with incarcerated mothers, but we share similarities somehow. I have seen my mother being physically and emotionally abused meaning that in many ways, her incarceration started long before she was physically confined. She didn't receive any level of counselling as well as us. I am hopeful that she and other thousands of incarcerated women will receive services that will support their rehabilitation so that they don't have to suffer the way we are suffering today because of her actions."

There are many children in Zimbabwe and world over who are suffering because of the incarceration of their mothers. But you and I can make a difference.



Betsy Machoko
Bsc Honors Social Work
Systematic Family Counsellor



We would love to hear from you!

We would appreciate any comments or feedback about our programs!

If you would like to comment about something that appears in this or any other issue of Jedidiah Newsletter, or advertise with us, please do so!

Address your comments to: The Editor

Jedidiah Trust

1097 Corn Crescent Avenue

Norton

Email: jedidiahtrustzim@gmail.com

(be sure to put "Newsletter comment" on the subject line for us to respond to you faster!)

Contact: Jedidiah Office Lines (+263716395941)