

JEDIDIAH TRUST

The Official Newsletter



"Our children are the future leaders, innovators, and change-makers of Africa. On this day, let us celebrate their resilience, strength, and limitless potential. Together, we can create a brighter and more inclusive future for the African child. Nelson Mandela

"The Day of the African Child reminds us of the importance of protecting and nurturing the dreams of our young ones. Let us create an environment where every child can thrive, free from discrimination and filled with opportunities." - Amina J. Mohammed

Celebrating Day of the African Child

by Staff Reporter

On June 16, in a collaborative effort between the Canadian Embassy and Jedidiah Trust, the Canadian Ambassadors' residence came alive with joy and excitement as celebrations were held for the children of incarcerated parents on the Day of the African Child. The event aimed to uplift and bring smiles to the faces of these young ones facing challenging circumstances. The day was filled with laughter and happiness as the children enjoyed engaging games, a delicious lunch, vibrant music, and energetic dances. The event provided a much-needed break from their everyday struggles, fostering a sense of camaraderie and offering them a chance to create cherished memories. It was a heartwarming occasion that highlighted the power of community and compassion.

Role of the Church in Supporting Inmates

by *Tafadzwa Rwizi*

The Church is the universal body of believers who live by the teachings of Jesus Christ. Christians are called to demonstrate the character of Christ through love and compassion. In Matthew 26:36, Jesus emphasizes the importance of visiting and showing love to those in prison. The Church is encouraged to go beyond preaching and make scheduled visits to inmates, engaging in various activities that bring joy and support. This includes sponsoring celebrations like Mother's Day for inmates and facilitating empowerment through sports and educational courses.

Everyone is a candidate to go to prison. We all react differently to diverse situations. Let us learn to forgive and assist our brothers and sisters to make better choices in life.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT!

Most of them will serve their time and be assimilated back into the free world. But without practical deliberate steps taken prior to their release, such integration can become a nightmare.

The Church should also lead the way in helping inmates integrate into society by providing support and creating opportunities for a smooth transition. Additionally, the Church should administer spiritual ministry through prayers, counseling, and sharing the Word of God, utilizing trained professionals to offer Bible-based solutions and instill hope.



Pastor Tafadzwa Rwizi

An avid prison ministry advocate and minister. He is the Senior Pastor of House of Redemption Ministries, a philanthropist, entrepreneur and Professional Life Coach.

We would like to thank Reverend Mukupe and Amai of Norton Anglican church for allowing us to sensitize their church members on issues concerning children of incarcerated parents and how as a religious sect they can assist us with our work. We also were further invited to an all night event where we sensitized the youth on the dangers of drug abuse and its link with imprisonment. The church also sponsored a child by paying for their school fees. For that we are very grateful.

You can also invite us to your Church to sensitize families on the role of the church in supporting inmates and their children





Chipo Munaku
Masters in gender and development studies
Bsc peace and governance

Life of a child with an incarcerated parent

by Chipo Munaku - Jedidiah Staff Member

When someone is imprisoned, it doesn't just affect the incarcerated. It affects the people left behind. Nearly 15 000 children in Zimbabwe have parents in the criminal justice system. It is often costly and difficult to visit or call a parent behind bars. And losing a relationship is traumatic and with lasting consequences. Sixteen year old Shingai is one of the teenagers affected by parental incarceration. "My most vivid childhood memories are those I had with my father," he says. "We would go fishing and he would take me to watch soccer matches especially between Highlanders and Dynamos since he was a staunch Glamour Boys fan. But his imprisonment changed that. Because of his imprisonment, I became a strong person. I have to show the world that I won't fall into this system and this cycle that traps so many people, like myself. Shingai is a high school student and is part of the beneficiaries of the psychosocial-support groups initiated by Jedidiah Trust.

The program focuses on raising awareness on what it means to live life in the absence of an imprisoned parent and ways of coping. "When I visited him I told him that it was hard growing up without him," Shingai says. "Like I had to learn to take care of my twin siblings at a tender age, I had to learn the art of survival on my own, which sometimes led to me going down the wrong path. And I told him that he could have curbed all that if his presence was just within the household." Having an incarcerated parent is associated with a high level of childhood trauma and at JEDIDIAH TRUST we aim to make things a little easier for children with parents in prison.

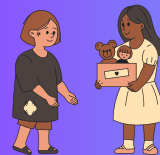


Help us to help them!

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 someone's 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

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Re-entry and Preparedness of Children

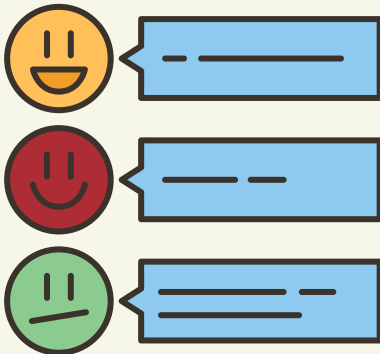
It has been 15 years since Frederic was seen by his son Luke and his daughter Anna. Luke was 3 and Anna a year old when Frederic was convicted for murder. Who is this person? Inquires Anna and Luke, Maria, perplexed is not able to provide an answer. When her children asked about their father, Maria indicated that her husband died in a car accident and here is a ghost who has risen from the dead. The situation at home is tense. Frederic cannot convince his children that he was in prison for the past 15 years and Maria cannot undo her lie. This is an illustration of what most children of incarcerated parents go through and why they need to be prepared before their parents come home.

Re-entry preparedness is an important aspect of reintegration process particularly for children of incarcerated parents. In most cases, when a parent is incarcerated, family members create all sorts of stories surrounding their detention. The children are told that their parent has traveled on work related business, or he has been transferred to another work station. All these stories aim to keep the children from reality that comes with a parent's incarceration which result in stigma and stereotypes. Children have unique vulnerabilities that require special consideration during the re-entry process. They are more susceptible to trauma and stress and may require additional emotional support and reassurance during the return of their parents from prison. Therefore, before release of an inmate, stakeholders should consider the following:

1. Children should have frequent interaction with the incarcerated parent 6 months or 12 months prior to the release. This will assist in breaking isolation, shame and fear from both parties.
2. Provide age appropriate information in a way that is appropriate for their age and developmental level. This will help children reduce anxiety and promote a sense of preparedness.
3. Address emotional needs when a parent has spent several years in prison, the child gradually disconnect with the parent such that they have little or nothing to share with the incarcerated parent.



by Lydie Mungala
Prison Right Activist/ Peacebuilding consultant
Mandela Washington Fellow 2021
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B.Sc., M.Sc. in Peace and Conflict Resolution Studies



We want to thank you all for the feedback we have been receiving since we started. All feedback is positive to us as it makes us grow and improve in conducting the work we are doing.

Here are some of your comments!

Woow this was awesome! Its a good read, I liked the part of presidential amnesty the most. indeed it was a mixed bag of emotions over it - Daniel (Norton)

The Jedidiah newsletter is a welcomed accomplishment, especially in the field of prisons and corrections. Experts and professionals alike can get together to share information, exchange ideas, updates and have an impact on the community collectively. Great idea, Mr. Chikwanda, and thank you for its implementation. Mrs Makaita Chikamhi Magarezano, Lawyer and Re-entry Advocate Masvingo

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!

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

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