

MATTHEW HOUSE

“PROVIDING HELP AND HOPE TO FAMILIES OF PRISONERS!”

~Life With Out My Dad ~

This is something my father told me before he left to go to prison. He is at Monroe Correctional Center and has been there since March of 2004 and will continue until he comes home. There have been emotional changes: I have changed schools, and my mom and I dealing with the stress of having to live by ourselves. **Even after he gets home it will take a while for life to return to normal.** People say they are doing what is best for me by not letting me see my dad until I am sixteen: meanwhile they don't realize how much they are hurting me.

Furthermore, dealing with him gone and starting High School has been a challenge for me, But I am doing fine, I guess. My grades have been dropping since they took my father from our wonderful home. Some kids may not have the best grades because they don't have a way to express their feelings about a family member being in prison. I myself, had a hard time at first. My grades were slipping and my father said to me from a quote: "**Do not look how far you have to go, but look how far you have come.**" Anonymous That statement I took to heart, my father has always been there for me whether out or in prison. I have been on the honor Roll ever since my father said that to me! I have only had my mom and the Matthew House to help me and support mom through this whole ordeal. My few and I do mean few close friends have stood by me, and I am grateful. **My school is no help. Schools should have a support group for teens who have a relative or close friend in jail or prison, so that they can talk about what is going on in their lives.**

Having experienced more emotions than I know what to do with, **I need my dad.** My feelings are sad, tearful, lonely, inactive and angry and very anxious since my dad left. For example, I have been sad and tearful because I miss him so much and love him more than anything in the world and I want him home with me now. My father always kept me from being lonely and inactive; he always made sure we were always entertaining ourselves. he would make sure I was always working on something to better myself or to have us be active. Anxiously I am waiting for him to come home: that way life can change back to normal.

Ever since my father has been gone I have had to get over the fact that he won't be coming home for nineteen months. **this makes me angry and depressed** that I cannot get help, the school wont help me and I have nobody expect my mom and dad, thank goodness for them and there strong and loving marriage. With this in mind, the prison telling me I cannot see him until I am sixteen is wrong; I totally disagree with them. The reason the prison gave me is that I have to be sixteen to see him because he has to have certain classes done first. All of this is unbelievably tormenting.

Something people need to understand is what I go through without a father around. It has been very tough having to handle all our difficult situations without him. My mother has been trying extremely hard to take care of all our basic needs and our household needs on just her income. She and I have our difficulties with meeting these needs, but we are making it. If it was not for all the help the Matthew House has given us I do not know where we would today. The helped us with emotional support (a lot of it) and holiday gifts and food help and much more. Thanks to Linda and Ann at the Matthew House, forever; you are our women in shinning armor from the Matthew House. Thank you lord for sending them to us. It has been stressful going through these unexpected changes in our life. Going through all of this has been an emotional roller coaster and it is something that I would not wish for anyone.

Yet, after all of the emotional trauma I have gone through and am still going through, my father still says, "**You are a very strong woman" and with his words guiding me, I know I can, and will, survive.**"