

# MATTHEW HOUSE

Providing Help and Hope to families with a loved one incarcerated in the prison system

~ Simon of Cyrene Society, Inc.

## One in every 100 adults is in jail or prison .....



**For the first time in U.S. history, more than one of every 100 adults is in jail or prison,** according to a new report documenting America's rank as the world's No. 1 incarcerator. It urges states to curtail corrections spending by placing fewer low-risk offenders behind bars. Using state-by-state data, the report says 2,319,258 Americans were in jail or prison at the start of 2008 — one out of every 99.1 adults. Whether per capita or in raw numbers, **it's more than any other nation.** By DAVID CRARY, AP  
Posted: 2008-02-28 22:20:03

### Record-High ratio of Americans in Prison ...

#### ~ Parents in Prison: Children in Crisis ~

When that happens, statistics show that **over 2 million children get left behind.** As a result of parental incarceration, many of these children experience disrupted and multiple placements, decreased quality of care, financial hardship and lack of contact with their parents.

The emotional damage is significant and undeniable. Ultimately, these children are at risk for many behaviors including poor academic achievement, substance abuse, delinquency, and even intergenerational incarceration.

**Children who experience parental crime, arrest and incarceration are profoundly affected physically, mentally and emotionally. When a parent is arrested, little attention is paid to the needs of that parent's children.**

Children experience a broad range of emotion when their parents go to prison. Initially, they feel tremendous fear and anxiety. They worry that they have been abandoned or that they will never see the parent again. They may worry that the remaining parent or caregiver will also disappear, or that the parent or caregiver cannot protect them or prevent other bad things from happening. The separation anxiety may cause nightmares, fear of strangers, fear of being alone, or "clinginess" to a person or object. Children worry that something terrible has happened to the parent in prison. Children also feel sad or alone. They believe they did something wrong that caused the parent to leave or that they could have prevented the crisis by behaving better or trying harder. These sad feelings contribute to a sense of isolation. People may not know or understand what children are experiencing, and the sadness and isolation may go unrecognized as children withdraw. Other common reactions include anger and guilt.

On the other hand, children may feel ashamed of, and angry at, the parent. They may feel intense loyalty and may fight to defend the parent. **The stigma of incarceration makes it hard for children to seek help because they feel embarrassed and fear rejection of themselves and of their parents.** Children always know something is going on and that deception only compounds the emotional trauma experience. The stigma of incarceration is significant. Children may be teased and taunted about their parent's situation, or they may be avoided and isolated for being part of a "bad" family.

Child Welfare League of America

This is where the work of Matthew House steps in. **We are there right from the beginning of the incarceration to help and support families...** We provide, food, clothing, counseling and referral, transportation for visitation all over the state of Washington. We provide shelter, sleeping accommodations, a food bank and clothing room. We have child care which is staffed by wonderful loving, caring women who provide a safe and loving environment for the children and families.

# From my heart to yours.....

Dear Friend,

I wish I could come to your house or office and sit down with a cup of tea and share my heart with you. I appreciate your support and prayers so much. I cannot thank you enough for your partnership-your contributions that enable us to fulfill the many vital ministries that the Lord has called us to do for families of prisoners.

I support Matthew House as well as six other ministries helping children around the world. I have the donation taken right from my account monthly as I know how important that money is for these children. If your mail box looks like mine I am getting more and more appeal letters from ministries needing more money. Now I am not even opening some of the letters as they seem to be coming every other week, not counting the phone calls. I totally understand the need but I don't want to be one of those ministries that is pumping your mail box full every week asking for money. Unfortunately, we do like you, have to operate with money. I am writing this from my heart and doing it through the newsletter and praying you will hear my heart in this. I need to ask you to respond with what you can help us through the summer months with a monthly donation so we may keep our doors open for families. My heart is not to ask so much you get overwhelmed by the asking of your help and support but I do need to let you know we have a need right now and I do not know of any other way to make that appeal.

**Unfortunately, with the financial crisis we are all facing right now some of our monthly support we have seen go down ...while our needs for families has more than doubled. Others of you have blessed us by continuing to faithful send your donation in every month.**

Hebrews 13:3 says we are to , **“Remember those who are in prison , as though you were in prison with them.”** One of the greatest things you can give to us right now is your financial support and prayers. Your financial support will help us to keep our arms and doors open to these families in crisis. Over the past year your **Caring Heart** has helped us to provide for over 12,000 services to families in need.

From the **“Forgotten Children”** and families of prisoners whose lives you have helped and provided for, **thank you!**

**Rev. Linda M. Paz, Executive Director**



**We do what others don't...**

**we give love and support to the FORGOTTEN CHILDREN of prisoners.**

**God Bless you for your continued faithful support of all we do for these families.**

**Thank You**



## **Time is running out!! Call and get your seats...NOW!**

We are so excited to have the first ever **Matthew House Fund Raiser** and hopefully get a chance to meet you face to face to let you know how much we love and appreciate you.

**Please plan on coming and bring a friend to our Fund Raiser. Meet the Staff, Board and learn more about what we do! We would love to meet with you personally!!**

**Pete McLeod's** act is more than just stand-up comedy, it's an entire variety show! His show features amazing sleight-of-hand tricks with hilarious stand-up, side-splitting musical parodies and hysterical audience involvement. Pete's skills in storytelling, songwriting, magic, comedy, gymnastics and a Master's degree in counseling combine for a program that is thoroughly entertaining and ***totally inspirational***. Watch for more information coming in the mail!

***A night of food ... fun ... fellowship ... fund raising!***

Will be a small silent auction with some items made by inmates as well as for \$50—\$100 donations you will get your choice of a quilt Free while supply lasts so be the first to donate!!!!

**Mention you read this in the newsletter and get \$10 off for a table of 8....**



***SEE YOU THERE!***

# Matthew House

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**RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**

[matthewhousemonroe.org](http://matthewhousemonroe.org)

***Providing Help and Hope to Families of the incarcerated.***

## **Your Donation Does Makes A Difference in children's lives**

**YES!** I want to keep up the support Matthew House and help "Keep The Miracle Alive" giving hope to children and families for 2009 with my gift of love. Enclosed is my "special donation" in the amount of

\$ \_\_\_\_\_  
(Or donate by Credit Card)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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**Call Rev. Linda Paz to come speak to your group or church today! 360-794-8720**