

**MOTHER AND CHILD LIVE-IN PROGRAMS IN CANADIAN PRISONS:
A POLICY ANALYSIS OF PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT
AND IMPLEMENTATION**

by

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B.A. Simon Fraser University, 1982

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ABSTRACT

In Canada, mother/baby live-in programs have been available in two provincial prisons since the 1970's. Recent changes to the Correctional Services of Canada (CSC) policy, however, will result in the implementation of these programs in five new regional institutions across Canada. The expansion of the programs into these facilities for incarcerated women, serving sentences of two years to life, appears to have been based on certain ideas about their potential rehabilitative value and, more fundamentally, certain ideas about the concept of mothering itself. The background against which the present study is placed, however, is a consideration of yet another perspective, that is, the "best interests of the child", in which Governments, both international and national, have mandated that those interests receive priority in the development of public programming.

The present research examines these ideas through a survey, using both closed and open ended questions, of 108 women offenders and 94 institutional staff at the Burnaby Correctional Centre for Women (BCCW) in British Columbia. It was felt that it was important to gain an understanding of the opinions of these women and staff to determine their views about the nature and purpose of the programming.

The results reveal the complexity of the issues and the difficulty in determining what actually is in the "best interests of the children". Given the multiplicity of personal problems the women identified, for example, personal abuse of drugs and alcohol, there may be difficulties for the mothers to take on the added responsibility of

mothering in an institution in which they are intensely involved in programming aimed at resolving these problems. As well, the physical environs themselves may well prove problematic to the "safe and loving development" of the children.

Finally, it is interesting to note that, unlike other studies which suggest that a significant proportion of mothers in prison have had responsibility for the care of their children immediately prior to being incarcerated, the opposite seems true for the major proportion of women in this study. Therefore, it is not even clear that parenting is a duty, activity and/or interest in which these women have been engaged at the point when they were imprisoned. The latter possibility should not suggest that these women are somehow deficient or not adequate women according to a stereotypic view of women as mothers. As well, it should be noted that it was not the intent of the present research to suggest that these programs should be entirely eliminated, but that more research is clearly needed to determine the realities of the needs of the women for the programs, and above all else, what constitutes the "best interests of the child" in such initiatives, before they are fully implemented into correctional institutions.

DEDICATION

TO MY HUSBAND

ROB

QUOTATIONS

when five new women's prisons open across Canada later this year and in the spring of 1996, children from new borns to teenagers will be part of the landscape.
(Dambrofsky, G. 1995:A31)

Positive parenting is the ability to instill in your children a sense of self-worth that is so well-rooted, they'll grow up able to cope with just about anything.
(Wolfond and Morton, 1994:62)

I therefore think that the exploration of efficient alternatives should be pursued, particularly before endorsing too broadly the mother and child programs which bring children into prisons, rather than their mothers into the community.
(Arbour, L. 1996:226)

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CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

when five new women's prisons open across Canada later this year and in the spring of 1996, children from newborns to teenagers will be part of the landscape (Dambrofsky, 1995:A31).

The Correctional Service of Canada began opening five new women's prisons across Canada with a mandate to provide child visitation and live-in programs within the new facilities. There has been very little research into the feasibility, success or failure of such programs in Canadian institutions. At the present time there are only three mother/child live-in programs in Canada, two in Provincial institutions and one which recently opened in a Federal institution. There has been virtually no research data available on whether these programs have achieved their expected results of maintaining the mother/child bond and aiding in the rehabilitation of the mother. The question of whether these programs should be abandoned in Provincial institutions or expanded into Federal institutions has not been adequately addressed within the Canadian context. The lack of research can largely be attributed to the minute number of women and children who have had access to a Mother/Child program and the small number of mothers who have participated in such Programs. Research from the United States and other countries, with Mother/Child programs, has been available for examination and comparison, however, the information does not address the Canadian experience, nor does it address Canada's diversity and uniqueness.

Although the primary context for analysis in this study is corrections and the specific focus on mother/child programming for women offenders, wider policy environments also dictate other perspectives to be weighted in the exercise. For example, Article 3 (1) of the 1989 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child states that:

In all actions concerning children, whether undertaken by public or private social welfare institutions, courts of law, administrative authorities or legislative bodies, the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration (Human Rights Directorate, 1991:3).

This clearly dictates that the child be ensured protection and care as is necessary for his or her well-being. Article 27 (1) elaborates on this by recognizing the right of every child to a standard of living adequate for the child's physical, health, spiritual, moral and social background:

States Parties recognize the right of every child to a standard of living adequate for the child's physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development (Ibid.:14).

Of more proximal relevance to the present study of a British Columbia institution is the 1995 Gove Inquiry into Child Protection in British Columbia. While the inquiry emerged out of one high profile case, the establishment of recommended goals was directed toward wider range consideration of "a safe and loving environment respectful of their developmental capabilities and cultural heritage" (Gove, 1995: 249). Children and youth are to be seen as a top priority for societal resources. Thus, going into this study, the rights of the child have to be determined as having priority over those of the women offenders.

There is, therefore, a compelling need for research into the existing Canadian programs and the underlying assumptions and concepts relating to the development and expansion of future mother/child programs. This research project examined the issues surrounding children living with their mothers in a prison environment and analyzed the varying perspectives of the "motherhood" issue. It also focused primarily on the question of the best interests of the child.

A Literature Review in Chapter II examines the complexities of the motherhood issue and the varying perspectives presented in the literature of incarcerated women and mothers, children and the community. An edified profile of female offenders, federally sentenced women, and incarcerated mothers is included in the literature review to provide a historical perspective and framework of this present study.

Chapter III provides a brief history and description of the Mother/Child Program at the Open Living Unit at the Burnaby Correctional Centre for Women (BCCW), the institution which is the focus for the present study.

Chapter IV details the methodology of the research project undertaken at BCCW.

This site was chosen for its location, prison population and the presence of a mother/child live-in program in the Open Living Unit. The average count at BCCW in the 1995/1996 fiscal year was 108 (Burnaby Correctional Centre for Women, 1996). In this study, 108 incarcerated women and 94 corrections staff were interviewed.

Chapter V provides the results of the present study and includes some specific profile information and social history of the women incarcerated at BCCW; a summary of the data concerning the number of incarcerated mothers; and the opinions and views of both the BCCW staff and incarcerated women on mother/child programming in a prison environment. Chapter VI concludes with a discussion of the results in Chapter V and the issues of motherhood as described in the literature review in Chapter II.

CHAPTER II LITERATURE REVIEW

The Motherhood Issue

In 1996, the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) began opening five new prisons across Canada for federally sentenced women. These new facilities are expected to replace the outdated and archaic Prison for Women in Kingston, Ontario. Child visitation and live-in programs will be an integral part of these new facilities, which have been initiated through policy changes in CSC, in the management of federally sentenced women. These policy changes can be attributed to the efforts of the Task Force commissioned in 1989 by Ole Ingstrup, Commissioner of the Correctional Services of Canada. The Task Force mandate was to examine the needs of women serving federal sentences:

Our mandate was to examine the correctional management of federally sentenced women from the commencement of sentence to the date of warrant expiry and to develop a plan which will guide and direct this process in a manner that is responsive to the unique and special needs of this group (Correctional Services of Canada, 1990: preface).

In the 1990 Task Force report, "Creating Choices", a number of recommendations were made including the replacement of Prison for Women with regional facilities across Canada, to bring, "women closer to their families, cultures and communities" (Ibid.:155). It was further recommended that each regional facility, "provide an appropriate environment to enable a child or children to live with the mother" (Ibid:144). The Task Force's recommendation has come to fruition with the opening

of the Okimaw Ohci Healing Lodge in Maple Creek, Saskatchewan in 1996. The Healing Lodge is the first of the new regional facilities to have a mother/child program with full-time, part-time, and occasional residency. The Policy Objectives of the Mother/Child Program at the facility are:

1. To provide mechanisms that both foster and promote stability and continuity for the child in its relationship with his/her mother.
2. To assist mothers at the Okimaw Ohci Healing Lodge in regaining self-worth and hope and to strengthen their psychological, emotional, and spiritual needs by providing them with daily and continuous access to their children (CSC, 1997).

The objectives of the policy emphasize the mother/child relationship, with an emphasis on the desired goal of enhancing the mother's psychological, emotional and spiritual growth, by being with her child. This is supported by the Task Force recommendations, which also referred to children being a catalyst for change, and proposed the Healing Lodge program be premised on principles which promote, "an appreciation of the healing role of children who are closer to the spirit world" (CSC, 1990:145).

The arrangement of children living with their incarcerated mothers within correctional facilities was viewed as an opportunity for mothers to have, "more incentive to be rehabilitated if they're given access to their children in prison" (Dambrofsky, 1995:A31). This perspective seems to imply women have maternal abilities and qualities of "mothering" which will prevail over criminogenic factors, if they are provided an opportunity to fulfill their feminine role. The "call" of

motherhood is expected to effect positive change. This may be seen by opposing perspectives to perpetuate the myths and outdated theories concerning women and how their criminality is kept in check by their maternal responsibilities:

For Lombroso, the 'normal' woman's criminality was kept in check by fulfillment of her maternal role and by repressing her sexuality (Gavigan, 1987:47).

Some feminists have argued programs which reinforce the traditional roles in penal institutions are, "based on the assumption that the woman who accepts her traditional role, who is passive, gentle and caring, is also non-criminal" (Smart, 1989:142). Children following their mother to prison to continue or to re-establish the nurturing bond may be viewed as perpetuating women's traditional roles, based on the above assumptions. These two possible perspectives on the idea of correctional rehabilitation, federal corrections and certain feminist academics, however, may not represent the full spectrum of opinion on this matter. For example, the voices of the female offenders themselves and of the general public may not be represented by either perspective. Finally, the central player in the programming itself is that of the child(ren) who have their perspective imposed upon them. Therefore, one of the key questions to be asked is which perspective operates to facilitate the needs of the mother and child, and ultimately society, the best? Given what has been discussed above, this is obviously not a straightforward question, but one which requires sensitive attendance to varying beliefs about what is appropriate for serving the needs of the mothers as well as society, but with the priority given to the needs of the child.

Complexity Of The Motherhood Issue

A study completed by the Elizabeth Fry Society of Edmonton in 1994, exemplifies the complexities of the varying perspectives on the motherhood issue. In the study, eight case studies of women, who had been in conflict with the law and, who had lost custody of their children at one time or another, were discussed. The researchers undertook the study in an attempt to answer questions derived from an earlier study in 1993. They had previously assumed mothers had been separated from their children because of incarceration, however discovered this was not the situation:

Initially, it had been assumed that women lost their children because of incarceration. However, after thinking about the situations of women known to the Society, it became clear to the research team that, in fact, many women had lost or given up their children prior to involvement with the law (Elizabeth Fry Society of Edmonton, 1994:1).

Several issues and themes were apparent for some or most of the mothers participating in the study:

- most of the women experienced dysfunction in their childhood family, which was viewed as affecting their own parenting skills. "Life has provided them with neither the skills nor the emotional resources needed to cope with the relentless giving that comes with being a mother" (Ibid.:156). "Some mothers were incapable of being remotely objective about their skills since they were raising their children as they had been raised themselves" (Ibid.:172).

- the lifestyle of the mother was shown to affect the women's approach to parenting, "because so much of mothering involves being aware and in contact with reality and one's own feelings, drug and alcohol use severely interfered with the women's ability to meet the needs of their children" (Ibid.: 164-165).
- the expectations of society that mothers measure up to an ideal standard without recognition of the women's history often resulted in support services being denied to effect necessary change, and contact with their children being denied because they were viewed as "bad mothers", "we punish troubled mothers by having a negative view of them, judging them very harshly, withdrawing support and refusing further contact, assuming that these women must be unfit or defective in some way, and by providing them with very little in the way of parenting programs or education" (Ibid.:169).

The women in the study had a history of victimization in their childhood and/or an alcohol or drug addiction problem. Most of the women did not have the experience of being raised in a positive and loving environment and were unprepared for the role of motherhood. Unrealistic expectations of society for these mothers were viewed as perpetuating the problem for the women and impeding intervention strategies of support, by condemning the mother for not "living up" to the societal obligations of motherhood (Ibid.:169).

Female Offenders

"Women in conflict with the law" is a growing area of interest to feminists, criminologists and corrections authorities. Traditionally, the nature of female criminality has held little interest to researchers who have concentrated their research on male offenders in society. Carol Smart attributes this phenomenon in part to the, "pervasiveness of the belief in the relative insignificance of female criminality" (Smart, 1976:1). Statistically, women have represented diminutive numbers compared to males involved in criminal offences, and have largely been ignored on this basis:

Indeed official criminal statistics consistently provide us with information that not only are female offenders fewer than male offenders but also that female offenders are, in almost all cases, a tiny minority. Consequently it has been maintained that there is not enough subject material to justify research (Ibid.:2).

The consequence is a lack of knowledge about female offenders which culminates in policy decisions being made about women based on the male experience and/or myths about women:

It is not surprising therefore that many myths, from the theological belief in the fundamental evil and weakness of Woman to the paternalistic belief in Woman's frailty and gentleness, still prevail in accounts of female criminality (Ibid.:3).

It can be argued the criminal justice system's approach in dealing with female offenders has been guided by some of these beliefs. Women's involvement with crime has been associated with women's struggle for equality and the feminist movement, implying that, "criminal activity is historically a male prerogative,

and that the 'new female criminal' is breaking with her sex role" (Gavigan, 1987:54). This is evident when a female offender, who is also a mother, comes before the Courts for sentencing. Women traditionally have been expected to have maternal instincts and innate qualities when it come to child bearing and child care. Offender mothers are deemed to be treated differently depending on whether they exercise their "maternal" responsibilities appropriately:

Children were found to be very important in the judge's sentencing decision. If the decision is whether to impose a custodial or a non-custodial sentence, a non-custodial sentence is more likely to be imposed if children are involved. In determining the length of the sentence, having children would become a stronger point for leniency (Masson, 1992: 94-95).

If leniency is contingent upon the involvement of children in determining whether a mother will be incarcerated, perhaps a harsher penalty may be imposed on a mother who is viewed as not fulfilling her maternal responsibilities satisfactorily. If this indeed is the situation, the acceptance of mother/child live-in programs as the norm in correctional institutions, could impact the sentencing of female offenders, as it appears child care issues are of importance to the Court. If a Judge knows a mother may keep her child with her while in custody he/she may be more likely to implement a custodial sentence. A judicial disposition in Quesnel, B.C. in March 1995 illustrates this issue, when the Judge gave a teenage mother an absolute discharge, instead of a gaol sentence:

A teenage mom went free yesterday after a disgusted Quesnel Judge said no juvenile jail will let her keep her breast-fed baby. The Judge slammed the 'legislative and executive branches of government,' saying the lack of a jail for juvenile moms is 'discriminatory' and unjust (Fournier, 1995:A10).

What perspective the Judge's decision is based upon is unknown, but one may assume he believes the traditional role of motherhood should not be interrupted for this mother and child.

The majority of female offenders who come into conflict with the criminal justice system are non-violent property offenders. Statistics indicate males commit considerably more crime than women in any given year. Statistics Canada reported that in 1994, of the 610,994 adults who were charged with Criminal Code Offences, only 98,136 were female. Violent offence statistics indicated that adult males were charged with 110,079 violent offences while adult females accounted for only 15,284 of the charges. Adult males charged with property offences were 124,401, which is less than 15% more than the total for violent offences charges. Adult females, however were charged with 37,490 property offences, an increase of almost 41% more than that of the total violent charges for females (Statistics Canada, 1994).

It would appear that females are more likely to commit property offences than violent offences, given these statistics. The socioeconomic status of women, "who come into conflict with the criminal justice system tend to be young, poor, under-educated, and unskilled" (Johnson & Rogers, 1993:98). According to the literature, one of the primary criminogenic factors contributing to women committing property offences is their inability to sustain themselves in society.

Johnson & Rogers examined the number of charges women received between the period of 1970-1991, which showed an increase in both violent offences and property offences committed by women. In 1970, there were 1,937 women charged with violent offences and 13,162 charged with property offences (Ibid.:99). In 1991, Statistics Canada reported that 12,924 women had been charged with violent offences and 47,513 women had been charged with property offences. However, in 1994, the number of women charged with violent offences continued to rise with 15,284 women charged, while women charged with property offences had dropped from 47,513 to 37,490. Interestingly, the statistics for males charged indicated a drop for both violent offences and property offences in 1994 (Statistics Canada, 1994). Overall, women were charged with fewer offences than males, however, there continued to be a rise in violent offence charges for women, since 1970. Little research has been conducted on the rise in violent offence charges against women. It has been suggested by some researchers that much of the violence perpetuated by women is the result of, "rebellion or retaliation against men in abusive or exploitative domestic situations" (Johnson & Rogers, 1993:102). It may also be a result of different charging patterns over time.

Considering the limits of the research to date, there has been no conclusive information concerning the criminogenic factors that have led to the steady increase of violent offences amongst women. Certainly, some studies of female offenders reported high incidences of physical/sexual abuse histories and/or substance abuse

issues (Elizabeth Fry Society of Edmonton, 1994; Shaw, 1992; Axon, 1989) however, the data are not conclusive.

Incarcerated Women

As previously stated, the charges women sustain overall were generally for non-violent offences, which suggests, "the majority of female offenders pose little or no threat to society at large" (McLeod, 1986:10).

Considering that of all adult women charged in 1994, more than 80% of the charges were for non-violent offences, this appears to be a reasonable conclusion to the data as a general assumption regarding all female offenders. However, it is questionable as to whether this assumption can be generalized completely to the incarcerated population of women. Although Correctional Services of Canada reported in 1992-93 that only 2.1% of federally sentenced inmates were women, it is interesting to note the majority of these women were serving sentences for violent offences (CSC, 1993:17).

The Task Force in their report, "Creating Choices", stated their research demonstrated that all:

federally sentenced women are in high need regardless of sentence length or nature of offence. Regarding risk, women generally are not a danger to others. There are a very small number of women who have come to rely on violence in order to survive overwhelming abuse throughout their lives (CSC, 1990:109).

The Task Force did not consider federally sentenced women to be a threat to the public safety but rather that the women presented a risk to themselves. The Task Force reported they came to the conclusion, based on consultations and research that demonstrated the women needed "support" not "security" (Ibid.:108). It remains unclear what the analytical process and factors were that led to these conclusions.

The following is a general overview of the uniqueness of statistics concerning female offenders, in order to clarify the differences from the literature regarding female offenders and incarcerated women. If we examine the statistics for female offenders using as categories: female offenders charged overall; female offenders sentenced to a provincial sentence of less than two years; and those female offenders serving a federal sentence of two years to life, it is apparent the charges for violent offences and risk posed to the public varies, therefore it can be confusing when the literature refers to the female offenders who are charged overall when delineating whether incarcerated women pose a threat to the public.

First, it is recognized females commit far less crime than males. In general, female offenders predominately commit non-violent offences and are viewed as presenting a low risk to society if in the community. The second distinction relates to women who serve a provincial sentence, that the statistics support the notion that the majority of these women were incarcerated for non-violent offences. Finally, the

third distinction is that the majority (69%) of the federally sentenced women were serving sentences for violent offences:

- Overall, therefore, 42% of the population were serving sentences for murder or manslaughter, 27% for robbery and other more minor violent offenses, and 31% for non-violent offenses (Shaw, 1991:5).

The question that remained unanswered from the literature is whether women who do commit violent offences present a risk to society. The literature reports that women offenders in general do not pose a risk to society because the majority of crimes committed by women are non-violent. However, the Task Force concluded that the majority of women who commit violent offences do not pose a threat to society, based on other factors, such as their own victimization. It is interesting that in some of the literature, the risk to the public is associated with the type of offence, but in the Task Force Report, the emphasis on risk to the public is associated more with other factors, such as the women's behaviour while institutionalized and their history of victimization.

The distinctions of statistics [between female offenders and incarcerated women] and the risk posed to the general public are important issues to clarify when mother/child programs are considered for a prison environment. The complexity of assessing risk to the public and the risk of recidivism by the offender are not simple tasks. Predicting future behaviour precisely is not possible as no one can predict or analyze all the variables which affect an action taking place, however some indicators can estimate the likelihood of future behaviour. Studies have been

conducted which provide further insight, such as the study conducted by the Solicitor General of Canada, which concluded a previous criminal history may be predictive of future criminal conduct:

It is also noteworthy that many of the criminal history variables identified in research with males were equally relevant with females. Prior criminal history, certain offence types, and sentence length were all predictive of future criminal conduct, and these variables can still form an essential feature of any new risk prediction instrument (Bonta, 1995: 289-290).

The risk that violent offenders pose to the public has not clearly been established by research on federally sentenced women. The degree of risk for this population is an important factor to be clarified prior to the implementation of mother/child programs into the prison environment.

Background Information

Some of the literature described incarcerated women as victims of abuse and identified numerous social injustices as factors in their offending history. Sexual and physical abuse, poverty, alcohol/drug addictions and lack of education are some of the "criminogenic factors"¹ which lead to an offending history:

Their offences are concentrated in the types of property crimes that could well be considered a means of survival in a time when employment options for women with low education and few job skills are becoming increasingly restricted. For some women, sexual or physical abuse as a child marks passage into a life of street prostitution; for others, years of physical or emotional abuse as an adult culminates in a single act of violence. Many women offenders are at the same time victims (Johnson & Rogers, 1993:112).

¹ "Criminogenic" factors is the term currently employed in corrections policy and procedures which refers to factors in the offenders' history that may contribute to their offending such as substance abuse, lack of education and/or job skills.

In the preliminary results of a study comparing female and male serious offenders, "on the basis of their social and familial background, criminal history, and personal or emotional adjustment" (Loucks & Zamble, 1996:26), it was found that both men and women reported having come from a disadvantaged socioeconomic background. The study cited that, "15% of the women and 33% of the men grew up in poor families" (Ibid.:26). Both males and females were reported having, on average, a lack of high school education, high unemployment and poor work histories, and a lack of job skills. In addition, both groups had a history of serious offences with a lengthy criminal history. The research indicated:

Overall, there was no evidence that the crimes that resulted in penitentiary terms for women were any less serious than the offenses of male penitentiary inmates (Ibid.:29).

Of the serious offender group, it was found men were incarcerated more often for robbery, whereas the women were incarcerated more often for assaults.

The study also found that women experienced higher levels of depression and suicide attempts. Further, they found women were less likely to report alcohol abuse than men, however the women were more likely to report drug abuse (Ibid:1996:30). A further more comprehensive report is said to be forthcoming upon completion of their analysis of the data.

Mental Health

Mental health issues of incarcerated women were examined in a study by CSC of seventy-six women at Prison for Women in Kingston in 1989. The sample was

representative (57%) of the incarcerated population at P4W (Blanchette and Motiuk, 1996). In this study they found that, of the sample, 17.1% of women had a major mental disorder; 32.9% indicated major depression; 19.7% generalized anxiety disorder; 34.2% psychosexual dysfunction and 36.8% antisocial personality; 63.2% alcohol use and 50.0% drug use (Ibid.:7).

A study completed in 1996 at BCCW on personality pathology and adult attachment found a "preponderance of insecurely attached women" (Turnbull, 1996:196). In this study, Turnbull expressed concern that women who are insecurely attached have a tendency to have children who also become insecurely attached. In addition it was also noted that parenting programs that would help address some of these issues had previously been poorly attended by the incarcerated women:

Given the preponderance of insecurely attached women found in the present sample, this is cause for concern, particularly given the plethora of other potential life difficulties facing children of incarcerated mothers (Ibid.:196).

Much of the research indicates that over three-quarters of the federally sentenced women have been physically and/or sexually abused. The literature also described the women's lack of empowerment and inability to make reasonable choices in part, due to their abuse issues and by reason of their history of victimization.

The Inquiry into the events at Prison for Women illustrates the viewpoint of

victimization of the FSW at Kingston Penitentiary:

Sadly, for many, their time in prison, even with the little it has to offer, was an opportunity to be sheltered from abusive relationships, the devastation of life on the streets while under the influence of alcohol or drugs, and the repeated inability to make reasonable decisions about their own lives. It offered the company, and often the support and friendship of other women. It should also offer some opportunity to reflect and to learn (Arbour, 1996:204).

The Task Force reinforces the concept of victimization and the inability of women to make reasonable decisions, thus it recommended that the women be provided with the opportunities and appropriate environment in which they will be empowered to make reasonable choices.

Overall, the literature profiled federally sentenced women as younger, first offenders with horrendous social and family histories, victims of sexual and/or physical abuse and who are likely to have an alcohol or drug problem. The Task Force recommended the building of five new regional federal jails to bring the women closer to their families and to provide a low security setting with a supportive environment to empower the women to make reasonable choices.

Incarcerated Mothers

A CHILD

*A CHILD LEFT BEHIND
CANNOT BEGIN TO UNDERSTAND
WHY MOTHER HAS
BEEN GONE SO LONG
I'M SÖ SORRY
IF I COULD CHANGE THINGS
I REALLY WOULD
ALWAYS REMEMBER
I REALLY DO LOVE YOU
DON'T BE AFRAID
I'LL BE HOME SOON (Inmate, 1990).*

The majority of women incarcerated in provincial or federal facilities are mothers. A study conducted in 1979 by the Ontario Correctional Service reported 54% of the women incarcerated in the Province of Ontario were mothers. Of the mothers incarcerated, 55% report living with at least one of their children prior to custody (Rogers & Carey, 1979:17). In 1986, Linda MacLeod published a working paper on incarcerated mothers in Canada in which she examined the issues of female offenders and their children. MacLeod tentatively estimated that in 1983 approximately 50% of the federally sentenced women had borne children, while only 30% lived with their children prior to the mother's incarceration (MacLeod, 1986:12). MacLeod acknowledged the limitations of the study, which she contributed to the lack of information:

The information currently available is often fragmentary, speculative and biased. There are few hard facts and there is a dearth of objective studies. . . . Much of the information summarized therefore is necessarily unscientific and emotional (Ibid.:3).

MacLeod's study provided an opportunity to explore some of the issues concerning female offenders and their children.

In 1989, Margaret Shaw conducted a survey on behalf of the Task Force on Federally Sentenced Women. The study involved 170 incarcerated women serving federal sentences in Canada. Shaw reported that almost two-thirds of the women were mothers and almost half of the women interviewed had a child under 16 years

of age, and had some involvement in their child's upbringing:

Among those women interviewed 81 (48%) had at least one child aged 16 years or under in whose upbringing they have had some responsibility, and 41 (24%) at least one child under five (Shaw, 1991:v).

Shaw further reported that two-thirds of all the women said they had primary responsibility for raising some of their children (Ibid.:11).

In 1990, the Task Force reiterated the findings of the study completed by Margaret Shaw on the issue of mothers and children. The Task Force further reported that, "two out of three federally sentenced women are mothers, who said they had primary responsibility for their children" (CSC, 1990:121). The Task Force recommended the building of five regional federal facilities for females which would include, "a home-like environment and sufficient flexibility to enable a child or children to live with their mother" (Ibid.:122). Their conclusion that two-thirds of the women incarcerated were mothers having primary responsibility for their children may be incorrect. Shaw reported only 48% of the women had children under 16 years of age, whose upbringing the mothers had "some" responsibility (Shaw, 1991:10). Given these statistics, it still remains unclear as to the mother's involvement with her child(ren) immediately prior to incarceration.

If a mother/child live-in program is introduced into all the new regional facilities, the demand for participation in the program will depend not only on the eligibility criteria for the mother but also the acceptable age of the child.

An earlier research study was conducted at the Open Living Unit¹ at the Burnaby Correctional Centre for Women in 1995 which indicated 55% of the twenty mothers interviewed lived with their children prior to incarceration (Shields, 1995:74). It is unknown whether the twenty mothers interviewed were serving a federal or provincial sentence at the Open Living Unit and what the ages of the children were. In addition, the 55% statistic reported refers only to the mothers interviewed, therefore it may not be reflective of the overall population.

In March, 1995 Rachel Labrecque completed a report on the issues of having children in federal facilities. In the introduction, Labrecque reports that, "two thirds of women in prison are mothers of children under five years of age, that they are often single parents, and that living apart is an ordeal for both the mothers and their children" (Labrecque, 1995:1). This statistic is considerably higher than the research to date has indicated.

In conclusion, the literature is not consistent in reporting what the percentage of incarcerated mothers are, who have primary responsibility for their children immediately prior to the mother coming into custody, nor are the statistics consistent concerning the ages of the children.

¹ The Open Living Unit has a mother/child live-in program for children under 2 years. The program is available to federally and provincially sentenced residents.

The Child's Perspective

It is undoubtedly true that the child and the mother both experience trauma when incarceration results in sudden separation. The child may be left behind with relatives or in the care of complete strangers with little or no understanding of where his/her mother has gone. The trauma experienced by the mother is often shared by the child left behind:

Tommy, a toddler with cocoa-brown skin and curly hair, stopped eating and talking. He grew thin and sickly. The exuberance in his brown eyes dimmed. He regressed and acted like an infant, kicking his legs in the air and rolling on his back. It is his desperate attempt to bring back the world he loved (Huie, 1992:1).

In the state of California, mother/child programming is viewed as a success in that, "the recidivism rate is between 60 percent and 80 percent in most prisons, the rate has been 10 percent or less for participating inmates", in mother/child programs (Ibid.:15). The success of the program appears to be calculated by the assumption that the child care responsibilities have rehabilitated the mother. The best interests of the child and its perspective were not discussed, nor was the actual outcome for the child.

The Best Interests of the Child

In considering what is in the best interests of the child in a custody dispute or in the case of child protection and/or apprehension, there are two Acts in British Columbia which govern the authority and process.

The Child, Family and Community Service Act, 1994 provides the authority for the state to intervene where there is a child protection issue. The principles subscribed to by this legislation include that, "children are entitled to be protected from abuse, neglect and harm or threat of harm" (SBC Chap. 27, 1994:6). Where the Act makes reference to the best interests of the child, it states, all "relevant factors must be considered in determining the child's best interests" (Ibid.:7). Some examples from the Act included:

- (a) the child's safety;
- (b) the child's physical and emotional needs and level of development;
- (c) the importance of continuity in the child's care (Ibid.:5).

These principles should logically be considered when determining whether a child should be in residence with the mother in a gaol setting. The controversial issue for corrections and society is whether the best interests of the child are being served by remaining with the mother in a prison environment or whether the child's best interests are better served by being separated from the mother and remaining in the community.

The Family Relations Act, 1993 should also be considered where there are issues of custody, guardianship and access concerning the child. The Act defines the best interests of the child as being paramount in determining the custody, access or guardianship of a child. In assessing the best interests, the Court is compelled to

consider, but is not limited by, the following:

- (a) the health and emotional well being of the child including any special needs for care and treatment;
- (b) where appropriate, the views of the child;
- (c) the love, affection and similar ties that exist between the child and other persons;
- (d) education and training for the child; and
- (e) the capacity of each person to whom guardianship, custody or access rights and duties may be granted to exercise these rights and duties adequately; and give emphasis to each factor according to the child's needs and circumstances (FRA, 1993:7).

The thrust of both Acts focuses on the needs of the child over parental needs. This is thus a weighting exercise which should be addressed in any mother/child program in existence or developed in the future.

Gove Inquiry into Child Protection

In 1995, the Honourable Judge Thomas Gove submitted his report on the inquiry into child protection to the Attorney General of B.C. The Inquiry was commissioned following the death of five year old Matthew Vaudreille by his mother and the inability of the Ministry of Social Services to protect him. Judge Gove ascertained one of the problems in protecting the child is attributed to the focus being placed on the mother instead of the child:

You would think that child protection workers, more than any others, would be clear that their client is the child, and that all their decisions must be dictated by the safety and well being of the child. But I could give you several dozen examples from Matthew's life where that was not so, where the workers' first priority was the welfare of Matthew's mother, not Matthew (Gove, 1995:324).

A number of recommendations were made by Judge Gove for the

reorganization and coordination of services for children. The central theme of these recommendations rested in a child-centered approach with coordination of all services for children.

Charter of Rights Challenge

In 1994, a woman who was not allowed to care for her new born baby in the secure unit of BCCW petitioned the Court claiming this violated her rights under sections 12 and 15(1). The woman claimed that under section 12, the failure of the institution to allow her to care for her child amounted to cruel and unusual treatment. Mr. Justice Low in the Supreme Court of British Columbia stated in his reasons for judgment that the separation of the mother and child was due directly to the mother's own conduct and that when people go to gaol they are separated from their children. He further ruled that the environment in the secure custody unit was not safe for a child:

To the contrary, the treatment of the petitioner in all the circumstances is the application of common sense. There is evidence that the secure custody unit would not be a safe environment for an infant due to the presence there of inmates having unpredictable and volatile natures (Supreme Court Registry, 1994:10).

The Court further dismissed the woman's claim of discrimination under section 15 (1) in which she alleged that not being allowed to have her child constituted discrimination. Justice Low concluded, "the petitioner has been denied only something she would like to have, not something given to others" (Ibid.:11).

It would appear the rights of the child in the decision focused on the issue of safety for the child in a jail environment, rather than the capability or suitability of the petitioner to care for the child. The Justice was aware the petitioner had a history of drug and alcohol abuse, and stated, even though she knew she was pregnant, "the petitioner persisted in her substance abuse lifestyle" (Ibid.:3).

The Court determined the mother's rights were not violated as the mother's own conduct resulted in her having to be in a secure setting, and the secure setting is not suitable for a child. However, the ruling does not define whether the mother's rights would have been considered violated had she been in a non-secure environment, such as the Open Living Unit, as the judicial decision had not addressed the mother's conduct pertaining to her ability to care for her child.

The Community Perspective

The community receives most of its information about women in prison through media resources, such as television movies, news, radio and the newspaper. The general public is presented with a variety of views about incarcerated women. An example of the different portrayals the media may present is illustrated following the incident at Prison for Women, when the evening television news, presented a video clip of the male emergency response team strip searching the women following a riot. Following the Inquiry by Judge Louis Arbour, of the incident at Prison for Women, one media response in the Province newspaper, was to publish a

cartoon of a male correctional officer in riot gear with a paper happy face, holding flowers, a nerf baton and a sympathy card (with cash), and written on the card it said from the "taxpayers". This was followed by a caption underneath the cartoon which said, "suggested tools for quelling future women's prison riots" (The Province, 1996:A20). This appeared to be a cynical response to the recommendations made in the Arbour Report for changes in emergency response procedures concerning incarcerated women. Such a portrayal obviously delivers a negative impression about the original incident.

The public has also been provided with information about mothers in prison, such as in the documentary, "Nine Months to Life". This appeared on the television program, Witness, in 1995. The program interviewed mothers at the Prison for Women, Portage La Prairie and at BCCW. The documentary provided information to the public from the women's perspective and from the reporter's perspective. In some instances, the information narrated by the reporter was not true. For example a scene of the mother/child program at the OLU, was immediately followed by a scene of the canine program in the secure unit. The narrator commented that before mothers are permitted, "to be with their own children, some women here are asked to first prove their availability to care responsibly for animals" (Almadon Productions, 1995). This comment was inaccurate, as the OLU mother/child program had no connection or conditions attached to it which involved the canine program in the secure unit. In addition, the narrator did not distinguish to the viewing audience the location change between the OLU and secure, which may have

left the impression that the Mother/Child and Canine Program were in the same location.

Another example of misinformation concerned the narrator's reporting of the OLU Day Care Centre in which she commented that all the children in the day care belong to the prison guards. In addition, the narrator stated a resident mother who wanted to place their child in the day care centre must agree to work in it. The day care centre in fact is a community day care centre with children from the community and from staff working in the gaol. Further, there were no conditions which required the mother to work in the day care if her child was in residence.

In addition, one scene from Portage LaPrairie shows one of the children playing in a rather drab court yard with the mother and other inmates. Later, there is a scene of the same child out in the country with relatives being pulled on a sled through the snow to cut down a christmas tree. The contrasting scenes illustrates how the media may construct conflicting images that may bias the views of the public.

A scene with a mother in the prison, vocally reinforcing her rights and desire to continue being a mother while incarcerated, may provoke public sympathy. As one mother stated, "Just because I'm stuck in the system doesn't mean that I don't have any rights" (Ibid.). This comment was preceded by the narrator telling the public, the mom was serving 12 years for manslaughter.

The narrator also interviewed the Warden of the new regional facility in Edmonton, which at the time was still under construction. In the program, the Warden stated to a group of BCCW inmates that the new Edmonton facility was designed with the concept that the Correctional Services of Canada believe, "the vast majority of women in jail are minimum security" (Ibid.). The new Edmonton facility was also considering a mother/child program for children up to school age. In 1995, the Edmonton facility opened and the media subsequently reported that, "Officials now admit building five new showcase facilities for women was a big mistake." (Duffy, 1996:29). The newspaper reported that at the Edmonton facility, "one prisoner was murdered, others attempted suicide and seven of 28 prisoners escaped--all in the first six months" (Ibid.:29). As a result of the problems at Edmonton, the news reported that CSC was to spend over \$2 million upgrading the new regional prisons.

The contrasting images presented to the public have thus produced mixed views of prison as an environment for mother/child programs. The dilemma in acquiring the community's perspective on this issue is the lack of sufficient and accurate information being presented to them which would allow the community to have a balanced and informed opinion.

CHAPTER III

THE MOTHER/CHILD PROGRAM AT THE OPEN LIVING UNIT - BCCW

The Burnaby Correctional Centre for Women is a provincial institution comprised of two facilities under the direction of a District Director. The Secure Unit and the Open Living Unit (OLU) are on the grounds of BCCW. The Secure Unit accommodates Federally Sentenced Women¹, Provincially Sentenced women and a remand population. Women are classified to the OLU if they meet the criteria for an open setting and the OLU program. Women on remand status are not eligible for transfer to the open unit.

The Centre has 28 rooms for residents with four of the rooms slightly larger to accommodate a mother and a child. The open setting provides a comfortable environment, including a fireplace in the main common room, and a small walking track and gazebo on the outside grounds. The residents have their own keys to their rooms and are expected to participate in programs or be engaged in work. The OLU also has a community day care centre on the grounds in which a resident may chose to work under the supervision of the day care supervisor.

The mother/child program has been available to residents since the OLU opened in 1991. The OLU replaced the Twin Maples facility in Maple Ridge, B.C. which first began a Mother/Child program in the 1970s. Immediately prior to Twin Maples closing, the residents compiled a booklet of poems, memories and stories, one of

¹ Federally Sentenced Women are incarcerated at BCCW through the Exchange of Services Agreement between the Federal and Provincial Governments.

which tells about the mother/child program (it was estimated that approximately eighty babies were at Twin Maples, over a period of fifteen years). The program was considered successful by staff and inmates, except for a few mothers who had some difficulties:

One mother went AWOL with her child. Another went AWOL and left her child who was then handed over to the Ministry of Social Services and Housing and one with behaviour problems was given back to the family (Resident, 1990).

The Twin Maples Mother/Child program was the basis upon which the OLU developed their program. Interestingly, the B.C. Corrections Branch has no policies and procedures for Mother/Child programs within the Branch.

OLU Mother/Child Program

A description of the program to be studied and its procedures establishes the physical context for the study. A resident of the OLU may make application (See Appendix A) to the Local Director of the OLU for acceptance into the Mother/Child live-in program or extended visitation program. Prior to the child's acceptance into the Program, the mother must sign an agreement regarding the care of the child (See Appendix B). The authority to approve or deny acceptance into the program rests solely with the Local Director.

Criteria For The Mother/Child Program (See Appendix C):

- child is two years of age or under;
- one child per room to a maximum of four in the unit;

- there are no custody disputes involving the child;
- the father or significant other sharing responsibility for the child, guardian or person having legal custody agrees to the child living at the OLU;
- the mother is able to accept sole responsibility for the child and has the necessary parenting skills to parent the child;
- financial support for the child is provided through social services if other resources are not available;
- child has verified medical coverage;
- mother must be alcohol and drug free and be addressing the issues which led to her offending;
- child is physically and emotionally capable of being parented in the OLU.

The Mother/Child rooms are not large enough to comfortably accommodate more than one child on a full time basis, however the Centre has allowed more than one child for short durations, such as an overnight or weekend visit. This also included older children on occasion. The Program is described as flexible, using the criteria as a guideline, while recognizing the uniqueness of individual cases and situations, (see informational handout, Appendix D).

To determine the mother's capacity to parent, and the child's adjustment to the environment, a transition period is utilized to allow the child to integrate into the OLU slowly by having to commence visitation for short periods of durations leading to full time residency. Usually this involves short visits, overnight visits, extended

visits until full time residency is achieved. The individual needs of the mother and child are considered in order to allow the child to adjust to the new environment, and for the mother and child to adjust to each other. It also allows for staff to monitor the visits and to assess the mother/child relationship and identify any issues needed to be addressed. The OLU does not have an ongoing parenting program, however there are staff available who can provide expertise to the mother on child care issues. If the mother is eligible for temporary absences, access to community programs for parenting is a possibility. As the Mother/Child Program is not separated from the rest of the unit, there are insufficient staff and resources to accommodate children with special needs and mothers who require closer monitoring and assistance. As the interests of the child are of prime importance, mothers who have a history of physical or sexual abuse of children are not eligible for the program.

Women who are pregnant with no history of parenting, are permitted to have their child with them immediately following birth provided they met the criteria for the program. Reference checks with the family and social services involvement, if necessary, are required followed by closer monitoring by staff for the initial period of residency. The community health nurse is also available to visit with the mother and newborn following the birth.

Mothers Who Participated In The Program

It is estimated from OLU documentation that there have been at least 35 children in full or part time residency at the OLU from 1991 to 1996. Less than 10 of the children were in residence full time. Most of the children were overnight or weekend visitors to the OLU. (Complete records were not available, however staff who had been at the Centre since its opening, believed the estimates to be within reason.)

Parenting At The OLU

Parenting at the OLU presents a number of issues for mothers, that mothers in the community are unlikely to encounter, often making parenting at the OLU a more onerous task. The mothers only private space with their child is in the room which they share. Outside of this room they are exposed to elements that are most often beyond their control, such as open doors, a fireplace, noise level, stairs and the possibility of hidden drugs. The task of ensuring the child's safety is made more difficult for the mother because their home (OLU) is massive and occupied by more than 40 residents, staff and visitors in various activities. Observations made by the present researcher who worked in the institution from 1994 to 1997 include the following "snapshots" of the problems sometimes encountered by the mother. One mother for example, was often seen chasing her toddler from one end of the building to the other end, exhausted and exasperated by those who left a door open in one area and a potential hazard of some sort in another area. For another mother, her toddler spent considerable time in the mother's arms being held rather than being allowed to run and play, for fear the child might come to harm.

Mothers of newborns did not have the concerns of open doors and chasing their child, however they encountered other issues such as another resident being angry at the mother for "allowing" the child to cry for too long, having to request the kitchen be unlocked at 2:00 a.m. in order to fix the baby's bottle or a situation in which the mother's parenting skills might be called into question by another resident. A new mother or a mother whose self-esteem is low already can be easily intimidated by too much advice and too much help from too many people. As one mother put it, "I feel like I'm in a fish bowl".

Although mothers encountered the additional challenges of parenting at the OLU, the Program was deemed successful by many mothers, as one mother of a newborn stated:

I know my baby is o.k., he's well, I'm here feeding him, I can see him, there's nothing I have to worry about. I only have to worry about my treatment, case or whatever program I'm going through. I can concentrate on my studies, I don't have to worry about having to beg somebody to give me a phone call to phone where my son or daughter is just to say "hello" (Mother at OLU, 1994).

Over the time the present researcher worked in the unit, children visiting or living at the OLU were seen by most staff to be a positive event for the OLU. As one staff expressed it, "it has an impact on everyone within the institution. It brings out something good in people" (Staff member at OLU, 1994).

Motherhood Issues

There are a number of factors with which the mother is challenged in parenting in a prison environment. For each mother, the level of complexity of those challenges is

varied. Mothers with substance abuse problems, victimization, personality disorders, emotional problems, instability, grieving, guilt, low self-esteem and anger management issues are only a few examples of the factors on which a mother may have been working. Mothers who were attending to their own problems were not always ready to assume the responsibility for parenting and therefore may not have applied to the Program. The goal for these moms often seems to be to establish stability in their life prior to assuming the parental role or re-establishing contact with children they no longer had custody.

Mother/Child Program Evaluation

The OLU and former Twin Maples Mother/Child Programs have not been studied or evaluated to examine the outcome for the children and the mothers who have participated in the program. The success of the Program to date has been determined only by how well the mother and child have performed while in the facility.

CHAPTER IV METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The Burnaby Correctional Centre for Women (BCCW) was the site of this research study. As stated earlier, the facility houses federal and provincially sentenced women, as well as women on remand status. In addition, the Open Living Unit (OLU) at BCCW has a Mother/Child Program that has been operating since 1991.

The research study included two groups: the principal group, comprised of women incarcerated at BCCW, and a second group, composed of BCCW staff. The staff group included managers, supervisors, correctional officers, health care personnel, support staff, administrative support staff, and service providers under contract to the Corrections Branch, such as psychologists, and alcohol/drug counselors.

The average daily count of incarcerated women at BCCW in the 1994/95 fiscal year was 108.

Participants

In this study, 118 incarcerated women were asked if they would consent to an interview, of whom 108 agreed to participate. A total of 101 BCCW staff were asked to participate, with 94 staff agreeing to be interviewed. Interviews for both groups took place between May 10, 1996 and July 11, 1996.

Approvals

The BCCW District Director and the Vancouver Regional Director granted their verbal approval for the research study to be conducted at BCCW. Final written approval was received by the Assistant Deputy Minister of the B.C. Corrections Branch, Ministry of the Attorney General (See Appendix E).

The Simon Fraser University Research Ethics Review Committee granted Approval of the research on May 2, 1996 (See Appendix F).

Research Design

Structured interviews were the primary source of data. Two sets of questionnaires were utilized one for the incarcerated women and one for the staff. Pre-tests for both protocols were conducted prior to commencement of the interviews.

Both questionnaires used open-ended and closed questions to gather specific information about the views and opinions of the women and staff. Questions which pertained to the Mother/Child Program were the same in both sets of questionnaires, with the exception that additional questions were asked of the incarcerated women.

All subjects were identified only by a number on the questionnaire for the gathering and analyzing of the data. All names recorded in this study were held by the principal researcher in a secured location. Participation in this research was

voluntary and all participants signed a consent form acknowledging their understanding that they could withdraw from the interview at anytime.

Questionnaire Utilized for the Women's Study Group

The questionnaire for the women (see Appendix G) contained 116 questions divided into twelve domains (See Table 1). Following each question the women were asked if they had any additional comments, in order that they might have sufficient opportunity to express their views of the questions posed.

Table 1

Women's Questionnaire Domains

Administrative Information
Profile Information
Education
Work Experience
Marital Status and Children
Opinions of Mother/Child Programs
Family History
Relationship Information
Alcohol and Drug History
Offence History
Programs
Release Plans

Questionnaire Utilized for BCCW Staff

The staff questionnaire (See Appendix H) contained 43 questions within two domains. The primary domain pertained to questions about Mother/Child Programs in Prisons. As with the women's study group, comments were requested following each question to ensure there was sufficient opportunity for the staff to fully express their views.

Procedures For Interviews

Interviewers

Independent interviewers were involved in conducting the interviews of both the women and of the staff. Prior to the commencement of the interviews, there were several meetings arranged with the interviewers. The meetings involved discussion and clarification of the questionnaires, consents, procedures, protocols and ethics. A tour of BCCW was also provided for the interviewers.

Interviews With The Women

Notification To The Incarcerated Women

The women were provided with information letters describing the purpose of the research study, in addition to the letter being posted in the Living Units. The letter informed the women that an interviewer would contact them to arrange a time for an interview if they chose to participate. The women were also offered a \$10.00 honorarium at the completion of the interview for taking the time to participate (see attached in Appendix I).

Interviews

BCCW provided lists of the names of the women who were in custody and the Living Unit where they were located.

The interviewers went to the Living Units and where possible, contacted the women directly to discuss the research study and ask the women if they would like to participate.

Prior to the interview taking place, the interviewer reviewed the Consent Form with the participant and ensured their understanding that their participation in the research study was voluntary. The Consent Form was then signed by the participant and witnessed by the Interviewer (See Appendix J). Upon completion of the interview, the questionnaire was placed in a sealed envelope, and returned to the principal researcher. The interviewers recorded the names of the women who had been asked to participate to avoid women being asked more than once and to ensure the women who participated received their honorarium.

Staff Interviews

Notification to BCCW Staff

The District Director notified all staff at BCCW that this research study was being conducted. This was followed by notification from the researcher to all staff via E-Mail of the purpose of the research study, informing them they would be contacted. If they chose to participate, an interview time was set up. The majority of the BCCW staff were contacted directly to arrange an interview time. Due to time

frames and staff shift schedules, a further notification was sent to all staff inviting anyone who had not been contacted thus far to contact the researcher to arrange for an interview.

The Staff Interviews

Staff members were contacted individually, and appointments set for the interviews. Prior to the interview, the purpose of the study and was explained and a Consent Form (See Appendix K) was signed. Upon completion of the interview, the questionnaire was returned to the researcher in a sealed envelope.

Upon completion of the interviews for both the women and the staff, the data were coded. The SPSS statistical program was used for analysis.

CHAPTER V

RESULTS OF THE STUDY

The average daily count of incarcerated women at the Burnaby Correctional Centre for Women (BCCW) in 1994/95 was 108, comprised of women on remand status and those serving a federal or provincial sentence. In this study 108 incarcerated women and 94 BCCW staff and contractors were interviewed. The reported findings are thus all based on self-report data. Limitations of the research relate to the limitations of such self-report data as well as to the lack of generalizability of the findings.

Profile Of Incarcerated Women (n=108)

Of the women in the study, 19.4% (n=21) were federally sentenced, 59.3% (n=64) were provincially sentenced, and 21.3% (n=23) were on remand status. (See Figure 1.) The average age was 33 years, with a minimum of 19 years and a maximum of 56 years. The majority of the women (71.3%, n=77) were between the ages of 26 and 40 years old. Although custody status and age were not significantly related, it was of interest that one-third of federally sentenced women (n=7) were 41 and older, compared to the provincially sentenced women with 7.8% (n=5) and the remanded women with 17.4% (n=4) in that age-group. (See Figure 2.)

Figure 1

Custody Status of BCCW Population

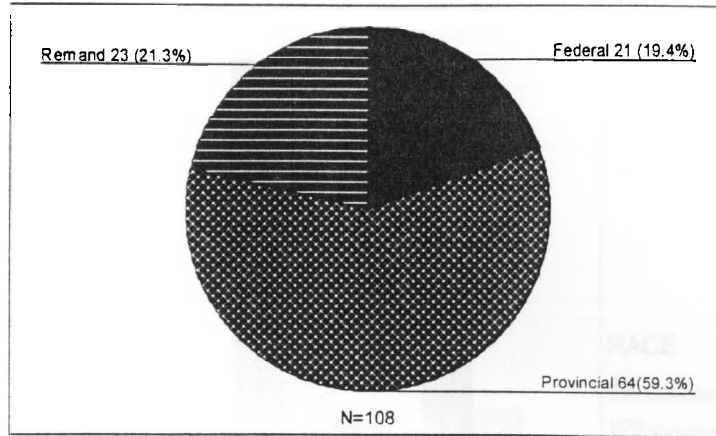
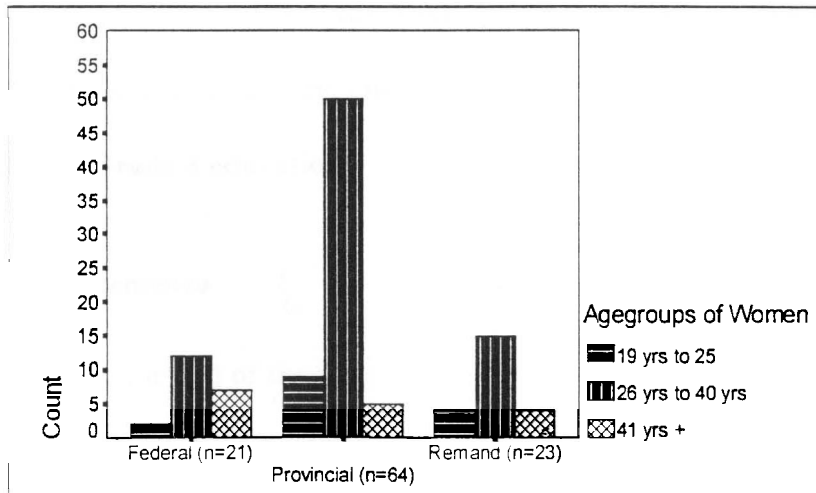


Figure 2

Age and Custody Status

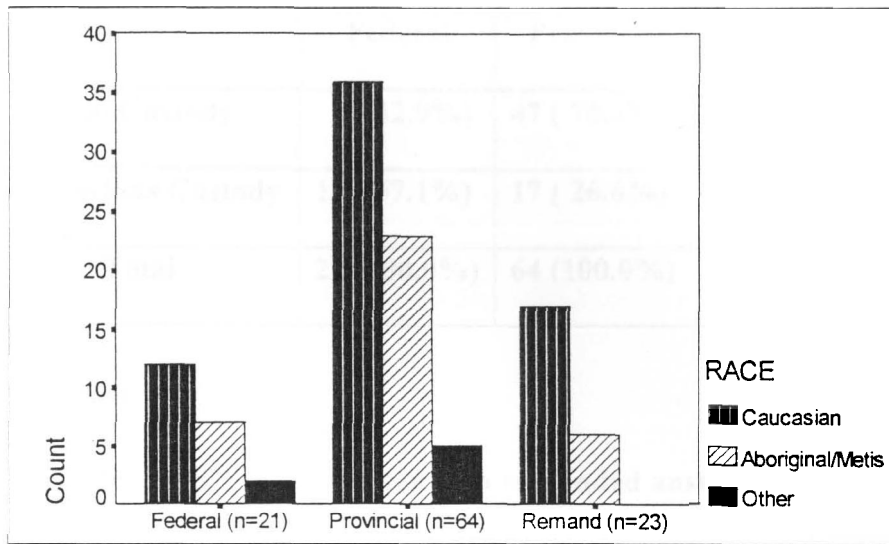


Race

The study group included 60.2% Caucasians, 33.3% Aboriginal/Metis and 6.5% other races. (See Figure 3.) Custody status and the race of the women were not related.

Figure 3

Custody Status and Race



Education

In the study group, 46.3% (n=50) of the women reported they had, at a minimum, Grade 12 completion or equivalency. Only 6.5% (n=7) of the study group reported having less than a Grade 8 education.

Previous Custodial Sentence

The majority (63.0%, n=68) of the women reported they had received a previous custodial sentence. Custody status and having had a previous custodial sentence were related ($\chi^2=7.8$, $df=2$, $p=.02$), such that women serving a federal sentence were less likely to have had a previous custodial sentence than the women serving a provincial sentence or women on remand status. (See Table 2.)

Table 2**Custody Status and Previous Custodial Sentence**

	Federal	Provincial	Remand
Previous Custody	9 (42.9%)	47 (73.4%)	12 (52.2%)
No Previous Custody	12 (57.1%)	17 (26.6%)	11 (47.8%)
Total	21 (100.0%)	64 (100.0%)	23 (100.0%)

Previous Probation

A majority (75.9%, n=82) of the women who responded answered that they had received a prior sentence of probation. (See Table 3.) There was a relationship between custody status and having had a prior sentence of probation ($\chi^2=11.1$, $df=2$, $p=.004$) such that, more of the Provincially sentenced women (87.5%, n=56) had been on probation than had either the Federally sentenced women (55%, n=11) or the women on remand status (65.2%, n=15). (See Table 3.)

Table 3**Custody Status and Previous Probation**

	Federal	Provincial	Remand
Previous Probation	11 (55.0%)	56 (87.5%)	15 (65.2%)
No Previous Probation	9 (45.0%)	8 (12.5%)	8 (34.8%)
Total	20 (100.0%)	64 (100.0%)	23 (100.0%)

Previous Parole and Parole Suspensions

Of the 29 women who reported they had received a parole, 8 were federally sentenced, 17 were provincially sentenced and 4 were on remand status. Of the women who had received a parole, 69.0% (n=20) said they also received a parole suspension. Although status of custody and parole suspension were not related, it was of interest that, of the (8) federal women who received parole, all of them said they had received a parole suspension.

Present Offences Of The Sentenced Women

The sentenced women of BCCW (n=85), in many cases were sentenced for more than one offence, therefore the offences listed here included the most serious offence with the longest sentence. (See Table 4.) (Women who were in custody because of parole suspension or revocation were included using their original sentence.)

Table 4

Present Offence

	Federal	Provincial	Total
Violent	17 (81.0%)	16 (25.0%)	33 (38.8%)
Drug	2 (9.5%)	9 (14.1%)	11 (12.9%)
Property	1 (4.8%)	27 (42.2%)	28 (32.9%)
Driving*	1 (4.8%)	6 (9.4%)	7 (8.2%)
Breach**	0 (0.0%)	1 (1.6%)	1 (1.2%)
Other	0 (0.0%)	5 (7.8%)	5 (5.9%)
TOTAL:	21 (100.0%)	64 (100.0%)	85 (100.0%)

*Driving offences includes for example, over .08, criminal negligence causing death.

**Breach category includes for example, fail to appear, breach of probation.

Although the status of custody and present offence were not statistically related, it is of interest that the majority (81%, n=17) of the Federally sentenced women were serving sentences for violent offences, whereas the majority of the Provincially sentenced women were serving sentences for non-violent offences.

Length of Sentence

Of the sentenced women (n=85) in the study group, there were 21 women serving a federal sentence and 64 women serving a provincial sentence¹.

Of the Federally sentenced women, 42.9% (n=9) were serving a sentence from 2 years to < 5 years, 33.3% (n=7) were serving a sentence from 5 years to < 10 years, and 23.8% (n=5) were sentenced to 10 years or more. The majority of the Provincial women (62.5%, n=40) were sentenced to less than 6 months, while 18.8% (n=12) were serving a sentence from 6 months to <12 months, and a further 18.8% (n=12) were sentenced to 12 months to < 2 years.

Childhood History

Most of the women in the study group related experiences of growing up in a dysfunctional family (which included living with parent(s), relatives, friends of the family or foster parents).

¹ A federal sentence is a term of incarceration which is 2 years or greater. A provincial sentence is a term of incarceration which is less than 2 years.

Almost two-thirds (60.7%, n=65) of the women who answered, said that alcohol abuse was a problem for someone in their childhood home. (See Table 5.) Although drug abuse was not as prevalent as alcohol abuse in the home, 31.3% (n=33) of the women who responded said drug abuse had been problem for someone in their childhood home. (See Table 5.)

Table 5

Alcohol or Drug Abuse in Childhood Home

	Problem	Not a Problem	Total
Alcohol	65 (60.7%)	42 (39.3%)	107 (100.0%)
Drugs	33 (31.1%)	73 (68.9%)	106 (100.0%)

Knowledge of Physical or Sexual Abuse in the Childhood Home

Most of the women in the study group who answered (69.2%, n=74) said they had witnessed or had knowledge of someone in their childhood home who was physically or sexually abused, while 30.8% (n=33) said they had not. Alcohol abuse and physical/sexual abuse in the women's childhood home were related ($\chi^2=18.55$, $df=1$, $p=.000$) as was drug abuse and physical/sexual abuse ($\chi^2=3.8$, $df=1$, $p=.053$). Women who experienced growing up in a home where someone abused alcohol or drugs were more likely to have grown up in a home where someone was physically or sexually abused.

Apprehended as a Child by a Social Services Agency

Of the women who responded, slightly more than a third 35.8%, (n=38) said they had been apprehended in their childhood by a social services agency, while 64.2% (n=68) said they had not been apprehended. Apprehension by a social services agency and alcohol abuse by someone in the home were related ($\chi^2=8.5$, $df=1$, $p=.004$). For women who were apprehended, it was more likely they experienced having someone in the home who abused alcohol. Interestingly, apprehension by a social services agency and drug abuse in the home were not related.

Childhood Experiences Related to Offending as an Adult

A majority (52.8%, n=57) of the women in the study group said their childhood experiences were directly related to their offending as an adult. Childhood experiences and alcohol abuse in the childhood home were related ($\chi^2=20.6$, $df=1$, $p=.000$), such that women (78.9%, n=45) who said their childhood experiences were related to their offending as an adult were more likely to have had someone in their childhood home who abused alcohol.

Childhood experiences and physical/sexual abuse in the family home were also related ($\chi^2=17.2$, $df=1$, $p=.000$), whereby it was more likely that women (84.2%, n=48) who said their childhood experiences were related to their adult offending were more likely to have had someone in their childhood home who was physically/sexually abused.

Childhood experiences and drug abuse in the family home were related ($\chi^2=12.1$, $df=1$, $p=.001$) such that women who had someone in their childhood home who abused drugs (88.9%, $n=24$) were more likely to have said their childhood experiences were directly related to their offending as an adult.

Personal History

Of the women in the study group who responded, almost half (49.5%, $n=53$) of the women answered they were either married or were in a common-law relationship. The majority of the women indicated that they had lived with their partner for longer than one year (88.7%, $n=47$).

Alcohol Problems

Of the women in the study who responded to the question of whether they had an alcohol problem, 41.0% ($n=43$) reported they had a problem and 57.4% ($n=62$) answered that they did not have a problem. There was a relationship between alcohol problems and alcohol abuse in the women's childhood home ($\chi^2=10.0$, $df=1$, $p=.002$) such that 79.1% ($n=34$) of the women who said they had an alcohol problem, were more likely to have encountered alcohol abuse in their childhood home.

A relationship also existed between alcohol abuse and whether the woman considered her childhood experiences were related to her offending as an adult

($\chi^2=4.1$, $df=1$, $p=.044$) such that 73.7% ($n=28$) of the women who said they had an alcohol abuse problem, were more likely to have said their childhood experiences were directly related to their offending as an adult.

Drug Problems

Almost two-thirds (62.6%, $n=67$) of the women who answered, identified themselves as having a drug problem. A relationship existed between women who had a drug problem and women who encountered drug problems in their childhood home ($\chi^2=7.1$, $df=1$, $p=.018$) such that, 81.8% ($n=27$) of the women who reported drug abuse in their childhood home were more likely to have a drug problem.

Physical Abuse, Sexual Abuse, and Psychological Abuse

Physical abuse was reported by 79.4% ($n=85$) of the women who answered, with no relationship between custody status, race or substance abuse.

Sexual abuse was reported by 59.6% ($n=62$) of the women who answered with no relationship between custody status, race or alcohol abuse. A relationship did exist between sexual abuse and drug abuse ($\chi^2=4.0$, $df=1$, $p=.047$) such that, women who had been sexually abused (69.4%, $n=43$) were more likely to report they had a drug problem.

Of the women who answered, 83.0% ($n=88$) had been psychologically abused. A relationship existed between psychological abuse and drug problems ($\chi^2=5.0$, $df=1$, $p=.035$), such that 69.4% ($n=43$) of the women who had been psychologically abused

were more likely to have a drug problem. Interestingly, no relationship existed between psychological abuse and alcohol problems.

Alcohol/Drugs A Factor In Commission of Woman's Offence

The majority (80.0%, n=84) of the women who answered said alcohol or drugs were a factor in the commission of their offence, and 20.0% (n=21) answered "no" to the question. A relationship existed between alcohol/drugs being a factor in the offence and alcohol problems of the women ($\chi^2=18.9$, $df=1$, $p=.000$), such that 100.0% (n=43) of the women who had an alcohol problem were more likely to have said that alcohol/drugs were a factor in the commission of their offence. Similar results were obtained for women with drug problems, whereby 95.5% of the women who had a drug problem also said alcohol/drugs were a factor in the commission of their offence. A relationship existed between drug problems and alcohol/drugs as a factor in the commission of the women's offence ($\chi^2=26.5$, $df=1$, $p=.000$).

Women and Children

Of the 107 in the study group women who responded to questions regarding children, 74.8% (n=80) said they had given birth to at least one child in their life time. The number of children born totaled 203, and at the time of the interviews, one woman said she was pregnant with her first child. (See Table 6.)

Table 6**Number of Women and Children**

Number of Children	Number of Moms	Total Number of Children
0	27 (25.2%)	0
1	21 (19.6%)	21
2	23 (21.5%)	46
3	20 (18.7%)	60
4	7 (6.5%)	28
5	6 (5.6%)	30
6	3 (2.8%)	18
	107 (100.0%)	203

Ages of the Children

In the study group 69.2% (n=74) of the women who had at least one child who was under the age of 19 years at the time of the interview. A total of 15.9% (n=17) of the study group reported having a least one child who was 19 years and over at the time of the interviews. (See Table 7.)

Table 7**Total Number of Mothers and Children's Age Groups**

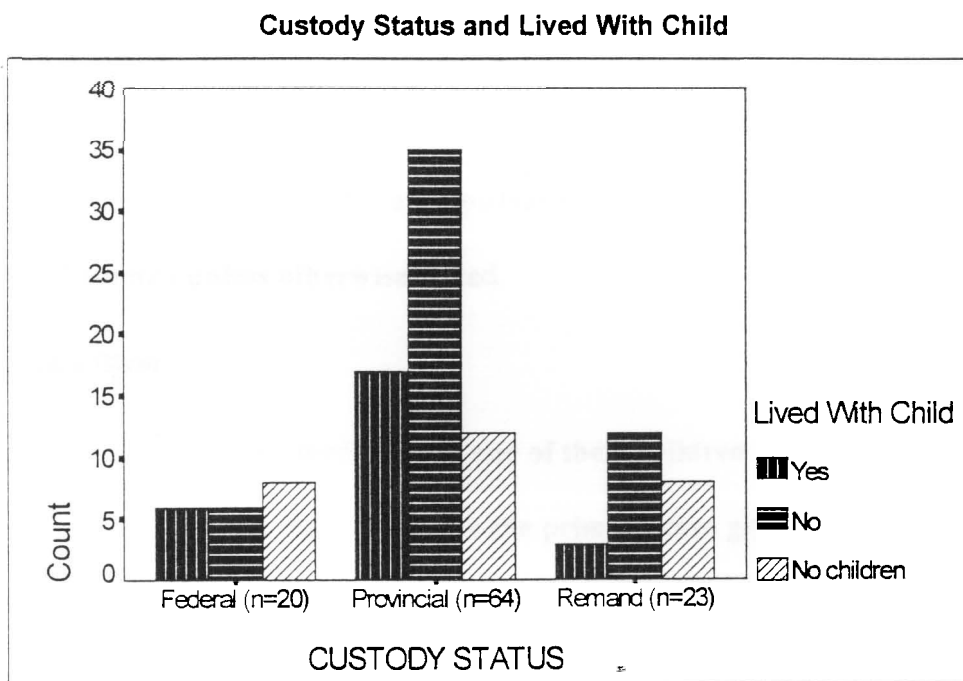
Category of Children's Ages	Number of Mothers With At Least one Child In Age Category
Birth to 2 years	16 (15.0%)
Birth to 5 years	32 (29.9%)
Birth to 10 years	48 (44.9%)
Birth to 15 years	66 (61.7%)
Birth to 18 years	74 (69.2%)
19 years +	17 (15.9%)

*Note: A mother who has more than one child in an age category is only counted once. The percentage totals to more than 100 because of multiple children per mother.

Residency of Child Prior to Mother's Incarceration

Of the women in the study group, 24.3% (n=26) of them reported they had lived with at least one child prior to incarceration. Although custody status and having lived with a child prior to incarceration were not related, it was of interest that only 13.0% (n=3) of the women on remand status reported to have lived with at least one child, compared to the Federally sentenced women with 30.0% and Provincially sentenced women with 26.6%. (See Figure 4.)

Figure 4



Residency of Child Prior to Mother's Incarceration and Age Categories Of Children

In the study group, only 7.5% (n=8) of the women reported they lived with at least one child 2 years of age or under prior to incarceration.

(See Table 8.)

Table 8

**Count of Mothers Who Lived With Child Prior To Incarceration
By Custody Status and Child Age Categories***

	Federal	Provincial	Remand	Total Number of Mothers
Birth to 2 years	0	7	1	8
Birth to 5 years	2	10	1	13
Birth to 10 years	3	15	2	20
Birth to 15 years	5	17	3	25
Birth to 18 years	6	17	3	26

* Mothers with more than one child in each category are counted only once.

Mothers and Children (n=79)

As noted above, 80 women reported giving birth to at least one child. One mother was not included in the results for administrative reasons, therefore the following refers to 79 women unless otherwise stated.

Primary Care Giver

Of the 79 mothers, 26 lived with at least one of their children prior to incarceration. Of the 26 mothers, 23 reported they were the primary care giver in the home. Of the 23 mothers who provided primary care, only 7 of the mothers had a child aged 2 years or younger.

Social Service Agency Involvement

Of the 79 mothers, 46.2% (n=36) had at least one of their children apprehended by a social services agency. Many of the mothers who had given birth (38% n=30) had

at least one of their children made temporary or permanent wards by a social service agency or had a child adopted, or in one case the whereabouts of the child was unknown to the mother. Of the 23 mothers who had primary care of their child prior to incarceration, almost one-third ($n=7$) of mothers had a child apprehended by a social service agency.

Mothers and Substance Abuse Problems

Of the 79 mothers, 84.8% ($n=67$) had a substance abuse problem¹. It is of interest that of the 26 mothers who lived with their child prior to incarceration, nearly three-quarters (73.1%, $n=19$) answered they had a substance abuse problem.

Alcohol Problems

Of the 79 mothers, 44.3% ($n=35$) said they had an alcohol problem. This proportion was similar for the 26 mothers who lived with their child prior to incarceration (42.3%, $n=11$).

Drug Problems

A greater number of the mothers had a drug problem (65.8%, $n=52$) compared to those reporting an alcohol problem. Again, this proportion was similar for the 26 mothers who lived with their child prior to incarceration (53.8%, $n=14$).

¹ Substance abuse includes alcohol and drugs. Women were counted only once if they had reported an alcohol and drug problem.

Mothers and Physical/Sexual Abuse

A great majority of the mothers (86.1%, n=68) answered "yes" to having been a victim of abuse¹ in their lifetime.

Of those mothers who lived with their child prior to incarceration, 73.1% (n=19) answered they had been a victim of physical or sexual abuse.

Mothers and Substance Abuse and Physical/Sexual Abuse

Three-quarters of the 79 mothers (74.7%, n=59) had been a victim of abuse and had a problem with substance abuse.

Of the 26 mothers who lived with their children prior to incarceration, over one-half (53.8%, n=14) said they were a victim of abuse and also had a substance abuse problem.

Primary Care of Children Upon Release

Of the 26 moms who had lived with their child, only 53.8% (n=14) expected to provide care for their child upon release. Of the 14 mothers who expected to provide primary care for their child upon release, only 6 of them had a child 2 years or under.

¹ Physical or sexual abuse are included only. Women were counted only once if they had reported an incident of both physical and sexual abuse.

Lived with child and length of sentence

Of the 26 moms who lived with their child prior to incarceration, 50.0% (n=13) were serving a sentence of less than 12 months and 11.5% (n=3) of the women were on remand status. Only 6 of the 13 mothers sentenced to less than 12 months said they expected to provide primary care of their child immediately upon release.

Opinions and Views of Mother/Child Programs

(Study group includes the incarcerated women n=108; Staff and contractors ¹ n=94)

The opinions and views of the women and staff on mother/child programs in prison were asked using open ended questions. Respondents were encouraged to comment and expand upon their answers to ensure an opportunity was provided for them to fully express their views.

Should Children Be Allowed to Live in a Prison?

As a general concept, the majority (75.0%. n=81) of the incarcerated women approved of having mother/child live-in programs in a prison setting. However, 29 of the women who replied "yes" placed conditions on their answer. For example, a typical condition was to limit the age of participating children. Comments received from the women were varied, with some women expressing concern about the safety of a child in a prison environment, while other women commented it would be a

¹ Staff and contractors refers to persons working at BCCW as an employee or under contract. Staff and contractors will be referred to as "Staff" for clarity purposes.

positive experience for the mother and child to be together. Following are some typical comments from the women:

"if they are young & it is the important years where they need this bond"

"jail really isn't the ideal place for children but if it gives them an opportunity to be with their mom-then o.k."

"it imprisons child intellectual & emotional development"

"negative energy from inmates; not healthy"

"not a good environment for a child because they would have memories".

Of the 26 moms who lived with their child prior to incarceration, 73.1% (n=19) answered "yes" to children living in a prison. Only 6 of the mothers had conditions to their responses.

Although a majority of the staff (58.5%, n=55) answered "yes" to children living in a prison environment, 29 of the staff added conditions to their "yes" response. A typical condition was to have the mothers and children live in a separate space within the prison. The following are typical examples of comments from staff:

"if the mother had sole care for child on the street"

"only if its an open, or community living setting i.e. 1/2 way house or open custody place."

"with qualifications- I think it has to be the right situations. Each mom and child must be looked at individually."

"it's not a good environment"

"it's a negative environment for a child to be growing up in."

Should Children Live At BCCW Secure Facility?

The majority (80.4%, n=86) of the women were opposed to children living in the BCCW Secure Centre, as it presently exists. Most of the comments from the women expressed concerns for the safety of the child in the BCCW secure environment.

Some of the typical concerns cited were the safety of the child, the child witnessing violent acts, exposure to drugs, and inappropriate language. Concerns were also voiced about the abnormal environment the child would be subjected to, with locked doors, speakers, and guards. Very few of the comments expressed were in support of having children in Secure. Examples of some of the comments from the women were:

"not fair to the children - why should they have to be here"

"because the child shouldn't have to go through locked doors, or be observed continuously by guards; and being together with inmates"

"violent place, you can't make it safe"

"too many violent offenders"

"it would be great for all inmates"

Of the 81 women who previously answered "yes" to children living in a prison, as a general concept, only 22.2% (n=18) said "yes" to children in the BCCW secure facility.

Of the 26 mothers who lived with their child prior to incarceration, only 15.4% (n=4) said "yes" to children living in Secure, whereas, 73.1% had answered "yes" to the previous question of children living in a prison.

The majority (87.2%, n=82) of the staff said "no" to children living in the Secure Centre, with only 8.5% (n=8) of the staff answering "yes". Of the 55 staff who had previously answered "yes" to the general concept of children living in a prison, only 12.7% (n=7) now answered "yes" to children living at the Secure Centre of BCCW.

The women inmates and staff both expressed concern for the safety of children living in the secure setting at BCCW. ~~The~~ physical environment, security of the building, concern for the children's safety from some of the incarcerated women, exposure to inappropriate behaviour, and the effect the overall surroundings might have on the children, were the most typical comments provided by the women and staff.

Should Children Live at BCCW Secure if a Separate Space Was Provided?

A large majority of the women (82.4%, n=89) said "yes" to children living in the Secure facility, if a separate space was made available for a mother/child program. The women responded more positively to mothers and children living in a separate space in the Secure Centre than to the previous question of children living in a prison, in general. (See Table 9.)

Of the 26 mothers who lived with their child prior to incarceration, over half (n=14) answered "yes" to children living in a separate facility in the Secure Centre.

TABLE 9

**Comparative Responses Of The Women and Staff To The Questions
Of Whether Children
Should Live in a Prison, BCCW Secure, Separate Unit in Secure**

	Children Living in a Prison -General Concept	Children Living in BCCW Secure - As Is	Children Living in a Separate Unit at BCCW Secure
Women's "Yes" Responses	81 (75.0%) (n=108)	18 (16.7%) (n=108)	89 (82.4%) (n=108)
Staff's "Yes" Responses	55 (58.5%) (n=94)	8 (8.5%) (n=94)	45 (47.9%) (n=94)

Only 47.9% (n=45) of the staff said "yes" to children living in Secure if a separate unit was made available. A further 39.4% (n=37) said "no" and 12.7% (n=12) said "maybe" or had "no opinion". More staff (n=55) had said "yes" to children living in a prison as a general concept, than they did to children living in the Secure Centre in a separate space. (See Table 9.)

Should Children Be Allowed To Live At The Open Living Unit?

Over two-thirds (79.6%, n=86) of the women said "yes" to children living at the Open Living Unit as it presently exists. The women at the OLU answered "yes" more frequently than the women living in the secure facility. The majority (87.5%, n=21) of the women from the OLU responded "yes", as did the women from secure (77.4%, n=65).

Of the 26 mothers who lived with their children prior to custody, 69.2% (n=18) responded "yes" to children at the OLU.

Staff responses were similar to the inmate's responses, with 75.5% (n=71) who said "yes" to children living at the OLU. It is of interest that the OLU staff, who have experience working with the OLU mother/child program, had only 66.7% (n=10) who answered "yes" to this question compared to staff working in the Secure Centre who had 75.0% (n=48) who answered "yes". Staff who work in both the Secure and the OLU had a greater percentage of "yes" responses (86.7%, n=13).

Should the Present OLU Mother/Child Program Continue?

The majority (72.9%, n=78) of the women said "yes" to the OLU Mother/Child Program continuing, however it is of interest that a greater number of women had said "yes" to children living at the OLU.

The women who commented on the Mother/Child Program continuing at the OLU said some changes were required, such as acquiring a separate space for the Mother/Child Program. Some comments from the women who answered were as follows:

"it's good for the mother - it helps them"

"it's really good for the mother & child to bond & it wouldn't be so intense for the mother to maintain or achieve that bond upon release"

"yes until something better can be done, until Government gives money to build new facility"

"maybe, system too strict, even for minimum security, too much flack from staff"

The majority (63.8%, n=60) of staff agreed that the Mother/Child Program should continue at the OLU, with only 14.9% (n=14) who did not agree and 21.3% (n=20) who were undecided. Similar to the women's responses, fewer staff said "yes" to the program continuing than they did to the question of, "should children live at the OLU".

The following were some of the staff's comments:

"Yes - In some ways, I don't feel like it's a program. But I think it's a golden opportunity that can be worked with. There aren't really any programs, courses, etc. These women (mostly) come from dysfunctional families - I don't see the support - we should have"

"Yes - But needs to be reviewed and emphasized responsibility placed on mother not staff"

"No - should hire child care worker with main responsibility is for children, not working now the way it is, not safe for the child"

"Yes - they are very careful, as I know it"

"No - too many drugs in the institution"

Rehabilitation Of Mothers Whose Children Live With Them In Prison

Over two-thirds (65.7%, n=71) of the women in the study group felt that mothers, who were allowed to have their children live with them in prison, were more likely to be rehabilitated.

The majority (66.3%, n=53) of the women who have given birth answered "yes" to this question, as well as a smaller majority (57.7%, n=15) of the mothers who lived with their child prior to incarceration.

Staff's opinions varied on this question, with 38.3% (n=36) who answered "yes" that mothers were more likely to be rehabilitated, whereas 28.7% (n=27) answered "no", 23.4% (n=22) answered "maybe" and 9.6% (n=9) said they "didn't know".

Best Interests Of The Child

An appreciable majority (84.3%, n=91) of the women in the study group considered that it was in the best interests of the child to remain with the mother in a prison, if the mother was capable of parenting. Of the mothers in the study group, the majority (87.5%, n=70) also answered it was in the best interests of the child. The same magnitude of response was received from mothers who lived with their child prior to incarceration (84.6%, n=22).

The majority (66.0%, n=62) of staff considered it to be in the best interest of the child to remain with the mother, if she was capable of parenting.

Alcohol/Drug Usage By A Mother In A Mother/Child Program

A substantial majority (73.1%, n=79) of the women answered that a child should be returned to the community, if a mother used alcohol/drugs while in a prison mother/child program. (See Table 10.)

Table 10

**Women and Staff's Opinions Of Outcome If A Mother
Uses Alcohol or Drugs While In the Mother/Child Program**

	Women's Responses (n=108)	Mothers' Responses (n=80)	Mother Lived With Child Pre-Custody Responses (n=26)	Staff's Responses (n=94)
<i>Child returned to the community</i>	79 (73.1%)	63 (78.8%)	18 (69.2%)	59 (62.8%)
<i>Child should stay in the mother/child program</i>	10 (9.3%)	6 (7.5%)	3 (11.5%)	9 (9.6%)
<i>Other options</i>	16 (14.8%)	10 (12.5%)	5 (19.2%)	25 (26.6%)
<i>Don't know/no answer</i>	3 (2.8%)	1 (1.3%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (1.0%)
Total	108 (100.0%)	80 (100.0%)	26 (100.0%)	94 (100.0%)

Women who had given birth and mothers who had lived with their child prior to incarceration also answered in the majority to have the child returned to the community if the mother used alcohol or drugs while in the mother/child program.

The women in the study group who answered that "other options" should be utilized, typically commented that the mother be given a second chance or the child should be sent to live with a relative or friend of the mother. Of the women who answered that the child should be returned to the community, some were critical of a mother who would use alcohol or drugs, and commented they, "did not deserve to have their children with them."

Staff were more lenient in their views about returning the child to the community if the mom was using alcohol or drugs in the mother/child program. Only 62.8%

(n=59) of the staff answered that, "the child should be returned to the community" compared to the 73.1% of women. (See Table 10.) Several (26.6%) of the staff choose "other options" in answering this question and typically commented that, "it depends on the situation". One staff commented that it, "should be assessed on a case by case basis. You have to recognize that women suffering with substance abuse do relapse."

Should Mothers in the Mother/Child Program Have To Take A Parenting Course?

A substantial majority (86.0%, n=92) of the women in the study group answered "yes" to mothers having to take a parenting course if they were in the mother/child program. Women who had given birth answered similarly, with 85.0% (n=68) who said "yes", however of the 26 mothers who lived with their child prior to incarceration, fewer "yes" answers were received (69.2%, n=18).

Would You Take A Parenting Course If Offered?

The majority (79.6%, n=86) of the women in the study group answered "yes" to taking a parenting course if it was offered by the institution. Almost all of the women (88.6%, n=70) who had given birth answered they would attend a parenting course as did the majority (88.5%, n=23) of the mothers who lived with their child prior to incarceration.

Should Mothers, In The Mother/Child Program Be Allowed To Use Physical Punishment?

Women in the study group were not in favour of mothers using physical punishment to discipline a child in the mother/child program. The majority (82.4%, n=89)

answered "no" to this question. Answers from the women who had given birth were similar with 87.5% (n=70) who answered "no" to physical punishment as a method of child discipline. Of the 26 mothers who lived with their child prior to incarceration 96.2% (n=25) also answered "no".

Although the majority (78.7%, n=74) of staff also answered "no" to mothers using physical punishment in discipline of a child, it is of interest that more of the women inmates were against its use than were the staff.

Should Correctional Staff Be Permitted To Search Children In Mother/Child Programs?

A slight majority (53.3%, n=57) of the inmate group who answered, said "no" to children in the program being searched by correctional staff in the presence of their mother. Interestingly, almost one-half (43.0%, n=46) of the women answered "yes" to staff searches being conducted, as one woman who commented said, "kids will be used; there's pressure here to get things." Examples of comments by some of the women who answered were:

"it's not a good thing for the child; the child remembers things like that"

"it's inappropriate; it's detrimental to the child to be treated that way"

Of the mothers who answered, only a slight majority (51.9%, n=41) said "no" to searches of children in the mother/child program. This was similar to the answers of the 26 mothers who had lived with their child whereas, 50% (n=13) answered "no", 46.2% (n=12) said "yes" and 3.8% (n=1) were undecided.

Of the staff who answered the majority (63.4%, n=59) approved of correctional officers searching of children in a mother/child program. Only 30.1% (n=28) of staff answered "no" to this question.

Some of the staff concerns were expressed as follows:

"If we have the least suspicion that there is contraband, they should not have the child. If we have to worry at all that there is contraband the child should be returned to the community and we shouldn't have to prove it as the welfare of the child is ultimately our responsibility"

"it's part of the deal of being in prison; if we didn't, the child would be used as pawns for sure"

"children are expected to have contraband in their diapers"

Should A Mother/Child Program Located In A Separate Building Of A Prison Be Permitted?

A substantial majority (88.9%, n=96) of the study group approved of a mother/child program in a separate building within a prison.

The majority of staff (73.1%, n=68) who answered this question also approved of a mother child/program in a separate building or space within a custody centre.

Although the majority of staff approved of the concept of a mother/child program in a separate building, concerns were expressed as one staff member said, "it would work with review and on a trial basis - if there were good candidates and lots of stipulations."

CHAPTER VI

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The idea of children living in a prison environment is a controversial and emotional issue that initiates a variety of opinion depending upon one's perspective. The best interests of the child as defined by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child should be the basis of policies and procedures for mother/child programs in prison in order that any child in the program be assured the opportunity for a safe and nurturing environment. The 1995 Gove Inquiry, the Child, Family and Community Service Act, 1994 and The Family Relations Act, 1993 further emphasize the obligation for the best interests of the children to have priority over parental needs. This indeed is a difficult task when assessing what the best interests of the child are in relation to the mother/child bond that has historically been viewed as the foundation of the "family". Mother/child programs in prison do not appear to have developed out of the need for the child to bond with the mother as much as the need and desire of the mother to bond with the child. Given the plethora of issues identified in this study for incarcerated mothers and within the prison environment, the implementation of mother/child programs may or may/not be the most effective intervention for resolution to such a complex issue. The various perspectives considered in this study are discussed with the hope of shedding light on these issues for further consideration by corrections administration, the public and the women and children most directly affected.

In Corrections the perspective of rehabilitation is an important issue in instituting mother/child live-in programs into prisons, as one corrections official stated, "prisoners will have more incentive to be rehabilitated if they're given access to their children in prison" (Dambrofsky, 1995:A31). This perspective may not be shared by everyone, e.g., some academic feminists, as it implies women have a maternal instinct to mother, which will initiate the desire for change within themselves. This may be viewed as perpetuating the myth that a woman's criminality may be kept in check if she fulfills her feminine role of motherhood. A myth that "good" mothers who have "good" parenting skills are less likely to conduct criminal acts. Also, the assumption may exist that a mother who ends up in prison also lacks appropriate parenting skills, and if provided an opportunity to learn how to parent, according to "societal standards", she will be less likely to re-offend.

In the present study, however, it is clear that a majority of women prisoners themselves, both mothers and non-mothers, as well as the staff caring for and controlling them, believe in both the rehabilitative value of the mother/child programs and the maternal instinct for women. These programs are thought to assist the women to be "good" mothers, which in turn will assist their becoming "good" citizens. It is also therefore concluded that this naturally works in the best interests of the child. Although when asked specifically about the appropriateness of the secure unit, support for the programming went down. Therefore it seems the

idea in abstract is more supported than in the concrete reality of a secure unit of a prison institution.

At this point it is worth reviewing the realities of each perspective as drawn from the results of the study to try and make meaning of the complexity and the dilemmas involved in the programming.

Mother's Interests

The focus of this perspective is on the mother's need and ability to change her behaviour with the child as the catalyst for the metamorphosis to a "good" citizen. Mothers in high need due to, for example, a history of dysfunction in their life and/or substance abuse, may not be responsive to the incentive of parenting in prison. The majority of women in this study reported alcohol and drug problems in addition to a history of dysfunction in their childhood. Given the profound substance abuse problems, the incentive to parenting may be beyond the woman's capacity for change without adequate treatment interventions. As one mom put it, "I loved my kids, I really did love them, but it was like addiction was kind of stronger, you know" (Elizabeth Fry Society of Edmonton, 1994:77).

There are a number of resulting issues which may occur if children were utilized to effect change such as, what happens if the incentive to parent falters and the mother's participation in the program is terminated? This could be interpreted by others that the mother is resistant to change, especially if she cannot be motivated by the incentive of being with her child. This may produce a negative impact on the

mother, the program and most importantly the child. The mother may experience the additional burden of guilt and experience further trauma because she could not fulfill her "obligation" of motherhood while struggling with her substance abuse issues. Another factor is the perception that others may have of the mother. She may be viewed as having an inability to cope with parenting or capacity to change her behaviour and thus, may experience a more difficult time to prove herself in the future as a competent parent. In this study, the majority of women and staff considered a mother who relapsed, while in the program, should have their child returned to the community. Although staff were more lenient in their views, the message from both the women and staff were quite clear that if the mother could not sustain from drugs or alcohol while in the program, the mother and child should be separated.

If a child is returned to the community in this circumstance, it could be viewed by the child's caregivers and, social service agency if involved, that the mother should not have further access. In this situation, the mother's access to the child may be temporarily or permanently curtailed. In this situation the mother not only must deal with her substance abuse issues but the guilt associated with the relapse and the separation from her child. This would probably result in a further "set back" for the mother in her "rehabilitation". One may argue that a mother is "setup for failure" if she is not far enough along in her recovery to take on the additional responsibility of parenting.

Some of those espousing the perspective of rehabilitation have utilized recidivism rates to measure the success of a mother/child program in prison. For example, the California study referenced earlier reported lower recidivism rates for mothers who had participated in a mother/child program compared to the other incarcerated women who did not. It is questionable whether the success of the program should be measured by recidivism rates, which implies that rehabilitation of the mother has occurred. Other factors may account for the lower recidivism rate, such as the selection criteria for the program which limits the acceptance to only those mothers who were more likely to be successful. Further, recidivism rates do not measure how well the mother and child are doing in the community and in their relationship. In this situation it would appear the child's perspective was not a factor in measuring the success or failure of the program.

In Canada, the only two mother/child live-in programs that have been in existence for several years have not been the subject of an in-depth evaluation or research study. This has limited the information concerning the Canadian experience which may have provided further insight into the feasibility of expanding or continuing mother/child programs.

The implementation of mother/child live-in programs into the new regional federal facilities have been primarily the results of the work of the Task Force members in their Report, *Creating Choices*. The Task Force was instrumental in promoting change in Correctional Services of Canada policy in managing federally sentenced

women. The Report emphasized the need for women to be closer to their families and for mothers and children to be together in the new facilities where possible. The Task Force held the view that two-thirds of the federally incarcerated women were mothers who had primary responsibility for their children. It would appear that the Task Force recommendations for mother/child programs in the new prisons were based partially on the belief the need for such programs was acute. Shaw's study (which was used as a primary reference for the Task Force) indicated however, that less than half the women had a child under 16 years old whose mother had "some" responsibility.

In the present study, 25% of the BCCW Federally sentenced women lived with at least one of their children who was under the age of 16 years. There were no federally sentenced mothers who lived with a child under the age of 3 years old. The differences in the findings between the BCCW study women and the Shaw study women may well be the definition of "primary responsibility" used in the Shaw study versus "lived with the mother prior to incarceration" in the BCCW study.

In the overall study group, only 24% of the BCCW women had children under 16 years old, whom they lived with prior to incarceration. As the mother/child program at BCCW accepts children up to the age of 2 years old, it was unexpected and interesting to find that only a small number of women had children in this age category. In the overall study group of 107 women, only 7.5% (n=7) had children under the age of 3 years old whom they lived with prior to incarceration. Of the 7

mothers, 1 was on remand and 6 mothers were serving a sentence of less than 12 months.

Of the 26 mothers who lived with at least one of their children who was under 3 years old, 50% were serving a sentence of less than 12 months. This would be a contributing factor for the under utilization of the mother/child live-in program at BCCW.

The mother's perspective should obviously be represented when considering mother/child live-in programs in prison. The Task Force adhered to the view that there is a need for women and their families to be geographically closer, in order to continue family ties, or in many cases re-establishing family connections.

Community support was a vital aspect for re-establishment of incarcerated women into society from prison. The women interviewed by the Task Force expressed their desire and need for connection with their families, and voiced how devastating separation was for them. The mothers at BCCW were no different in this regard, they missed their families and their children. Thus a family model idea appears to be consistent under both recommended policy and the women's beliefs.

For most mothers in this study, however, the separation from their children did not occur because of incarceration, but rather from other factors in their life, such as issues related to their substance abuse problems, and living in dysfunctional families. Almost half of the mothers in this study had at least one of their children

apprehended by a social service agency. Others relinquished custody to the father, grandparents, other relatives or friends.

Most of the women in this study related a history of substance abuse, physical, sexual and psychological abuse. From corrections perspective, it would appear that the treatment needs of the women are paramount in addressing these problems in order that they can stabilize to become "good" mothers for their families and "good" citizens for their community.

A major proportion of mothers (86.1%) in this study reported having a substance abuse problem which was actually higher than for the overall study group with 79.2%. Almost two-thirds of the mothers who lived with their children prior to incarceration also reported having a substance abuse problem. Of the mothers who lived with their children only 53.8% said they expected to immediately provide care for their child upon release from custody. Some of these mothers expressed the view that it depended on how "good" they were doing with their treatment or schooling, before re-establishing a permanent living arrangement. The mother's perspective is crucial on this point, as it is important for her to optimize opportunities for healing and settling in prior to accepting the additional responsibility of parenting.

The majority of women considered mothers who have their children live with them in prison were more likely to be rehabilitated. However, of the mothers who lived with their children, just over one-half considered this to be the case. Perhaps the latter group have come to appreciate different realities of motherhood values.

As a general concept, the majority of the women believed it was in the best interests of the child to be with the mother if she was capable of parenting. However, when more specific questions were directed about mother/child programs, the women and staff expressed concerns about the accommodations for children and the environment to which they would be subjected.

Specifically, the incarcerated women and staff did not consider the Secure Centre at BCCW to be appropriate for a child to live in. The majority of the concerns women had were for the safety and well being of the child. They clearly indicated the environment was unsuitable for children citing the fear of violence, drug use, inappropriate language and behaviour from other inmates. The majority of the women and staff however, believed that a separate unit within the Secure Centre would be acceptable.

It would appear the physical plant of the prison was not the primary concern for the safety and well being of the children. Rather, the women and staff were more concerned with the behaviour of the other incarcerated women in the prison who were viewed as exhibiting behavioral problems unsuitable for children's observation.

The majority of the women considered that the Open Living Unit at BCCW should continue their mother/child live-in program. It was of interest that more of the women agreed to the general concept of children living in prison than they did to

accepting the OLU program. In fact more women said yes to children living in Secure in a separate unit than said yes to the OLU program. It would appear the separation of the program from the population is important to the women even if the program is operating in a minimum or open environment.

There are a number of issues that require a deeper understanding in viewing the women's, and specifically the mother's, perspectives of children living in a prison environment. This area requires further research in order to examine all aspects of the issues. The following are only some of the questions which arise:

- If the mother has several children and has to make a choice as to which children should live with her in prison, how will this affect both the mother and children? If she chooses to leave the children in the community, how will this affect her when others have their children with them in the prison?
- What effect does it have on a mother, who does not feel she is ready to parent, due to the need to work through her own issues, when she is encouraged to parent because she appears to meet the criteria? The effect this may have on the mother depends not only on the mother's perception of the situation but how she feels about herself. She may be concerned about not being able to cope with parenting or she be concerned that others won't think she wants her children if she says no.
- What about the mother who believes she has good parenting skills and parents in the prison, only to find out her level of parenting is viewed with some concern by others? As the literature suggests, many mothers lack appropriate parenting

skills however, not all mothers may know or believe they do. Also, the mothers who wanted additional parenting information and skills may be overwhelmed by a parenting course and come away more informed but with lower self-esteem and guilt because they have not previously fulfilled the role as others saw it should be.

- What will it do to the mother who is serving a lengthy sentence and who bonds with her child only to have the separation occur at a later time? Although a transition phase would undoubtedly be a part of the plan, what long term effect will this have on the mother and the mother/child relationship?
- How will a mother in the program resolve conflict between other mothers and/or children?
- What happens to the mother's self-esteem and future with their children when they are refused entry into the program? How would this be viewed externally?

Mothers parenting in a prison environment would be provided a number of support services not available to them in the community. It would enable them to work on their "criminogenic" factors while parenting in order they may retain or establish bonding with their children. Parenting in a prison presents a number of issues for mothers that would not normally be of concern to them if they were parenting in the community such as: the other incarcerated women; the routine is not her own or the child's; the physical environment, to a large extent, is beyond her control; she may be monitored continually not only by the staff but by the other women; and she may have concerns for her future once she leaves the prison. For these mothers,

there is always a measure of uncertainty that may not be as prevalent as for those parenting in the community.

Child's Interests

The child's perspective, on the other hand, is something which requires a concentrated examination to ensure the health, safety and well-being of the child is the focus in any decisions being made for or about the child's future.

While most of the findings from the present study did necessarily focus on the interests of the mother, in surveying the women, the clearly stated requirement from government and international bodies is for the interests of the child to be placed first. As indicated in the introduction, it is not obvious that the UN requirement to recognize the rights of every child to a standard of living adequate for the child's physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development is met by institutionalized mother/baby programming for women offenders. Or, of more relevancy to the prison setting, the question is, it possible to achieve the goal set out by the Gove Commission for a safe and loving environment for children - one which is respectful of their developmental capabilities - within these programs? We need to examine the issue more closely with those interests in mind. It may be considered ironic for example, that many of the incarcerated mothers who have a history of dysfunction and abuse, which in part may be considered responsible for their own circumstances of substance abuse and behaviour, would now be parenting in a prison environment. This may viewed as perpetuating the cycle of family dysfunction. According to other

research, a profound number of women at BCCW were identified as being insecurely attached and would therefore have a tendency to have insecurely attached children (Turnbull, 1996:196). This is an important concern when considering candidates for mother/child programs, as the focus of these programs should be the mother/child relationship.

The "best interests of the child" concept obviously requires the focus to be on the child. The mother/child relationship is an emotional issue, and one which encompasses thoughts and ideas of nurturing, loving, caring and protection for the child in a healthy relationship. The women and staff in this study both considered it would be in the best interests of the child to remain with their mother in a prison environment. Although, the majority in the study agree this would be good for the child, the conditions for participation in the program and where the program is located is of issue to them.

The OLU program and Correctional Services of Canada both speak to the "best interests of the child" in rationalizing mother/child programming however, the child's perspective is not represented, rather its perspective is imposed upon it by others. To determine what is in the best interests of the child is difficult to predict or measure without the knowledge of how children will be affected in the long term by the experience of living in a prison environment and/or living with their mother. There are a number of issues that require examination in regards to the child's

needs with the prime consideration being the safety and well being of the child and the right to develop to their full potential.

Concerns have been voiced in this study by the women and staff that the child should not be exposed to other inmates who may behave inappropriately. They also voiced concerns for the children not to be raised in a less than home-like atmosphere, with locked doors and guards. Yet the majority of staff and almost half of the women agreed that it was all right for children in the program to be searched in the presence of their mother. The searching of children has been included in CSC's draft policy for the Ochi Healing Lodge. Although this may be in the best interests of the institution, it cannot be considered in the best interests of the child. The public and the children have frequently been made aware to ensure children protect themselves by teaching them to say "no" to strangers, yet we would tell them it is all right to be searched by one for less than loving or caring purposes.

A number of questions require further study in order to more thoroughly understand the effect of living in a prison will have on the child. The effect on the children will of course depend upon the ages of the children while they are living in the prison, the length of time, the environment and situations to which they are exposed. The ideal participant and situation may consist of a mother who is capable, willing and ready to parent with a child that is healthy, well adjusted and able to cope in a prison environment. The relationship between mother and child in this situation would likely be strengthened to better prepare them for their release to the

community. They then do not have to experience the trauma of reunification and adjustment between each other. Their relationship continues to be positive in the community and the mother no longer offends. However, these ideal circumstances are likely to be rare. It is possible that separation of the mother and child may occur due to an adverse situation or circumstance in the prison or mother/child program. For example, the problems demonstrated when one Federal facility recently opened may have resulted in the participant children and mothers being separated, had there been a program in operation already. It is unknown what effect it would have had on a child who bonds with her mother in prison and then is suddenly separated from her.

This also raises the question as to the effect on the child if the mother/child relationship is successful in the prison but dissipates once back in the community. For example, what effect would it have on the child if the mother relapses in the community? Support in the community for a mother and child is crucial in order to provide them both with the optimal opportunity for success.

When children go to prison to live with their mother, access to the community is not as readily available. Depending upon the age of the child, this could be a potential problem, especially for an older child.

In addition, children surrounded by all adult females may not be viewed as the optimal situation for a child. Access to other age appropriate children is necessary and beneficial for the child and could be achieved through community pre-schools.

However, children who are more aware of their environment and who attend community facilities, for example school, could be stigmatized by other children or parents who know they live in a prison.

Community's Interests

Finally, the community's perspective has not been adequately represented to date either. The influence of the media that has provided conflicting impressions of women in prison may or may not result in support for the concept of children in prison. In order for any mother/child program to be truly successful, the support of the community is required for the mother and child in the prison. More importantly, that support is needed upon release from prison. The public has not yet been provided sufficient and accurate information in order for them to make an informed opinion on the issue.

In this study, the majority of the Provincially sentenced women and women on remand had received a previous custody sentence and/or sentence of probation. Federally sentenced women had slightly less than half with a previous custody sentence and a majority of the women had a previous sentence of probation. If mother/child live-in programs are an accepted practice in the majority of prisons and the Judiciary takes into account the mother's parental responsibility, it may impact the sentencing decision in certain situations. This could result in a mother being sentenced to custody, whereas an alternative may have been considered previously. Charter issues of discrimination would likely also arise.

The various perspectives on these matters represent diverse views in approaching mother/child live-in programs in prisons. Each approach requires further inquiry. The question of whether society and the justice system should permit mothers and children to become the focus of experimenting through continuation or expansion of this type of program remains uncertain. The present study did not intend to suggest all mother/child programs for women offenders should be eliminated. Instead, it recommends that these programming initiatives be assessed using the "best interests of the child" criteria as a priority over, not in balance with, the best interests of the mothers/women prisoners. As well, it does not make judgment on the appropriateness of the belief that such programs have rehabilitative value or in the validity of holding the belief that all women should be mothers, or that mothering is a natural role for women. Instead, it asked the women prisoners themselves as well as the staff who are responsible for them, what beliefs they held on these issues. It is hoped that the analysis of their opinion can assist and advance the discussion and analysis of the appropriateness of expansion of these programs into prison institutions.

APPENDIX A

Information and Planning Sheet for Child Visits

Resident's Name: _____ Room: _____

C.S.# _____ Case Manager: _____

Case Manager's Comments: _____

Information on Child/Children

Name: _____ Age: _____

Sex: _____ B.C. Medical # _____

Dr. Name and Phone #: _____

Childs Health: (medical, eating, sleeping) _____

Contact Person and Phone Number in case child/children must leave early _____

General Information

Date of visit: _____

Plans on departure and arrival: _____

Plans for work relief and/or child care: _____

Trust fund statement for meals submitted? yes _____ no _____

Permission to visit all areas yes _____ no _____

Forwarded to Director for approval Date: _____

Director

Approval Granted _____ Denied _____

Comments: _____

Director's Signature: _____ Date _____

Case Manager's/Staff assessment of visit _____

APPENDIX B

MOTHER AND CHILD AGREEMENT

RESIDENT
INITIALS

1. RESIDENTS MUST SUBMIT APPLICATIONS FOR CHILD VISITS EARLY TO ALLOW TIME FOR PROCESSING. THERE IS ALSO ONLY A LIMITED AMOUNT OF CHILDREN ALLOWED FOR EXTENDED VISITS AT ONE TIME. _____

2. CHILD IS DROPPED OFF BY CAREGIVER AND PICKED UP BY THE SAME PERSON UNLESS THERE IS AN EMERGENCY. _____

3. EXTENDED CHILD VISITS MAY BE APPROVED IN ORDER TO HAVE QUALITY TIME WITH THEIR MOTHER. THE CHILD IS REQUIRED TO STAY WITH THEIR MOTHER FOR THE DURATION OF THE VISIT UNLESS THERE ARE NECESSARY REASONS FOR THE VISIT TO BE TERMINATED. THIS DECISION IS MADE BY STAFF. _____

4. EMERGENCY NUMBER FOR CAREGIVER IS REQUIRED FOR CONTACT AT ALL TIMES. _____

5. MOTHERS ARE EXPECTED TO INSTRUCT THEIR CHILDREN IN REGARDS TO ADHERING TO THE RULES SHOWING GOOD CONDUCT AND RESPECT TOWARDS THE STAFF AND OTHER RESIDENTS. ANY VIOLATIONS CAN TERMINATE THE VISIT IMMEDIATELY. _____

6. PARENTS ARE REQUIRED TO SUPERVISE THEIR CHILDREN AT ALL TIMES. CHILDREN ARE NOT PERMITTED TO MOVE AROUND THE CENTRE UNATTENDED BY PARENT OR DESIGNATED CAREGIVER. _____

RESIDENT SIGNATURE

STAFF SIGNATURE

DATE

PLEASE INITIAL EACH GROUP AS READ AS UNDERSTOOD

GENERAL

_____ Initial

- Mothers room is to be kept tidy and all baby equipment is to be stored after use away from general areas.
- All residents are responsible for any damage to their rooms mothers must supervise the use of toys, pencils, crayons etc.
- Staff must be told if CAREGIVER will be missing or late for a count due to health care needs.

MOTHER'S SIGNATURE _____ DATE _____

STAFF SIGNATURE _____ DATE _____

MOTHER AND OLDER CHILD AGREEMENT

RESIDENT
INITIALS

1. CHILD IS DROPPED OFF BY CAREGIVER AND PICKED UP BY THE SAME PERSON UNLESS THERE IS AN EMERGENCY. _____

2. CHILD IS PERMITTED TO HAVE EXTENDED VISITS IN ORDER TO HAVE QUALITY TIME WITH THEIR MOTHER. THEY ARE REQUIRED TO STAY AT THE CENTRE FOR THE DURATION OF THE VISIT UNLESS THERE ARE NECESSARY REASONS FOR THE VISIT TO BE TERMINATED. THIS DECISION IS MADE BY STAFF. _____

3. EMERGENCY NUMBER FOR CAREGIVER IS REQUIRED FOR CONTACT AT ALL TIMES. _____

4. MOTHERS ARE EXPECTED TO INSTRUCT THEIR CHILDREN IN REGARDS TO ADHERING TO THE RULES SHOWING GOOD CONDUCT AND RESPECT TOWARDS THE STAFF AND OTHER RESIDENTS. ANY VIOLATIONS CAN TERMINATE THE VISIT IMMEDIATELY. _____

5. PARENTS ARE REQUIRED TO SUPERVISE THEIR CHILDREN AT ALL TIMES AND BE AWARE OF WHERE THEY ARE AT ALL TIMES. _____

6. MAKE SURE THAT YOU GET YOUR APPLICATIONS FOR CHILD VISITS IN EARLY AS THERE IS ONLY A LIMITED AMOUNT OF CHILDREN ALLOWED FOR EXTENDED VISITS AT ONE TIME. _____

RESIDENT SIGNATURE

STAFF SIGNATURE

DATE

APPENDIX C

OPEN LIVING UNIT MOTHERS WITH BABIES PROGRAM

The Open Living Unit has a unique program whereby a pregnant woman or mother may be allowed to keep her child with her during her incarceration. The child must be aged two years or under. The capacity is four children at any given time.

The program began in 1973 at Twin Maples Correctional Centre when a pregnant woman was sentenced to a short period of incarceration. The child was born and both mother and child were housed at Twin Maples. That short period was found to be successful and since then almost 100 babies have utilized the program.

The mothers are approved to have babies remain with them, after interviews with classification and institutional staff.

Some criteria for mothers are:

- must be suitable for minimum secure setting.
- a check with the Ministry of Social Services and immediate family in the community.
- a social worker will interview the mother and if there is no financial support from the father or family, will determine monthly fees they will pay for the baby's expenses while here.
- mothers must have the ability to cope with the baby and participate in the institutional routines and programs.

It is the mother's responsibility to do her work assignments and care for her baby. If the baby has any health problems we have a clinic with a nurse within the complex. We use the Grace Maternity Hospital in Vancouver. Burnaby Health also has a community Health Nurse available to us, checks on the baby periodically or when needed to give the mother support in the early months.

Strengths of the program:

- new mothers learn how to cope with a new baby.
- mother has some guidance in how to make purchases; feed; bathe and generally care for a new baby.
- to form a bonding during the first formative months.
- helps the family to develop and define a workable release plan for both.

APPENDIX D

If one is "Expecting" to join the Mother-Baby program in the Open Living Unit of BCCW., the following may be helpful to the mother in question.

A crib is provided by the unit if needed, depending on the age of the child.

Funding from Social Services is available for the basic needs of the child, e.g. diapers, formula and clothing.

There are four existing mother/child rooms. These four rooms are larger than the remaining rooms in OLU.

There is an outdoor playground on the premises of the Open Living Unit. This includes swings, bicycles as well as other large toys for older children.

Laundry facilities are available in the living unit, existing of two washers and two dryers and childrens laundry is given first preference; especially during working hours of the residents, 8:00am - 3:00pm.

Every week a citizen is available to go shopping for a child's needs.

A refrigerator is available for all residents to share.

All meals are provided for older children.

If the mother is attending any or all drug and alcohol programs, a unit nanny is provided and financially supplemented by the unit.

A mother must have a job placement while residing at the Open Living Unit. There are various examples of the placements; one being the daycare centre that exists on the premises of OLU.

If the mother is working in the daycare centre, her child will stay with her for the entire working shift.

If a mother is working in any other job placement other than the daycare, her child may go to the daycare centre from 8:00am to 11:30am.

After the mother is allowed to participate in off grounds activities, the child can accompany her on walks and other outings such as library, church as well as bi-weekly social outings.

Bonding with your child is the biggest factor to consider when deciding on the venture of residing at the Open Living Unit. How badly as an individual do you want the bonding development. Bonding with one's child for the first (3) years of his/her life is the most precious gift you will receive which you will never lose in your life time.

Consider other factors also before arriving at the decision of having your child with you while residing at the Open Living Unit. These factors may be stress, frustration as well as simply not being ready, to be a full time parent while dealing with your own personal addictions and not wanting to overload oneself; therefore discuss your short and long-term goals with your case manager.

Frustration and stress level can rise due to inconsiderate behaviour both by staff as well as inmates. When a child is sleeping in the evening for the night, majority of individuals are not considerate about the noise level. They slam doors, yell for others, and carry on conversations loudly in the vicinity of the child's room. Children wake up, with interrupted sleep and do not go back to sleep therefore fussing for the remaining evening/night which disrupts the child's sleeping pattern.

Even when asked politely not to carry on the noise, people do not refrain.

The use of the intercom after 7:00pm or so is another element that is disruptive for children when sleeping.

There are no set complete guidelines or rules in relation to this mother/child program which causes confusion between mother and staff.

With rules changing on a daily basis, stress becomes a major factor that has to be considered by any mother.

Ask yourself the following:

Do you want to or even can you deal with the stressful situations while your child resides with you?

APPENDIX E

AGREEMENT BETWEEN
MINISTRY OF ATTORNEY GENERAL
CORRECTIONS BRANCH
AND
DONNA MACLEAN

In return for the Corrections Branch providing authorization to carry out research, involving the review of client files, distribution of questionnaires, and interviews with inmates, x-inmates, staff and contractors at the Burnaby Correctional Centre for Women, I agree to the following terms:

- o All inmate, staff and contractor information will be kept confidential;
- o Personal Identifiers will be removed from data at the earliest possible time;
- o The research will not impose significant time demands on Corrections Branch staff;
- o Any information collected or retained in an individually identifiable form will not be used for any purpose other than the proposed research and will be destroyed at the earliest possible time;
- o The completed research will be shared with the Corrections Branch.

RECEIVED

F. J. Demers
Assistant Deputy Minister

Donna MacLean

APR - 9 1996

of Solicitor General

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

VICE-PRESIDENT, RESEARCH



BURNABY, BRITISH COLUMBIA
CANADA V5A 1S6
Telephone: (604) 291-4152
FAX: (604) 291-4860

May 2, 1996

Ms. Donna McLean
Graduate Student
Criminology
Simon Fraser University

Dear Ms. McLean:

Re: **Mother and Child Live-in Programs in Canadian Prisons: A Policy
Analysis of Institutional Policy Development and Implementation**

I am pleased to inform you that the above referenced Request for Ethical Approval of Research has been approved on behalf of the University Research Ethics Review Committee. This approval is in effect for twenty-four months from the above date. Any changes in the procedures affecting interaction with human subjects should be reported to the University Research Ethics Review Committee. Significant changes will require the submission of a revised Request for Ethical Approval of Research. This approval is in effect only while you are a registered SFU student.

Best wishes for success in this research.

Sincerely,

Bruce P. Clayman, Chair
University Research Ethics Review Committee

c: M. Jackson, Supervisor
N. Boyd, Director

BR, hme

APPENDIX G
QUESTIONNAIRE - BCCW INCARCERATED WOMEN

DATE: _____

1. Interviewer: _____
2. Interview #: _____
3. Open Living Unit _____ How long? _____
Secure _____ How long? _____
4. Status
 1. Federal,
 2. Provincial
 3. Remand
5. Date of Birth: Year _____ Month _____
6. What is your race?
 1. Caucasian
 2. Aboriginal
 3. Inuit
 4. Black
 5. Asian
 6. Other (specify) _____
7. What is your first language?
 1. English
 2. French
 3. Mandarin
 4. Cantonese
 5. Spanish
 6. Other _____
8. What is your level of competence in spoken in English?
 1. primary language spoken since birth
 2. fluent - no difficulty
 3. good - experience some problems with certain words or vocabulary.
 4. enough to be understood
 5. can't speak any English - few words or less (requires interpreter)

9. What is your level of reading and writing in English?

1. can read and write
2. cannot read or write
3. can read but not write
4. can write but not read

EDUCATION:

10. What is the highest level of education you have completed?

1. up to grade 7
2. grade 8-9
3. grade 10
4. grade 11
5. grade 12 graduate
6. GED
7. some college
10. college diploma/certificate _____
11. some university Degree: _____
12. university graduation
13. vocational/trade
14. other (specify)

11. Describe what education/vocational training you received while incarcerated. (*Include Current*)

1. None

12. Do you plan to attend school or vocational training in the community upon release? 1. Yes 2. No 3. decided Describe type of training or school program:

WORK EXPERIENCE:

13. What jobs have you held in the community?
1. None

YEAR	JOB TITLE	LENGTH OF TIME IN JOB	REASON LEFT

14. Do you plan to work immediately upon release?
(If answer is "no" go to question #18)
1. yes 2. no 3. undecided

Comments: _____

15. What have you done to find employment in the community?
1. TAs to look for work
2. Job counselor
3. Looked in paper
4. Friends
5. Return to old job
6. Nothing
7. Other: _____

16. Do you think you will have any problems finding work?
1. Yes 2. No

Comments: _____

17. Do you have a confirmed job for when you are released?
1. Yes 2. No

Comments: _____

MARITAL STATUS AND PARTICIPANTS CHILDREN

18. What is your current marital status?

- 1. married
- 2. common-law
- 3. divorced
- 4. separated
- 5. single
- 6. other: _____

19. How long have you been together in your current relationship?

20. Have you ever been married or lived common-law previously?

- 1. Yes 2. No

Describe: _____

21. How many children have you given birth to?

- 1. no children
- 2. 1
- 3. 2
- 4. 3
- 5. 4
- 6. other: _____

(If the answer is "no" children, go directly to question #33)

22. Describe the gender; year of birth of your child(ren) and father as in Father 1, 2 or first name or initial.

	Year of Birth	Male/Female	Father(s)

23. Did any of the children live with you immediately prior to your incarceration? 1. yes 2. no

Identify which children: _____

24. If Yes to question #23 - were you the "primary care giver" to the child(ren) living with you? (*Mother lives with child(ren) however, someone else has the day to day care of the child*)

1. yes 2. no

Comments: _____

If "NO" who provided the primary care?

25. If the child(ren) were not living with you prior to incarceration, who did they live with? For each child:

Child #1: _____

Child #2: _____

26. Have any of your children been apprehended by a social services agency. (*e.g. Ministry of Social Services & Housing*)

1. Yes 2. No

Describe: _____

27. Have any of your children been made a ward of a social services agency? (*e.g. Ministry of Social Services & Housing*) (*A ward is where MSSH has legal authority over the child through the courts.*)

1. Temporary ward

2. Permanent ward

3. No

Describe for which children: _____

28. When you are released from custody do you expect to immediately become the primary care giver for your child(ren)? (*If yes, go to question #30*)

Describe: _____

29. If "NO" to question #28, are there any future plans to become the primary care giver to the child(ren)?

1. yes 2. no

Describe: _____

30. Describe the contact you have had with your child(ren) while being in custody?

1. no contact

Comments: _____

2. Writes How often? _____

3. Telephones How often? _____

4. Visits How often? _____

5. PFV How many times? _____

31. Describe the concerns you have, if any, about being separated from your child(ren). 8. No Answer

32. Describe the concerns you have, if any, about reuniting with your children when you are in the community?

8. No Answer

33. What do you think is the best method of maintaining the mother/child bond while a mother is in custody? 1. Don't know 8. No Answer

THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS ARE FOCUSED ON THE VIEWS AND OPINIONS OF THE INMATES/RESIDENTS REGARDING MOTHER/CHILD LIVE-IN PROGRAMS IN JAILS.

MOTHER/CHILD PROGRAM:

The mother/child program is presently operating at the Open Living Unit. This program allows one child, up to the age of two years to remain with her mother full time at the Centre. The following are questions for all women to respond to:

34. Do you think mothers should be allowed to have their child(ren) live with them while in a prison? (*Prison - meaning any jail - question is a general one*)

1. Yes 2. No 3. No Opinion 8. No Answer

Comments: _____

35. Do you think mothers should be allowed to have their child(ren) live with them in the secure facility? (*Secure - "As Is" in one of the units*)

1. Yes 2. No 3. No Opinion 8. No Answer

Comments: _____

36. If a program was made available in the secure facility, what is the maximum number of children you think the inmate mother should be allowed to have with her? (*Secure - As Is*)

1. one 2. two 3. three 4. it should be determined by the mother
5. other: _____

37. If a program was made available in secure, up to what age do you think is appropriate for the child(ren) to stay with their mother?

38. What concerns, if any, do you have for child(ren) living in the secure facility?

1. none 8. no answer

39. What concerns, if any, do you have for the inmates, if children were to live in the secure facility? 1. none 8. no answer

40. Do you think a mother/child live-in program should be made available in secure, if a separate unit or space was made available in the building, separate from the other inmates?

1. Yes 2. No 3. Maybe 4. No Opinion 8. No Answer

41. Do you think mothers should be allowed to have their child(ren) live with them in the Open Living Unit? (*Open Living Unit - "As It Presently Exists"*)

42. What do you think should be the maximum number of children the resident mother should be allowed to have live with her? (*Open Living Unit - "As It Presently Exists"*)

1. one
2. two
3. three
4. it should be determined by the mother
5. other: _____

43. Up to what age do you think it is appropriate for the child(ren) to stay with their mother at the Open Living Unit?

Age: _____

44. What concerns, if any, do you have for child(ren) living at the Open Living Unit? 1. none 8. no answer

45. What concerns, if any, do you have for the other residents, at the Open Living Unit when child(ren) are living-in?

1. none
2. don't know
8. no answer

46. Do you think the present mother/child live-in program at the Open Living Unit should continue? (*"The program as it exists"*)

1. yes
2. no
3. maybe
4. don't know
8. no answer

47. Prior to an inmate mother being accepted into a live-in mother/child program, what criteria do you think should be established for acceptance:

1. don't know
8. no answer

48. Do you think a mother in the program should have to take parenting courses?

1. yes 2. no 3. don't know 8. no answer

49. What course(s) do you think a mother in the programs should have to take besides a parenting course?

1. None 2. Don't Know 8. No Answer

50. Do you think the institution should offer parenting courses to all inmates?

1. Yes 2. No 8. No Answer

51. Would you take a parenting course if offered?

1. Yes 2. No 8. No Answer 9. N/A

Comments: _____

52. What do you think are the 5 most important qualities that make a good mother? 1. Don't Know 8. No Answer

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Secure Inmates Only: (Questions #53 & #54)

53. Would you utilize the mother/child program if one was made available in secure? 1. Yes 2. No 8. No Answer 9. N/A

Comments: _____

54. Would you apply to the mother/child program at the Open Living Unit if you transfer? 1. Yes 2. No 8. No Answer 9. N/A

Comments: _____

Open Living Unit Residents Only - With Children 2 years and under - Question #55:

55. Have you applied to have your child(ren) live with you at the OLU?
1. Yes 2. No 8. No Answer 9. N/A

Comments: _____

All Inmates/Residents:

56. Why do you think a child should be allowed to live with his/her mother in an institution? (*In general*)

Comments: _____

57. Do you think a mother who has her child(ren) live with her in the institution is more likely to be rehabilitated?
1. Yes 2. No 3. Maybe 4. Don't Know 8. No Answer

58. Do you think it is in the Best Interests of the Child to be with their mother in the institution if the mother is capable of parenting? (*In general*).

Comments: _____

59. What kinds of problems do you think a mother might experience having her child(ren) in secure?
1. No Problems 2. Don't Know 8. No Answer

Comments: _____

60. What kind of benefits do you think a mother might experience by having her child(ren) in secure?
1. No Benefits 2. Don't Know 8. No Answer

Comments: _____

61. What kind of problems do you think a mother might experience having her child(ren) at the Open Living Unit?

1. No Problems 2. Don't Know 8. No Answer

Comments: _____

62. What kind of benefits do you think a mother might experience having her child(ren) at the Open Living Unit?

1. No Benefits 2. Don't Know 8. No Answer

Comments: _____

63. If a mother uses alcohol/drugs while having her child(ren) living with her in the institution, do you think the child should be:

1. returned to the community
2. the child should be allowed to stay
3. other _____
8. no answer

Comments: _____

64. What reasons do you think a mother should be removed from the program and the child(ren) returned to the community?

1. None 8. No Answer

Comments: _____

65. Do you think a live-in mother/child program is acceptable in an institution if the program was located in a separate building from the custody centre?

(Any jail - in general: e.g. secure)

1. Yes 2. No 3. Don't Know 8. No Answer

Comments: _____

66. If a program was made available in a separate building a BCCW and space was not a factor, what is the maximum number of children do you think the mother should be allowed to have with her?

Number of children: _____

67. Up to what age do you think the child should be allowed to stay?
(In the separate building site)

Age: _____

68. Do you think a mother in the program should be allowed to use physical punishment to discipline her child?

1. Yes 2. No 3. Don't Know 8. No Answer

Comments: _____

69. Do you think Correctional staff should be allowed to search child(ren) in the program, in the presence of their mother, for contraband?

1. Yes 2. No 3. Don't Know 8. No Answer

Comments: _____

70. Do you think a mother in the live-in program should have to attend at least one program which addresses the issues which led to her offence, in addition to parenting her child?

1. Yes 2. No 3. Don't Know 8. No Answer

Comments: _____

PROFILE - BACKGROUND INFORMATION OF PARTICIPANT

FAMILY HISTORY:

71. During your childhood years from birth to age 19 who did you live with?

72. Were you ever apprehended, as a child, by a social services agency?

1. Yes 2. No 3. Don't Know 8. No Answer

Comments: _____

73. How many brothers and sister do you have? _____
(If no siblings go directly to #76)

Sibling 1:	Year of birth _____	1. Male	2. Female
Sibling 2:	Year of birth _____	1. Male	2. Female
Sibling 3	Year of birth _____	1. Male	2. Female
Sibling 4	Year of birth _____	1. Male	2. Female

74. Did your siblings live in the same home with you during your childhood?
1. Yes 2. No 8. No Answer 9. N/A

Comments: _____

75. Did any of your siblings get apprehended by social services?
1. Yes 2. No 9. No Answer

Comments: _____

76. Was alcohol abuse a problem for anyone in your home situation?
(Identify home e.g. foster, parent)
1. Yes 2. No 8. No Answer

Describe: _____

77. Was drug abuse a problem for anyone in your home situation?
(Identify home e.g. foster, parent)
1. Yes 2. No 8. No Answer

Describe: _____

78. Did you ever witness or know of an act of physical or sexual abuse of
someone in your family home?
1. Yes 2. No 8. No Answer

Comments: _____

79. Prior to your incarceration, did you have regular contact with your family?
(Include parents, siblings, relatives, foster)
 1. Yes 2. No 8. No Answer

Please describe - including type of contact and frequency for each member.
(Family excluding spouse and children.)

Family Member	Type of Contact	Frequency

80. Since your incarceration, do you have contact with the family members described in the previous question?
 1. Yes 2. No 8. No Answer 9. N/A

Please describe including type of contact and frequency for each member.

Family Member	Visits	Phones	Writes

81. Do you think your childhood experiences are directly related to your offending as an adult?
 1. Yes 2. No 8. No Answer

Comments: _____

RELATIONSHIPS:

82. How would you describe your preference for intimate relationships in the community: *(Sexual preference)*
 1. Heterosexual 2. Homosexual 3. Bi-sexual 8. No Answer
83. While incarcerated have you engaged in an intimate relationship with another woman?
 1. Yes 2. No 8. No Answer

84. Were you ever a victim of physical abuse?

1. No
2. Father
3. Mother
4. Spouse
5. Significant other
6. Stranger
7. Foster parent
10. Other: _____
8. No answer

Describe: _____

85. Were you ever a victim of sexual abuse?

1. No
2. Father
3. Mother
4. Spouse
5. Significant other
6. Stranger
7. Foster parent
10. Other: _____
8. No answer

Describe: _____

86. Were you ever a victim of psychological abuse?

1. No
2. Father
3. Mother
4. Spouse
5. Significant other
6. Stranger
7. Foster parent
10. Other: _____
8. No answer

Describe: _____

ALCOHOL AND DRUG HISTORY:

87. Do you have an alcohol problem?

1. Yes 2. No 3. Maybe 4. Don't Know 8. No Answer

88. Do you have a drug problem?

1. Yes 2. No 3. Maybe 4. Don't Know 8. No Answer

89. What programs have you attended in the institution for your alcohol or drug problem?

1. None 8. No Answer 9. N/A

Describe: _____

90. Do you think alcohol or drugs were factor in the commission of your offence?

1. Yes 2. No 3. Maybe 4. Don't Know 8. No Answer

Comments: _____

91. What programs do you plan to attend in the community upon release to deal with your alcohol or drug problem?

1. None 8. No Answer 9. N/A

Describe: _____

OFFENCE HISTORY:

92. For what offence(s) are you presently incarcerated and sentence length for each offence? *(If on remand just list the charges and go directly to question #96.)* 8. No Answer

93. What was the date the current sentence commenced?

8. No Answer 9. N/A

94. What is your anticipated release date? *(This includes remission or mandatory supervision date.)* 1. Don't Know 8. No Answer

95. What is your sentence expiry date?
(This is the date the sentence actually ends.) 1. Don't Know 8. No Answer

96. Have you ever received a custody sentence previously?
(Offence and which jail.)

1. Yes 2. No 8. No Answer

Describe: _____

97. Have you ever been on probation?
1. Yes 2. No 8. No Answer

98. Were you ever charged with Breach of Probation?
1. Yes 2. No 8. No Answer

99. Have you ever received parole?
1. Yes 2. No 8. No Answer
(If no, go to #102)

100. Was your parole ever suspended?
1. Yes 2. No 8. No Answer

101. Was your parole ever revoked?
1. Yes 2. No 8. No Answer

PROGRAMS:

102. What programs have you participated in while in the institution?
- 1. Breaking Barriers
 - 2. Cognitive Skills
 - 3. Aboriginal Treatment Readiness Program
 - 4. Model of Change
 - 5. Alcohol and Drug Counseling
 - 6. NA Group
 - 7. AA Group
 - 10. LINC
 - 11. Parenting Course
 - 12. Other(s): _____

103. Which program(s) do you think helped you the most?

8. No Answer

Comments: _____

104. Which program(s) do you think helped you the least?

8. No Answer

Comments: _____

RELEASE PLANS:

105. Do you have a place to live when you get released?

1. Yes 2. No 3. Maybe 4. Don't Know 8. No Answer

(If Yes go directly to question #107)

Comments: _____

106. Do you need help in finding a place to live?

1. Yes 2. No 3. Maybe 4. Don't Know 8. No Answer

Comments: _____

107. What plans have you made for your release?

(In general - e.g. go on welfare and look for a place; work; live with a friend and look for work, etc.)

Comments: _____

108. Where do you plan to live when you are released?

- 1. Vancouver
- 2. Burnaby
- 3. New Westminster
- 4. Surrey
- 5. Other: _____
- 6. Don't Know
- 8. No Answer
- 9. N/A

109. Do you have anyone to help you get settled into the community when you are released?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 3. Maybe
- 4. Don't Know
- 8. No Answer

Comments: _____

110. Do you want help from a volunteer to help you get settled into the community?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 3. Maybe
- 4. Don't Know
- 8. No Answer

Comments: _____

111. What kind of help would you like?

- 8. No Answer
- 9. N/A

Comments: _____

112. Will you be applying for social assistance upon release?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 3. Maybe
- 4. Don't Know
- 8. No Answer

Comments: _____

113. What are your 3 biggest fears about being released?

- 1. None
- 8. No Answer
- 9. N/A

114. Do you think you will ever come back to prison again?
1. Yes 2. No 3. Maybe 4. Don't Know 8. No Answer

Comments: _____

115. What have you missed most by being incarcerated?
1. Nothing 8. No Answer

116. When you are released, what do you think you will miss about the institution?
1. Nothing 8. No Answer

APPENDIX H
QUESTIONNAIRE - STAFF AND CONTRACTORS

DATE: _____

1. Interviewer: _____
2. Interview #: _____
3. Gender
 1. Female
 2. Male
4. What position to you hold at BCCW:
 1. Security Officer/Correctional Officer
 2. Supervising Officer
 3. Manager
 4. Contractor: _____
 5. Other: _____
 8. No Answer
5. Where do you work at BCCW?
 1. Secure
 2. Open Living Unit
 3. Secure and OLU
 8. No Answer

Comment: _____

6. What is the total amount of time you have been with BCCW?
Months: _____
7. How long have you been with the Corrections Branch including Provincial and Federal Corrections and in other Provinces?
Months: _____

MOTHER/CHILD PROGRAM:

The mother/child program is presently operating at the Open Living Unit. This program allows one child, up to the age of two years to remain with her mother full time at the Centre. The following are questions for all women to respond to:

8. Do you think mothers should be allowed to have their child(ren) live with them while in a prison? (*Prison - meaning any jail - question is a general one*)

1. Yes 2. No 3. No Opinion 8. No Answer

Comments: _____

9. Do you think mothers should be allowed to have their child(ren) live with them in the secure facility? (*Secure - "As Is" in one of the units*)

1. Yes 2. No 3. No Opinion 8. No Answer

Comments: _____

10. If a program was made available in the secure facility, what is the maximum number of children you think the inmate mother should be allowed to have with her? (*Secure - As Is*)

1. one 2. two 3. three 4. three or more 5. it should be determined by the mother 5. other: _____

11. If a program was made available in secure, up to what age do you think is appropriate for the child(ren) to stay with their mother?

12. What concerns, if any, do you have for child(ren) living in the secure facility?
1. none 8. no answer

13. What concerns, if any, do you have for the inmates, if children were to live in the secure facility? 1. none 8. no answer

14. What concerns, if any, do you have for the staff, if children were to live in the secure facility? 1. none 8. no answer
-
-
15. Do you think a mother/child live-in program should be made available in secure, if a separate unit or space was made available in the building, separate from the other inmates?
1. Yes 2. No 3 Maybe 4. No Opinion 8. No Answer
-
-
16. Do you think mothers should be allowed to have their child(ren) live with them in the Open Living Unit? (*Open Living Unit - "As It Presently Exists"*)
-
-
17. What do you think should be the maximum number of children the resident mother should be allowed to have live with her? (*Open Living Unit - "As It Presently Exists"*)
1. one
 2. two
 3. three
 4. three or more
 5. it should be determined by the mother
 6. other: _____
18. Up to what age do you think it is appropriate for the child(ren) to stay with their mother at the Open Living Unit?
- Age: _____
19. What concerns, if any, do you have for child(ren) living at the Open Living Unit? 1. none 8. no answer
-
-
20. What concerns, if any, do you have for the other residents, at the Open Living Unit when child(ren) are living-in?
1. none 2. don't know 8. no answer
-
-

21. What concerns, if any, do you have for the staff, at the Open Living Unit when child(ren) are living-in?

1. none 2. don't know 8. no answer

22. Do you think the present mother/child live-in program at the Open Living Unit should continue? (*"The program as it exists"*)

1. yes 2. no 3. maybe 4. don't know 8. no answer

23. Prior to an inmate mother being accepted into a live-in mother/child program, what criteria do you think should be established for acceptance:

1. don't know 8. no answer

24. Do you think a mother in the program should have to take parenting courses?

1. yes 2. no 3. don't know 8. no answer

25. What course(s) do you think a mother in the programs should have to take besides a parenting course?

1. None 2. Don't Know 8. No Answer

26. Do you think the institution should offer parenting courses to all inmates?

1. Yes 2. No 8. No Answer

27. Why do you think a child should be allowed to live with his/her mother in an institution? (*In general*)

Comments: _____

28. Do you think a mother who has her child(ren) live with her in the institution is more likely to be rehabilitated?
1. Yes 2. No 3. Maybe 4. Don't Know 8. No Answer

29. Do you think it is in the Best Interests of the Child to be with their mother in the institution if the mother is capable of parenting? (*In general*).

Comments: _____

30. What kinds of problems do you think a mother might experience having her child(ren) in secure?
1. No Problems 2. Don't Know 8. No Answer

Comments: _____

31. What kind of benefits do you think a mother might experience by having her child(ren) in secure?
1. No Benefits 2. Don't Know 8. No Answer

Comments: _____

32. What kind of problems do you think a mother might experience having her child(ren) at the Open Living Unit?
1. No Problems 2. Don't Know 8. No Answer

Comments: _____

33. What kind of benefits do you think a mother might experience having her child(ren) at the Open Living Unit?
1. No Benefits 2. Don't Know 8. No Answer

Comments: _____

34. If a mother uses alcohol/drugs while having her child(ren) living with her in the institution, do you think the child should be:
1. returned to the community
 2. the child should be allowed to stay
 3. other _____
 8. no answer

Comments: _____

35. What reasons do you think a mother should be removed from the program and the child(ren) returned to the community?
1. None
 8. No Answer

Comments: _____

36. Do you think a live-in mother/child program is acceptable in an institution if the program was located in a separate building from the custody centre?
(Any jail - in general: e.g. secure)
1. Yes
 2. No
 3. Don't Know
 8. No Answer

Comments: _____

37. If a program was made available in a separate building a BCCW and space was not a factor, what is the maximum number of children do you think the mother should be allowed to have with her?

Number of children: _____
Comments: _____

38. Up to what age do you think the child should be allowed to stay?
(In the separate building site)

Age: _____

39. Do you think a mother in the program should be allowed to use physical punishment to discipline her child?
1. Yes
 2. No
 3. Don't Know
 8. No Answer

Comments: _____

40. Do you think Correctional staff should be allowed to search child(ren) in the program, in the presence of their mother, for contraband?
1. Yes 2. No 3. Don't Know 8. No Answer

Comments: _____

41. Do you think a mother in the live-in program should have to attend at least one program which addresses the issues which led to her offence, in addition to parenting her child?
1. Yes 2. No 3. Don't Know 8. No Answer

Comments: _____

42. What do you think are the 5 most important qualities that make a good mother? 1. Don't Know 8. No Answer

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

43. What do you think are the best methods of maintaining the mother/child bond while a mother is in custody?
1. Don't Know 8. No Answer

Comments: _____

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS ABOUT MOTHER/CHILD LIVE-IN PROGRAMS:

APPENDIX I*

June 5/96

TO:

FROM: Donna MacLean

Re: Research Study - Mother/Child Live-In Programs

Commencing May 21/96 I am coordinating a research study to examine the issue of mother/child live-in programs in institutions. Currently, there are only two institutions in Canada which allow a mother to have her child live with her during incarceration, one is in Manitoba and the other is at the Open Living Unit. The Correctional Services of Canada is planning to have similar programs in their new regional facilities for women and are currently developing policy in this area.

This is an area which has been largely ignored by researchers and as such there is little information about these programs. I believe it is important to incorporate the opinions and views of all women incarcerated at BCCW. During the next couple of months, you will be asked to meet with a research assistant to discuss this study further and to answer any questions you may have about the study. If you wish to participate in the study the research assistant will provide you with a consent form to sign prior to conducting the interview. Participation in this study is voluntary. All responses will remain anonymous. The interview will take approximately one to two hours and includes questions about your personal history, your views on mother/child live-in programs and some questions about your release plans. The interview takes a holistic approach in learning more about women incarcerated at BCCW.

An honorarium of \$10.00 will be provided for those wishing to participate.

APPENDIX J

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

INFORMED CONSENT BY SUBJECTS TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH PROJECT

The University and those conducting this project subscribe to the ethical conduct of research and to the protection at all times of the interest, comfort, and safety of subjects. This form and the information it contains are given to you for your own protection and full understanding of the procedures used in this research project. The research study includes but is not limited to the examination of the issues of mother/child live-in programs in prisons. This includes a comprehensive profile of BCCW inmates and their opinions on mother/child programs. The procedure used in this research study will be an in depth interview, by the researcher, using a questionnaire. The information gathered will be used to provide a profile of BCCW inmates and their views and opinions on mother/child programs in prison, specifically at BCCW. The responses provided by the participants will remain anonymous and not identifiable in the final report. The participants responses will remain confident by the researchers. Your signature on this form will signify that you have read and understood the procedures involved in this research project, and that you have received an adequate opportunity to consider the information in this document, and that you voluntarily agree to participate in the project.

Having been asked by _____ for Donna MacLean of the School of Criminology of Simon Fraser University to participate in a research project, I have read the procedures specified in this document.

I understand the procedures to be used this research project and to my taking part.

I understand that I may withdraw my participation in this research project at any time.

I also understand that I may register any complaint I might have about this research project with the chief researcher named above or with Neil Boyd, Director of the School of Criminology, Simon Fraser University.

I may obtain copies of the results of this study, upon its completion by contacting, Margaret Jackson, School of Criminology.

I have been informed that the research material, (interviews) will be held confident by the principal investigator.

I agree to participate by being interviewed as described above, during the period of May 15 to August 31, 1996 at the Burnaby Correctional Center for Women (BCCW).

NAME (please print) _____

ADDRESS: 7900 Fraser Park Drive, Burnaby, B.C. _____

SIGNATURE: _____ WITNESS: _____

DATE: _____

Once signed, a copy of this consent form will be provided to you upon your request.

APPENDIX K
INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Female Offender Study

I have agreed to be interviewed for the purposes of gathering information on female offenders. I am aware this research study includes but is not limited to the examination of the issues of mother/child live-in programs in prison including a profile of female offenders and release planning.

I have been informed and understand that I may stop the interview at any time and withdraw my participation in the study.

I am also aware that my responses will remain anonymous and not identifiable in the final report.

I voluntarily agree to participate.

Name - Please Print

Witness - Please Print

Name - Signature

Witness - Signature

Date

The contact persons for this study are Donna MacLean, Dr. Margaret Jackson and/or Dr. William Glackman in the School of Criminology, Simon Fraser University (291-4127).

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