

- Quick Facts -

On any given day, approximately 350 children in Deschutes County are living with the disruptive effects of a parent being incarcerated.

More than 2.7 million children in the U.S. currently have an incarcerated parent.

Pew Charitable Trust- 2010

Over half of the mothers and fathers in state prison reported to be the primary provider for their children before their incarceration.

Bureau of Justice- 2010

Parental incarceration is recognized as an “adverse childhood experience (ACE)” for its unique combination of trauma, shame, and stigma.

Annie E. Casey- 2007

These children often have difficulty transitioning to successful adult lives, showing high rates of unemployment, lower educational achievement, and greater risk of criminal justice involvement.

American Bar Foundation- 2013

Central Oregon Partnerships for Youth (COPY)
63333 West Highway 20
Bend, Oregon 97703

Central Oregon Partnerships for Youth

C.O.P.Y.



Mentors for Children with Incarcerated Parents

A program developed and offered through:



Deschutes
County
Sheriff's
Office

The Challenge:

Throughout the United States, more adults are serving sentences for crimes than ever before. In America, there are over 2 million adults serving jail or prison sentences. On average, half of those inmates are parents to a minor child. A recent study estimated that 2.7 million children have a parent behind bars and 10 million children will experience parental incarceration at some point in their young lives.



On any given day in Deschutes County, approximately 350 children are impacted by the disruptive effects of parental incarceration. They often experience fear, anxiety, anger, sadness, loneliness, low self-esteem, depression, and emotional withdrawal. Many will struggle in school and in relationships with their peers. This isolation puts them at risk to repeat the mistakes their parent made.

The Solution:

The Deschutes County Sheriff's Office established the Central Oregon Partnerships for Youth or COPY program. COPY connects children of incarcerated parents with safe and appropriate adult mentors. The goal is to

establish a positive and healthy bond with an adult outside of the child's home. The impact of a mentoring relationship has proven itself time and time again. Evaluation and research has shown a link between mentoring and attendance in school, reduction in negative behavior, and improved self-worth and social skills. Most importantly, mentors provide consistency in a time of great change and a positive outlook for the future.

Each mentoring experience is unique. COPY staff interview both prospective volunteers and children about their skills, interests, activities, and backgrounds. Some mentors become involved with academic assistance, helping with reading or writing skills. Other relationships focus on children engaging in new opportunities like sports, cultural activities, or just talking over pizza. Program staff assist volunteers in establishing relationship goals, working through challenges, and setting up additional community resources.

To Become Involved:

The first step in becoming a mentor is to contact COPY staff at 541-388-6651 or COPY@deschutes.org. A volunteer application and other material is available online at www.deschutes.org/copy. COPY offers three training classes a year. These half day classes cover program policies, communication skills, establishing a mentor relationship, and how incarceration impacts families.

To ensure the safety of children involved with the COPY program, all volunteers must complete a fingerprint-based background check,

volunteer interviews, and reference checks and initial drug screen. Volunteers are required to have, and maintain, a safe driving record and be at least 21 years of age.

After the background process is complete, volunteers work with COPY staff to be matched with a child on the program's waiting list. Volunteers review the background of the child and family and, along with program staff, attend an initial meeting. Mentors then commit to spending two to three hours of weekly contact for a minimum of one year.



Take the first step in becoming a mentor and make a difference in the life of a child in Deschutes County...

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www.sheriff.deschutes.org/copy
www.facebook.com/deschutes.COPY