

How does prison time affect relationships?

16 March 2015

A new study highlights the complicated spillover effects of incarceration on the quality of relationships.

Although paternal [incarceration](#) in the past 2 years was mostly inconsequential for fathers' reports of [relationship quality](#), mothers connected to these recently incarcerated men reported lower overall relationship quality, lower supportiveness, and greater physical abuse. Surprisingly, current paternal incarceration was positively associated with some indicators of relationship quality.

"The fact that current and recent paternal incarceration have countervailing consequences for relationship quality suggests that future research must continue to rigorously interrogate the timing of incarceration's effects on [family life](#)," wrote the authors of the *Journal of Marriage and Family* study, which included 3,433 men and women.

More information: Turney, K. (2015), Hopelessly Devoted? Relationship Quality During and After Incarceration. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 77: 480-495. [DOI: 10.1111/jomf.12174](https://doi.org/10.1111/jomf.12174)

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