

News Release

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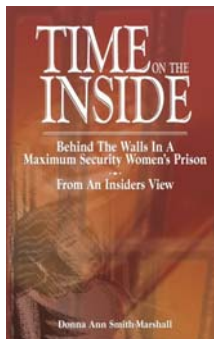
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Two-Thirds of Women in California Prison's are Mothers with Children under 18 and Why You Should Care about Women Going to Prison Today More Than Ever

LONG BEACH, CA –February 27, 2007 - Prison causes damage and disruption to the lives of vulnerable women, most of whom pose no risk to the public. Common offences for which women are sent to prison are theft, prostitution and drug use. Prison is often a very expensive way of making bad situations worse.

Donna Ann Smith-Marshall will inform you that:

- 4500 women prisoners are mothers with children under 18
- 18% of these children are in foster care
- 10% of women have lost parental rights and custody of their children
- Study shows a 12% increase in women's prison in 2006 from 2005
- 60% of women prisoners have mental health problems
- 35% have attempted suicide
- 25% have been in the foster care system as children
- At least 50% report being victims of childhood abuse or domestic violence
- 70% re-offend within one-year of release; 35% shortly thereafter
- Former women prisoners returning to their communities face serious challenges
- A prison bed costs around \$31,000 a year

CREDENTIALS: Donna Ann Smith-Marshall is an energetic media guest, a 13 year expert in the field of women and incarceration, a reformed ex-offender, mother, activist, and the author of a dynamic, informative, new book; ***TIME ON THE INSIDE: Behind The Walls In A Maximum Security Women's Prison From An Insiders View***— FMA Publishing — August, 2006. Smith-Marshall says; "Taking the most troubled individuals out of society and punishing them in order to teach them how to live within society is, at best, ineffective. Whatever else a prisoner knows, she knows everything there is to know about punishment because that is exactly what she has grown up with. Whether it is childhood sexual abuse, neglect, lack of concern; punishment is most familiar to her. Prison does not work. The best way to cut women's offending is to deal with its root causes". We must help women as they will continue to suffer and that of their children as well.

AVAILABILITY: California, nationwide by arrangement and via telephone. Available as a last minute guest and a great call-in show!

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