

**Fall 2022 Newsletter**

**The Extra Give is only a month away!**

Would you like to help children of incarcerated parents? Check out our donation page to see how you can help!

<https://www.extragive.org/organizations/ambassadors-for-hope>

**Financial Help Desperately Needed!**

No one can escape noticing that everything is becoming more expensive. Rising inflation means that the caregivers of children with incarcerated parents are experiencing increased difficulty meeting basic needs for food, housing, utilities, diapers, gas, etc. During the past year, Ambassadors for Hope has provided over \$500 in funds to purchase such things as diapers, wipes, glasses, gas, headphones needed for virtual schooling, and sneakers for children with parents in prison. Local grocery stores have also contributed gift cards to help defer these costs. However, as needs have recently increased, our resources are clearly insufficient. How can you help? Donate to Ambassadors for Hope during the **ExtraGive!** The **ExtraGive** is our largest source of income allowing us to continue to provide our support to these children throughout the year. Your support for AFH during this time is vital to help caregivers meet essential needs of a child whose parent has been incarcerated.

**Please donate during the ExtraGive at this link on November 18!**

<https://www.extragive.org/organizations/ambassadors-for-hope>

Any amount you can contribute is greatly appreciated and will directly benefit a child with an incarcerated parent. Thank you for helping Ambassadors for Hope meet the needs of children with parents in prison.

**Tracy Rennecker Community Liaison Update**

Things have been keeping me busy the last several months! Mostly I have been preparing for the ExtraGive on November 18! During this stressful time with rising costs to the families we support it is even more important that we have your support during the ExtraGive this year.

In addition to the ExtraGive I have been applying for corporate donations and visiting local stores requesting donations in gift cards for the Family Services Advocate to use for emergency items for the children she works for.

In August I attended the Back to School Night at Burrowes Elementary. It was a very worthwhile event. I met many families and teachers who were glad to hear

event at Burrowes elementary in the beginning of October. This event is an effort managed by the Community School Director, Alexander Rohrer to connect the families at this school to community agencies on a more regular basis throughout the school year. It is an opportunity for agencies to have a presence in the school community while providing families with information and resources.

I have also been occupied with the children's book project, working with three Millersville University students to revisit appropriate books for middle school age children and beginning to look for books to be vetted for high school level reading. More to come very soon on this project!



*Photo above:*

*Tracy Rennecker pictured at Burrowes Elementary Back to School Night in August*

*Photo below: Tracy Rennecker pictured with participants at Burrowes Elementary Community Connections event in early October*

## Family Services Advocate Update

The Family Services Advocate Program continues to receive consistent referrals from Lancaster County Prison. Since March of 2022, Karlee distributed 68 bears to children with a personalized recording from their incarcerated parent. These bears have allowed 68 children to keep an attachment with their mother or father providing comforting moments when they are missing their parent. The Program is continuing to investigate different ways on how to be the most purposeful and make the most impact for the children and families that are affected by parental incarceration. Special visitations at Lancaster County Prison have restarted. This allows a child to have a 1-hour contact visit with their parent once a month when specific guidelines are met. The parent and the child can read books, color, play games, and hug each other, while ultimately

maintaining the important bond between the parent and child. Karlee will be presenting in December at the DDAP Post-natal Symposium about how parental incarceration impacts children, how to build protective factors around children, and the work the Family Services Advocate Program does to support the children affected by parental incarceration.



*Photo: Ambassadors for Hope bear given to children with a parent in prison.*

## Parents - the second time around

In the past year, over half of the 192 children referred to the Family Services Advocate lived with grandparents. Grandparents who take on caregiving roles are more likely to experience depression and chronic health problems as they are forced to reduce their daily activities, modify their time of employment, and possibly need to quit their jobs or reduce their work hours to care for their grandchildren.

These families will have a very difficult challenge without support from friends, neighbors, and the community. many churches have programs to assist these families. **If you wish to help a family please donate during the 2022 ExtraGive on Friday, November 18.** You can also send a donation to Ambassadors for Hope, 8 South George Street, Millersville, PA 17551, or visit the Ambassadors for Hope website to make a donation <http://www.ambassadorsforhope.com/donate.php>

## Suggested Resources

### **Tips to Support Children When a Parent is in Prison**

*By: Rosemary Martoma, MD, FAAP*

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