



Sister Warriors
Freedom Coalition
sisterwarriorsfree.org

Young Women's
Freedom Center
youngwomenfree.org

For The People
forthepeople.org

Mother's Day
2022

BOND BEYOND BARS

Motherhood & Incarceration



YOUNG WOMEN'S
FREEDOM CENTER



Because Mothers Deserve To Be Reunited With Their Loved Ones

Women are the fastest growing prison population in the United States, and a majority of incarcerated women are mothers. This Mother's Day, we are fighting for the nearly **150,000 incarcerated mothers** who will not be able to spend this day with their children. With most mothers acting as primary caretakers, ripping apart families is inhumane and causes a ripple effect across entire communities. When families are broken, public safety is at risk.

That is why **For The People** is partnering with the **Sister Warriors Freedom Coalition** and **Young Women's Freedom Center** to bring more mothers home, where they belong. We recommend the following steps be taken to reunite mothers with their children as soon as possible:

1 Ensure resentencing criteria addresses the unique experiences of women and gender-expansive people.

Prosecutors in states including CA, OR, WA, IL, and LA have the ability to bring cases back to court and recommend a person's resentencing and release. We urge them to focus their efforts on women and gender-expansive people by incorporating their specific needs, experiences, and context throughout the resentencing process.

2 Recognize criminalized survivors during conviction, sentencing, incarceration, and resentencing.

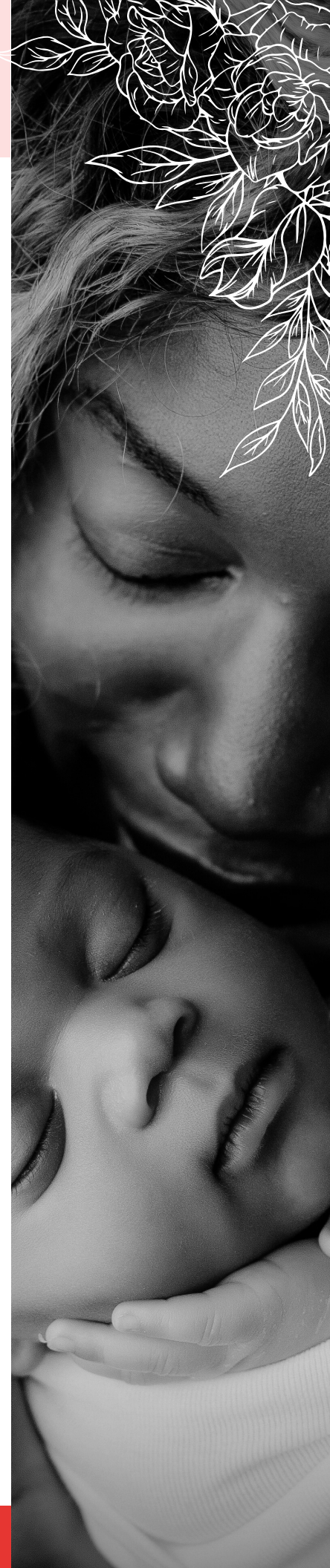
The majority of incarcerated women are survivors of abuse, violence, or trafficking. Following the language in California's AB 124 (2021) and other legislation like it, prosecutors should learn to identify whether someone is a criminalized survivor and to take into account trauma and how it may have contributed to the offense.

3 Create more humane conditions for incarcerated women and gender-expansive people leading up to reunification.

We must increase availability and access to physical and mental healthcare for incarcerated and formerly incarcerated women and gender-expansive people, end conditions that allow sexual assault to occur while in custody, and improve visitation and reunification services that separate mothers from their children.

4 Invest in alternatives to incarceration for mothers, caregivers, pregnant people, and survivors.

The state should provide funding for alternatives to incarceration and alternative crisis response models that can reduce trauma and family separation due to incarceration. We should consider alternatives such as community housing for people who are pregnant or caretaking young children.



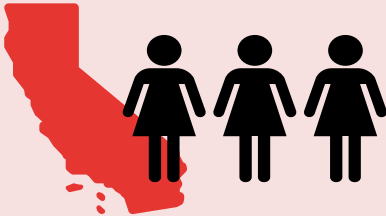
MOTHERHOOD & INCARCERATION



475% ↑

WOMEN ARE THE NATION'S FASTEST GROWING PRISON POPULATION

From 1980 to 2020, the state prison population of women increased by over 475%, double the rate of increase for men.



CALIFORNIA HAS THE WORLD'S LARGEST WOMEN'S PRISON

Central California Women's Facility in Chowchilla, CA, houses the most women in the world.



62-79%

MOST INCARCERATED WOMEN ARE MOMS

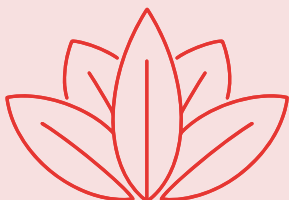
Almost two thirds (62%) of women in prison are mothers to minor children, while over three fourths (79%) of women in jail are mothers to young children.



25%

ABOUT 1 IN 4 WOMEN HAVE A FAMILY MEMBER IN PRISON.

And almost one in every two Black women has a family member who is in prison.



60-86%

MOST INCARCERATED WOMEN ARE SURVIVORS OF ABUSE.

60% of women in state prisons have experienced past physical or sexual abuse. 86% of women in jail have experienced past sexual violence, and 77% have experienced past partner violence.

THREE MOTHERS.



Amika. 7 years lost.

"There's just no words for how it felt: **that first hug** where you can hold your child without guards being over your shoulder or saying you have five seconds left to hold your loved one."



Benee. 10 years lost.

"Being a mother without my partner was hard. Driving **eight hours to prison** during rain and snow... the kids would cry because they missed their dad. I did everything alone. But now, he takes care of everything. I come home, dinner's made."



Lynne. 18 years lost.

"It was probably about the worst thing I've ever been through. And then when my son was released, **it was hard to believe**. Since he was a little kid, he's had so much potential. Now — oh, I can't wait to see him fly."



[Click here to watch the video.](#)