



"CLOSE IN HEART" READING LIST

[All Rise for the Honorable Perry Cook](#) by Leslie Connor (Ages: 8 - 12 years, Grades: 3 - 7)

Eleven-year-old Perry was born and raised by his mom at the Blue River Co-ed Correctional Facility in tiny Surprise, Nebraska. His mom is a resident on Cell Block C, and so far Warden Daugherty has made it possible for them to be together. That is, until a new district attorney discovers the truth-- and Perry is removed from the facility and forced into a foster home. When Perry moves to the "outside" world, he feels trapped. Desperate to be reunited with his mom, Perry goes on a quest for answers about her past crime. As he gets closer to the truth, he will discover that love makes people resilient no matter where they come from... but can he find a way to tell everyone what home truly means?

[B.O.S.S. Stories](#) by Jaclyn Walker (Grades: K-12)

These real life stories are from the perspective of 9 children and 2 adults that have been impacted by incarceration. However, these B.O.S.S. (Breaking Obstacles to Seek Success) stories will encourage others in similar situations that regardless of your circumstances, then you can still be a BOSS!

[Far Apart, Close in Heart](#) by Becky Birtha (Ages: 4-8)

Children can experience many emotions when a parent is in jail or prison. They may be angry, sad, lonely, or scared. Sometimes friends act differently toward them. Sometimes the children begin acting differently too. In this important book, young readers will learn that even when it feels like nothing can get better again, there are ways they can improve their circumstances. Sending letters, talking to a trusted grown-up about their feelings, and even visiting a parent in jail or prison can help keep a parent close in their hearts. Use this title as a helpful tool to start a conversation with any child in this situation and to remind them they are not alone.

[Farm Team](#) by Will Weaver (Ages: 12 and up and Grades: 7- 9)

With his father in jail and his mother working full-time, fourteen-year-old Billy Baggs finds himself in charge of running the family farm in northern Minnesota and having to give up the thing he loves most--baseball.

Find more resources at: suffolkpubliclibrary.com



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[Mountain Dog](#) by Margarita Engle (Ages: 8-12 years)

Grade Level: 3 - 4 When his mother is sent to jail in Los Angeles, eleven-year-old Tony goes to live with his forest ranger great-uncle in the Sierra Nevada Mountains, where Tony experiences unconditional love for the first time through his friendship with a rescue dog.

[The Night Dad Went to Jail](#) by Melissa Higgins (Ages: 5-8, Grades: 2-3)

When someone you love goes to jail, you might feel lost, scared, and even mad. This colorfully illustrated book lets children know that they are not alone in this situation. It offers age appropriate explanations to help with difficult conversations. Told from the experience of a rabbit, this picture book is intended to make a parent's incarceration a little less frightening.

[Our Moms \(Living with Incarcerated Parents\)](#) by Q. Futrell (Grades: Elementary)

Meet Michael, Paul, Jennifer and Anne! All children are different in many ways, but all have one thing in common, their moms are in prison. Parental Incarceration affects children in many ways. This book will serve as a conversation starter for such a sensitive issue that impacts nearly 3 million children in the US.

[Pieces of Why](#) by K. L. Going (Grades: 4-7)

Twelve-year-old Tia lives in a white slum in New Orleans with her mother, and her whole world revolves around singing in the gospel choir with her best friend, Keisha--but when practice is interrupted by a shooting outside the church, and a baby is killed, Tia finds that she cannot sing, and she is forced to confront her feelings about her incarcerated father who killed a girl in a failed robbery years before.

[Ruby on the Outside](#) by Nora Baskin (Ages: 8-12, Grades: 3-7)

Ruby's mom is in prison, and to tell anyone the truth is to risk true friendship in this novel that accurately and sensitively addresses a subject too often overlooked

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[The Same Stuff As Stars](#) by Katherine Paterson (Ages: 10-12, Grades: 5-7)

Angel Morgan needs help. Daddy is in jail, and Mama has abandoned her and her little brother, leaving them with their great-grandmother. Grandma is aged and poor, and doesn't make any attempt to care for the children—that's left up to Angel, even though she is not yet twelve. The only bright spot in Angel's existence is the Star Man, a mysterious stranger who appears on clear nights and teaches her all about the stars and planets and constellations. "We're made out of the same stuff as the stars," he tells her.

[Tight](#) by Torrey Maldonado (Ages: 10 - 13 years, Grades: 5- 6)

After his quick-tempered father gets in a fight and is sent back to jail, sixth-grader Bryan, known for being quiet and thoughtful, snaps and follows new friend Mike into trouble.

[Tyrell](#) by Coe Booth (Grades: 8-12)

Fifteen-year-old Tyrell, who is living in a Bronx homeless shelter with his spaced-out mother and his younger brother, tries to avoid temptation so he does not end up in jail like his father.

[Visiting Day](#) by Jacqueline Woodson (Ages: 5-7, Grades K-2)

In this moving picture book from multi-award winning author Jacqueline Woodson, a young girl and her grandmother prepare for a very special day--the one day a month they get to visit the girl's father in prison.

[What Do I Say About That?](#) by Julia Cook (Ages: 8 - 12 years, Grades: 2 - 6)

This book takes a unique look at the internal struggles with which a child of an incarcerated parent is faced

[What Will Happen to Me?](#) by Howard Zehr (Grades: 7-12)

Pairs portraits of children whose parents are incarcerated with the reflections of grandparents who are caring for them and includes resources for caregivers and advice on dealing with the unique emotions of these children.

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[When I Miss You](#) by Cornelia Spelman (Ages: 4 - 8 years)

A young guinea pig describes situations that make him miss his parents, how it feels to miss them, and what he can do to feel better.

[The Year The Swallows Came Early](#) by Kathryn Fitzmaurice (Ages: 8 - 12 years, Grades: 4 - 7)

After her father is sent to jail for gambling away the inheritance she planned to use for culinary school, eleven-year-old Groovy Robinson must decide if she can forgive the failings of someone she loves.

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