

## Actual Birth Experiences of Incarcerated Mothers From Across the US

A woman in Chicago was arrested for cashing fake payroll checks at seven months pregnant. When she went into labor, officers cuffed her hands together and chained her legs together. Another chain was placed around her contracting belly, connecting her hands to her feet. When she got to the hospital, the belly chain was removed, but her legs were still chained, and one hand was cuffed to the bed. She remained that way for nine hours, until it came time to push. At that point, the correctional officer unlocked the leg restraints, but left one arm cuffed to the bed. An hour later she delivered her baby

<https://www.nytimes.com/2015/04/22/us/politics/128563021>

Billings, MT an incarcerated woman was forced to deliver her daughter on a filthy booking room floor of the Yellowstone County Detention Facility in Billings in 2012 after several requests for medical aid were ignored.

Source: <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-prison-montana/pregnant-inmates-sometimes-mistreated-in-montana-jails-ocw-says-idUSKBN0CZ28N20140904>

In August of 2019, released surveillance footage showed a 26-year-old inmate alerting Denver County Jail deputies and medical staff that she was in labor, she was ignored and gave birth to her son, alone in her cell without any medical aid or assistance. Her experience is not isolated, as a number of reports by women in prisons and jails across the country have revealed a similar disregard for pregnant women's basic needs. <https://www.prisonpolicy.org/blog/2019/11/205/pregnancy/>

A woman at Rikers Island Prison, NY describes the experience of being pregnant there as dehumanizing and incredibly traumatic. She did not receive prenatal care, even though she was ethically and legally entitled to it, she was deprived food by officers, subjected to invasive and illegal cavity searches and was accused of smuggling drugs instead of being pregnant. She was told by correctional officers that this is what she deserved because she committed a crime, with no regard for her condition or needs as a pregnant woman. [https://www.womensop.org/issue\\_brief\\_pregnancy\\_and\\_birthing\\_in\\_jails\\_and\\_prisons](https://www.womensop.org/issue_brief_pregnancy_and_birthing_in_jails_and_prisons)



# BABIES BEYOND BARS

Supporting Incarcerated Pregnant and breastfeeding individuals

## OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this activity, you will be able to:

1. Identify programs for Federal, State, and Local correctional facilities as it relates to giving birth and breastfeeding while incarcerated.
2. List barriers to breastfeeding encountered by women who are in the correctional setting.
3. Describe the findings of the current study of the current status of pregnant or breastfeeding women who are incarcerated.
4. List recommended actions that citizens, health workers, hospital units, and correctional facilities can take to support breastfeeding among women who are incarcerated.



# BABIES BEYOND BARS

Supporting Incarcerated Pregnant and breastfeeding individuals

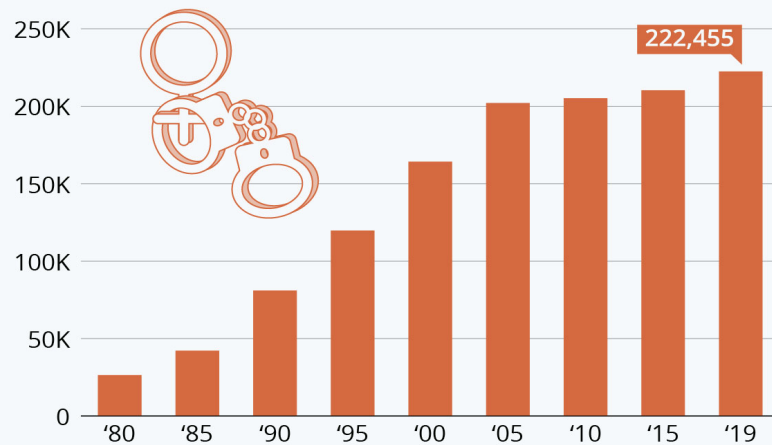


## WHO IS SHE...

In general, incarcerated people tend to be those with marginalized identities and those struggling with poverty, substance use disorders, housing insecurity, abuse, abandonment and many other serious issues. Incarcerated people are a diverse cross-section of society whose disadvantages and unmet needs often begin early in life and continue into adulthood, causing multiple vulnerabilities. Particularly women.

## The Rise of Incarcerated Women in the U.S.

Number of women in U.S. jails and state/federal prisons\*



Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics via The Sentencing Project



statista

Interactive. (2022, November 23). *Incarcerated women and girls*. The Sentencing Project. Retrieved March 19, 2023, from <https://www.sentencingproject.org/fact-sheet/incarcerated-women-and-girls/>

The number of women incarcerated in the U.S. increased by **700** percent over the past four decades, according to the research and advocacy center's The Sentencing Project, there has been an increase from **26,378 in 1980 to 222,455 in 2019**. Twice the rate of growth for men. **1.2 million** women are currently under supervision in the criminal justice system.

*Gendered justice: Women in the criminal justice system.* (n.d.). Retrieved March 18, 2023, from <https://www.centerforgenderandjustice.org/site/assets/files/1536/4.pdf>



INCARCERATED MOTHERS  
ARE DESPERATE FOR YOUR  
ADVOCACY AND SUPPORT.







## PREGNANCY IN PRISON STATISTICS (PIPS) PROJECT

Until ARRWIP's "Pregnancy in Prison Statistics" (PIPS) study, there have been no systematic data on how many pregnant people are behind bars in the U.S. or what happens to those pregnancies. This historical absence of data shows us just how neglected incarcerated pregnant people are. With the First Step Act of 2018, the Bureau of Justice Statistics is now required to collect pregnancy outcomes data from federal prisons, but we have a long way to go for people in jails and state prisons.

*Pregnancy in prison statistics (PIPS) project. ARRWIP. (n.d.). Retrieved March 17, 2023, from <https://arrwip.org/projects/pregnancy-in-prison-statistics-pips-project/>*



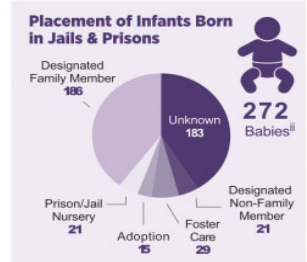
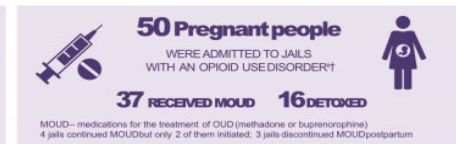
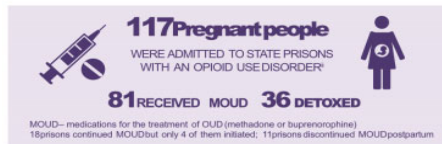
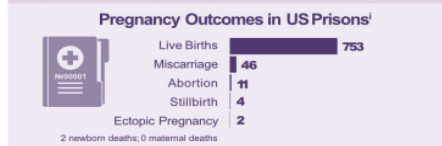
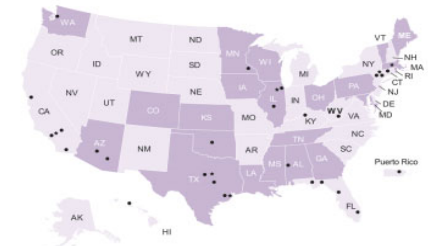
## Incarcerated Pregnant People in a 12Month Period

### Collecting Data on Incarcerated Pregnant People

From 2016-2017, statistics were collected on pregnancy outcomes from all federal prisons and a sample of state prisons and of large jails across the US, representing 57% of females in prison and 5% of females in jail. Participating prisons and jails reported aggregate data on a monthly basis for one year.

- State Department of Corrections
- Jails
- Federal Bureau of Prisons

Outcomes reported for 22 state DOCs, all Federal prisons, and 6 jails.



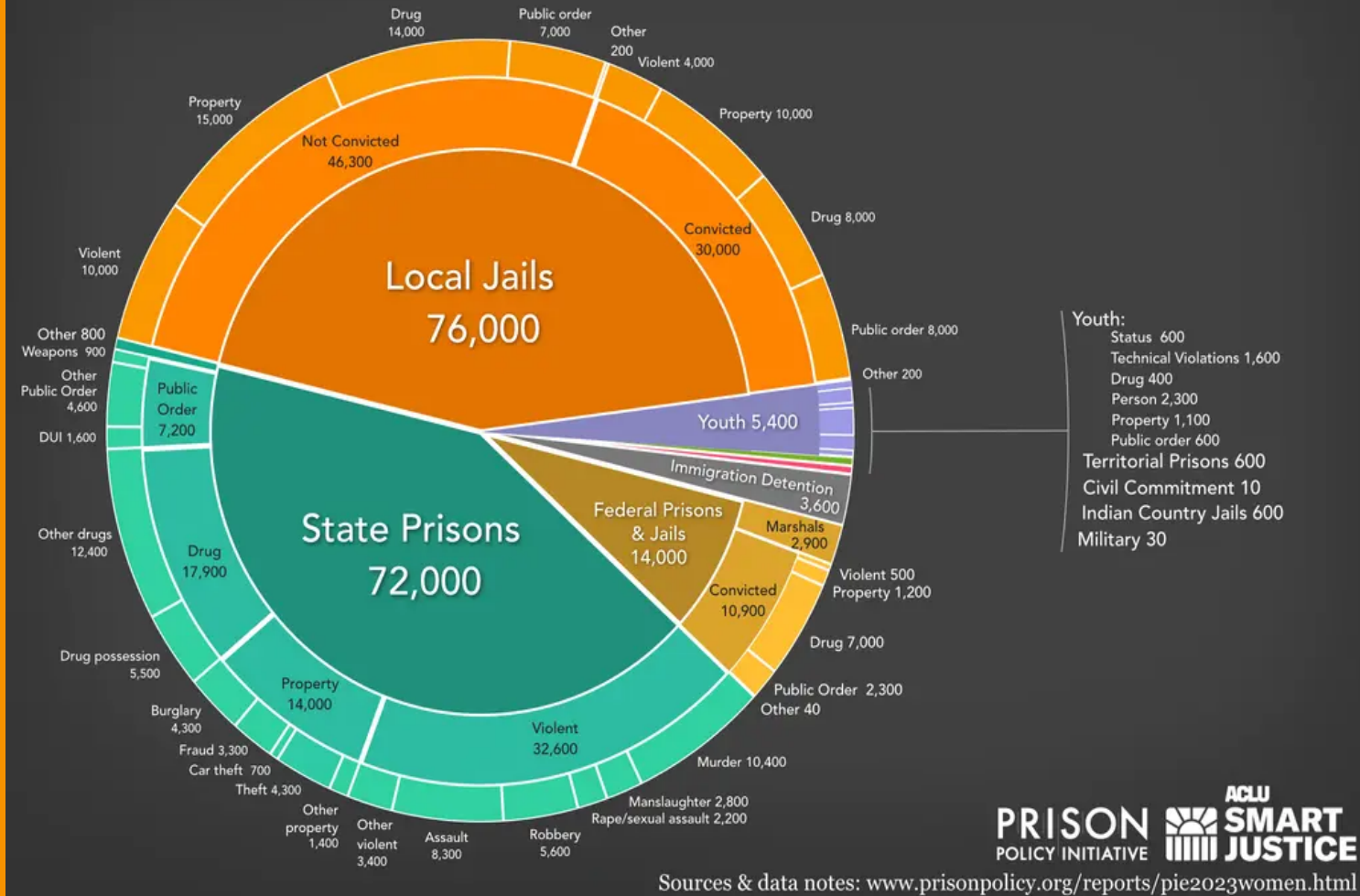
<sup>1</sup>Pregnancy outcomes data were available for women whose pregnancies ended while they were still incarcerated.  
<sup>2</sup>Data collected in a 6 month period. For a subset of sites that choose to report these outcomes (OUD: 20 prisons, 4 jails; Breastfeeding numbers: 13prisons, 5 jails; breastfeeding policies were reported for all 22 prisons and 6 jails. Infant placement: 19prisons, 5 jails; Tubal numbers: 10prisons, 4 jails; tubal policies were reported for all 22 prisons and 6 jails)  
<sup>3</sup>Reporting discrepancy in # of people with OUD and # of treatment interventions  
For full data and citations, please visit arrwip.org.

INFANTS ARE  
TAKEN FROM  
THEIR  
MOTHERS  
IMMEDIATELY  
AFTER BIRTH



# How many women are locked up in the United States?

The United States is one of the top incarcerators of women in the world. Changing that will require knowing where the 173,000 incarcerated women fall within our decentralized and overlapping systems of mass incarceration.

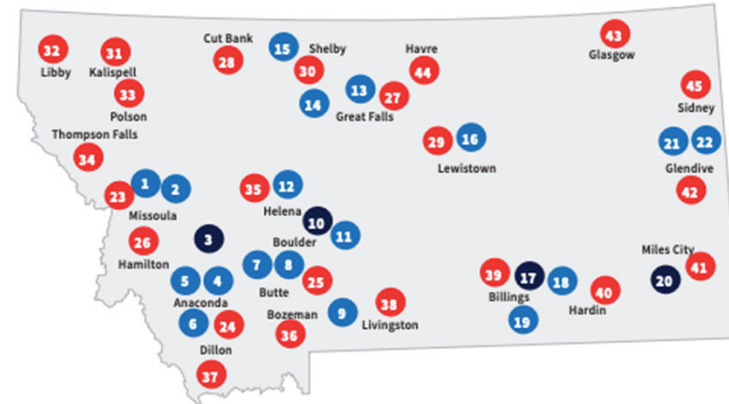


Sources & data notes: [www.prisonpolicy.org/reports/pie2023women.html](http://www.prisonpolicy.org/reports/pie2023women.html)



# MONTANA CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES

## OFFICES AND FACILITIES MAP



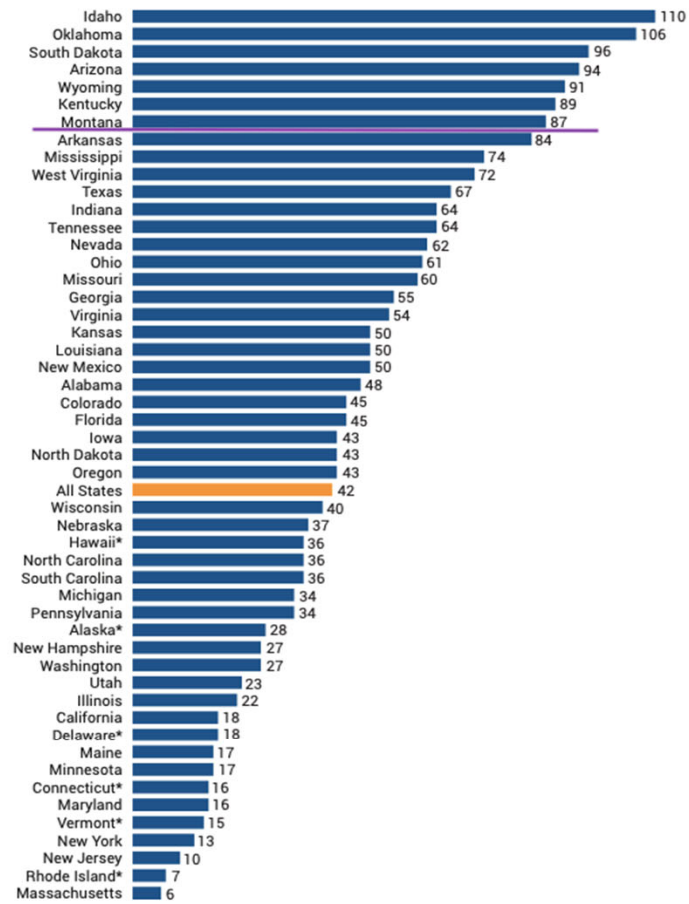
- |   |   |                              |                          |
|---|---|------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 Missoula Assessment & Sanction Center (MASC)                | 15 Crossroads Correctional Center   | 23 Missoula P&P Office       | 36 Bozeman P&P Office    |
| 2 Missoula Prerelease Center                                  | 16 Nexus Treatment Center   | 24 Anaconda P&P Office       | 37 Dillon P&P Office     |
| 3 Montana State Prison  | 17 Montana Women's Prison   | 25 Butte P&P Office          | 38 Livingston P&P Office |
| 4 WATCH West - Warm Springs                                   | 18 Alpha House Prerelease Center  | 26 Hamilton P&P Office       | 39 Billings P&P Office   |
| 5 Connections Corrections Program (CCP West)                  | 19 Passages: Prerelease Center  | 27 Great Falls P&P Office    | 40 Hardin P&P Office     |
| 6 Sanction, Treatment, Assessment & Revocation Center (START) | Assessment, Sanction & Revocation Center (ASRC)                                   | 28 Cut Bank P&P Office       | 41 Miles City P&P Office |
| 7 Butte Prerelease Center                                     | Alcohol & Drug Treatment (ADT)  | 29 Lewistown P&P Office      | 42 Glendive P&P Office   |
| 8 Connections Corrections Program (CCP East)                  | 20 Pine Hills Correctional Facility - Youth & Adult: Young Adult Treatment Center | 30 Shelby P&P Office         | 43 Glasgow P&P Office    |
| 9 Gallatin County Reentry Program                             | Assessment Center   | 31 Kalispell P&P Office      | 44 Havre P&P Office      |
| 10 Riverside Special Needs Unit                               | Alcohol & Drug Treatment (ADT)  | 32 Libby P&P Office          | 45 Sidney P&P Office     |
| 11 Elkhorn Treatment Center                                   | Jail Hold Unit  | 33 Polson P&P Office         |                          |
| 12 Helena Prerelease Center                                   | 21 Dawson County Correctional Facility  | 34 Thompson Falls P&P Office |                          |
| 13 Great Falls Prerelease Center                              | 22 WATCH East - Glendive  | 35 Helena P&P Office         |                          |
| 14 Great Falls Regional Prison                                |   |                              |                          |

State - owned Facility      Contracted Facility      Probation & Parole Offices



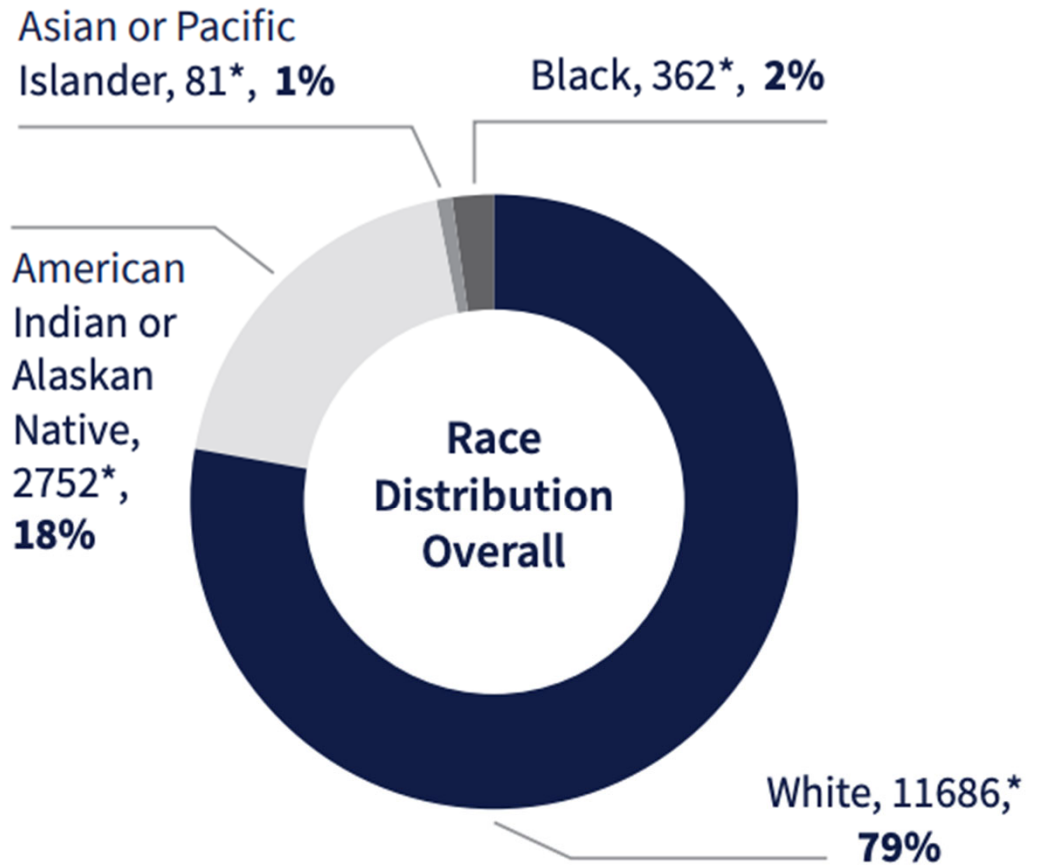


### Highest and Lowest Female State Imprisonment Rates (per 100,000 U.S. Female Residents), 2020



\*In these states with integrated jail and prison systems, data include both jail and prison populations.  
Source: Carson, E.A. (2021). *Prisoners in 2020 - Statistical Tables*. Washington, DC: Bureau of Justice Statistics

MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF  
CORRECTIONS RACIAL  
STATISTICS OF INMATES



\*These numbers do not include Interstate Compact offenders

## Top 10 Offenses for Male and Female Offenders FY2020

<b>Males</b>		<b>Total</b>
<b>1</b>	Criminal Possession of Dangerous Drugs	<b>826</b>
<b>2</b>	Criminal Endangerment	<b>384</b>
<b>3</b>	Theft	<b>293</b>
<b>4</b>	Driving Under Influence of Alcohol or Drugs -- Penalty for Fourth or Subsequent Offense	<b>250</b>
<b>5</b>	Burglary	<b>177</b>
<b>6</b>	Assault With a Weapon	<b>118</b>
<b>7</b>	Strangulation of a Partner or Family Member	<b>100</b>
<b>8</b>	Partner/Family Member Assault	<b>86</b>
<b>9</b>	Criminal Possession with Intent to Distribute	<b>74</b>
<b>10</b>	Failure to Register as Sex or Violent Offender	<b>73</b>

<b>Females</b>		<b>Total</b>
<b>1</b>	Criminal Possession of Dangerous Drugs	<b>453</b>
<b>2</b>	Theft	<b>86</b>
<b>3</b>	Criminal Endangerment	<b>85</b>
<b>4</b>	Driving Under Influence of Alcohol or Drugs -- Penalty for Fourth or Subsequent Offense	<b>45</b>
<b>5</b>	Criminal Child Endangerment	<b>36</b>
<b>6</b>	Criminal Possession with Intent to Distribute	<b>32</b>
<b>7</b>	Burglary	<b>29</b>
<b>8</b>	Criminal Distribution of Dangerous Drugs	<b>25</b>
<b>9</b>	Forgery	<b>21</b>
<b>10</b>	Bail Jumping	<b>20</b>





SHACKLING WOMEN DURING  
CHILDBIRTH IS INHUMANE



**MONTANA  
JAIL  
STANDARD  
POLICY ON  
PREGNANCY:**

**Prenatal and Postpartum Health Care  
Program:**

- Access to obstetrical services by a qualified provider
- Provisions of pregnancy management include the following:
- Pregnancy testing
- Routine and high-risk prenatal care  
Management of chemically addicted pregnant inmates
- Appropriate nutrition
- Postpartum follow up



Passages Women's Community Correctional Facility ♦ Billings, Montana



Jennie Hansen, Warden for MTWS Prison since 2017, addresses the reasons many women are in prison, citing the financial and domestic issues that lead many women to criminal activity. “Maybe it was a forged check or embezzlement to make ends meet. A single mother can’t pay the rent and feed four children on a waitress’s salary. Maybe it was a drug sale for the man who gave her money.”

It's not netflix. Home. (n.d.). Retrieved March 18, 2023, from <https://yellowstonevalleywoman.com/its-not-netflix/>



## Montana Women's Prison ♦ Billings, Montana





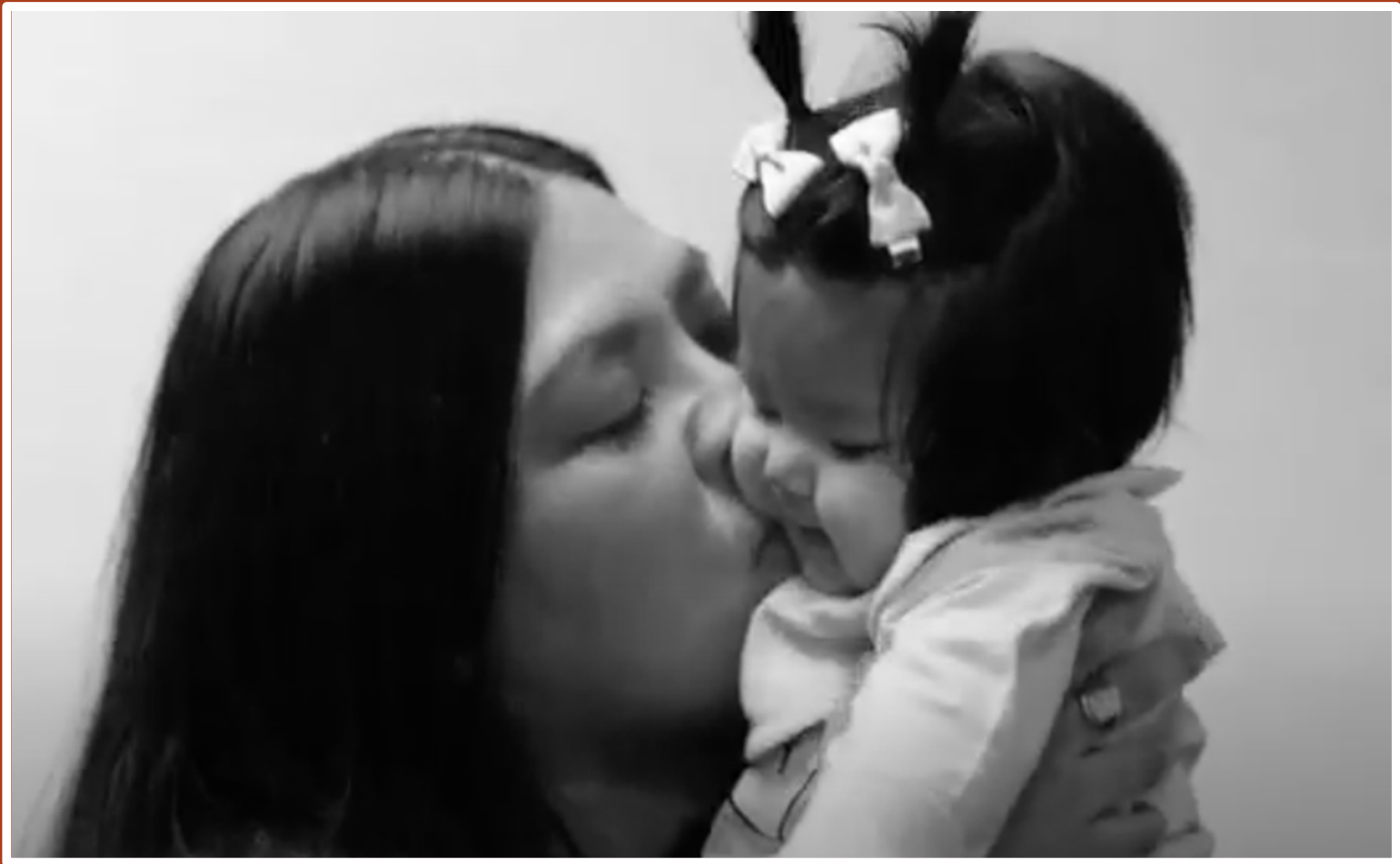
Her newborn is put in the custody of a caregiver who may be a relative or a foster placement.

The mother may or may not know the caregiver.

But her heart is broken, nonetheless. It is not at all unusual for a baby to be cared for out of state.





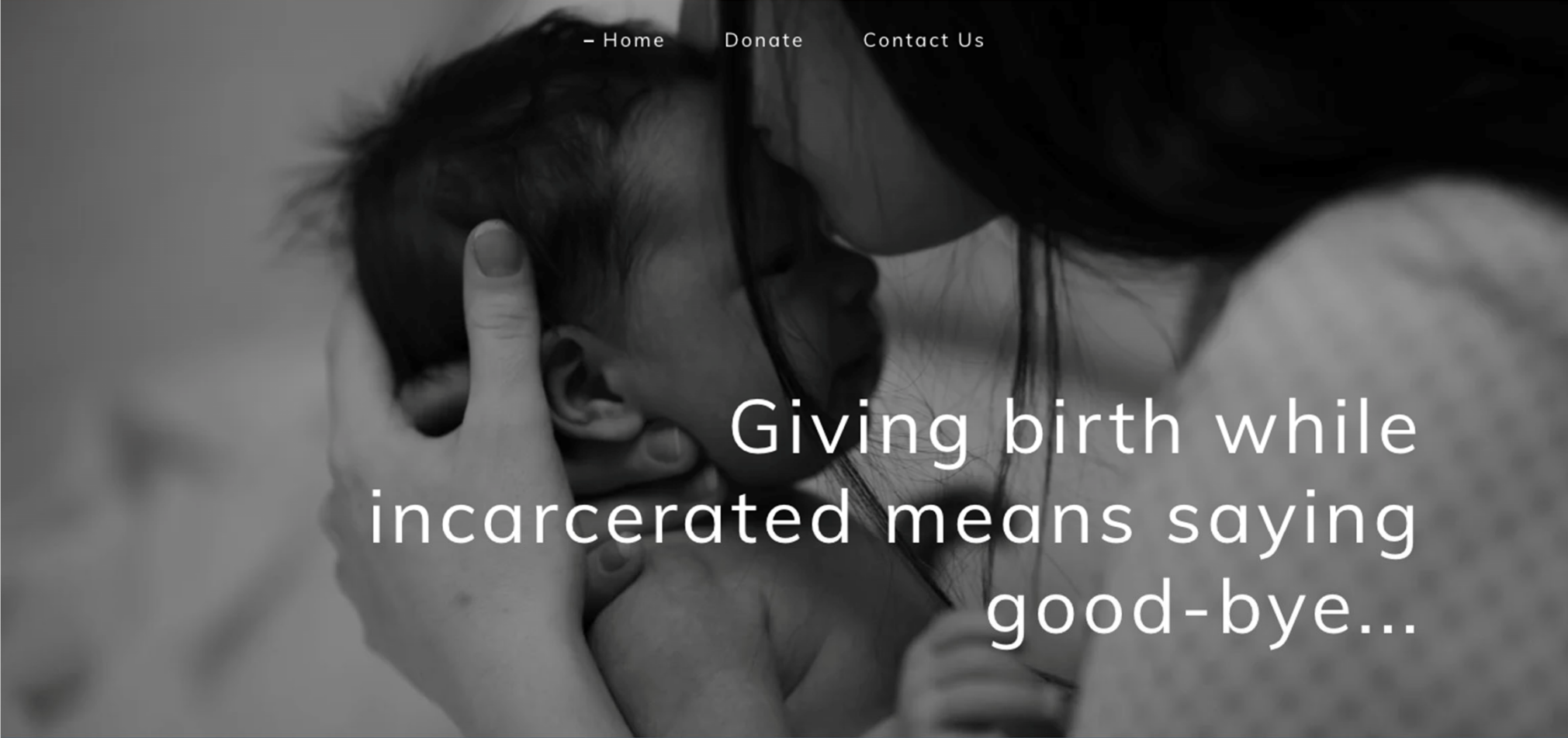


Your donations allow nurturing to continue for Babies Beyond Bars

[- Home](#)

[Donate](#)

[Contact Us](#)



Giving birth while  
incarcerated means saying  
good-bye...

[BABIESBEYONDBARS.ORG](http://BABIESBEYONDBARS.ORG)



*The Family Tree Center strives to foster a community where all families have the support and resources, they need to provide safe, stable, and nurturing relationships and environments.*

## **THE FAMILY TREE NURTURING CENTER**

### **Child Abuse Prevention Center of Montana**

Providing:

- Parent Education using The Nurturing Parent Program® both in the classroom and The Montana Women's State Prison
  - Childcare
  - Respite Childcare
  - Developmental Preschool
- In Home Mentoring with The Parent Aide Home Visiting Model
  - Parent Connect Groups





### **Benefits to mothers who participate in the Babies Beyond Bars program:**

- A. She will receive professional prenatal education for childbirth and breastfeeding at her facility throughout her journey.
- B. Babies and caregivers will be pre-qualified for WIC services, so they are ready to receive the WIC child benefits.
- C. She will receive care from a certified Doula who can provide prenatal pregnancy support, preparation for and support during the birth of her child along with postnatal support as she adjusts to separation from her infant.
- D. She will work directly with hospital lactation nurses who will have a pre-planned breastfeeding and pumping plan, specific to her unique circumstances. She will receive assistance with breastfeeding her infant, along with instructions specific to the Symphony hospital grade breast pump and will be issued a personal use pump kit with properly fitted flanges that she will take back to the facility along with her pumping plan.
  - A. If she arrives at the facility and has already given birth elsewhere, she will be issued a personal use pump kit at the facility.
- E. Once she has returned to the facility, she will have the use of the same Symphony hospital grade breast pump that she learned to use while in the hospital.
- F. Babies Beyond Bars staff will work with the infant's caregiver to educate about health benefits and the safe handling and feeding of expressed breastmilk.
- G. She will be furnished with breastmilk storage bags for freezing the expressed milk.
- H. Her breastmilk will be safely packed and delivered or shipped directly to the baby's caregiver.
- I. Shipping costs will be covered by Babies Beyond Bars.
- J. She will receive breast pads, a pumping bra and help with any breast issues, milk production issues or non-medical postnatal issues that arise during her journey to provide her breastmilk to her baby.

Your donations allow nurturing to continue for Babies Beyond Bars

[- Home](#)

[Donate](#)

[Contact Us](#)



Giving birth while  
incarcerated means saying  
good-bye...

[BABIESBEYONDBARS.ORG](http://BABIESBEYONDBARS.ORG)

## Washington Corrections Center for Women



*There are roughly 119 federal & state prisons for women in the US.*

*The February 21, 2022, issue of Women's Community Justice Association stated that there are currently only 11 prisons in the United States that have specific programs or policies that allow breastfeeding, and 5 jails allow breastfeeding and/or pumping.*

*There are only nine states that have prison nursery programs: New York, Nebraska, Washington, Ohio, Indiana, South Dakota, Illinois, West Virginia, and Wyoming.*



## Prison programs around the United States:

- Alabama:** The Alabama Prison Birth Project began in 2016. The organization provides support and information about childbirth and the postpartum experience, a healthy meal is provided for expectant mothers, a doula is available, and they built a lactation room out of an 'isolation cell' in 2018.
  - California:** California Assembly Bill 2507, now California Penal Code § 4002.5 took effect on Jan. 1, 2020. The law requires county jails to develop and implement an infant and toddler breastmilk feeding policy for people who are detained in or sentenced to county jail.
  - Florida:** Lowell CI Women's Prison has a lactation program.
  - Georgia:** Motherhood Beyond Bars, founded in 2013 provides pregnancy and postpartum health education and support.
  - Illinois:** The Illinois Birth Justice (IBJ) was founded in 2015 and put doulas into the pregnancy tier at Cook County Jail, developed policies and organized maternal support for women who wished to breastfeed while incarcerated in Logan prison and Cook County Jail.
  - Minnesota:** The Minnesota Prison Doula Project, founded in 2008 provides doulas and breastmilk expression support
- Michigan:**
- Michigan Department of Corrections pre- and post-natal care include counseling, Lamaze and parenting classes, and childcare options. They can express breastmilk if scheduled for parole within 45 days after delivery.
  - Prison Doula Initiative has provided childbirth education and birth doula support to birthing people in Michigan's women's prison since 2018.

## Prison programs around the United States:

### •Pennsylvania:

- Clinton Township SCI Muncy Correctional Facility-Pilot program to introduce the use of Doulas
- Philadelphia the Riverside Jail allows women to pump

•**New Mexico:** In August 2017, NM District Court ruled that breastfeeding is a constitutional right under the NM Equal Rights Amendment and held that NM Corrections Dept must allow inmate mothers to breastfeed during in-person visitations and must allow inmate mothers to use an electric breast pump to express milk while they are. This was in response to Monique Hidalgo, a prisoner serving a three-year sentence in New Mexico, who sued the state for her right to breastfeed her child during visits.

•**New York:** The Ladies of Hope Ministries was founded by former inmates who created The Reproductive Justice Program because prisons don't support pregnant individuals.

•**Oregon:** The Family Preservation Project lactation program - started in 2018

•**Texas:** Mothers and Infants Together (MINT) Program

•**Virginia:** The Virginia Prison Birth Project provides doulas & breastfeeding - began in 2019

•Washington: The Parenting Program in Washington State - began in 1999

•**West Virginia:** Mothers and Infants Together (MINT) Program





# BABIES BEYOND BARS.ORG

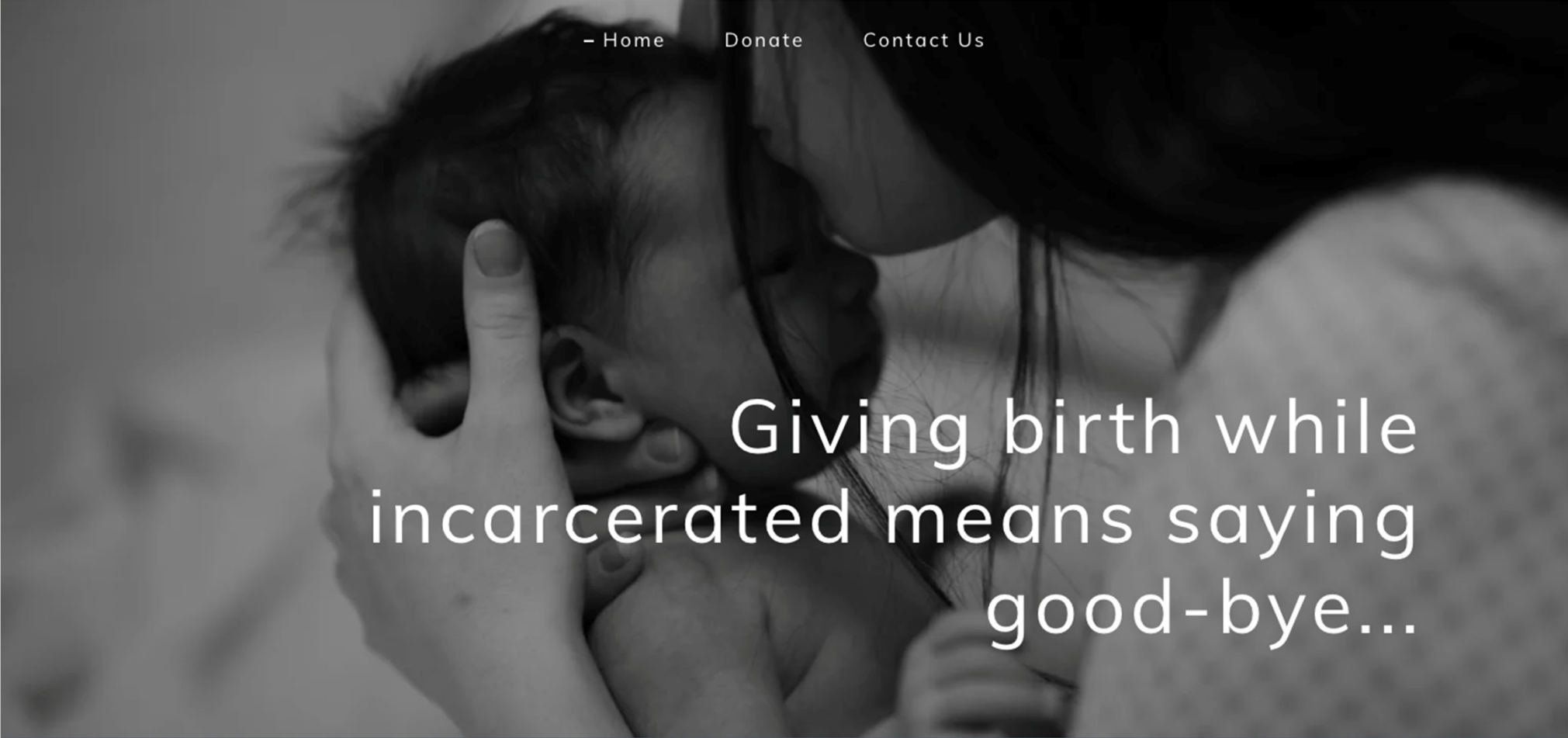
Supporting Incarcerated Pregnant and breastfeeding individuals

Your donations allow nurturing to continue for Babies Beyond Bars

[- Home](#)

[Donate](#)

[Contact Us](#)



Giving birth while  
incarcerated means saying  
good-bye...

[BABIESBEYONDBARS.ORG](http://BABIESBEYONDBARS.ORG)

