

# CENTER FOR LAW AND SOCIAL POLICY (CLASP) AND COMMUNITY LEGAL SERVICES, INC.,

## **EVERY DOOR CLOSED FOR EX-OFFENDER PARENTS TRYING TO REBUILD THEIR LIVES AND FAMILIES**

New Fact Sheets Offer Solutions for Ending Unfair Exclusions From Jobs,  
Housing, and Basic Services

(To download the fact sheets, visit: [http://www.clasp.org/Pubs/Pubs\\_New](http://www.clasp.org/Pubs/Pubs_New).  
For printed copies of the fact sheets in a folder, call (202) 906-8000.)

(Washington, DC) - Each year, approximately 400,000 mothers and fathers finish serving prison or jail sentences and return home eager to rebuild their families and their lives. As these parents struggle to make a fresh start, they encounter many legal barriers that will make it very difficult for them to successfully care for their children, find work, get safe housing, go to school, access public benefits, or even, for immigrants, stay in the same country as their children. A new set of 8 two-page fact sheets – “Every Door Closed: Barriers Facing Parents with Criminal Records. An Action Agenda” – details the scope of the challenges these families face and offers solutions for federal, state, and local policymakers.

The problem is daunting:

- More than 10 million children have ex-offender parents. Most ex-offender parents are non-violent offenders.
- Increasing numbers of parents-especially mothers-have been incarcerated. Women are the fastest growing subgroup of the prison population.
- African-American and Hispanic families are disproportionately affected. Twelve percent of African-American men, 4 percent of Hispanic men, and 1.6 percent of white men in their twenties and early thirties are in prison or jail.
- Ex-offender parents need assistance to rebuild their lives. Fewer than one-third of men and only half of women in state prison have finished high school.

Developed by the Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP) and Community Legal Services, Inc., the new fact sheets cover ex-offenders’ problems with obtaining jobs, housing, financial aid for higher education, and public benefits, in addition to their struggles with child support obligations, maintaining contact with their children while incarcerated, and keeping immigrant families together.

The fact sheets are based on the groundbreaking report, “Every Door Closed: Barriers Facing Parents With Criminal Records” by Amy E. Hirsch, Sharon M. Dietrich, Rue Landau, Peter D. Schneider, Irv Ackelsberg, Judith Bernstein-Baker, and Joseph Hohenstein, also published by CLASP and Community Legal Services, Inc.