

Jessica Reid



Short Biography

After being separated from her father for 24 years and witnessing the devastating effects of parental incarceration as an educator, Jessica co-founded Fostering, Empowering and Advocating Together (FEAT) for Children of Incarcerated Parents in 2012. Currently, FEAT is the only organization in Canada providing supportive programming for children of prisoners. In her role as the Executive Director of Programming and Research, Jessica has developed six programs to support the underserved needs of children and families. These include Peer Mentorship programs, Girl's Empowerment Retreats, and a Family Visitation program to name a few. As an advocate and educator for children of imprisoned parents, Jessica professionally speaks at universities, community events, and conferences.

Furthermore, Jessica has organized an annual campaign, Feet for FEAT, where she walks over 400 kilometres from Toronto to Ottawa to raise awareness on the need to support children affected by parental incarceration in Canada. In conjunction with developing and facilitating supportive programming at FEAT, Jessica has successfully defended her Master's thesis at Trent University which empirically examined the impact of parental incarceration on internalizing symptoms and externalizing behaviours. To date, Jessica's research, academic excellence and commitment to social justice has earned her several accolades including the prestigious Nelson Mandela award from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council.