

*Chief Judge of the State of New York*



*Jonathan Lippman*

April 2010

Dear Criminal Justice Professional:

I am pleased to present a new resource, **Be Sure Your Child is Cared For and Safe**, a flyer designed by the New York State Permanent Judicial Commission on Justice for Children to help parents who have been arrested provide for appropriate care for their children. When parents—primary caregivers—are arrested, taken into custody, detained or incarcerated, the experience can be traumatic for both parents and children. It is a crisis for the entire family. To make certain that children are safe and properly cared for, parents need to arrange for a suitable caregiver who can make immediate educational and healthcare decisions. Knowing that their children are taken care of and safe will allow parents to focus on their criminal proceedings.

The flyer highlights short- and long-term solutions and provides easy-to-use forms (parental designation of person in parental relation) to ensure a child's caregiver can access medical services and make educational decisions for the child. It also provides information about resources that can be helpful to parents, caregivers and children. The flyer is not legal advice and strongly recommends that parents consult with an attorney about their options and plans regarding their children.

Since the flyer is intended to provide parents with both immediate and longer-term options for their children's care, it should be made available at each step of the criminal justice process. For instance, the flyer should be available when the parent is arrested, taken into custody, at arraignment, and at holding. And, for parents who did not make plans at these early stages, or for those who need to reassess their plans, it should also be available at sentencing, upon entering a facility, at court appearances and during their incarceration.

The flyer has been translated into: Spanish, Chinese, Russian, Arabic, Korean, Bengali, Haitian Creole, and French and is available for download in all nine languages on the Commission's website at [www.nycourts.gov/ip/justiceforchildren/incarceratedparents.shtml](http://www.nycourts.gov/ip/justiceforchildren/incarceratedparents.shtml). Hard copies of the flyer can also be ordered in English and in Spanish from the Commission website.

I hope that you will make every effort to make this resource available to parents who enter your system and need this critical information.

Very Truly Yours

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jonathan Lippman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and "L".