

# Human Rights Watch

## Children's Rights

**<https://www.hrw.org/news/2017/05/09/mamas-bail-out-day-campaign-aims-help-jailed-mothers>**

## Campaign and Advocacy

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Children Suffer When Moms Cant Bail Out

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The bail system punishes mothers when their children get held in jail. Mothers have to arrange visits and pay for phone calls. Mothers borrow money to pay bail bond fees. Mothers cut food budgets and scrape together rent, while making payments on those fees.

But what happens when mom gets held in jail?

California Jail

Sarah Jackson and Daria Morrison were in the car with a friend who committed some robberies. Neither actively participated, according to later witness testimony, but both were arrested and held with high bail, despite having no prior criminal record. Darias family bailed her out, and she was able to fight her case, pleading to a reduced charge and eventual dismissal. Sarah could not afford to bail out. And she had a young son at home. For three months, she stayed in jail, unable to see or care for her child. Her son suffered, missing her touch and the stability of having her at home. She was tormented being away from him. When the prosecutor offered her a time-served deal, she willingly accepted it just to get home to her child, even though it meant pleading guilty to two serious offenses, with lengthy probation, a seven-year suspended prison sentence, and no chance for a dismissal like Daria.

When single mothers cannot bail out of jail, children may get sent to foster homes. They may go hungry or miss school or be left in the hands of family members incapable of caring for them. [Children suffer trauma](#) seeing a parent behind the glass at jail visiting hours, or walked into a courtroom shackled, in jail uniform. Many mothers do not allow their children to come to court or jail. This spares the child

seeing their parent in such circumstances, but also increases the disconnection of the family. Even telephone contact with children while in jail is difficult and expensive.

The Human Rights Consequences of Parental Notice of Abortion in Illinois

Children and Families Sent to Harm by the US Remain in Mexico Program

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