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## **Model Prenatal Care in New York Prison**

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Originally published in *Collective Voices* Vol. 1 Issue 4, Spring 2006

NPR's "Weekend Edition Saturday" profiled the prenatal care program for female inmates at Bedford Hills Correctional Facility in Westchester County, NY. The state sends all of its pregnant inmates to Bedford Hills, a maximum security prison, where they receive prenatal care and parenting classes. Inmates are also permitted to keep their infants at an in-house nursery for up to 18 months after birth. The program was created to cultivate relationships between mothers and their newborns, as well as give the women a reason to "stay straight," according to NPR. Mary Byrne of Columbia University, who is evaluating the success of the nursery program, said the infants at Bedford Hills "do as well as babies in any other setting" and are "not challenged at all in any negative way." Her research is expected to be completed in 2007. Critics of the program say it is "soft on crime" and that inmates should lose their parental rights. The U.S. is one of four countries that routinely take infants away from their incarcerated mothers (Wertheimer, "Weekend Edition Saturday", NPR, 11/5).