

For Immediate Release

State Legislators Show Support for Successful Prison Program

Indianapolis, IN (February 9, 2010) – Tomorrow, members of the Indiana General Assembly will be traveling to Indiana Women’s Prison (IWP) where they will host a baby shower for the Wee Ones Nursery (WON) program.

Members of the women’s caucus, Political Organization for Women's Education and Representation (POWER), became interested in the Wee Ones Nursery at IWP and wanted to assist.

The WON program began at IWP in early 2008 for eligible pregnant offenders. It is currently one of six similar programs in the nation. The intent of this voluntary program is to provide parenting education and to ensure quality time to strengthen the mother-infant bond during the initial months after the infant’s birth. Currently, offender mothers receive educational program instruction from Riley Development Center, Healthy Starts via the Marion County Health Department, and the Clarian Health Network.

Since the newborns and mothers live together on a separate unit, each female offender must meet certain criteria in order to be considered for the WON program. The offender must be pregnant at the time she is delivered into IDOC custody and her earliest possible release date must be no later than eighteen months after her projected delivery date. The offenders also cannot be incarcerated for a violent crime, any type of child abuse or child endangerment, and must have a Department conduct history free of any serious offenses.

During the legislative session Representative Linda Lawson and Senator Earline Rogers made points of privilege for all members of the General Assembly to donate needed items to the WON program. All the items that have been collected will be presented during the shower by the caucus members.

While visiting, the legislators will also take a tour of the facility and enjoy lunch prepared by the female offenders.

The baby shower will begin on Wednesday, February 10, 2010, at approximately 12:15 pm at the Indiana Women’s Prison at 2596 Girl School Road in Indianapolis, IN. News media are invited to attend.

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