

HIGHLIGHTS OF 1985

1985 was an exciting and challenging year for AIM. Early in the year Virginia Monroe was hired as a part-time assistant to the Volunteer and Transportation Program. Together she and Coordinator Jean Fox have been able to expand outreach to the pre-release centers, Charlotte and Brook Houses, and to the fathers' group at MCI Norfolk. This addition in staff has also allowed AIM to increase transportation services to MCI Lancaster, allowing mothers to utilize the Visiting Cottage Program.

In June, AIM celebrated its 5th anniversary with a party at MCI Framingham. Over 125 friends attended. Mothers, volunteers, board members, present and former staff members and special guests enjoyed the pleasures of reminiscing and acknowledging AIM's achievements.

The summer brought some changes as Lila Austin, fundraiser, left AIM to work at the Gardiner Howland Shaw Foundation, and was replaced by Julianne Kelly, formerly with the New Bedford Women's Center. When two dedicated Steering Committee Members were suddenly moved to the pre-release facility in Lancaster, AIM began to look at the question of how to maintain their involvement while involving a new body of mothers at MCI Framingham to act as representatives for women incarcerated there.

In the fall, the Family Support and Advocacy Program under Coordinator Deb Filler achieved some significant changes in social work policy regarding incarcerated mothers and their children with the Department of Social Services. This was the culmination of over two years of effort by many people, staff, mothers and volunteers involved in the Policy Task Force on Incarcerated Mothers and their Children. This represents a major accomplishment for a small advocacy organization such as AIM.

The year ended on a festive note with the "Tree of Hope" at MCI Framingham. Not only a fundraising event, the tree garnered much publicity, community awareness and involvement, and culminated in a tree-lighting ceremony and party attended by the AIM family of mothers and children, staff and volunteers and special guests.

STAFF AND STEERING COMMITTEE

When AIM began in 1980, the first objective was to make visits between mothers in prison and their children happen. Two positions were created: a full-time coordinator of Volunteers and Transportation and a part-time position to raise funds and advocate on behalf of the parental rights of incarcerated women. In response to the tremendous need of mothers imprisoned at MCI Framingham, AIM has grown to have a full-time advocate, a full-time fundraiser and two coordinators (one full-time and one part-time) to oversee volunteers and transportation. As Coordinator of Volunteers and Transportation for the past six years, Jean Fox has been a community resource on the needs of incarcerated mothers and their children. Other AIM staff members in 1985 were: Lila Austin, Fundraiser, followed by Julianne Kelly; Deborah Filler, Coordinator of Family Support and Advocacy; Virginia Monroe, Assistant to the Volunteer and Transportation Program; and Casel Walker, Bookkeeper.

AIM's programs work hand-in-hand under the direction of the Steering Committee made up of staff and incarcerated mothers. In August 1985 long-term Steering Committee members Greer Toney and Lisa Odell moved to the pre-release center in Lancaster. Through the fall, AIM Steering Committee and Board of Directors discussed ways in which AIM could continue to benefit from the expertise of mothers in