

THE



FAMILIES AFFECTED BY

IMPRISONMENT

Strong Support for North Wales FABI Programme

The January edition of this newsletter introduced the work of the North Wales Safer Communities Board's regional team that has been put in place to drive change to support children and families affected by the imprisonment of a family member.

Since the programme started, the number of partners coming forward to support the work has risen with many joining the 'Families Affected by Imprisonment' (FABI) Programme Steering Group. This group now has twenty members and includes partners of the North Wales Safer Communities Board, HMP Berwyn, Public Health Wales, the Wales ACE Support Hub, Barnardos Cymru and Novus. It also has representation from youth offending and from HMP Styal so that the needs of those North Wales families who have family members in prisons outside of North Wales are also considered.

If you wish to understand more about the work, please contact the regional team, Sara Kettle and Catherine Pritchard at: sara.kettle@wrexham.gov.uk / 01978 292453 or Catherine.pritchard@wrexham.gov.uk / 01978 292444. There is no bespoke service at the North Wales level to support these children and families, however, the team can signpost you to training resources or alternative support and organisations like Pact (the Prison & Advice Care Trust) that operate locally. They are currently preparing a directory of useful resources and support services that both professionals and families can access. If you have anything that would be useful to include in this directory, please contact them.

Welcome ...

...to this second edition of a newsletter that aims to highlight the issues and needs of the children and families of North Wales who are affected by the imprisonment of a family member. We had a great response to the first newsletter in January, so thank you to everyone that got in touch and offered their support for the work. The newsletter has also prompted requests for direct support which has reinforced how unique the challenges are for this vulnerable group of children and their families.

This newsletter, therefore, will continue to raise awareness of their specific issues and needs so that, as professional bodies and agencies, we can undertake preventative work and provide more targeted and non-stigmatising support and services to this hidden group in society, as well as help break the cycle in line with the Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) programme.

IN THIS ISSUE:

Strong support for North Wales FABI Programme

Pact helps increasing numbers of children and families visiting HMP Berwyn

How loss, stigma and secrecy affect children with a parent in prison

Children with mothers in prison face the most disruption

'Living with Mum' at HMP Styal, Cheshire

Bridgend 'Whole Family Approach' proven to have positive impact on lives

School engagement commences

ACE (Adverse Childhood Experiences) Update

This newsletter has been prepared on behalf of the North Wales Safer Communities Board, Area Planning Board & HMP Berwyn.





Pact Helps Increasing Numbers of Children and Families Visiting HMP Berwyn

In March 2018, 1,215 children visited HMP Berwyn. December 2017 saw a peak of 1,619 visits by children as Christmas brought the men and their families closer together.

Pact runs the family engagement service at the prison. Staff engage with families when they arrive and support them emotionally through what can be quite a traumatic process. In February, PACT had a total of 970 enquiries regarding family matters.

Sandra Edwards is the Family Engagement Manager; she is responsible for running the visitor centre and is the lead for the family engagement service. Sandra networks with outside agencies, gathering information to signpost families to advice, guidance, learning opportunities and support to enable them to have positive relationships with their family member in prison. When the children visit, Sandra's staff arrange play activities for them. They also liaise with schools to support authorised absence for visits. Monthly forums with the Governor allow the children and families to influence the work that Pact does.

Pact also supports the men at HMP Berwyn to re-establish links with family members, helping them apply for child contact and liaising with social services. They also provide mediation between family members and emotional

support, where necessary. Pact is also one of the providers facilitating family courses for the men. They have four family courses enabling the men to learn more about their children and healthy relationships which includes family days so that the men can demonstrate to their children what they have learned.

If you wish to contact Pact about any area of their work and/or have any information that can support their work, please contact: Sandra Edwards: Sandra.Edwards2@hmps.gsi.gov.uk

Pact has developed a book, 'Locked Out', to support children to cope with the imprisonment of a loved one. The book contains useful guidance for parents/carers and professionals working with children and a variety of fun and informative activities for children. Their website address is: <https://www.prisonadvice.org.uk/>



Sandra Edwards, Pact's Family Engagement Manager

Children with Mothers in Prison Face the Most Disruption

It is estimated that about 18,000 children in the UK have a mother in prison. Only 9% of children with mothers in prison are cared for by their fathers. The low numbers of fathers who care for their children while their mother is in prison may be explained partly by the fact that up to a third of these fathers might be in prison themselves. As a result of this, just 5% of children with mothers in prison remain in the home they were in prior to their mother being given a custodial sentence meaning they

are often removed from the stability provided by friends and school just at the time when they need it the most. Therefore, children with mothers in prison generally face far more disruption than children with fathers in prison. This is compounded by the fact that most mothers in prison are located 60-150 miles from home making visits by their children difficult.

There are no prisons in Wales for women.

Imagine what it feels like for the child ?

.....what do they say? (maybe suddenly with Gparents/Carers)

- "Is it like TV ? Will her room have bars, will she get food?" (Nilly aged 8)
- Why did the police wreck my room too – I haven't done anything honestly? (Ilem aged 5)
- Why cant I sit on your knee mummy ? Shall I tell them ill be good? (collly aged 4 1/2)
- Why did they look in Penny's nappy? (Molly aged 9)
- If I can t cope will my sisters go into care? (Mia aged 17)
- I couldn't finish college – but that's life isn't it (Jan aged 17)
- I think I was just looking for love (mandy aged 16)
- Will they let her out if I tell them its my birthday (Daisy aged 7 1/2)



Extract from presentation by Lucy Baldwin, De Montfort University, Leicester, 9.3.18 on 'The Impact of Maternal Imprisonment on Mothers & Their Children'

How Loss, Stigma & Secrecy

Affect Children with a Parent in Prison

This article has been provided by Ben Raikes, Division of Social Work, University of Huddersfield

Research confirms that children who are affected by parental imprisonment are likely to experience stigma from their peers and wider community, for example in the form of name calling at school. For this reason, many families are reluctant to seek help. Some children are told not to discuss their imprisoned parent with anyone, not even their best friend, which adds to their isolation. Other children are never given a proper explanation and are often only provided with vague information such as they are 'working away'. These children are vulnerable to being shocked by the truth when perhaps it is revealed by another child at school who has looked on-line.

If children are not given proper explanations then they suffer what has been termed as 'ambiguous loss' where their world starts to become uncertain as they begin to doubt other things that adults tell them. In most cases, children will worry about their parent in prison, and miss them acutely, experiencing the loss of that parent as

akin to a bereavement. However, it is a bereavement that they are inhibited from talking about due to the shame their situation engenders, and even if they did share their situation they are not guaranteed to receive an empathic response. These feelings of loss have been described as 'disenfranchised grief'.

When children do not get to visit their parent in prison they are likely to imagine the worst in terms of how their parent is coping, which in turn can be corrosive to their mental well being.

In some cases, where children are the victim of the parent's offending, directly or indirectly, the removal of their parent to prison could be experienced as a relief. However, even children in that situation are likely to experience ambivalent feelings about the imprisoned parent. Providing support to these children to help them cope with these feelings and to assist their understanding is key.

VARIABLE	IMPACT
Mother or father in prison	Maternal imprisonment generally more disruptive
Prior attachment / No prior attachment	Determines how separation experienced
Offence type	Determines level of stigma experienced
Determinate or Indeterminate sentence	Date to aim for or a feeling of hopelessness
Ethnicity of prisoner	Extra concern regarding racism and cultural needs
Type of prison	Lower security category = more meaningful contact
Carer and their attitude	Carer as gatekeeper of contact and information re: IP
Living outside family	Little research on 'corporate parent' and LAC

The Varying Impact on the Child through the Criminal Justice System Journey:

- Prior to offence - stress, related to offending (or not)
- Arrest - traumatic, akin to a break-in, if dawn raid
- Bail / Remand in Custody - uncertainty, parent deteriorating
- Sentence - shock or perhaps well-prepared
- Visiting - changes of prisons - new rules - stress
- Release - adapting again - released parent may not recognise life has moved on without them

'Living with Mum' at HMP Styal, Cheshire

HMP Styal is the closest female prison for women who come from North Wales. It accommodates both adults and young offenders. It is located about 2 miles south west of Manchester Airport between Wythenshawe and Wilmslow.

Long distances between the family home and the prison can be a serious barrier to engaging with families. Not only is the cost of travelling so far a financial hardship, it also takes a long time to travel these distances and for small children, this can be tiring and fraught with tension. However, Styal provide family days for women who are not local on an individual basis to help support families. The prison is also fortunate to have a Mother and Baby Unit (MBU) which is managed by Family Action who work closely with the Local Authority to produce effective solutions for women who travel long distances.

There are currently six MBUs in England and the Styal Service provides for nine mothers and ten babies. This enables women to build and repair bonding and attachment with their babies. Babies generally can remain on the MBU with their mothers from birth to 18 months. During their stay on the MBU, mothers can access parenting courses, baby massage, rhyme time, messy play,

breast feeding support and antenatal classes. Mothers are supported by Early Years staff to develop strong attachments and good parenting skills. The unit is staffed by Family Action staff from 07.30 am – 08.00 pm, 365 days a year. Women on the MBU can have unlimited visits from their children and a full contact family visit with their loved ones on a monthly basis.

To enable the mothers to access part-time work in the prison, there is an Ofsted "Outstanding" nursery service which looks after the babies. The MBU work in close partnership with Phoenix Futures who provide the family services in the visitors centre and co-produce family events.

As a practitioner, if you think that you can support Styal in creating positive outcomes for the baby, child, family and mother from North Wales, please contact Nanette Steel at: nanette.steel@family-action.org.uk

This article has been provided by Nanette Steel, HMP Styal.

Family sports at HMP Berwyn



National Information Centre on Children of Offenders'

The National Information Centre on Children of Offenders is a knowledge hub to support professionals in working with the children and families of those in custody, bringing together useful information in one place.

See: <https://www.nicco.org.uk>

Best Practice in UK and Netherlands Applauded at Cardiff Conference

At a recent conference in Cardiff, hosted by G4S and the Welsh Centre for Crime and Social Justice, an audience of academics, policy-makers and practitioners heard distinguished speakers from the UK and the Netherlands describe innovative examples

of initiatives to strengthen prisoners' ties with their children and families. These included Lord Farmer, author of a major review of the topic in the UK, and Angela Christopher from the Ministry of Justice, who is leading on implementation of its recommendations.



Bridgend 'Whole Family Approach' Proven to Have Positive Impact on Lives

University
of South
Wales

Child B Pre and Post IWW



The conference also showcased Invisible Walls Wales (IWW), a multi-agency 'through the gate' project developed in HMP Parc, Bridgend. IWW adopts a 'whole family' approach with both social welfare and criminal justice goals. It aims to improve the quality of life of all participants and enhance their relationships as a family, as well as to reduce the risks of re-offending by the father and future offending by his child(ren). The main partners working with G4S are Barnardos Cymru, Bridgend Social Services and Gwalia.

Researchers from the University of South Wales reported findings from an independent impact evaluation of IWW, which concluded that IWW has been exceptionally successful, having had a significant positive impact on the lives of both prisoners and families. For the children who participated, changes indicated improvements in their emotional well-being, attention levels, behaviour and peer relationships. There was also a fall in the number of children needing support from Social Services post IWW. One of the key successes of the project was the engagement of schools, which led to direct links between IWW and individual teachers of those children who participated, parent/teacher showcase events held in the prison and the development of a formal arrangement with many schools through the 'Invisible Walls Accord'.

It has also begun to influence thinking, policy and practice nationally (and to some extent internationally).

For the research report [1] 'Prisoners' children and families: Can the walls be 'invisible'? Evaluation of Invisible Walls Wales' see <http://www.europis.org/news/key-findings-prisoners-children-and-families-evaluation-of-invisible-walls-wales-2017/> or <https://wccsj.ac.uk/publications-research/printed/2017>. A recent journal article [2] is available at: <http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/2066220317742634>.

This article has been provided by Anna Clancy and Mike Maguire, University of South Wales

[1] Clancy, A. and Maguire, M (2017) Prisoners' children and families: Can the walls be 'invisible'? Evaluation of Invisible Walls Wales. University of South Wales.

[2] Clancy, A. and Maguire, M. (2017) 'Prisoners and their children: an innovative model of "whole family" support'. European Journal of Probation, Vol 9, 3: 210-30.

ACE (Adverse Childhood Experiences) Update....

In our first edition, we told you about Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), their impact and how 'parental incarceration' is one of the 11 ACEs.

You can follow the work of the ACE Hub, find out about events they are organising, get involved and share your experiences via Twitter @acehubwales and Facebook / acehubwales/

School Engagement Commences

If you are a school/or work with a school that would like to participate in work to support children who have a family member in prison, please get in touch with the regional team. For information:

- participating schools in Flintshire have set up a FABI Support Group further to undertaking 'Hidden Sentence' training – please contact Emma Baines for information on Emma.Baines@flintshire.gov.uk; and
- a meeting of Local Authority Heads of Education and Children's Services will take place at HMP Berwyn in May to enable local authorities and schools to understand the impact on a child of having a family member in prison and what it's like to visit them in the secure estate.

DID YOU KNOW?

- 1,215 children visited HMP Berwyn in March 2018
- Most children with fathers in prison are looked after by their mothers
- Only 9% of children with mothers in prison are cared for by their fathers
- Approximately 4,000 children in England and Wales are cared for by their grandparents each year as a result of the imprisonment of their mother



Website Coming Soon ...

A programme webpage will shortly be available on the website of the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner. You will therefore be able to follow the work of the programme and share your experiences.

For further information about the work,
please contact:
sara.kettle@wrexham.gov.uk / 01978 292453 or
catherine.pritchard@wrexham.gov.uk / 01978 292444.

