



Ministry of
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National Offender
Management Service

Children and Families of Offenders

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RSG – Rehabilitation Services Group



The Impact of the Family on Reducing Re Offending

- **Prisoners who receive visits from family members or partners have a significantly lower one year re offending rate [52%] compared to those who are not visited [70%] [5]**
- **Maintaining family ties makes it easier for a prisoner to re integrate into society and more able to get a job and stable accommodation [6]**
- **If good family relationships are maintained through out a sentence offenders are less likely to re offend**

However: 45% of prisoners lose contact with their family whilst inside [7] and women prisoners are more likely to be held over 100 miles from home and are less likely to be able to call on the support of a stable relationship than the general population. [8]



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Children of Offenders and Inter Generational Crime

It is estimated that 160,000 children each year have a parent in prison [9]
But there are no definitive statistics on the number of offenders who are parents, the number of children who have a parent in prison or what happens to dependents when parents are imprisoned

Children of offenders are at risk of poorer outcomes than their peers

- **Children of prisoners have three times the risk of anti-social/delinquent behaviour compared to their peers. They are a vulnerable group which is in need of targeted support [10]**
- **65% of boys with a convicted parent go on to offend compared with 22% of boys whose parents are not offenders [11]**
- **Children who have a parent in prison have twice the risk of developing behavioural problems than children who have not had a parent in prison [12]**



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Structures

- **Children and Families Team in NOMS Rehabilitation Services Group, a mix of prison, social work, and seconded advisers**
- **Cross Government Partnership working – NOMS / DFE / MOJ / Home Office / DoH / YJB and Families of Offenders Board – chaired by Directors from NOMS and DFE – to set work programme and provide options to Ministers – supported by a VCS Reference Group**
- **NOMS / DFE joint steering overseeing all projects which support families of offenders.**

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Work Programme

- **Recent review of good practice/what works to underpin a revision of the Supporting Families Framework to be geared towards new structures**
- **Raising awareness [Hidden Sentence Training]**
- **Improving identification of offender's children, assessment of family need and information sharing**
- **Setting standards, issuing guidance and specifying services – provision of services to visitors and rehabilitation services including evaluation of relationship and parenting interventions**

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Partnership Working

- **Piloting Family Support Worker in 9 prison establishments to provide support for offenders and their families and create vital links with and referrals to children's and family services / children's centres in the community (Pact). Fast evolving via DfE Grant money to take FSW work out into the community (Spurgeons) and Community Advocates (Pact) to establish networks and raise awareness**
- **Supporting DfE initiatives on "Early, intensive and tailored support" and Families with Multiple Needs to support offenders families and prevent inter generational offending**
- **Changes in local government structures will require a more localised approach for NOMS – based around prisons and probation trusts - supporting NOMS engagement with Community Budget pilots exemplar areas**

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References

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Integrated working between Criminal Justice, Children and Adult services

Good practice evidence

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What enables it to happen?

Resources

Partnership working

links with existing integrated approaches

Strategy/ Policy

Practice

Identification of families and information sharing

Schools

Wales

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What are the barriers to overcome?

No shared outcomes between agencies
Prison narrow focus on child protection
Problems in identifying the children
Commissioning across LA boundaries
OAYS limitations in focusing on risk than need
Limits to information sharing
Removal of regional planning structures
Impact of re-structuring on momentum
Overcrowding works against local planning for prisons

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Reasserting the Vision

Reducing re-offending: supporting families, creating better futures, a framework for improving the local delivery of support for the families of offenders,
November 2009

‘a coherent system to support offenders’ children and families...’

Green Paper

More devolved decision making and budgetary control for Children’s Services

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