



To improve support for the families of prisoners,

THIS SHOULD BE IN THE BLUEPRINT!

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 1- Two Questions/Four Factors
- 2- The Importance of.1: There being something rather than nothing, BUT...
- 3- Two Questions, "Don't promise what can't be delivered"
- 4- Two Questions, "Often, it is women who pick up the burden for the whole family"
- 5- A Call to Action.1: The Golden Thread- Putting family at the heart of the criminal justice system
- 6- A Call for Reflection.1: Stigma, beyond Courtesy Stigma
- 7- The Importance of.2: Schools
- 8- Two Questions, "For wider system change, Agencies need to understand their responsibilities"
- 9- A Call to Action.2: Reading between the lines: a toolkit to help schools support children with a parent in prison
- 10- A Call for Reflection.2: The Social Injustice of Parental imprisonment
- 11- The importance of.3: Data
- 12- Two Questions, "What we really need is joined-up thinking"
- 13- A Call to action.3: Children of Prisoners- Fixing a broken System
- 14- A call for Reflection.3: The Financial Impact on Families of Imprisonment and Release
- 15- The Importance of.4: The voices of children and young people not being overlooked and meaningful opportunities for them to share their views and being responded to being sought
- 16- Two Questions, "Hush Stigma"
- 17- Two Questions, "The UK is a punitive society, how do we change perceptions?"
- 18- A Call to Action.4: Child Impact Assessments
- 19- A Call for Reflection.4: A Societal Blind Spot
- 20- Faith Communities, Give me this mountain?
- 21- Two Questions, "A significant part of the challenges faced by families of prisoners comes down to relationships...the Church is, at its core, also about relationships"
- 22- Two Questions, "Breaking Barriers...as a Muslim Woman Community Chaplain..."
- 23- Appendix A: "Areas of Excellence"
- 24- Appendix B: Factors that contribute to the overrepresentation of the Gypsy Roma and Traveller Community in the Criminal Justice System
- 25- Appendix C: How to create an "Area of Excellence"- YSS- Family First Service- Worcester
- 26- Notes

## Two questions/ Four Factors

We want to invite you to play your part in a conversation that our society needs to have.

To improve support for the families of prisoners, what should be in the blueprint,

What are the issues that we should be aware of?

What can we do?

These two questions inevitably beg us to ask a third question, does our society need to improve support for the families of prisoners? Why? How? Who else is wrestling with these questions and what are they doing?

The ripple effects of crime and imprisonment radiate well beyond just those convicted of crimes, affecting firstly the victims of their crimes, there are also secondary or collateral consequences for the families of convicted people, finally there are also consequences for wider society, affecting us all as members of the general public and our perceptions of crime and the fear of crime and our personal safety, which affects too the systems that we build to punish crime.

“The degree of civilization in a society can be judged by entering its prisons” said Fyodor Dostoevsky. As citizens we need to ask ourselves what sort of society we are living in, and do we want our society to be built on our better or our baser instincts? How we choose to administer punishment is our key test. The UK is a punitive society, as a beach is made up of individual grains of sand, so a punitive society is built from 70 million individual grains, that is our own individual fears and prejudices that we all share about crime and criminals, which has led us to a negative public discourse around prisons that is reflected in the institutions themselves which impacts on not just the prisoner but also their families experience.

We launched The Ebb Leicester in 2017 after a small group of us became aware that in a city the size of Leicester, there was not at that time, a support group for the families of prisoners and furthermore there was no statutory body or Government agency tasked with responsibility for assessing the needs of families affected by imprisonment, no attempt at systematic data collection, we were driven by our conviction that the families of prisoners were a hidden and neglected group.

“An offender’s family are the most effective resettlement agency” said The Joint Thematic Review by HMIP & Ofsted 2014.(1) Where the state does acknowledge the families of prisoners is in highlighting the benefit of family ties to a prisoner’s rehabilitation journey, as a whole slew of Government White Papers & reviews, culminating in the Farmer Reviews of 2017(2) and 2019 have demonstrated, and Michael Farmer coined what has become a celebrated phrase describing families as “the golden thread”.

“I do want to hammer home a very simple principle of reform” said he, “that needs to be a golden thread running through the prison system and the agencies that surround it. The principle is that relationships are fundamentally important if people are to change.”

What the system has signally failed to do is recognize that the families of prisoners are not just a resource for the benefit of the system, but people in their own right who have distinct support needs of their own, many feel that they are serving a parallel sentence and being penalised with emotional, financial and social costs for crimes that they have not committed.

They face not just one challenge, but a series of challenges as their family member progresses through the criminal justice system.

They suffer from information neglect as the red flags that go up to prompt an inquiry into whether help is needed for the family who are left behind, as a convicted person journeys through the system are locally based and might not necessarily connect to all the agencies that could offer family support. The system unduly relies on families themselves coming forward for assistance and appears insensitive to the social stigma of imprisonment which prompts feelings of shame and fear of social services involvement and deters families from seeking help and support, help then only arriving in response to manifestations of distress or difficulty such as the behaviour of a child or school absence.

They suffer from information neglect also as “the powerless negotiator” often lacking the vital information to help them deal practically and emotionally with the system on their own behalf and as an advocate for their imprisoned family member therefore affecting their ability to participate in decision making on their loved one’s behalf.

The social implications that the families of prisoners face include housing, health and education, they potentially face a demoralization unlike other involuntary separations, imprisonment can be a precipitating factor in family and marital breakdown, they may suffer victimisation of their own, being targeted because of their family member’s crime, the families from which prisoners are drawn are often among the most marginalised groups in our society and their imprisonment can entrench and deepen the existing disadvantages that their families face and following release it is families who often the ones trying to pick up the pieces of all of the above.

Whilst respecting the highly individualised nature of family circumstances, and, individuals within a family, we have identified four factors that appear to us to be most commonly experienced by families affected by imprisonment,

Emotional distress- Stigma- Financial distress- The need for empowerment.

## The Importance of

### 1: There being something rather than nothing, BUT...

The Ebb Leicester launched with good intentions, but with limited resources, which included the depth of our understanding of the unique needs of families affected by imprisonment. We initially hosted a weekly drop in service at Leicester Jesus Centre, a centre managed by a Church, in the city centre, which had a limited impact but did enable us to expand our knowledge enough to identify the four factors and develop a programme to reach out to the community through schools, and we were blessed to discover that another group had come together in Leicester, at the same time as us but independently of us, asking the same questions that we had been asking, but with a focus on primarily but not exclusively ethnically minoritized communities and people from the Islamic community, our fellow Community Chaplaincy Association member, The Straight Path Resettlement Project, led by Ferzana Dakri.

Since first meeting we have worked in partnership on many projects, including the HMP Leicester Steering Group and the Families Affected by Imprisonment Project, of which more later, but at this point I must interject a personal note, on the intersection between partnership and friendship.

Ferzana has been a tower of strength to me personally over the years. She is an inspirational figure who appears to have been working three full-time jobs (as a mother, running The Straight Path and her professional career) all the time I've known her, has a depth and breadth of knowledge on the criminal justice system, but more importantly has a deep wisdom that comes from an understanding of and love for people, which is evident in her considered response to the two questions, "Breaking Barriers...as a Muslim Women Community Chaplain..."

Returning to the Ebb, I have found that this work has both exposed and stretched our limitations as a service, and I include in that process my personal limitations also. Good intentions are not enough, to translate good intentions into right action, they need to be well informed. All work with or on behalf of the families of prisoners needs to be profoundly thought through, in particular, we need to ensure that actions undertaken for the children of prisoners does not add to their burden or stigma, but instead bolsters and empowers them.

The practical and immediate effects of parental imprisonment are numerous and far reaching, an emotional impact, an educational impact, a financial impact, a practical impact such as a change of caregiver or loss of the family house, but first and foremost, this is a wellbeing issue. The toll on their emotional and mental health, potentially, can be immense.

A young person's experience of the criminal justice system can start with the shock of having their home raided, watching a family member being arrested and a sudden separation ensues. It has been estimated that as many as 80,000 children in England & Wales each year witness a home raid, this is only an estimate, as no official statistics are kept on this. (3)

Some children may not have been even told where their absent parent is, other children may be forced to keep the imprisonment a secret. Children and young people can often feel a sense of loss, "ambiguous loss" their parent being physically absent but psychologically present, which can lead to a sense of grief, but with no clear opportunity to acknowledge the grief, or be supported to process it. The various negative effects associated with parental imprisonment might be shared by children experiencing divorce or loss in the family, but the stigmatization associated with involvement with the criminal justice system might negate the natural impulse to sympathy.

In response to a funder's request we drew up an "Areas of Excellence" map, detailing to the best of our knowledge what organisations were working and where to step in, to fill the gaps left by our state's failure to have due regard or care for children and their families with a family member in prison, in spite of all the evidence that has been gathered in the reports we will outline in the following call to action and call to reflection sections of this document, in spite of safeguarding legislation such as "Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018" (4) which boldly states an intention to enable children to have optimum life chances, in spite of laws such as The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, enshrined in UK law since 1992 which includes (in Article 3) that the interests of children and young people should be thought about at all levels of society and that their rights should be respected by people in power, Article 9 states children and young people have the right to keep in contact with both their parents, if they are separated, unless this might harm the child, Article 12, the opinions of children and young people should be considered when people make decisions about things that involve them.

We need to appreciate that even within these "areas of excellence" these specialist organisations are often underfunded, geographically limited and face challenges such as capacity issues on how many families that they are able to support or first contact issues, only connecting with a family after a period of time has elapsed when they first had contact with the criminal justice system.

But beyond, the "areas of excellence" our rudimentary map contained many blank spaces, where there is little or no provision at all, where our society is failing to bring the hidden into the light, what does that say about us? We need system reform, community support and societal change.

And here's a question for you. What is happening in your local area? Are you living in an "area of excellence" or a blank space?

### Two questions, "Don't promise what can't be delivered"

J is a mum of 2, a son and a daughter. Her son spent over a decade in prison, after first getting involved with the criminal justice system at age 15. She wrote to us...

"I hope this helps others gain insight into how a prison sentence affects the whole family and devastates them too, families may be embarrassed and not want to talk, so gaining trust is vital.

"Families will be bewildered by the whole experience/system. Any advice/support given, especially if any phone details or names or departments to contact are given are better wrote down for them, so they are remembered. Don't promise what can't be delivered.

"Be kind...kindness goes a long way!

"Be practical...do they manage to communicate with the prisoners, are they literate (not just computer literate)

"Visits...are they able to book a visit? Get to the visit? Aware of the rules surrounding visits? Aware that they can take some money to purchase refreshments on a visit?

"Be aware of any cultural/religious boundaries with families and prisoner."

## Two Questions, “Often, it is women who pick up the burden for the whole family”

Somia Bibi is Family Engagement/Outreach Worker & Volunteer Coordinator at Himaya Haven, a Birmingham based organisation supporting prisoners’ families from Black, Asian & Ethnic Minority Communities.

“There is a need for culturally nuanced support that recognises the necessity for multilateral and collaborative support from third sector organisations and prisons and probation.

“It must also be recognised that often, it is women (mothers, daughters, spouses, partners, aunts) who pick up the burden for the whole family (emotional, financial, practical) when a loved one is arrested and in prison, and the ripple effects of such responsibilities and emotional labour are substantial.

“They are often navigating new terrain in some way, early signposting to organisations like Himaya Haven that provide support to families of prisoners and those at risk of crime would be an invaluable support mechanism. Greater collaborative work and communication across sectors, as well as more potent signposting to key third sector organisations, would help ensure robust aid occurs sooner rather than later.”

## A Call to Action

### 1: “The Golden Thread- Putting family at the heart of the criminal justice system”-

#### The Centre for Social Justice

“Our research has revealed that there exists a community of men, women and children who are forgotten, unsupported and alone. Having already suffered the consequences of the crimes committed by their relative they are often then thrown aside in a system which fails to recognise their needs.”

The Centre for Social Justice’s report “The Golden Thread- Putting family at the heart of the criminal justice system” offers a hard-hitting analysis of how interaction with the criminal justice heap immense pressures on families, as they travel alongside a family member’s journey from arrest to release, “The failure to fully unlock the potential of family across the criminal justice system is a longstanding missed opportunity. Most significantly it is a betrayal of families and children who find themselves through no fault of their own in contact with the criminal justice system” and the report concludes with 22 detailed recommendations arranged around 4 topics- tackling the trauma of arrest- recognising the impact of sentencing on family- maintaining connection during custody- preparing families for life after prison.

“The importance of family to our criminal justice system cannot be understated. And yet it all too often remains an afterthought.”

“Arrest has the potential to traumatise family members. Families can experience discrimination as a result of the arrest. There is a lack of information and support for families, both during and following an arrest. It could be presumed that, at the very least, families would be kept abreast of the basic facts about their relative’s case...the reality however is that families are often told very little.”

But, this section does conclude with examples of good Police practice such as Operation Paramount, launched by Thames Valley Police & Thames Valley Violence Reduction Unit in partnership with Children Heard & seen.

“It is difficult for families and defendants to ever be fully prepared for what will happen at trial and sentence, trials can take unexpected turns...”

“The impact of the lack of support for families during the court process is stark” having considered the impact of court delays, the impact of media coverage, the report notes “the kind of provision in courts that families need is not complicated or costly...”

“Recommendation 2:1 “Voluntary sector organisations should be commissioned to provide support for families of defendants across courts in England & Wales ideally in the form of court-based support workers. This will help ease the pressure on staff and legal professionals within the court system.”

“Crucial research undertaken by Dr Shona Minson has shown the differential treatment between children who are separated from their primary carers in the family courts and those separated from their primary carers through imprisonment in the criminal courts.

“Under Section 1(1) of The Children Act 1989 the child’s best interests are the paramount consideration of the family court. In the criminal courts children are “so overlooked that the question of whether a woman has dependent children is not even included in routine data collection at sentencing or imprisonment.”

Recommendation 2:2 “The Government should introduce a statutory duty to be placed upon the Courts to consider the best interests of the child and other dependents or the impact that the sentence would have upon them. This would be in line with existing sentencing guidelines and case law in this area”.

This section concludes with a consideration of kinship carers, who can be glimpsed through the fog generated by institutional neglect and disregard as hidden heroes, “estimates suggest that there may be up to 2000 families in England & Wales where kinship carers are looking after a child whose mother is in prison” “Critically not all kinship carers receive an allowance” “often experience compounding disadvantage” “more likely to be older, poorer, have chronic health conditions” “some are grandparents” “others have their own children to care for and little income to cover their costs”

“Research suggests that 45% of prisoners lose contact with their families whilst in prison” this sobering statistic is set against the key role that many families play in supporting the health and wellbeing of their relative in prison, often at the expense of their own health and emotional wellbeing and with impacts on the finances of the family.

“Evidence suggests that supportive familial relationships can fundamentally transform the prison experience for those inside and reduce the likelihood of reoffending upon release.

“Release from prison brings with it many mixed emotions” “it is not always an exclusively positive experience” “Resettlement planning must begin at the earliest opportunity and where possible involve families”.



“For many families the threat of recall, whereby an individual is taken back to prison if they have breached their licence conditions defines the release period.” There are several reasons that an individual may be recalled including a charge of further offending, non-compliance, failure to keep in touch and a failure to reside.”

The report concludes “Families are a beacon of hope for those who have nowhere else to turn. All the while they are at risk of significant psychological, emotional, financial, and social harm. It is not uncommon for families to be subject to untold trauma throughout their journey through the justice system. And each day the system turns a blind eye to their needs.

“There are significant opportunities to create systemic and cultural change across the breadth of the criminal justice system so that it is compassionate, trauma-informed, and responsive to the needs of prisoners’ families. The system has a responsibility to this group of individuals which it has failed for far too long. We call on the Government to take the action laid out in this report to ease the heavy burden that rests on the shoulders of the families of people in prison.”

## A Call for Reflection

### 1: Stigma, beyond Courtesy Stigma (5)

A paper by Anna Kotova of the University of Birmingham has a compelling central argument that the stigma experience by families affected by imprisonment is multi-faceted, includes courtesy stigma (or guilt by association) the fear of stigma, the stigma of coming from a marginalised community, “different sources that reinforce each other dynamically” and a forceful secondary theme, of the weaponizing of stigma by the state.

“Courtesy stigma” “one’s identity is tainted by virtue of association with a stigmatised individual.” “a web of shame, a number of strands through which stigma is transferred from the prisoner inside to their relatives outside.” “Negative stereotypes about prisoners families abound, where the family are viewed as part of the same bad stock as their imprisoned relative or causally linked to their offending.” “These stereotypes become important when we are asked to vote on penal policies, and we have to make a value judgment that affects a group of people whom we don’t know personally.”

“The families of prisoners often fear stigma to a greater extent, than they actually experience it. “ “Hearing negative stereotypes in media and penal policy discourse can often make families feel stigmatised even when no one close to them does anything to stigmatise them overtly.” Even feared stigma can still be a powerful experience.

“The families of people in prison can also be stigmatised for who they are, in addition to who they are linked to, as many are drawn from marginalised backgrounds” “the socially excluded” (includes the working class, the poor, gender- “Women play a vast role in supporting men and women in prison...typically look after children of people in prison...women are often blamed and even indirectly punished for the wrongdoing of “their men”-race and racial stereotypes).” Stigma is rooted

in fundamental social injustices.” “There is a long history of stigmatising the poor” of “poverty deemed to be the result of a rational choice” “the willingness to live off the state”.

Finally, we should be mindful too of self-stigma, the dangers of internalising a negative view of your own worth.

## The Importance of

### 2: Schools

The Time to Campaign to raise awareness of the needs of children and young people with a family member in prison was launched on 19/09/19 and was The Ebb’s first attempt at building an alliance with the vision of making Leicester an “area of excellence” in support for the families of prisoners. The alliance was between The Ebb, Time to Change, the Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner for Leicestershire and De Montfort University, linking together mental health and wellbeing, criminal justice, education and faith organisations.

“This is a wellbeing issue” (6) guided our approach, and we sought to partner with schools, as they are at the heart of their local communities, schools being the one institution that almost all children regularly attend and a school community actively aware of familial imprisonment we envisioned could be a lifeline, a safe space for students and their caregivers to share what is going on.

What might a school community actively aware of familial imprisonment look like? Familial imprisonment is akin to a Russian doll, often hidden or concealed within other issues. The imprisonment of a household member is one of the ten acknowledged Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES) known to have significant potential impacts on long term health and wellbeing. An understanding of ACES (the 10 acknowledged ACES cover abuse, neglect, and household dysfunction) is of vital importance to anyone working with children with imprisoned parents, particularly the understanding that although parent imprisonment is an ACE in its own right, it is likely that most children coping with this trauma will have been exposed to additional adversity. The more ACES a child suffers the more likely it is to impact negatively on outcomes in terms of health, school attainment and later life experiences.

But, but, BUT! Here’s the thing, the impact of ACES can be mitigated. “Trauma almost invariably involves not being seen and not being taken into account” says Dr Bessel Van Der Kolk (Author- “The Body Keeps the score: Brain, mind and body in the healing of trauma”). Just one caring, compassionate adult can make a world of difference. “Resilience has been defined as a positive adaptive response in the face of significant adversity. It is thought to transform toxic stress into tolerable stress. Children who end up doing well despite adversity have usually had at least one stable committed relationship with a supportive parent, caregiver, or other adult. This seems to buffer them from development disruption and build skills such as the ability to plan, monitor and regulate behaviour and adapt to changing circumstances.” Nadine Burke-Harries (Author- “Toxic Childhood Stress- The Legacy of Early Trauma and How to Heal”)

Our key proposal to schools was that an effort be made at the start of the school year to combat information neglect as a school may be unaware who, or, if any of their students are affected by familial imprisonment and if unknown, these students might be suffering in silence and lacking in support, within the very system of care that could help them.

This primary aim to combat information neglect should be accompanied by actions to promote the destigmatization of familial imprisonment such as posters within the school, a specific school policy addressing the issues, a named designated staff member to oversee enactment of the policy, links on the school website with contact details of both the school's designated person and organisations in the community that could be approached if the family would welcome support.

Consent and confidentiality should govern our approach. By providing visible reassurance to the children in their care and their families that they are not alone in having to deal with the fallout of the imprisonment of a family member and that support, help and understanding are available should that be their wish, a school might even be delivering a benefit to children and families of which they are not aware.

I must acknowledge at this point, much of our engagement with schools has been in firefighting, inquiries relating to situations where a family is already in a crisis, and we are still working towards offering a service that is proactive as well as merely reactive.

#### Two Questions, "For wider system change, Agencies need to understand their responsibilities"

Lisa Wilkinson is Community & Young People Involvement Officer at the Violence Reduction Network, covering Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland.

"Agencies need to understand their responsibilities. There should be immediate support from a support agency to check in and reassure the family and provide clear information about what happens when their family member is in prison.

"There needs to be stronger communication with schools and the education sector to understand the impact of imprisonment on children and young people. It should be kept confidential by teachers, so other children are not aware of a child's parent in prison.

"Communication from the prison should be clear and done as quickly as possible, for example, if a prisoner is moved to a different prison, they should be allowed a call as soon as possible with a family member, to confirm they have arrived safely. Where possible, prisoners should be kept in a prison close to their family. More free calls for prisoners to keep in touch with their families. There should be more visits for families and families should not be punished through the IEP (incentive & Earned Privileges) system.

"Where possible, there should be more than one visit hall in a prison for conflict avoidance, "non associates" can be kept separate so that families do not see their family member involved in an altercation.

"The Violence Reduction Network must continue to support the Families Affected by Imprisonment Project." The Violence Reduction Network was a key partner in setting up Leicester's Families Affected by Imprisonment Project and could act as a model that if there was to be a national

response to tackling these issues, Violence Reduction Units up and down the country could play a pivotal role.

### A Call to Action

#### 2: Reading between the lines: a toolkit to help schools support children with a parent in prison-

##### Children of Prisoners Europe (COPE) (7)

Children of Prisoners Europe (COPE) is a Pan-European network of non-profit organisations working on behalf of children separated from an imprisoned prisoner. The network encourages innovative perspectives and practices to ensure that children with an imprisoned parent fully enjoy their rights under the UN Convention on the Rights of The Child.

COPE have produced a range of toolkits promoting best practice for professionals who come into contact with children with an imprisoned parent- "Child Talk"- a reflective toolkit for prison administrators and staff- "Keeping Children in Mind"- for sentencers and "Reading between the lines" for schools which opens with this guiding principle...

"Schools provide a major opportunity to support children of incarcerated parents and to help meet their needs" and this recommendation...

"Guidance should be prepared and training provided so that teachers and other adults in schools are aware of the particular needs of children of incarcerated parents and can appropriately support such children in their performance, attendance and behaviour."

Consideration is given to the findings of "The Children of Prisoners: Interventions and Mitigations to strengthen mental health (COPING) Study". "Coping research found that children's resilience is closely related to sharing information with them openly and honestly about what has happened and the reasons for their parent's imprisonment, consistent with their age and maturity..."

"Schools can be places where children feel safe to talk about their feelings, where they can gain an understanding that what has happened is not their fault and crucially that they do not have to cope alone..."

"It is not the imprisonment of the parent in and of itself that means a child will misbehave, but rather the response to the imprisonment (which may include social isolation and bullying) or the lack of response that increases the risk factor of stigmatisation and acting-out behaviour."

Consideration is then given to the "many ways that organisations supporting children affected by imprisonment can engage positively with schools" ...

"Thank school staff for what they do! "Many teachers and other school staff feel more like social workers and are overwhelmed by the level of need they see in their pupils" "Training for school staff is essential" "Provide schools with information for children" "Help schools to address issues of

parental imprisonment in the curriculum” “Help schools connect with the child’s parent in prison”  
“Contact between the imprisoned parent and the school can help reduce stigma for children and can help them realise that their parent still has a role to play in their life.”

The concluding section is chockful of adaptable resources that will help to bring insight such as...

### Feelings children may have when a parent goes to prison

“The imprisonment of a parent or close family member can be a traumatic and devastating experience for children, affecting almost every area of life, especially if they have a new caregiver or need to move house or change school. They face a unique set of challenges and can experience a wide range of emotions, including...

Anxiety- about being separated from their parent

Trauma- especially if they witnessed the arrest

Worry- that they will be taken away too

Shame- about why their parent is in prison

Anger- at their parent for leaving them and at the authorities who took them away

Embarrassment- at what their friends will think

Fear- that they can’t talk about their parent or ask any questions

Confusion- about what will happen next

Social isolation- particularly if the crime is high profile or reported in an unhelpful way

Sadness- that the family has changed

Relief- that there are fewer arguments at home

Grief- because they deeply miss their parent

Guilt- if they somehow think they are to blame

Burdened- if they feel they have to keep the imprisonment a secret

Overwhelmed- especially if they have to take on extra responsibilities at home

“Children often feel a mix of these emotions at the same time, and different emotions on different days, and that can make it very hard to learn. Many children with a parent in prison also experience discrimination, bullying and increased poverty.

“Schools can be important communities of care for children with a parent in prison. Teachers can help children just by listening to them and offering a safe space where they can share their feelings.

It is also important to listen to children's silences, if they are keeping their feelings inside, this can be damaging. Giving children time, and helping them to build trust, is very important."

### How to help children when a parent goes to prison

"It can be very hard to know what to say or do when a child's parent goes to prison. Children in the COPE network have told us that they find it helpful to understand that what has happened is not their fault and that they are not alone. Knowing these two things can make a significant difference to children and can help them to cope better. It is helpful to remember...

"Parental imprisonment is just one of many challenges a child may face. If schools can "normalise" parental imprisonment and ensure that it is considered alongside other possible challenges children may face (e.g., divorced parents or a health issue) families will be much more likely to share information with the school.

"Not every child feels the same. Each child is different, and feelings can vary even within sibling groups. It is important that every child feels listened to and knows they can speak to someone about how they feel if they need to.

"Feelings can change. If a child is really angry one day and says she never wants to see her father again, she might not feel the same the next day. Children need to be given opportunities to change their minds and revisit decisions they have made (for example, about contact with their parent)

"Not saying anything can be hurtful. If no one mentions their parent in prison, children may feel more ashamed. Even asking about how their parent is can help. If the crime is reported in the news, it might be helpful for the school to write to the family and offer support, reassure them the school's focus is on the needs of the child, not the reason for imprisonment.

"Not everything is about the imprisonment. Having a parent in prison should not define a child, there are lots of other elements of their life that are also important. Sometimes children are upset because of something unrelated to their parent in prison. It can be hurtful for children when adults attribute every emotion to the imprisonment.

"See the potential, not the problem. It is hard to have a parent in prison, and children can feel judged or stigmatised. Because of this, their behaviour might be difficult. Teachers can help children to maintain high aspirations for their lives and can show understanding and support.

"You don't need to solve everything. Having a parent in prison is a complex situation, and it can be hard to know how to help. The most important thing for a child is that someone cares about them. Just listening can be enough. Sometimes it is also helpful to ask other organisations who can help."

### Common misconceptions

"We don't have anyone in our school with a parent in prison. Just because the school does not know, does not mean that there isn't a child with a parent in prison. There are 2.1 million children with a parent in prison on any given day in Europe, it is likely that, at some point, every school will have a child with a parent in prison. Having a parent in prison is not something that children want to share, because they may feel ashamed or worried about what people will think if they find out. By ensuring that parental imprisonment is addressed, schools can help children even without knowing."

“I need to know about the crime to be able to support the child. Children with a parent in prison have not committed a crime, and they need support in their own right to cope with one of life’s most devastating events. It is important to focus on the relationship rather than the crime. For a child, the parent in prison is first and foremost their father or mother, not a criminal.

“I don’t want to upset the children more by talking about it. Not talking about it can mean that children feel the imprisonment of their parent is something to feel ashamed about, especially if they know that the teacher knows their parent is in prison. Even just asking how their parent is lets children know you see that parent as a person, not someone children should be afraid, or ashamed to mention.

“He’s just like his father, you can see how it’s going to turn out for him. Some children may worry that they are a “bad person”. If their parent is in prison, it is helpful to reassure children that their parent can still be a good person and parent, even though they are in prison. If a child’s behaviour becomes negative, it is important to consider why this might be (e.g., bullying, stigma, social isolation) and help with this, rather than judge the behaviour itself.

“We’ve read about the father’s crime and don’t think she should have any contact with him. You may have your own views on the crime committed, but it is important to address the situation non-judgmentally, from the child’s perspective. The child has done nothing wrong, yet their life has changed dramatically. Decisions about contact should be child centred.

“It’s important that all of his teachers know what has happened. Careful consideration should be given to who needs to know and why. Some teachers may only need to know that a child is experiencing a difficult situation, while others might need more detail. Trust and confidentiality are very important at such a difficult time.”

#### Addressing the issue of parental imprisonment in the curriculum

“It is important to provide as many opportunities as possible for children to be able to talk about having a parent in prison. Because we do not always know who is affected, referring to parental imprisonment in general can help children feel less stigmatised and more confident about asking for help. In our language we can help children understand that a person is more than the crime they have committed. Challenging judgemental attitudes can help children of prisoners feel that they can talk about their experience without being condemned by the crime of their parent...

“Religious education/philosophy/ethics. Include discussions around questions such as “Should dependent children be taken into account in sentencing?” and “How can you balance justice for the victims of the crime with justice for the victims of the sentence (e.g., children)?”

“History. Consider the key moments in history of prison reform in your country. Have imprisonment rates increased or reduced in your country? Why is this?

“Politics. Consider the key influences of the justice system in your country. What trends are there in criminal justice in your country?”

## A Call for Reflection

### 2: The Social Injustice of Parental Imprisonment (8)

“Children of prisoners are often negatively affected by their parent’s incarceration which raises issues of justice” ...” they might endure two different forms of objectionable inequalities.” “They are often deprived of resources that are important for ensuring fair equality of opportunity in adulthood, also they are likely to suffer inequalities in terms of childhood welfare.”

“Among other things they suffer from separation anxiety, stigma, social exclusion, increased poverty, disruption of parent-child bonds and breakdown of family ties.” “Despite all this, policies specially designed to support children of prisoners are often lacking.” “What moral obligations are owed to these children and by whom?”

“Inequalities are acceptable only if they are the result of choices for which the affected individuals are themselves responsible.” Guilt is a necessary condition for the infliction of punishment.” “Failure to confine penal harm only to the offender comes perilously close to punishment of the innocent.” “Imprisonment seems to give rise to or aggravate already existing inequalities among children and the future adults that they will become.”

“Parental imprisonment too often negatively affects the psychological wellbeing of children of prisoners.” “Besides feelings of shame and stigma, children of prisoners often experience sleeping problems and feelings of depression...an enduring trauma associated with feelings of uncertainty about their parent’s wellbeing, whether the parent will come back and whether things will return to the way they used to be.” “The risk of post-traumatic stress disorder is even greater if the child has also witnessed the arrest of their parent.”

“In addition to psychological harm, families of prisoners often suffer from loss of household income...which can lead to...an increase in child poverty.” “The psychological wellbeing of children of prisoners might further deteriorate in such economically constrained circumstances...as well as a lack of social and emotional support.” “The harms associated with parental imprisonment cannot be dismissed as merely emotional.” “Children can suffer in multiple ways when a parent is sent to prison...the children might end up living with grandparents, family friends or in the foster care system.” “All this puts’ children of prisoners in a very vulnerable position, yet, it is important to keep in mind that parental imprisonment might have good consequences for children when they are the victims of crime or domestic violence...Prison may lead to rehabilitation and reform that may improve family functioning.” “The challenges that result from the incarceration of a parent for the most part largely outweigh positive effects.”

“The incarceration of a parent is a state intervention that often has drastic effects for the children affected by it...unlike other separations, the incarceration of a family member does not lead to much sympathy or recognition from others...there are also negative effects that come from direct contact with the prison system.”

“Visiting a parent in a prison setting might be stressful and contribute to the enduring trauma already associated with the arrest and physical separation of the parent.” “Inside the prison, visitors are subject to subordinated status...the child does not necessarily understand the logic behind prison rules.” “Stigmatization, social exclusion and reminders of one’s subordinated status challenge the



social bases for self-respect.” “Victims of such treatment are at risk of internalizing a false view of their unequal worth.”

“Imprisonment often has a disproportionate impact on already economically and socially disadvantaged families and magnifies patterns of social and economic disadvantage.” “The impact of parental imprisonment is not necessarily limited to the children’s welfare here and now; it might also have a sustained impact on opportunities later in life.” “Children of prisoners are at risk of facing a range of negative consequences that are likely to render them worse off relative to other children.”

### The natural and the social lottery

“Unchosen inequality is unjust.” “One is not responsible for the genes one happens to be born with- the natural lottery, and one cannot choose the social circumstances in which one is born- the social lottery.” “Inequalities among children cannot be justified by the choices and actions of their parents.”

“Children, as a matter of justice, are owed both a happy childhood as well as the resources needed in order to ensure fair quality of opportunity later in adulthood.” “To be able to live life without stigma is a core demand of justice.” “In addition to their negative impact on children’s welfare, if they experience an enduring stigma in their youth, they are at risk of internalizing a false view about their worth.”

“Taking these inequalities seriously should lead us to reconsider prevalent practices within our criminal justice systems...considering alternatives to imprisonment...and by providing social and emotional support for children of prisoners and their families.”

### The Importance of

#### 3: Data

The Families Affected by Imprisonment Project was established in January 2021, a partnership between 3 local authorities- Leicester City, Leicestershire County & Rutland County, Leicestershire Police, Schools, Probation, and the Violence Reduction Network to improve the support available in our area to families who have a loved one in prison.

Five priorities were agreed to...

Identify affected families- Contact families- Develop a pathway (that is create a pathway/assessment toolkit for family workers)- Upskill family workers & Review Capacity of local organisations offering specialist support to the families of prisoners.

To identify and contact affected families, a data sharing agreement between Probation and the 3 local authorities was agreed, whereby a list of people recently convicted is sent to the relevant council to be cross-checked with their data systems to identify if the person and family details are known to them. Contact is then made with the family or via their key worker (if they have one). If there are details identifying a school-age child in the family the name of the child and school are passed to the Operation Encompass team to contact the school.

To upskill family workers a Hidden Sentence: The Impact of Parental Imprisonment on Prisoner's Children and Families training programme was developed, and I was very grateful to be given the opportunity to join the pool of trainers delivering the programme. In response to the question "What can we do?" we set out six principles...

Don't be part of the silence- Obtain the voice of the child- Ease the uncertainty- Encourage Openness and honesty- Support contact with the imprisoned parent (if appropriate)- Identify support networks for the family.

Delivery has been a mixture of online and face to face delivery, to 81 delegates in 2022 and 130 in 2023.

### Two Questions, "What we really need is joined-up thinking"

Kieran Breen is CEO of Leicestershire Cares, who work with Business, Schools & Community Groups to support young people. The VIP (Violence Intervention) Project works with young people involved in the criminal justice system. The Powering-Up Project works with care experienced young people.

"The thing about prisoner's families is that this is one of those issues most people don't really think about. And, it's often children who are suffering and invisible because there is a lack of data on them, a lack of knowledge and a lack of support. In many ways, they are the hidden victims of the justice system.

"What we really need is joined-up thinking, where staff in schools, social services, youth and community are aware of the issues facing prisoner's families and are able to offer support to the children and their families. There are some good examples we can pick up on, but the real thrust at the moment is we need to acknowledge the problem and work with families to understand their needs to offer them support and to remove the stigma.

"I know there is a lot of goodwill among the Police, Social Services, Health, Schools. We can build on that and really make a difference."

## A Call to Action

### 3: Children of Prisoners- Fixing a Broken System

Crest's 2019 report, "Children of Prisoners- Fixing a Broken System (9) was truly game-changing, in its revealing that the numbers of children affected by parental imprisonment were far more extensive than had been previously estimated or officially acknowledged.

"Our research, including new modelling, using up to date prison population records, has shown that there are 312,000 incidents per year of a child losing a parent to custody in England & Wales- 17,000 as a result of mothers' being sent to prison...a significant increase from the previously used figure of 200,000.

"However with no formal process in place to systematically identify the children of prisoners, there is actually no central record of who these children are."

The system that has brought us to this sorry pass is then put under the microscope.

"Every local authority has a responsibility to protect and promote the welfare of children in need in its area. However children who have a parent in custody are not regarded as vulnerable by definition of their parent's incarceration. They are an invisible group.

"A significant body of research demonstrates that children of prisoners are at risk of significantly worse outcomes than children not affected by parental imprisonment, including an increased risk of mental health issues and of being included in the criminal justice system themselves in later life.

"Gaps in the system mean that chances to support the needs of the children of prisoners are continually missed. During a parent's journey through the criminal justice system, there are numerous points at which children of prisoners could be identified, on arrest, at sentencing, on entry to prison and under probation supervision. But, at the moment at no point does the system ask "if this is a parent in custody, where is their child? Should we be concerned about their welfare?" No red flags go up to prompt inquiries as to whether help is needed for the family who are left on the outside. Instead it is left to the offender or the parent left behind to seek help, something which is problematic because of stigma and fear about children being taken into care.

"Of course not all children who are vulnerable will end up living poor lives, but if we don't even know who they are, we can't ensure they have the right safety nets.

"That parental imprisonment is of itself an adverse childhood experience, associated with additional disadvantages for children affected, suggests that a parent going to prison should be a red flag for services to ensure the wellbeing and support needs of the child or children in that family are addressed. However, no such red flag currently exists.

"Provision for prisoners and their families is largely provided by the voluntary and community sector." "We spoke to services operating on the "outside" as part of this research who highlighted the significant challenges of piecing together a whole family view that encompasses the family on the outside, as well as the parent on the inside, and in engaging criminal justice services in building that picture."

## The opportunity

“The point of sentencing represents an opportunity for services to ensure the wellbeing of the family left behind. It is a point when one arm of public services (the courts and criminal justice services) makes a decision that is of interest to another part of public services (children’s services). HM Courts should inform the relevant local authority when they have sentenced a parent to custody.

“Building a “prompt” in the form of a notification system into our public service infrastructure is of course only part of the picture. From there we need to ensure that the needs and circumstances of the family left behind are identified and build the evidence base for the interventions that work best to build resilience in children and families. Building effective partnerships between prisons, local authorities’ and probation services and their voluntary sector partners which can overcome the prison walls in order to develop whole family approaches that nurture family ties will also be vital.

“These are golden opportunities not only to reduce reoffending for adults but to halt the cycle of intergenerational offending and improve outcomes for children.

“This is a child welfare and a crime prevention opportunity which we are currently wasting.”

54% of people who enter custody have a child or children under 18

7% of children will experience their parent’s imprisonment during their time at school

45% of prisoners lose contact with their family whilst in prison

Observing that “the criminal justice system remains constrained by its short sightedness with a focus on only the offender and “community” children’s services” it notes “despite an overall lack of awareness and support for children of prisoners, examples of good practice exist all across the UK”, and offers this response to the question “What does good look like?”

“Identify children of prisoners- Intervene early- The Importance of whole family support- Flexible and targeted support which lasts for as long as necessary.”

## A Call for Reflection

### 3: The Financial Impact on Families of Imprisonment and Release

Families Outside who work to support families affected by imprisonment across Scotland, undertook a 20 month research project into the cost to families of imprisonment and release, and released their findings in “Paying the Price”: A project on the financial impact on families of imprisonment and release (10) which paints a stark picture of the implications of the financial burden that

imprisonment imposes on families, implications that may also come with attendant health and social costs.

Scotland has the highest imprisonment rate in Western Europe, with approximately 7,400 of the 5.5 million Scottish population in prison.

61% of people in prison have a child.

As part of the research a literature review analysing 51 interviews of people (the majority women) financially supporting loved ones in prison, was undertaken, and highlighted the role of prison in creating, sustaining, and deepening poverty, particularly in the wake of a decade of austerity, pandemic, and cost-of-living crises. Significantly, people held in prison often come from the most deprived areas in Scotland.

“The cost of imprisonment is overwhelmingly borne by single women on low incomes, who describe “coping” with the costs through sacrifices and silent suffering, food and fuel poverty, lack of “free” time, isolation, and loss of connection...

“Families already in poverty are being squeezed financially, to the point of being crushed.

“When someone goes to prison, their family usually loses an income.” “The costs associated with supporting someone in prison are also high, unnecessarily so, we found.”

“An estimated 27,000 children in Scotland experience a parent’s imprisonment each year, more than those who experience parental divorce.”

“Most families are often already living in poverty, when their family member goes to prison, and then feel stigmatised and “in the shadows”.”

“Our research shows that these families are experiencing very serious additional financial penalties that tend to particularly impact mothers and children. Families deal with this by silently suffering, enduring, and living a diminished life.”

“Covering the basics and being able to join in with normal social life is a far cry for families in Scotland where someone has gone to prison.” “The financial, social and health impacts- both psychological and physical on families are profound.” “In our discussions for our research we have heard that many policymakers and professionals are not aware of the additional costs for families, beyond the loss of income of the person in prison.”

“Our research captured how prison creates, sustains, and entrenches poverty for the families left behind. The costs in supporting someone in prison falls disproportionately to women, affecting their physical and mental health.

“The families of people held in prison overwhelmingly live on very low incomes, even before taking the costs of prison into account. The impact of the additional costs on families is that they often experience extreme food and fuel poverty, leaving them unable to engage in any social activities that cost money.

“Remand is an especially costly and stressful time for families. Our responders spent an average of £300 per month spent providing support to the person in custody- around half the average monthly income.

“People in prison on remand are not required to work, so prisons rarely provide the opportunity for them to do so.

“During the prison sentence, families spent on average £180 a month (a third of the disposable monthly family income) and a day and a half per week of their time supporting the person.

“On release from prison, the costs are shouldered by families, with £300 per month (half of the average monthly income) spent in the first couple of months. Claims for benefits can and should be set up before the person leaves prison, but this does not happen, and families shoulder the burden.

“The Scottish Prison Service and contracted establishments need to seek out ways to reduce unnecessary costs associated with imprisonment for families, drawing on examples of positive practice from European prison systems, such as in Norway and Sweden.” “Provide information to ensure families are fully informed about prison regimes and processes, maximise financial support available to families as early in the criminal justice system process as possible.” “Improve access to benefits and travel costs for families.” “Increase opportunities for people held in prison to support themselves and their families.” “Reduce the stigma families affected by imprisonment face in society.”

## The Importance of

### 4: The voices of children and young people not being overlooked and meaningful opportunities for them to share their views and being responded to being sought

We launched Tara’s Club, “a creative arts programme for children with a family member in prison” on 04/05/23.

We met Tara through social media, and she wrote to us...

“My name is Tara Thompson...my idea for a project with children of prisoners...inspired by my own experience with parental imprisonment...it would offer children the chance to explore their feelings and experiences with other people in a similar situation. There would be options for children to explore different mediums such as drama, dance, singing, writing and art...the aim would be to pull together a performance/gallery comprised of all the created work, allowing the children and young people to have a sense of pride at what they have produced and have a positive emotion that connects to their parent’s imprisonment instead of just feeling shame...

“I’m sure there is a reason that a programme like this doesn’t exist however I hope that something does come of this...if there had have been even just a tiny amount of support for us, it would have made it slightly easier. So that’s why I’m trying as hard as I can to try and make it better for other young people experiencing parental imprisonment.”

Reading Tara’s letter, I knew that Tara’s Club could provide something currently missing in our community, a positive vision, a supportive network of people in similar situations, a safe space for children (and by extension, relief, and support for their families) that empowers, that encourages self-expression, self-belief, resilience, and connection. There is a Māori proverb “Adorn the bird with feathers so that it may fly” and I knew I wanted The Ebb to give it all we’ve got, to be able to offer that tiny amount of support for children and young people, right here in Leicester.

It appears to me also that it is of equal importance the environment we create for the children who attend as what we are actually doing with them. For a person to grow they need an environment that provides them with genuineness, acceptance, and empathy. We can create that environment for children and their families with a loved one in prison, if we act towards them with unconditional positive regard, a concept from Carl Rogers, the American psychologist.

We all exist in a world loaded with experiences, our thoughts, behaviour, reality create a self-concept, the belief we hold about ourselves, based on our past experiences, our current circumstances, and our future expectations. It is not static; it changes over time. With poor self-concept, people can become destructive, but once we understand our self-concept better, we will be able to improve it.

Carl Rogers said of his concept of the fully functioning person, it is an ideal. We are always in the process of becoming and changing. Negative feelings are not denied but worked through.

Everyone has the potential to heal.

### Two Questions, "Hush Stigma"

A experienced parental imprisonment, when a teenager at school. She wrote to us...

"What are the issues that we should be aware of? Parental loss and psychological impact. Social stigma around having a parent in prison (bullying and marginalisation from neighbours and social networks, colleagues, schools, internal family politics). "Hush stigma." Told to keep it a secret to avoid social judgment.

"Neglect of children- One parent in prison and the other parent may be suffering and unable to provide hands-on parenting. Downward spiral is easy to fall into, wrong crowd, risk taking behaviours, intergenerational offending, drug and alcohol use, teenage pregnancy. Victims can often fall into wrong crowds, which exacerbates vulnerability and poor decision making.

"What can we do? Create a safe space for open conversations without judgment and unite people who have experienced the trauma of having family in prison. Structures to support individuals such as best practices (weekly) to aid trauma recovery and getting back on track with life emotionally/physically. Duty of care support system to measure and monitor impacted individuals and signpost for further support as required. Guidance to mimic good parenting and genuine friendships to encourage living a positive life."

### Two Questions, "The UK is a punitive society, how do we change perceptions?"

Charlotte Robey-Turner works at Buttle UK and Leicestershire Cares supporting young people to lead fulfilling lives and have a voice, locally and nationally.

"I echo calls for more robust data on the children and families of those sentenced to prison and having better data sharing agreements between organisations that need to know this, schools, social

services, youth services. This could go a long way to ensuring that support is put in place as soon as possible and to reduce the negative impact that family imprisonment can have on young people.

“Understanding that each family (and indeed, individual within a family) is different and will respond to the imprisonment of a family member differently is really important. This needs a flexible person-centred support approach which can connect families and children with local help and advice, as well as give them the time and opportunity they need to talk about how they feel and what individual support they need. For some, the person going to prison may even be a relief or positive thing, but this could still bring feelings of guilt, and there is always likely to be an economic impact and the stigma associated with having a parent in prison.

My third key issue is, how do we address the stigma associated with having a family member in prison? A lot of the focus is on supporting individual family members which is important, but I think that a lot of the need for this support comes from the fact that the UK is a punitive society...those who commit crimes should be punished...this seems to extend not only to the person who commits the crime but their entire family! How do we change perceptions so that those who are already struggling with the impact of family imprisonment are not also ostracized from, or even targeted by their community, which should instead be a source of support at a difficult time?

“As someone who advocates participation and co-production, my immediate answer to this is to put the experiences of families and young people who have been through parental imprisonment front and centre of our calls for action. Ask them what should be done, involve them in the development of support and calls for action. I know that hearing firsthand from those with lived experience can really spur you to want to create change!

“While its awful that there isn’t consistent support for families affected by imprisonment across the country, this does present the opportunity for us to co-design what this support and service should look like with those who have lived experience of the issue. This should hopefully make it as impactful and effective as possible from the start.”

## A Call to Action

### 4: Child Impact Assessments

The Prison Reform Trust have a longstanding interest in improving criminal justice outcomes for women, calling for a reduction in women’s imprisonment and a step change in how the justice system responds to the needs of women, and have pioneered Child Impact Assessments to ensure children’s needs are identified and addressed when a mother is in contact with the criminal justice system.



The Child Impact Assessment is a highly adaptable resource and a version for children with a father in the criminal justice system has been produced also.

The Child Impact Assessment is rooted in the conviction that children and young people should be seen, listened to and considered at all stages of their parent's journey through the justice system, arrest, court and sentencing, prison or community sentence and prior to release.

"Child Impact Assessments are not about assessing children, rather their needs." (11) "Assessments can be used by a wide range of practitioners, from statutory and voluntary services, as a tool to better understand children's needs. Keeping children safe, listening without judgement and sharing information sensitively are vital."

Sounds good? So what do we need to implement Child Impact Assessments? "Nothing more than attitudinal change, creativity and a vision for improving outcomes for children."

"The imprisonment of a household member is a recognised Adverse Childhood Experience...the imprisonment of a mother is much more likely to disrupt a child's life than paternal imprisonment and often leads to the break-up of the family. Only five percent of children remain in their family home when a mother goes to prison. Changes of carer and home may result in a change of school."

"Women in the criminal justice system are a particularly vulnerable group. Many women in prison have been victims of much more serious offences than those they are accused of committing."

"Most women are sent to prison for non-violent offences and serve sentences of 12 months or less. Short sentences are long enough to break up families but often not long enough for meaningful interventions that address problems leading to offending behaviour."

"Despite the well-evidenced impact on children of having a parent in the criminal justice system, children themselves are rarely considered in criminal justice proceedings. They are seldom recognised as a vulnerable group within the systems and structures that should protect them, and there is no government agency responsible for their wellbeing."

"It is everybody's responsibility to keep children" (affected by parental imprisonment) "safe, but the reality is, it's become nobody's."

"Several reports and policy documents refer to children of imprisoned parents as more likely to end up in the criminal justice themselves. This message is upsetting and stigmatising for children, and many feel tarnished with the same brush as their parent. This in itself can be a barrier to accessing support. It puts a burden of blame on the children instead of a duty of care on those who should protect them."

"Children reported that choice (deciding whom they complete the Child Impact Assessment with, ideally someone with whom they already have an existing relationship) and trust (feeling confident that information sharing will be open and transparent) are paramount."

"A child may experience trauma at any stage of their mother's criminal justice journey, and some questions may trigger emotional memories. Furthermore, the impact of trauma may make it difficult for a child to put their feelings into words, understand their emotions, or order their memories. A gentle, trauma-informed approach is important to minimise re-traumatisation."

"The sharing of information is something that worries many families affected by imprisonment. Several mothers and grandmothers described feelings that decisions were made about children with little or no consultation; this compounded their feelings of powerlessness within criminal justice processes. Media treatment of women in the criminal justice system can be particularly harsh, and

families often fear that information will be misrepresented or used to make decisions about custody.” “Data collection should be used to shine a light on the issues and must not become a barrier to families accessing support.”

“Grandparents play an important role in supporting children with a mother in the criminal justice system, often with little or no financial or emotional support.”

“Training for practitioners on the impact on children of having a mother in the criminal justice system, and an understanding of how being separated from their children affects mothers, are key to ensuring children receive the right support. One study found that practitioners lacked confidence when it came to families affected by the criminal justice system, and their perception was that they did not have the necessary skills to adequately support families. The study revealed, however that staff were able to identify families’ main needs and concerns when asked. In other words, it was the anxiety of practitioners about not having a knowledge of the criminal justice system that became a barrier to effective support, and not their lack of skills.”

“Children and young people who contributed to the consultation for this toolkit confirmed that the most important message for them to hear is that they are not alone.”

#### Notes about the Child Impact Assessment

“It is important when completing the Child Impact Assessment to be aware of the impact of trauma on children with a primary carer in the criminal justice system.

“Introduction. In this section, examples of different emotions are given. For some children, naming the emotion may be helpful, but others may prefer to use their own words or examples, or use pictures instead.” “It is important that children know that there is not a right or wrong way to feel; all feelings are valid.”

“A focus group of children with experience of a parent in prison said that they would like to be asked both how they are feeling and how they are doing; some children might be experiencing very complex emotions but are managing those well with coping strategies in place.”

“My mum was arrested.” “Many children describe the arrest of their mother as deeply traumatic. Children who witness their mother’s arrest may experience nightmares and flashbacks. If a mother is arrested while children are at school, coming home to an empty house can be confusing and traumatic.”

“My mum’s going to court.” “In a family court, decisions are made in the best interest of children. In stark contrast, the decision made in a criminal court can result in children being separated from their mothers with no assessment of their wellbeing.”

“My mum’s doing a community sentence.” “Some children might be living with their mother during a community sentence. This might be positive (mum is still around) or difficult (if the relationship with mum is strained or if children fear further disruption) and for many children it is a combination of both.”

“My mum is in prison.” “Many children have questions about their mum’s life in prison, and they often imagine a far worse scenario than the reality.” “Some children may choose not to visit mum in prison initially (they might feel angry or let down by their mum) but may later change their mind. Others may not want any contact at all with their mother. It is really important that children have an opportunity to re-visit decisions about visiting or having a relationship with their mum.”

“My mum is being released from prison.” “Families often say that release is a time when they need support more than ever.” “For some children, the thought of mum’s release is really exciting; for others, it can feel uncertain.” “Some children may have unrealistic expectations of mum’s release (everything will be ok when she gets out) others will know from prior experience that it can be one of the most challenging times with a lot of pressure for life to get back to normal.”

“if those working with children and families in a professional capacity are able to recognise their own unconscious bias this can allow children to have the freedom to engage more meaningfully in the process of decision making and action planning.”

### A Call for Reflection

#### 4: “A Societal Blind Spot”

Shona Minson’s audio essay “Mums in Prison” for Radio 4’s Four Thought (12) is charged with emotion, it challenges our indifference, as a society to children with mothers in prison. I felt it demanded a response from me personally because what actually is “societal indifference”? Surely, its only the sum total of our individual apathy?

“A barrister...I developed a practice in care cases- cases where the local authority has applied to move children from the care of their parents.” “All of those cases took place within the framework of the Children Act. A piece of legislation from 1989, the same year as the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, which sets out how children should be thought of and treated when the family courts become involved on their lives.”

“At the heart of the Children Act is the principle that the child’s best interests are the paramount consideration of the court. I believe in that principle. I believe that every child has value and worth and should be protected. So, I spent some years working in a system where the intention was to prioritise children’s wellbeing.”

“When my youngest was due to start school, I started a master’s degree in criminology. We had to write an essay about women’s imprisonment...”

“I started trying to find out what happened to children when their mums were sent to prison.”

“Why did a child’s best interest sit at the top of the pile in the family courts, but if that child was separated from their parent in the criminal courts, they might not even get a mention...”

“Each year about 12,000 women are sent to prison, and 75% of those, according to the Ministry of Justice’s own statistics are sentenced to less than 12 months in prison, whilst 50% of all women are sentenced to less than 3 months. If sentenced to 3 months only 6 weeks will be spent in prison, but 6 weeks is long enough for a single mother to lose her home, her children, her job, and it can take years to regain them, if ever.”

“With no financial support for people who take on the care of these children, families are often pushed into poverty.” “Unlike children who are fostered or adopted after they’ve been removed from their parents in the family courts, those whose mum is in prison, don’t receive any help or support.” “It might surprise you to know that we don’t actually know how many children are affected as no one asks the question...”

“Children whose mums are in prison are off the radar.”

“This has very practical implications. For example, if I foster a child, and they come to me on Monday evening, the school near me has to provide a school place for that child on Tuesday morning. But if a child’s mum is sent to prison on Monday and the child has to move to live with her Granny who lives in a different area, there is no obligation for a school to provide a place for that child on Tuesday or any other day. Many of the children I met had spent long periods out of school for that reason.”

“The lack of concern and support for children communicates how little society values them.”

“The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, ratified by the UK places a duty on the state to ensure that no child suffers discrimination or punishment because of the actions of their parents, but in the UK, we are doing exactly that every day. For whatever reason, children whose parents are convicted of criminal offences are treated differently to other children.”

“It seems that a child whose parent is convicted of criminal offences is somehow being held responsible or are regarded as criminal- being guilty by association.”

“That’s not ok. We do not hold children responsible for their parents’ actions in any other space in society, so why these children?”

“We need change. Change in the way we think. And I say “we” very deliberately. Yes, there needs to be change in the sentencing of parents and change in the ways that local authorities and schools and health services provide support, but there are needs to be change in all of us...”

“When a child’s parent is imprisoned that should not cause shame, stigma, or exclusion for that child. If anything follows, it should be support, care, nurture and acceptance.”

“The experiences of children whose parents go to prison has been a societal blind spot and we’ve let them be forgotten in the darkness.”

“It’s time for us to open our eyes.”

## Faith Communities, Give me this mountain?

When I first became involved in prison ministry, at HMP Blundeston, Suffolk, in the 90s, I was driven by the conviction that second chances were at the heart of the gospel, yet as I got to know prisoners and hear their stories, I began to ask the question, “When did these men actually have their first chance?”

Poor life choices come from poor life chances. There is a line of disadvantage that runs from inequality- poverty- mental ill health- offending behaviour. Disadvantages cluster like crows.

The point of conception is akin to opening a bank account, your wellbeing bank account. (13) Following conception, every time a pregnant mother experiences her needs being met, a penny is added to the child’s wellbeing bank account. Following birth, every time that child experiences connection with their caregiver, more pennies are deposited in their wellbeing bank account. There may be times when withdrawals are made, when a parent is experiencing stress and is less available to the child, but if there are enough funds already in the bank, this will not make a dent in the overall balance. However, some children may be born without that many pennies in the bank, and for these children positive experiences may not be enough to cover the deficit.

The Gospel of First Chances is to make as many deposits, as we can, as individual citizens, and as a society, into people’s wellbeing bank accounts, to act as a circuit breaker on the line of disadvantage.

Families affected by imprisonment are witnesses against the pretensions of the UK to be a just society. Our state, our system in the UK, currently recognises no moral obligation to families, including children, affected by imprisonment. When the state separates a child from their parent, due to that parent’s conviction that is a just act. But is it then a just act that the state then turns a blind eye and deaf ear to the needs of that child?

This callous indifference is a consequence of the divide in our society which creates the conditions for the UK being a punitive society and gives rise to the line of disadvantage and was observed and described as long ago as 1845, by Benjamin Disraeli as “two nations, between whom there is no intercourse and no sympathy, who are as ignorant of each other’s habits, thoughts and feelings as if they were...inhabitants of different planets...THE RICH AND THE POOR.”

Although the line of disadvantage has been chipped away at over the years, it remains stubbornly intact. Can people of faith offer a hopeful vision, of their faith communities viewing the moral obligation of the disadvantaged with the same spirit with which Caleb approached Joshua, [Oh! He was itching for the chance to tackle giants!] and declared “Give me this mountain.”

Can we envision an ACE (that is Adverse Childhood Experiences) Aware Nation? ACEs deliver silent and hidden cuts to people’s sense of self, wellbeing health and prospects. Do we believe that it is possible to prevent ACEs from blighting the lives of people and reduce the strains that their effects put upon society? It will require societal change, a shift in thinking, for the toxic effects of ACEs cannot be mitigated by professionals alone, this needs to be complimented by the way that we interact with one another on a daily basis. Real change comes from the ground up, not the top down. Can faith communities help lead the transformation of the UK from a punitive society to an ACE Aware Nation? Well, it will require us to ask searching questions, of society and of ourselves. Of ourselves, we all hold individual fears and prejudices about crime and criminals, that collectively add up to the punitive society. Our challenge is this, can we also at the same time hold a radical vision of justice, based on the teachings of our faith?

## Searching Questions

That there is something rotten gnawing at the heart of our society, and the way that our society is constructed is placing an intolerable burden on children and young people is evidenced by a rising tide of mental ill health, which peaks in adolescence and young adult years.

Consider the following from Centre for Mental Health- Children & Young People's Mental Health: The Facts (14)

- 1 in 6 school age children (between the ages 7-16) has a mental health problem (a rise from 1 in ten in 2004)
- 75% of adults with a diagnosable mental health problem experience the first symptoms by the age of 24
- ¾ of children in care have a diagnosable mental health problem
- Research suggests that school exclusions are linked to long-term mental health problems
- Young people in the youth justice system are 3 times more likely than their peers to have a mental health problem
- Suicide is the largest cause of mortality for young people under 35. Suicide rates have been increasing in recent years.
- There is an average 10 year delay between young people displaying first symptoms and getting help

What is the root cause of the crisis in the mental health of children and young people in the UK? Firstly, it must be acknowledged that the burden is not shared equally, but is concentrated in disadvantaged groups, where the risk factors are multiplied.

“Children from the poorest 20% of households are four times as likely to have serious mental health difficulties by the age of 11 as those from the wealthiest 20%.”

Living/being raised in poverty raises children's chances of developing poor mental health.

## The Red Thread

The criminal justice system throws a spotlight on the wider social injustices in our society. If prisoners are overwhelmingly drawn from marginalised communities, it follows that their families will be too. Particular groups are disproportionately over-represented in the criminal justice system, people from a minority ethnic group, people that identify as Muslim, people from the Gypsy/Roma/Traveller community (Please see Appendix B for Factors that contribute to overrepresentation of the GRT community in the criminal justice system). We are likely to find children with parents in prison among households at particular risk of poverty, but we can't detect something we're not looking for, so we need to develop ways that will enable children and young people to tell their stories.

I say, we need to make the effort to reach out to them. Why? Michael Farmer coined his celebrated phrase “the golden thread” to describe the families of prisoners, a rewind through the A Call to Action & A Call for Reflection sections of this document reveal that stigma is “the red thread” (red for danger) running through the experiences of families affected by imprisonment, exacerbating the stress that they are already under and acting as a deterrent to seeking help and support.

Anna Kotova- “Courtesy Stigma is a web of shame, a number of strands through which stigma is transferred from the prisoner inside to their relatives outside.”

COPE (Children of Prisoners Europe)- “It is not the imprisonment of the parent in and of itself that means a child will misbehave, but rather the response to the imprisonment (which may include social isolation and bullying) or the lack of response that increases the risk factor of stigmatisation and acting-out behaviour. See the potential, not the problem. It is hard to have a parent in prison and children can feel judged or stigmatised.”

William Bulow & Lars Linblom- “Children as a matter of justice are owed both a happy childhood, as well as the resources needed in order to ensure fair equality of opportunity later in adulthood. To be able to live life without stigma is a core demand of justice. In addition to their negative impact on children’s welfare, if they experience an enduring stigma in their youth, they are at risk of internalizing a false view about their worth.”

Families Outside- “Most families are often already living in poverty, when their family member goes to prison and then feel stigmatised and “in the shadows” and they call for action to “Reduce the stigma families affected by imprisonment face in society.”

Prison Reform Trust- “It is important to understand what the Child Impact Assessment is not, in order to reduce unintended harm to children. It is not about assessing children; rather, it is about assessing their needs. Its aim is to reduce stigma, not compound it.”

Shona Minson- “When a child’s parent is imprisoned that should not cause shame, stigma or exclusion for that child. If anything follows, it should be support, care, nurture and acceptance.”

## Two Visions

I want to conclude by setting out two visions. Firstly, a vision of faith communities supporting children and families affected by imprisonment. Faith communities have resources of human capital, social capital, and spiritual capital. How are we expending our spiritual capital?

In our divided society, both sides have a list of sins that offend them. The lists do not reveal how virtuous we are, they only reveal whose side we are on. Confronted with the line of disadvantage, confronted with the punitive society, can we opt-out? There is no opt-out but there is a choice, we can be passive or active. If we are not actively on the side of the poor, we are passively on the side of the system.

Shona Minson says that “the lack of concern and support for children (affected by imprisonment) communicates how little society values them” which raises a question for people of faith, what are we communicating about who we value?

Jesus grants us an insight into the solicitude of God in Luke 12:6-7 "Are not five sparrows sold for two pennies? And not one of them is forgotten before God. Why, even the hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not; you are of more value than many sparrows."

That "fear not" is a word of comfort to all weary, distressed souls, to any who are feeling crushed in spirit, that God knows and values them, even if the world and maybe even they themselves, cannot see them as a person of value.

The word hidden is often used to describe children and their families affected by imprisonment. They are not hidden to God; Jesus assures us that "Nothing is covered up that will not be revealed or hidden that will not be known." (Luke 12:2) The day will come when all the hidden people that are valued by God will be known. Surely, it is the task of faith communities to bring the word of God's esteem to them today?

Two Questions, "A significant part of the challenges faced by families of prisoners comes down to relationships...the Church is, at its core, also about relationships"

The Rt Revd Martyn Snow is the Bishop of Leicester. He wrote to us...

"What are the issues we should be aware of?"

"As with many problems facing our society, a significant part of the challenges faced by families of prisoners comes down to relationships. They have to navigate a considerable change in the nature of the relationship to the person who has been imprisoned. But, they are also likely because of that connection, to experience strain or even breakdown in other relationships.

"Family members, whether partners, siblings, parents or children can experience complex grief, shame, feelings of abandonment and betrayal, bewilderment, separation anxiety, social isolation and discrimination on top of practical, financial and logistical challenges. If the relative's imprisonment means a loss of income and having to move house or school, then the emotional and psychological impact only compounds further. And, for children especially, this sort of traumatic experience can set themselves up for further challenges later in life.



### “What can we do about it?”

“I believe there is a lot which Churches can do to support families of prisoners, because the Church is, at its core, also about relationships. The Christian faith teaches us of a God who is love, with whom mercy triumphs over judgment, and who offers wholeness and community to all, including and especially the downtrodden and marginalised.

“Therefore, Churches should be among the first to offer unconditional welcome and understanding to those who face stigmatisation elsewhere. Through a Church community, families of prisoners should be able to receive practical, emotional and spiritual support, a place they can just be, and somewhere they can be heard. It might sound like a small gift we can offer, but simply being with and walking alongside can make a huge difference.

“I would also like to see Church leaders and members being trained in reconciliation so they can help families strained by the experience of imprisonment find a way forward.”

### Two Questions, “Breaking Barriers...as a Muslim Woman Community Chaplain...”

Ferzana Dakri leads The Straight Path Resettlement Project in Leicester, was a Family Engagement Worker at HMP Leicester and currently serves in the Probation Service.

“As a Muslim woman community chaplain and the first South Asian family engagement worker in HMP Leicester, my role was seen as breaking barriers, reaching minority and disadvantaged groups in the prison.

“The issues that we should be aware of...cultural sensitives and cultural competencies, language and faith, visibility.

“The importance of faith-based community chaplaincies cannot be overestimated and is recognised by HMPPS on the Faith Partnership Framework (Gov.uk.2021) (15) The Straight Path Resettlement Project (SPR) provides a wide range of different support, being the conduit for the service user referred to by partner agencies, as well as translation of criminal justice documents for those whose first language is not English. As a community chaplaincy, the primary focus remains on those of the Muslim faith background.

“Muslim men in prison make up a disproportionate percentage of the prison system, 17% of the prison population in England and Wales identify as Muslim (MoJ 2021) which is significantly out of line with general population. This inevitably means that many thousands of families are impacted through the domino effect of “secondary imprisonment” which compounds the impact on support organisations like SPR

“Once operationalised it was important to raise awareness about SPR to ensure that people knew that a culturally sensitive resettlement project was working in the heart of the community. Families and prisoners needed to know that they could reach out to fully trained family and faith support chaplains who would be able to understand, support and relate through heritage and culture. Word of mouth and signposting of the project proved incredibly important for women in need.

“Accessing a female family chaplain has allowed familiarity and connection for families with regards to pastoral care and guidance, on sensitive and personal matters and honouring that need, whether religiously affiliated or otherwise. Being of the same faith as those engaging with the project means that I can pick up and understand visible signs, sympathise, and contextualise. This has helped bring into the open experiences and concerns to ensure that they do not remain unsaid and hidden. A synergy of faith and culture can help to break down barriers when working with people of the same faith who would either struggle or feel apprehensive asking for help.

“Despite shared common factors such as faith, ethnicity, heritage and culture, there remains barriers for Muslim women to open up and talk about their experiences. The element of trust was a major factor where families felt they needed to feel safe and assured that once they opened up, their voices would be protected. Overcoming shame and taboo and then taking measured steps to trust someone who could identify with what they were going through was a struggle.”

### “Areas of Excellence”

We have a vision to make Leicester an “area of excellence” in support for the families of prisoners. This is still very much a work of progress, but we have developed a 7-5-4 model to crystallize the challenge and help build alliances.

There are 7 key points (on a prisoner’s journey) where families intersect with the criminal justice system- Arrest- Pre-Trial- Sentencing- Time served in the community- Time served in custody- Pre-release- Release, so we will develop 5 strategic responses- with the arresting authorities- at court- in the community- at the prison- through the gate, to offer support at the key points, and tackle the 4 factors- emotional distress- stigma- financial distress- the need for empowerment.

We will not accept the status quo. There is a job to do, but we have the tools to do it. In the Call to action/Call for reflection sections of this document we have set out the pre-existing knowledge and resources available. Can you respond by working to strengthen the work already being undertaken in your local area or by envisioning your locality as a new “area of excellence” in support for the families of prisoners?

The social damage associated with familial imprisonment is an issue of justice, but a just society is more than merely morally desirable. A society that disregards the common good will be inherently unstable, as will a society that does not say to the poor and vulnerable, come and join in, because we need you. The Centre for Social Justice say this “While multiple governments have committed to

harnessing the power of family to change lives in the system, we have heard repeatedly- from prison staff- police officers- frontline charities and the families and children themselves- that these sound intentions have rarely translated into meaningful change on the ground. A reduction of only 10% in reoffending would not only lead to thousands of fewer victims of crime, but an estimated economic benefit of £1.8 billion. The failure to unlock the potential of family across the criminal justice system is a longstanding missed opportunity.”

We began with two questions, I have outlined 2 visions and I want to end with 2 personal reflections, our limitations should lead us to humility, our knowledge does not make us an expert on another person’s life and a trauma-informed approach is vital. Trauma is not just the event, its how you experienced the event. Trauma is not always caused by bad things happening, it can also be experienced when good things don’t happen. In response, let us attempt to look at it through the other person’s, not our own lens. We are not the rescuers, but we can be the encouragers. The language of possibility is important.

## Appendix A: "Areas of Excellence"

Organisations with a specific focus on families impacted by the criminal justice system.

- 1- North- East- NEPACS (THE North East Prison After Care Society)
- 2- Lincolnshire- Lincolnshire Action Trust (LAT)
- 3- East Anglia- Ormiston Families
- 4- PACT (Prison Advice & Care Trust)- Court-Based Support in London- Prison-Based Support- England & Wales- Runs Prisoners Families Helpline
- 5- South Coast- Sussex Prisoners Families
- 6- Spurgeons based at HMP Winchester
- 7- Children Heard & Seen- Based in Oxfordshire- offer Mentoring & Support to children affected by parental imprisonment across England & Wales
- 8- East Midlands- Families Affected by Imprisonment Project- Leicester- The Straight Path Resettlement Project- Leicester- The Ebb Leicester
- 9- West Midlands- Himaya Haven
- 10- YSS (Youth Support Services) Worcester, include the children of prisoners in their remit, please see Appendix C
- 11- Bristol- The Children Centre's have a network of CAPO Champions (CAPO- Children affected by parental offending)
- 12- Swansea- Families and Friends of Prisoners (FFOPS)- Phone service- Drop In Centre- Outreach service
- 13- North West A- Time-Matters UK- Merseyside
- 14- North West B- Out There- Manchester
- 15- North West C- POPS (Partners of Prisoners)- Manchester- Merseyside- Yorkshire- Leicestershire
- 16- Scotland- Families Outside

I hope that brief overview reflects some of the depth and breadth of the amazing work currently being done up and down the country, to offer a vital lifeline to families affected by imprisonment and to assure them that they are not alone, and that help and support is available if they want it.

I want to acknowledge that our map is very rudimentary, that there are gaps where either there is little or no provision for families affected by imprisonment, or a lack of knowledge on our part means that we have not included an organisation that is doing important work in that area. Please get in touch with details if that is the case. We want to acknowledge and thank you for your service.

Contact: [ebbleicester@gmail.com](mailto:ebbleicester@gmail.com)

## APPENDIX B: Factors that contribute to overrepresentation of the Gypsy Roma & Traveller community in the criminal justice system (16)

“Based on the most recent statistics the GRT community make up 0.1% of the UK population, but 9% of young people within the criminal justice Youth estate identify as being from a traveller background, 5% of prison detainees in the adult estate identify as Romany Gypsy or Irish Travellers.

Societal adversities can combine and lead to increased risk of criminal behaviour. For Romany Gypsy and Irish Traveller people these factors include their experiences of poor living conditions, persistent experiences of ongoing discrimination throughout the life-course, poor physical health and disability, substance misuse, domestic violence, poor mental health, of all ethnic groups the lowest levels of academic attainment and the highest suicide rates.

Multiple adversities faced by Romany Gypsy and Irish Traveller people combine to increase the risk of engaging in criminal behaviour, which in turns lead to an overrepresentation within the criminal justice system.

Research has found that minoritized defendants are more likely to plead “not guilty” compared to White defendants, due to a lack of trust between ethnic minority defendants and the justice system. This lack of trust may mean that minoritized defendants do not feel able to cooperate with the Police or follow the advice of solicitors. Lack of an early guilty plea increases the likelihood of harsher sentencing, including increased time in custody. Mistrust of the Police and the Justice System is strongly felt within the Romany gypsy and Irish Traveller communities, with many Romany Gypsy and Irish Traveller people feeling unfairly treated and persecuted throughout their entire lives.

The experience of GRT people within prison is often marred by negative experiences that reduce the effectiveness of custody to rehabilitate, and rehabilitation is further hampered by the difficulties that GRT people have in maintaining family ties during prison stays. Prison management should take into consideration when designing activities for their GRT population that 68% of Romany Gypsy and Irish Traveller prisoners have not received a full education outside prison, often leaving school at the transition to secondary education. Understanding cultural differences can help prison officers provide suitable services and improve engagement and wellbeing within prison.”

### Appendix C: How to create an “area of excellence”- YSS- Family First Service in Worcestershire (17)

Launched in January 2021 the YSS Family First (YSS FF) service aimed to reach out to children and their families in Worcestershire who experience the imprisonment of a loved one. Forging a multiagency collaboration, the service aimed to- Identify families affected by familial imprisonment- Provide a single point of contact- Gather data- Liaise and advocate on behalf of families with relevant community agencies- Provide practical help with maintaining contact with the incarcerated parent and supporting the child and family’s general health and wellbeing by designing and implementing a programme of targeted, responsive, need-based support.

“This need-based responsive support has provided a lifeline for families. Halting cycles of emotional decline and social isolation, YSS FF have provided a therapeutic and practical support for families, most of which felt they had no one to turn to. In the face of social stigma and exclusion, YSS FF practitioners have supported families in recognising their strengths as families and as individuals and afforded them opportunities to develop the skills and strategies required to move through challenging times.” (16)

A research study set out to evaluate the need for services such as Family First nationwide. It makes compelling and galvanizing reading.

“Interviews with stakeholders (education, housing, Police, Charities, and support organisations) and practitioners revealed consistent themes:

“Forgotten Families- characterised by no formal system for tracking children and young people in such circumstances, while children encounter disrupted childhoods, face safeguarding issues and encounter barriers to support.

“Prison Defining Childhood- the behavioural impacts of such circumstances on children and young people and their lack of voice in the system.

“Secondary prisonisation revealed the stigma and shame felt by families and the paradox of being “seen” regarding stigma but “not seen” regarding voice and available support.

“Intersectionality described the complex intersecting issues that impact upon families’ experiences including mental health problems, financial difficulties, and substance dependency, exacerbated by imprisonment and by the reasons that led to imprisonment. The consequences of unmet need include social isolation, increased emotional distress and trauma, and impact on children’s ability to engage in their education.”

“It is proposed that radical change is needed in terms of recording and storing information about how many children are affected by parental imprisonment in real-time and that the way in which this information is initially recorded, stored, and shared with partner agencies is urgently reformed.

“The report details that not all parents, children and young people throughout the UK experiencing family imprisonment have access to services and support systems required to meet their complex needs. Furthermore, lack of awareness and social stigma surrounding family imprisonment threaten to perpetuate a cycle of social disengagement.

“The children and young people of today with imprisoned parents need support to help them to deal with the trauma and distress surrounding parental imprisonment, to continue to grow and to engage

fully in their education, relationships, and future. At present, we don't even know who they are."  
(16)

Let us conclude with these two thoughts. According to the report, YSS FF has "raised the profile" of families affected by imprisonment in Worcestershire and let us echo the YSS theory of change- "We enable people to develop their resilience and feel that they belong in the community."

## NOTES

- 1: HMIP & OFSTED Joint Thematic Review 2014
- 2: Ministry of Justice- "The importance of strengthening prisoners' family ties to prevent reoffending and reduce intergenerational crime"- Lord Farmer
- 3: The Centre for Social Justice- "The Golden Thread- Putting family at the heart of the criminal justice system".
- 4: Working Together to Safeguard Children- A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children
- 5: Anna Kotova University of Birmingham- "Beyond Courtesy Stigma: towards a multi-faceted and cumulative model of stigmatisation of families of people in prison"
- 6: The Ebb Leicester- Prospectus for Schools
- 7: Children of Prisoners Europe (COPE)- "Reading between the lines: a toolkit to help schools support children with a parent in prison"
- 8: William Bulow/Lars Lindblom- "The Social Injustice of Parental Imprisonment"
- 9: Crest- Children of Prisoners- Fixing a Broken System- Authors- Sarah Kincaid- Manon Roberts- Professor Eddie Kane
- 10: Families Outside- "Paying the Price"- A project on the financial impact on families of imprisonment and release
- 11: The Prison Reform Trust- "This is Me": A Child Impact Assessment toolkit
- 12: Dr Shona Minson- Mums in Prison- Radio 4- Four Thought
- 13: Siobhan Collingwood, Andy Knox, Heather Fowler, Sam Harding, Sue Irwin, Sandra Quinney, Edited by Dr Claire Coulton, Lancaster University- "The Little Book of Adverse Childhood Experiences"
- 14: Centre for Mental Health- Children & Young People's Mental Health: The Facts
- 15: Masson, I, Booth, N and Dakri, F (2022) in The Routledge Handbook of Women's Experiences of Criminal Justice (Women in the middle: the gendered role of supporting prisoners- Natalie Booth and Isla Masson with Ferzana Dakri)
- 16: The Traveller Movement- "Available But Not Accessible"- Romany Gypsies & Irish Travellers: Barriers in Accessing Purposeful Activities in Prison
- 17: Victoria Cooper; Jane Payler; Stephanie Bennett; Lottie Taylor- "From Arrest to Release, Helping families feel less alone: An evaluation of a Worcestershire Pilot Support Project for Families Affected by Parental Imprisonment"

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the ebb



Community Chaplaincy Association

