

Family Learning in Prisons: A Resource for Prisons and Learning Providers

“An offender’s family are the most effective resettlement agency”

HM Inspectorate of Prisons, HM Inspectorate of Probation and Ofsted joint thematic review on resettlement provision for adult offenders (2014)

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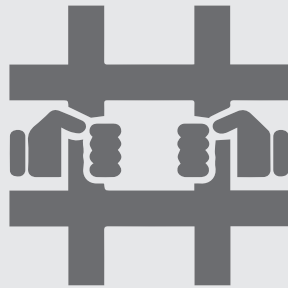
200,000

children in England and Wales with a parent in prison



45%

of prisoners lose contact with their family whilst in prison



Offenders who maintain family relationships and receive visits while in custody are

38%

less likely to reoffend than those who do not receive visits



54%

of offenders have children under 18 when they enter custody



Children of offenders are three times more likely to experience mental health problems, exhibit antisocial behaviour and become 'Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET).



Two-thirds

of women prisoners are mothers



65%

of boys who have had a father in prison go on to offend themselves



FOREWORD

Supporting a prisoner's relationship with his or her family, as well as other significant relationships that are meaningful and constructive, should be a primary focus for anyone caring for those in custody and who hope to achieve positive change and a transformation in lives.

Many of those in custody will have experienced a non-traditional upbringing, with a range of adults having cared for them and similarly those in custody with children may have less orthodox arrangements outside of a traditional family arrangement. The important element in all of these relationships, is that they should be supported by Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) to provide meaningful support for those in custody, which will further offer constructive support for the individual on release.

While family and significant relationships may sometimes be the direct or indirect victims of a prisoner's offence, or may have contributed to the offending behaviour, maintaining family contact, where appropriate is recognised as a key source of support for prisoners during their time in custody and on their release

HMPPS believes that maintaining and encouraging positive family and significant relationships can be an important protective factor in helping offenders to break the cycle of crime, desist from future offending and may impact on the prevention of intergenerational crime. This is reinforced by a recent thematic report from her majesty's Chief Inspector of Prisons, in which he concludes: "It is widely accepted that good family contact has an important role to play, not only in supporting prisoners through their sentence, but in supporting their rehabilitation after release."

This publication encapsulates much of our thinking around family and significant relationships and family learning and how prisoners engage with their children. It is a useful addition to support Governors, Directors and staff in engaging prisoners with their family and significant relationships.



Paul Baker -
Director of London and Thames Valley Prisons

INTRODUCTION

This guide to family learning in prisons, comes at a crucial time of prison reform. For many years, 'Children and Families' has been one of the acknowledged rehabilitation pathways in English prisons. The pathway assumes that 'maintaining strong relationships with families and children can play a major role in helping prisoners to make and sustain changes that help them to avoid re-offending'.¹ Maintaining strong family relationships for prisoners as a major contributor to desistance is widely accepted.

Equally, the maintenance of strong family ties is vital for the children of prisoners. Research shows that the outcomes for children of prisoners can be hugely negative². They are at twice the risk as their peers who do not have a parent in prison, of developing anti-social behaviour and poor mental health outcomes, as prisoners' families are negatively affected socially, financially, emotionally and practically by the fact of a family member being imprisoned.³

In its good practice guide to the initiative at HMP The Wolds⁴, OFSTED acknowledged the contribution that family learning can make to resettlement.

"[An] offender who had previously had alcohol issues said after being released from prison: 'Thanks to family learning the kids are so good with me now that I have been released. My son won't let me out of his sight and I have so much time for my kids. We go out and have so much fun. The pub can wait!'"

Launching the Prison and Courts Reform Bill in 2017, the Secretary of State for Justice, Liz

Truss, specifically referred to the duty owed to prisoners and their families to reform the way that prisons are run. She gave meaning to that position in the bill itself by committing '...to develop a measure of the quality of prisoners' family relationships.'

'...research has found that prisoners who report improved family relationships are significantly less likely to reoffend or use class A drugs on release from prison.'⁵

Acknowledging the place of family relationships in supporting rehabilitation, the Prison and Courts Reform Bill devolves family services' budgets to Prison Governors while committing to ensuring that such funding is distributed more evenly and fairly.

Therefore, this publication comes at an opportune moment in the long history of prison reform in the UK. Family learning is not just about the academic sphere that we so often associate with helping with homework, relationships with schools, encouraging academic success – important though we know these to be. Far more importantly for prisons, it is also about establishing positive and sustainable relationships between prisoners and


1 Shown at <http://prisonlinks.co.uk/the-7-pathways-to-reduce-reoffending/>

2 Joseph Murray, David P. Farrington, Ivana Sekol, Rikke F. Olsen (2009) Parental Imprisonment: effects on children's anti-social behaviour, crime and mental health

3 Howard League What is Justice Working Papers (2014) Justice and prisoners' families

4 Ofsted (2011) Good practice resource – Inclusive family learning in a prison setting: HMP Wolds

5 Prisons and Courts Bill 2016-17



their partners, children and parents. It is about working to sustain family relationships so that children can maintain a meaningful relationship with mothers and fathers and so that partners can explore and sustain ways of being together that will provide sustenance to their relationships post-release. It is not a one-way street but a way that all members of a family can contribute to each other's learning not just during the term of a sentence, but more importantly, once the prisoner re-settles in the community.

The publication has been developed by the Learning and Work Institute (L&W). We are an independent policy and research organisation dedicated to promoting lifelong learning, full employment and inclusion. We research what works, develop new ways of thinking and implement new approaches. Working with partners, we transform people's experience of learning and employment. What we do benefits individuals, families, communities and the wider economy.

L&W brings together over 90 years of combined history and heritage from the "National Institute of Adult Continuing Education" (NIACE) and the "Centre for Economic and Social Inclusion" (CESI)

Together with our partners in the National Family Learning Forum, the Learning and Work Institute is a leader in Family Learning. Our independent Inquiry⁶ into Family Learning in England and Wales has had a major impact in supporting high quality, innovative practice; appropriate policy and advocacy; and encouraging research and development.

The report arising from the Inquiry "Family Learning Works" demonstrated the importance of the learning family in encouraging both adults' and children's learning. This is especially important in the context of offender families, where families play a crucial role in reducing re-offending. Family learning is shown to help break intergenerational cycles of disadvantage, by maintaining communication and parental involvement in children's progression.

We advocate an expansion of family learning in prisons as a major contributor to rehabilitation and resettlement, dove-tailing with the Secretary of State's commitment to using reform to strengthen the place of families in the rehabilitation process. Not only does this benefit prisoners and, more importantly, the families and communities to which they return, it can be a vital factor in enabling the partners and children of prisoners to contribute to a more positive future for themselves. We hope that this resource will encourage more family learning initiatives in prisons.

Policy context

Prison reform is currently high on the government agenda, with close examination of prison rehabilitation and reform including consideration of how family services can impact on rehabilitation. The 2014 joint thematic review⁸ on resettlement provision for adult offenders by HM Inspectorate of Prisons, HM Inspectorate of Probation and Ofsted stated that "An offender's family are the most effective resettlement agency".

6 NIACE (2013) Family Learning Works: The Inquiry into Family Learning in England and Wales

8 HM Inspectorate of Prisons (2014) Resettlement provision for adult offenders: Accommodation and education, training and employment



The negative impact of imprisonment on families is well documented and evidenced. Consequently, prisons, support agencies and relevant stakeholders expend a great deal of time and effort to help prisoners maintain family ties, through a wide range of family-focussed work. Prison Family Support Services are under review and will be recommissioned soon.

A 2014 Ministry of Justice report⁹ found that offenders who maintain family relationships and receive visits while in custody are 38% less likely to reoffend than those who do not receive visits while, without targeted intervention, there is a high risk that learned patterns of behaviour are likely to be passed on to the next generation¹⁰.

“Supporting and maintaining links between offenders and their families can help reduce reoffending. Doing so can contribute to tackling inter-generational offending by addressing the poor outcomes faced by children of offenders.”¹¹

In recognition, Conservative Peer Lord Farmer recently chaired The Farmers Review¹² - an independent review to investigate how supporting men in prison in England and Wales to engage with their families can reduce reoffending and assist in addressing intergenerational crime.

In 2004, a Children and Families Pathway was included in the “National Offender Management Service (NOMS) National Reducing Re-Offending Action Plan.” This provided a framework for maintaining family relationships and the integration of relationship and parenting skills into mainstream support.

However, a 2014 review of the pathway found that while there are outstanding examples of best practice, there is also a gap between the national policy vision and delivery. The report found that:

- Family services are often not seen as a priority or are limited in scale and ambition.

9 Ministry of Justice and Department for Business Innovation and Skills (2014), Parenting and relationship support programmes for offenders and their families: Executive summary

10 Helen Fair and Jessica Jacobson Institute for Criminal Policy Research, Birkbeck, University of London December 2016

11 Ministry of Justice and Department for Business Innovation and Skills (2014), Parenting and relationship support programmes for offenders and their families

12 Clinks, Farmer Review | how can supporting men in prison to engage with their families reduce reoffending?

-
- There is little awareness among commissioners of the range of services available
 - There is significant variation in the quality and scale of family service provision commissioned.

Who this publication is for

This publication has been developed for Prison Governors, Heads of Learning and Skills, Third Sector and Family Learning managers and Programme Commissioners, to encourage and support provision of family learning programmes in prisons.

The resource also aims to support Education Providers, Health professionals, Third Sector Agencies, Local Authority and private Family Learning Providers, who wish to continue or extend their family learning provision to prisons.

How to use this guide

Prison Governors and staff, including Education staff, Heads of Resettlement, of Learning and Skills and the prison Quality Improvement Groups (QIG) should use this resource to increase their knowledge of family learning and the benefits it brings to prisons, to offenders and their families.

Prison Governors and staff should review the resource to inform their commissioning of family learning programmes.

Family learning providers should use the resource as a source of information to ensure that appropriate evaluation is integrated into the delivery of family learning programmes from the outset.

Especially where evaluation is limited by financial or other constraints **family learning providers** should use the "Family Learning in Prisons Outcomes Planning and Capture Tool" to ensure that internal evaluations provide sound, quantifiable evidence of impact.

Family learning providers should use information in the resource to encourage their staff to access and to upload family learning materials and resources to the Virtual Campus; and to use the Wider Outcomes Planning and Capture Tool in its digital form on the Virtual Campus.

FAMILY LEARNING IN PRISONS

What are family services?

There is a wide range of services for offenders and their families, ranging from services which help maintain family relationships to transformational family based interventions.

Family interventions can be supported and delivered by family intervention workers based in the prison or by a range of agencies such as Ormiston Families Breaking Barriers service for children affected by imprisonment which supports prisoners' families. Family interventions range from information, advice and guidance for families and professionals working with families of offenders, to virtual support services such as the Offenders' Families Helpline¹³.

Prison "Family Support Services" are under review and will be recommissioned in the future.

i-HOP (Information Hub on Offenders' families with children for Professionals) is a one-stop information and advice service to support all professionals in working with children and families of offenders, including frontline staff, strategic managers and commissioners. Commissioned by the Department for Education, i-HOP is run by Barnardo's in partnership with POPS (Partners of Prisoners and Families Support Group).

"a pedagogical approach that refers to any learning activity that impacts on both children and adult family members, where learning outcomes are intended for both, and that contributes to a culture of learning in the family."¹⁴

Family learning encourages adults to support children's learning within the family. It involves learners in practical activities which engage adults in learning, provides opportunities for parents to support their children and helps them to understand their role in their children's learning.

Family learning differs from other forms of learning as it raises the expectations and aspirations of both children and adults. It supports parents to help their children achieve, gives parents the confidence to learn for themselves and encourages progression to further learning, for both adults and children.

Not least, family learning helps parents to support their child's learning, developing "learning families" which can help break cycles of intergenerational deprivation.

What is family learning?

Family learning is an important strand of family interventions. The founding principle of family learning is that parents and carers care about their children. It can be defined as:

"It is far better, we believe, to invest public money in low-cost family learning programmes than to spend it addressing the consequences of our failure to target interventions."¹⁵

¹³ The Offenders' Families Helpline info@offendersfamilieshelpline.org

¹⁴ NIACE (2013) Family Learning Works: The Independent Inquiry into Family Learning NIACE (2013)

¹⁵ *ibid*

Family learning has both immediate and long term positive effects on the whole family¹⁶ including:

- Progression in skills, learning and employment
- Attainment for adults and children
- Widening horizons
- Increasing aspirations
- Improved relationships
- Confidence
- Resilience

How family learning is delivered in prisons

“Maintaining meaningful relationships with family members, acquiring parenting and relationship skills, re-shaping negative patterns of thinking and behaviour in interaction with the family and having a supportive family to return to on resettlement are seen to be protective factors not only in reducing re-offending but also in preventing the inter-generational transmission of offending”¹⁷

What type and size of programmes are delivered in prisons?

There is a wide variety of family learning programmes in prisons, ranging from informal engagement activities such as “Family Days”, to formal, accredited learning programmes, such as family reading, language and maths and parenting programmes.

Family learning programmes in prisons include Family Literacy, Language and Numeracy (FLLN) programmes and Wider Family Learning (WFL) programmes which encompass any subject that encourages adults to engage with their children in learning.

A review of the National Interventions Directory found that current family learning programmes in prisons also include examples such as “Good parenting skills”, “Learning and Playing” and “Creativity and Games”.

There is wide variation in the size and scale of family learning programmes, ranging from large scale established programmes delivered by, or in partnership with, external agencies and charities, to smaller single prison programmes, delivered by local authority community learning providers, charities and / or prison education staff.

Some are delivered in multiple prisons by, or in partnership with, external agencies and charities such as PACT (Prisons Advice and Care Trust) or Barnardos - national charities which support people affected by imprisonment.

Where does family learning take place in prisons?

Family learning programmes are delivered in a wide variety of settings in prisons, from classrooms to chaplaincies, mother and baby units, family visitor centres and prison libraries.

¹⁶ ibid

¹⁷ Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, National Offender Management Service (NOMS), Policis, Kingston University and Toynbee Hall (2014) Parenting and Relationship Support Programmes for Offenders and Their Families

How family learning is delivered in prisons

In some family learning programmes, parents and children might attend sessions together with a tutor who is trained to work with both adults and children. In other programmes, adults might have a session/s while children have separate sessions, followed by a joint session where adults and children come together with

both tutors. Alternatively, only adults have taught sessions, with intergenerational aspects of learning provided through home activities, or adults may attend adult only classes, such as parenting programmes, which benefit the whole family.



AN OVERVIEW OF FAMILY LEARNING PROGRAMMES IN PRISONS

Family learning programmes actively involve families not only in maintaining relationships but also in enhancing parenting skills and building a joint vision of the future which does not include offending and which provides a more positive environment for children.¹⁸

The following section sets out a series of Family learning case studies organised by theme, to illustrate the variety of family learning programmes currently delivered in prisons.

Contact details for all organisations included in the case studies are provided in the Further Information and Resources section of this guide.

"Children and families can play a significant role in supporting an offender to make and sustain changes which reduce re-offending. [We] recommend measures to reduce family breakdown, such as family learning and parenting skills."¹⁹

Family relationship programmes

Family relationship programmes are designed to maintain and improve relationships between family members.

"short parenting courses appeared to increase awareness and sensitivity to others, enhanced relationship and communication skills and made communications with family and children more positive."²⁰

Pact delivers several accredited relationship and parenting courses in prisons.

"**Building Stronger Families**" (BSF) has run in 28 male and 3 female prisons in the UK. The programme aims to strengthen relationships between prisoners and their partners. "Building Stronger Families" strengthens family relationships through better communication and developing a shared approach to parenting. A Ministry of Justice analysis²¹ of 144 prisoners who had completed the programme, showed that participants had a 10% lower re-offending rate compared to a matched cohort of prisoners with similar profiles.

Pact's "**Building Bridges**" is a four-day relationship building course for younger prisoners and a parent or other significant adult relative who is required to attend the course alongside the prisoner.

Evaluation²² of a course delivered to young males and their families found that the programmes succeeded in strongly improving the communication between parents and their sons in prison, resulting in:

- Improved behaviour of the young person
- Greater involvement of the parent with their child's sentence
- A greater chance of the parent allowing the young person to return home
- Opportunities for case workers and Youth Offending Team (YOT) workers to work with the parents.

¹⁸ ibid

¹⁹ National Offender Management Service: The National Reducing Re-offending Delivery Plan

²⁰ Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, National Offender Management Service (NOMS), Policis, Kingston University and Toynbee Hall (2014) Parenting and Relationship Support Programmes for Offenders and Their Families

²¹ Extracted from <https://www.prisonadvice.org.uk/building-stronger-families>

²² Extracted from https://www.i-hop.org.uk/app/answers/detail/a_id/44/related/1

Pact's "**Time to Connect**" is a short parenting course for men who have younger children. It is designed to build confidence in parenting and develop participants' sense of responsibility as fathers. The course helps fathers develop skills whilst in custody which can be used on release.

By improving the quality of the relationship between the parents and child the programme aims to contribute to both a reduction in reoffending and improved outcomes for children. The programme has received positive feedback from participants about what they have learned from the course²³:

"I've learnt how to become a better father and ways to play with my child"

Participant on Time to Connect programme

"Triple Parenting Programme (Triple P)"

"**Triple P**" is a set of evidence-based parenting programmes focused on developing positive relationships, attitudes and behaviour. "Triple P" is currently delivered in 25 countries, comprises different levels of intensity, and can be adapted for different family structures.

HMP Barlinnie – Triple P parenting programme

Triple P is used in Glasgow as part of a wider approach to parental learning and family services in the city. Following a successful pilot in 2009 HMP Barlinnie requested that a rolling programme of Triple P groups be offered within the prison.

Family bonding sessions provide opportunities for fathers to practice the Triple P strategies.

"I am able to communicate better with my kids on the telephone and have longer conversations with them. Use incidental teaching and give lots of descriptive praise and now have a better bond with them"

Father on Triple P programme

"**Strengthening Families, Strengthening Communities**" (**SFSC**) is delivered by the Council for Racial Equality. It is an inclusive parenting programme designed to promote protective factors which are associated with good parenting and better outcomes for children. It is often used to support parents at risk of being marginalised, including BAME parents, teenage parents, parents with learning disabilities and parents with experience of drugs, alcohol or violence. It is also delivered in prisons. Follow the link (<http://raceequalityfoundation.org.uk/sites/default/files/publications/downloads/glynisecoulson.pdf>) to see Glynise Coulson, Principal Practitioner Parenting - Lincolnshire present a guide to delivering the SFSC programme in prison highlighting issues such as the need for partnership working, and the possible emotional impact of the setting on facilitators.

Ormiston Families' "**Unite**" programme delivers "**Maintaining Family Ties**" - a course of four two-hour sessions which helps offenders to explore the impact of offending behaviour on relationships and make decisions on how to reduce that impact. The aims of Maintaining Family Ties

23 Extracted from Pact, Time to Connect: Information for Commissioners

are to help offenders identify supportive relationships and explore the impact of offending behaviour on relationships. Participants then make a personal action plan aimed at nurturing important relationships. In Essex, Norfolk & Suffolk and BeNCH (Bedfordshire, Northamptonshire, Cambridgeshire and Hertfordshire) Ormiston work with the three Sodexo Community Rehabilitation Companies (CRCs) where they deliver Maintaining Family Ties as part of their support for the government's Transforming Rehabilitation (TR) programme across the East of England.

Barnardos deliver a wide range of family support services in prisons including relationship and parenting programmes. These include "**Family Matters**" which is delivered in Northern Ireland and delivered at HMP Parc in Wales and HMP Birmingham as part of the "**Invisible Walls**" project – an extensive support programme to assist offenders and their families to strengthen family relationships both prior to and after release from prison.

HMP & YOI Doncaster – Parenting for male offenders

Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council Adult, Family & Community Learning run a Certa accredited Level 1/2 "**Developing Parenting Skills**" programme for male offenders at HMP and YOI Doncaster. The course is delivered by a family learning tutor, alongside a prisoner mentor and is supported by the Families First team at the prison as and when required.

The programme aims to develop and enhance existing parenting skills. Learner feedback shows that participation has

supported prisoners to maintain positive family ties and helped them to feel that they are a better partner and parent.

English skills are embedded throughout the programme, which is supported by peer mentors. Anecdotal evidence indicates that participating mentors show improved behaviour on the wing and are positive role models for other offenders.

HMP Hollesley Bay - Challenge Charts

HMP Hollesley Bay recently introduced a new family learning parenting activity. "**Challenge Charts**" are reusable wallcharts on which fathers help to set weekly challenges for their child and choose the child's reward for reaching their goals. This allows them to take an active parenting role which can have benefits for the whole family.

Family Days

Family learning in prisons includes short interventions such as "Family Days". These provide an important opportunity for families to spend quality time together and take part in activities which promote engagement between family members.

Targeted family days such as fathers-only or mothers – only visits help parents to bond with their children and to put into practice skills they have learned in their relationship courses.

HMP Woodhill - bringing families together prior to release

Community Learning Milton Keynes and Pact work with families to deliver “**Family Days**” and “**Father and Children Days**” – activity based visits organised by the prison to bring families together prior to the father’s release date.

“We witnessed fathers working together with their children on projects that could be taken home and treasured, building up relationships that they may not have been able to do on a regular visit.... Overall, the family learning impacted the children the most, they enjoyed being given the opportunity to come into the prison and spend quality time with their fathers... I believe that this (Family Days) is an essential part of rehabilitating prisoners and is important for a successful family life outside the prison. Not only that, but it is important for the children to maintain a relationship with their father when they are away for a long time. Family learning gave those children a chance to socialise and develop a stronger relationship.”

Family Learning Tutor

HMP and YOI Parc - parent/child engagement activities.

“**Family Days**” at HMP and YOI Parc are run by the Offender Management Unit and Family Intervention Unit and supported by volunteers. Regular family days include parent/child engagement activities to help to create and strengthen bonds with children. Age-specific play areas for children, a sensory facility for children with special needs and a family interventions

lounge is provided along with input from other service providers about support available for offenders and their families.

HMP Erlestoke – practicing new parenting skills

Barnardo’s run regular “**Family Days**” at HMP Erlestoke. Prior to a “Family Day”, offenders attend a preparatory workshop which focuses on child development, responsibilities & expectations of the day, and discussion around the kinds of activities which children would enjoy.

Activity based visits

HMP Leeds - Jigsaw Visitors’ Centre

The Jigsaw Visitors’ Centre²⁴ is a registered charity that works in partnership with HMP Leeds. Activity-based family visits are hosted in the centre, spanning activities such as sports, den making days, cooking, gardening, and music, with an average of 10 prisoners, 10 family members and 20 children taking part per visit.

HMP Askham Grange – family activities

The Acorn House initiative at HMP Askham Grange strengthens ties between imprisoned mothers and their children by enabling them to stay together for 48 hours. Mothers work with the Family Learning Team to develop a plan of activities for the visit.

Family reading and storytelling programmes

“**Storybook Dads**”, (and more recently “**Storybook Mums**”), is a well-established family learning programme running in more than 100 UK prisons. Programme staff record imprisoned parents reading a story for their child either on CD or, in a few prisons, on film. It is run variously by library staff, by Education, the prison Chaplaincy, Offender Management Unit or external organisations such as Pact. In some cases, peers (other prisoners) help to support the programme. Editors (prisoners who are trained in software to edit and enhance recordings with sound effects) at HMP Channings Wood receive all the recordings from prisons across the country and convert these into CDs.

- 70% of prisoners think that taking part will help reduce their likelihood of re-offending
- 95% of 850 prisoners (who completed a Storybook participant survey), reported that the project had improved/enriched their relationship with their child;
- 92% (of 150 families who responded to the family feedback survey) reported that receiving the CD had improved/increased contact between the child and the prisoner.²⁵

“Storybook Dads has helped my relationship with my son and partner massively, as they know I am thinking of them often and I’m willing to make an effort to be part of their lives!”

Programme participant

“My children are so happy after hearing their Dad’s voice. It was the most beautiful thing. We are so grateful. It has truly helped. Thank you so much.”

Partner of programme participant

Comments from prisoner editors demonstrate some wider benefits of the programme;

“Working for Storybook dads gave me a sense of purpose and self-belief. I don’t feel like I’m a lost cause any more. I’m better than that. I’ve got hope for the future and something to give.”

Prisoner editor

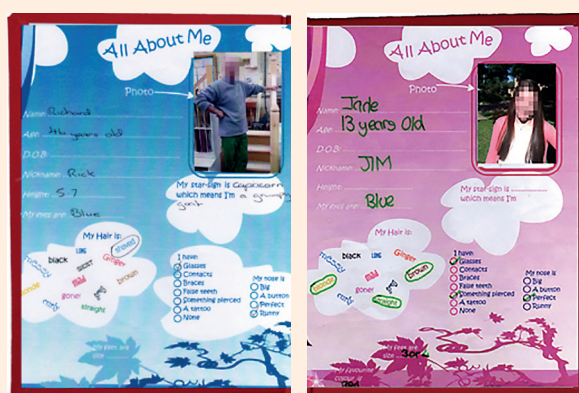
HMP & YOI Hollesley Bay – Storybook Dads/Storybook Mums

In HMP Hollesley Bay, “**Storybook Dads**” has taken place since October 2008. In 2016, 81 recordings were made by 71 men benefitting 97 children. The finished CD, along with a new copy of the book and a home-made greetings card are sent to the child.

“[Storybook Dads] allows prisoners to maintain contact with their children [and] grandchildren. This builds family relationships, encourages dialogue, shows their partners that they care and are actively sharing parenting responsibility, [and] increases their literacy and creative skills... [It] provides comfort, reduces stress and trauma for the children, improves their literacy skills, [and] develops a love of reading...the improved well-being of the child impacts on the whole family, it assists in bedtime routines, provides an aural presence and makes everyone feel closer”
Prison Library Manager

Storybook Dads/Storybook Mums has expanded to include “**Me and My Dad**” and “**Me and My Mum**”, where the adult and the child complete corresponding activity sheets which can be made into a book.

In HMP Hollesley Bay, father and child complete activity sheets which help them to learn about each other’s likes, hopes, ideas, memories, hobbies and daily lives. The final sheets are bound (by the father in prison) into a hardback “**Me and My Dad Memory Book**” which is sent to the child.



“Fathers and children gain a greater understanding of each other, which strengthens their relationship and opens up dialogue and interaction between them. They have the opportunity to share their feelings and tap into their creativity. Children know that, although absent, Dad is thinking of them and they have a unique memento.”

Prison Library Manager

HMP Lowdham Grange – Storytime Dads

As a variation to Storybook Dads, HMP Lowdham Grange used high-quality audio-visual technology through the “**Story-Time Dads**” project. As well as helping offenders to maintain strong family ties, the programme offered offenders the opportunity to gain accreditation in video editing qualifications at levels 1 and 2 to support successful resettlement.²⁶

Storysacks

A Storysack is a large cloth bag containing a young child’s picture book with supporting materials to stimulate reading activities. It is widely used in schools internationally, to enhance the teaching of literacy and promote enjoyment of reading.

HMP Wealstun – Storysacks for fathers and children

“**Storysacks**” courses have been delivered at HMP Wealstun since 2009, where programmes are run by a family learning tutor from MD Teaching and Training (a Leeds City Council Adult Learning provider) and a staff member allocated by the prison.

The purpose of the Storysacks programme is to improve fathers’ skills in supporting early literacy through sharing books and stories. The programme helps fathers to appreciate their role in helping their children to learn and develops their practical resource-making skills. Fathers keep up-to-date with current reading strategies used in schools, and reflect on their role in supporting their child’s learning

The 30- hour accredited programme includes a family learning visit at the end of the course where fathers use their storysacks with their children, and take part in a range of literacy activities which can be replicated at home.

“Prisoners had a useful and safe space within prison while on our course to consider the impact of being apart from children and how this affects their [the children’s] learning. They also learned how to support learning even if they couldn’t see their children every day.”

Family Learning Tutor

Prison staff saw a different side to prisoners as they worked to create something special for their child, and viewed them in a more positive light when they saw how men interacted and played with their children during the family learning visit. An additional unexpected benefit was that the men themselves promoted the course to other parents on the wing or in their workshops.

Some fathers shared positive stories about their children’s achievements in school or nursery which included reading more frequently, having a good start at primary school and building language skills.

One mother who brought her children to the [family] visit was so pleased with family learning that she asked us how to get her children’s school to run a course. We explained how to do this. When her partner attended another [Storysacks] course some months later, she came to the family visit and brought with her a certificate from the family learning course her school had put on at her request and which she had attended with her 6-year-old. The 6-year-old brought his school books with him (we had to arrange for this with the prison) so he could show his dad how well he was doing. These two things would not have happened without our programme.”

Family Learning Tutor

HMP Eastwood Park – Reading together

HMP Eastwood Park’s “**Reading in Partnership**” programme encourages mothers or family members, in prison, to read the same book at the same time as their children who are reading it at home. The prison library orders books to facilitate this.

Feedback from prisoners and their families indicate a range of benefits including development of a shared interests and goal, and improved communication with family members at family visits and through regular phone calls.

The prison’s “**Books for Babies**” initiative encourages mothers in the Mother and Baby Unit to sign up their babies for their

own library card so that they can borrow library materials both for themselves and to read to their babies. This promotes close contact between mothers and babies.

HMP Norwich - Family Learning Group

The “**Family Learning Group**” is a monthly single session group, which embeds literacy and numeracy in practical activities, such as activities where offenders make items to give to their children. It is run by Norfolk County Council Adult Education and supported by library staff.

“Maintaining family ties, supporting the offender’s role as a father to his children, supporting the child and giving them items to remember their father by. Self-esteem, creativity and self-expression are benefits for prisoners, as well as improvements in maths/literacy, learning new skills and spending time in a relaxed environment doing something different. These programmes benefit the prison by supporting resettlement and providing purposeful activity.”

Family Learning Tutor

Homework Clubs

Homework clubs take place in both female and male prisons, often supported by library staff, peer mentors and/or volunteers and enabling parents to play a positive role in their children’s lives²⁷. Evaluation demonstrates that homework clubs are valued by both parents in prison and other family members as a positive opportunity for maintaining relationships.

Some homework clubs involve parents with older children. In these, parents improve their own subject knowledge and understanding of how subjects such as Maths and Reading are currently taught in schools, so they can support and encourage their children’s learning.

HMP Parc – Learning together

Fathers in the “Learning Together” homework club at HMP Parc follow the school curriculum along with their children, so they are better able to support their children with homework when they visit the prison.

HMP Leeds – working with partners

The HMP Leeds Homework Club takes place in the Jigsaw Visitor Centre in HMP Leeds and is delivered in partnership by centre staff, Manchester College and HMP Leeds. In the homework club, prisoners support their children to complete homework tasks within the prison.

HMP Low Moss - supported by volunteers

In Scotland, HMP Low Moss hosts a homework club every weekday evening in a bright, modern family area, supported by teachers from local community volunteer groups. Speaking of HMP Low Moss, Andy Hogg, general secretary of the Prison Officers Association (Scotland), recognises the need for children seeing their parents as positive role models.²⁸

²⁷ Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, National Offender Management Service (NOMS), Policis, Kingston University and Toynbee Hall (2014) Parenting and Relationship Support Programmes for Offenders and Their Families

²⁸ Prison Officers Association (POA) Scotland news article (2012) There is a Better Way

"It's about engaging with the families as well to make sure [prisoners] are going back into a supportive environment... The experience I have with fathers – engaging with their children – they're not sitting there saying, 'carry on your life of crime'. ...The conversation is around 'don't you do what I've been doing, this is where it all ends up'. But they've not always got the opportunity to say, 'here's the path that you should take'.

Transformational programmes

These are intensive programmes which focus on changing the way that family members interact.

Safe Ground is a charity working with offenders on a range of projects, both in prison and in the community, with the aim of reducing re-offending by developing relationship skills and challenging attitudes and thinking e.g. "**Fathers Inside**" and "**Family Man**".

"**Family Man**" is a seven- week family relationships programme for men which uses drama, group discussion, games and written work to support students to develop and maintain their family relationships. The programme challenges existing attitudes and behaviours whilst also developing skills that promote participation in education, training and employment opportunities and contribute to desistance from crime. The programme is delivered by Safe Ground staff or by two tutors (usually prison education staff or officers) and a family support worker trained by Safe Ground.

Evaluation demonstrates positive impacts on reoffending, family relationships and resettlement.

"There could be little doubt of the enduring impact this programme had made on these men and their families or of its consequent potential to strengthen the social bonds which could contribute to subsequent desistance from crime."²⁹

"**Fathers Inside**" is an intensive five-week group-work programme for men focusing on parental responsibilities and children's development and wellbeing. The programme enables students to develop a better understanding of their role as a father, while challenging attitudes and developing skills essential to successful resettlement. The programme has a proven impact on re-offending. A Justice Data Lab analysis³⁰ showed that "Fathers Inside" participants are 40% less likely to re-offend than those who did not participate, and that they committed fewer re-offences. "Father Inside" has been identified as an example of best practice for successful intervention in advance of release and resettlement.³¹

"**Building Positive Futures**" is a 10- week programme which combines solution focused brief therapy with cognitive behavioural therapy techniques. The programme is delivered in prisons by Mentoring West Midlands in partnership with Coventry University's Centre for Research in Psychology, Behaviour and Achievement as part of the Genus Project. This is a multi-tiered family support intervention, with supporting group work programme, comprising of the Building Positive Futures Programme (in custody and the community), individualised family support and 1-1 mentoring for the offender.

29 Boswell Research Fellows (2011) The 'Family Man' Impact Study: An Evaluation of the Longer-Term Effectiveness of Safe Ground's Revised Family Relationships Programme on Prisoner Graduates, their Supporters and Families

30 Ministry of Justice (2016) Justice Data Lab analysis: Re-offending behaviour after participation in Safe Ground's Fathers Inside programme

31 Barnardos and Family Strategic Partnership (2012) Are we nearly there yet, Dad?

“Building Positive Futures” uses a collaborative approach between offender and facilitator where offenders identify personal solutions (or goals) to enable them to think about the type of future they want to have with family or their partner / children. With consent, contact can also be made with the family to enable continuity of messages around behaviour and lifestyle. The programme aims to;

- enable positive changes to be made to improve relationships and reduce re-offending
- support change in relation to behaviour, decision making and lifestyle choices

Journeywoman research project

Geese Theatre Company is a team of actors and group workers who present interactive drama and conduct workshops, staff training and consultation within the Criminal Justice System, using drama-based group work to explore issues such as anger management, violence and behaviour change with prisoners.

Their **Journeywoman** research project with women prisoners at HMP Forston³² involved ‘the use of active exercises, role-plays and theatrical metaphors. Data was collected through reflective diaries that were completed daily by 32 participants. The diaries used open-ended questions to prompt reflection and insight. At the end of the programme, diaries were analysed and benefits of the programmes summarised as:

- increasing motivation to change
- developing self-esteem
- strengthening relationships
- increased problem solving skills.

Parenting Inside Out

There are international examples of transformational programmes, which could inform design and development of UK prison programmes. In the United States, the “**Parenting Inside Out**” programme is an evidence based parenting skills training programme based on cognitive behavioural and social learning theory for parents in prisons.

Topics covered include communication skills, problem solving skills, anger management, child development, nurturing children through reading and play, family dynamics, using positive reinforcement, transition planning and reintegration.

The programme has demonstrated measurable and significant impact on reducing reoffending whilst improving family relationships and parenting skills in addition to wider outcomes such as reduced substance misuse.³³

³² Day R. (2008) The experience of ‘Journey Woman’ from the perspective of the participants

³³ Parent and Child Study (2012) a randomized controlled trial (RCT) of the effectiveness of the *Parenting Inside Out* program

Family learning on the Virtual Campus

The Virtual Campus (V.C.) is a secure, web-based learning environment which is delivered by the National Offender Management Service (NOMS) and the Ministry of Justice.

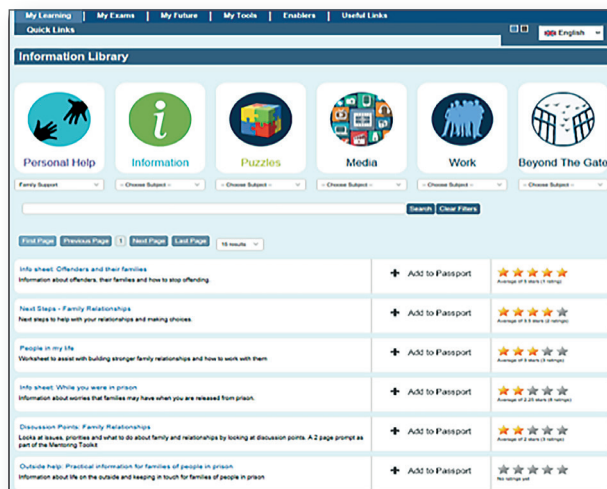
Offenders can use the Virtual Campus to access

- Information, advice and guidance based around skills and work
- Educational materials
- Online training and modules.

Virtual Campus advisers (such as prison tutors, personal officers and probation officers) can also use it to

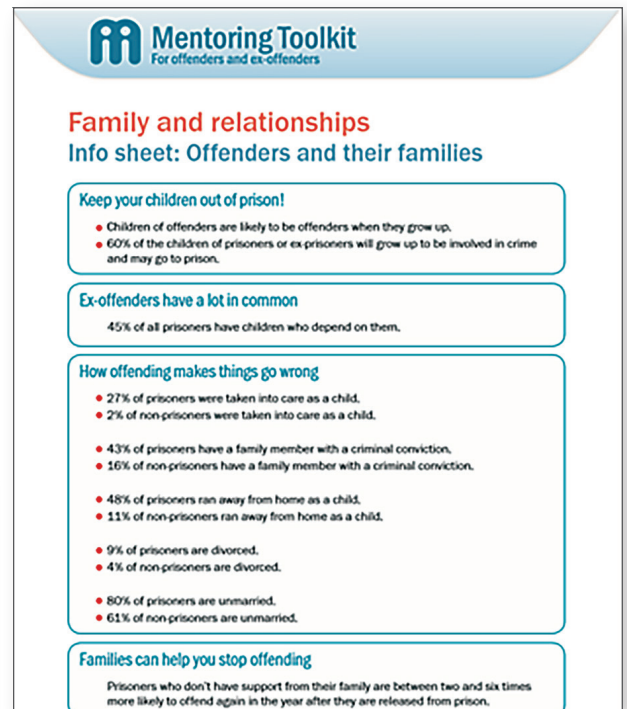
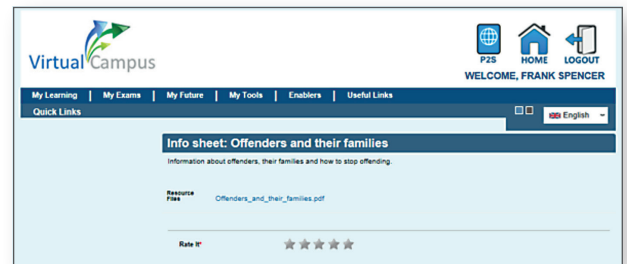
- Create and manage learner action plans
- Send 'secure relay messages' to the learner
- View statistics for cohorts of students.

There are various resources on the VC which can support family learning programmes in prisons.



Examples include:

1. "Offenders and their families" – an information sheet about offenders, their families and how to stop offending



2. "Next Steps – Family relationships" – Recommendations to help offenders with making choices in their relationships

Next steps

Your relationships

Your relationships are your own business. Nobody knows as much about your family as you do, and nobody can choose your friends for you. However, you can think about the relationships you do have, and how much you value them.

If you have children, your relationships with them are very important. You probably want to see them, help them and, if possible, live with them. Find out whether there are any family programmes in your area where you and your children can learn together.

What are the next steps that you want to take to improve your relationships?

Making choices

Look at the fact sheets in the Resources and you'll see that ex-offenders who have good, strong relationships are more likely to stay out of prison.

You probably met people inside who had that kind of relationship. Now that you are out of prison/YOI, you can make important choices about all of your relationships. Your mentor can help you do this. There are also people and organisations out there who can give you support and advice.

To make good choices now, try thinking about:

- who helped and supported you before your sentence
- who missed you while you were inside
- who kept in touch with you
- who said they would support you when you got out

3. "People in my Life" - A worksheet to assist with building stronger relationships

Family and relationships

People in my life

Think about the people that are really important to you.
Think honestly about how you want this relationship to develop.

Are they family, friends, children, people I have offended with, employers, prisoners?

Do you want to work on it or leave it behind?

People that are important to me	Why are they important?	Are they a good influence or a bad influence?	What should I do about this relationship?

4. "While you were in prison" – Information about worries families may have when prisoners are released

Mentoring Toolkit

For offenders and ex-offenders

Family and relationships

Info sheet: Offenders and their families

Keep your children out of prison!

- Children of offenders are likely to be offenders when they grow up.
- 60% of the children of prisoners or ex-prisoners will grow up to be involved in crime and may go to prison.

Ex-offenders have a lot in common

45% of all prisoners have children who depend on them.

How offending makes things go wrong

- 27% of prisoners were taken into care as a child.
- 2% of non-prisoners were taken into care as a child.
- 43% of prisoners have a family member with a criminal conviction.
- 16% of non-prisoners have a family member with a criminal conviction.
- 48% of prisoners ran away from home as a child.
- 11% of non-prisoners ran away from home as a child.
- 9% of prisoners are divorced.
- 4% of non-prisoners are divorced.
- 80% of prisoners are unmarried.
- 61% of non-prisoners are unmarried.

5. "Discussion points: Family relationships" – Two-page discussion prompt which Looks at issues, priorities and what to do about family and relationships

Mentoring Toolkit

For offenders and ex-offenders

Family and relationships

Discussion points

Family and relationships: What are the issues?

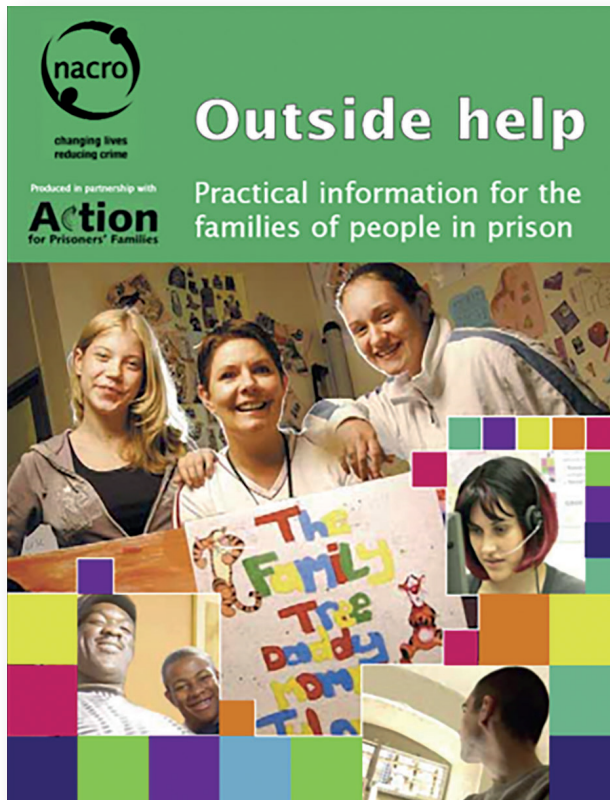
Use the prompt questions on the next page to begin to discuss the subject of family and relationships.

• Jot down any key points that come up in discussion.

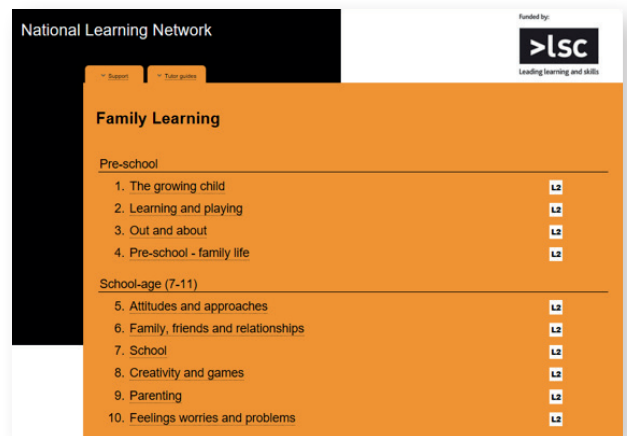
Family and relationships: What are your priorities?

Decide which issues are most important. Give them a star rating (***) or list them here.

6. "Outside help" – Practical information for families of people in prison



7. In the National Learning Network section of the VC, there are further family centred resources.



Family learning providers can apply to **Meganexus Ltd**³⁴ to request that their own content is submitted to the VC Board for upload to the Virtual Campus. Contact details at <http://www.meganexus.com/>

34 <http://www.meganexus.com/>

EVALUATING FAMILY LEARNING IN PRISONS

Demonstrating impact

Demonstrating the impact of family learning programmes in prisons can be challenging and resource intensive, especially as the prison environment makes it difficult to measure impact on the wider family. In many evaluation studies, the evidence has been inconclusive due to factors which include the absence of a control or comparator group, the mainly qualitative approach to measuring outcomes, the effects of self-selection of participants and issues around follow-up post release.

Why evaluate?

Family learning programmes in prisons should be evaluated to find out whether the programme results in the intended outcomes and to provide evidence that they do.

What does evaluation show?

Reviews of U.K. and U.S. evaluations of the impact of family interventions have found evidence that interventions which focused on improving or maintaining relationships with partners and children could help towards reducing reoffending through achievement of intermediate outcomes. For example, participation in parenting programmes was associated with enhanced parenting knowledge and skills, improved parental satisfaction, improved communication skills and increased self-esteem.³⁵

The level of rigour varies, depending on factors such as the scale of the programme and the resource available for evaluation.

Some larger programmes have been rigorously evaluated. For example, a study of

the effectiveness of the U.S. Parenting Inside Out programme was based on a randomized controlled trial (RCT) - considered the gold standard in programme evaluation.

The study, of 359 male and female participants found measurable positive impacts on rates of re-offending. Participants, one year post release, were less likely to have been arrested, (27% - 48%), and less likely to report having been involved in criminal behaviour (91%). Other impacts included better parental involvement in the lives of their children; better attitudes and reduced substance misuse (66% less than control group peers)³⁶

The impact of some of the larger scale U.K. programmes has also been extensively assessed and evaluated. Safe Ground for example, have commissioned 9 independent evaluations and reviews of the Family Man programme including a re-offending analysis by the Ministry of Justice Data Lab and the Family Man Impact Study,³⁷ a longitudinal study which looked at the programme's impact on a range of outcomes, including family relationships and resettlement.

³⁵ National Offender Management Service (NOMS) (2013) Analytical Summary: Intermediate outcomes of family and intimate relationship interventions: a rapid evidence assessment (REA)

³⁶ Results from Parenting Inside Out Outcome Study at <http://www.parentinginsideout.org/outcome-study/>

³⁷ Boswell Research Fellows (2011) The 'Family Man' Impact Study: An Evaluation of the Longer-Term Effectiveness of Safe Ground's Revised Family Relationships Programme on Prisoner Graduates, their Supporters and Families

The study collected quantitative and qualitative data from a fifth (104) of former participants in the programme which found that:

- 74% reported continuing higher levels of confidence
- 90% reported learning how to problem-solve from their group experiences
- 78% reported implementing the goals in their Family Man Action Plan
- 84% reported improved relationships with their children/families

The most recent Justice Data Lab analysis³⁸ of Safe Ground's Fathers Inside programme showed that those who took part were less likely to re-offend than those who did not (24% compared to 40% in the control group) and that they committed fewer re-offences. The analysis measured proven re-offences in a one year period for a 'treatment group' of 51 offenders who took part in the programme. The analysis showed that that, for every 100 participants, the Safe Ground Fathers Inside programme:

- decreases the number of proven re-offenders during a one-year period by between 4 and 28 people
- decreases the number of proven re-offences during a one-year period by between 16 and 123 offences

Larger programmes are also more likely to use recognised research tools as part of their evaluation methodology. For example, for Pact's "Time to Connect" Programme, changes in how the participant feels as a parent are measured using an adapted version of the NHS Tool to Measure Parenting Self-Efficacy (TOPSE) in

addition to qualitative data from participant feedback forms. This is completed at the start and then again at a later stage of the project to measure changes over time. Data on the impact of the Building Positive Futures programme is collected using the Justice Outcomes star at the beginning, mid-point and end of the programme in addition to witness statements from staff and family members.

Programmes which operate in multiple prisons, such as "Storybook Dads", provide standardised feedback forms for libraries, participants and families, the results of which are collated and reported back, at a national level, to participants on an annual basis. The Shannon Trust performs an annual survey/snapshots (to be completed by mentors and learners) to measure the impact of the programme.

Evaluation evidence from smaller programmes is mixed, due in part to inconsistent and informal approaches to data collection and insufficient resources to undertake high quality evaluation.

How to evaluate

Acknowledging the challenges faced by smaller providers in evaluating the impact of family learning in prisons, the following section is designed to support learning providers to undertake effective evaluation by providing a step by step approach to planning and capturing data to evidence the outcomes of family learning.

38 Ministry of Justice (2016) Justice Data Lab analysis: Re-offending behaviour after participation in Safe Ground's Fathers Inside programme

Family Learning in Prisons Outcomes Planning and Capture Tool

This tool has been developed to support learning providers to identify and capture the full range of outcomes of family learning programmes in prisons. The tool will help providers to demonstrate the wider outcomes of their learning programmes alongside measurement of outcomes for individual learners. It gives learning providers a focused and consistent way of planning and capturing evidence to demonstrate the difference they make and in doing so will help to build a substantial evidence base of the benefits of family learning in prisons.

The tool provides an outcomes framework developed both from existing research and knowledge about the benefits of family learning and from action research with learning providers in two prisons to evidence the benefits of their family learning activities. The outcomes framework is not intended to be exhaustive; the tool is designed to be flexible and can be adapted to reflect local circumstances and specific family learning programmes or activities. It is based on the NIACE Wider Outcomes Planning and Capture Tool which is already widely used by community learning providers. By using the outcomes framework approach, any family learning programme, irrespective of size or design, can measure the impact of their programme.

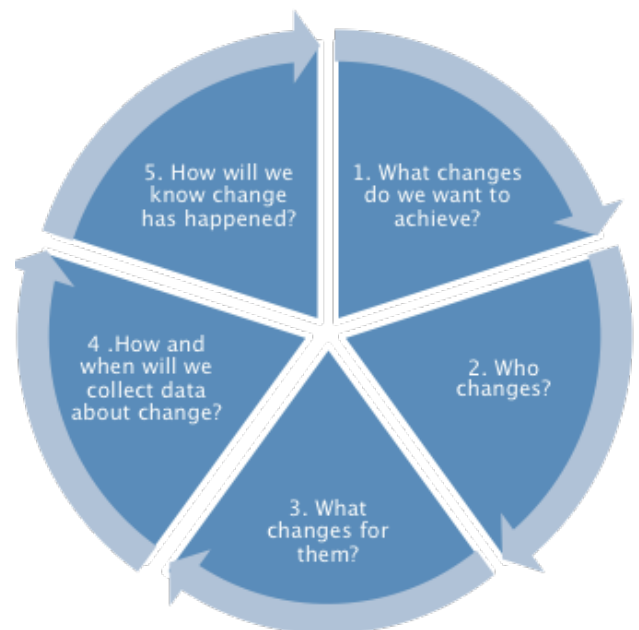
How to use the tool

Use of the tool will help providers decide;

- Which outcomes are important
- What evidence you need to collect
- How you will collect the evidence

Figure 1 below shows the questions family learning providers need to consider at each stage of the Outcomes Planning and Capture Tool. The tool itself and a more detailed description of each stage are provided on the following pages.

Figure 1. Stages of the Outcomes Planning and Capture Tool



Family Learning in Prisons Outcomes Planning and Capture Tool

Brief description of family learning programme/activity:					
Outcome category	Who changes?	How do they change?	Tools/methods to capture information	When will we collect it?	Evidence of change (what will we measure?)
(High level/headline area of change)*	(Brief description of group of stakeholders e.g. learners, family members, tutors, prison staff, peers)	(Positive/negative, and intended/unintended changes) e.g. improved relationship with children; increased self-esteem)	(e.g. questionnaires, interviews, learner diaries, tutor notes)	(e.g. at the start and end of the activity, after each session)	(e.g. learners reporting increased self-esteem, number moving on to further learning)

*Outcome categories: Health & Wellbeing; Family relationships; Other social relationships; Employment; Learning; Personal progression; Other

Identifying and planning outcomes

Clarifying the purpose of your programme and the outcomes (the changes you aim to achieve) is an essential first step in the process of gathering evidence to demonstrate the benefits of your programme/activity. This will help you to include meaningful evaluation from the start of your programme delivery.

Being clear about the expected outcomes of your programme will also help you to demonstrate causality i.e. how learner's outcomes are specifically linked to the activities you are delivering. This is particularly important when learners may be participating in other programmes, making it difficult to identify the impact of each.

Ideally, don't try to identify outcomes on your own. Including other voices in this process (e.g. learners (graduates from previous programmes), tutors, prison staff, volunteers (peer mentors or external volunteers) will help you to understand what the outcomes are, and which are most important.

Completing the tool

Column 1: Outcome category

This column shows the high-level or headline area of change for which the wider outcomes of your project are being measured. For example, if one of the changes you wanted to achieve through your activity was improved communication between offenders and their children, the headline area of change under which the outcome would be measured would be Family relationships. It is important to continue to measure the individual learner outcomes, as well as the wider outcomes of learning.

The following high-level areas of change are suggested for family learning programmes/ activities in prisons:

- Health and wellbeing (physical and mental health)
- Family relationships
- Other social relationships
- Learning
- Employability
- Personal Progression
- Other (e.g. changes for the prison; changes for community)

Choose the area/s that are most relevant to your family learning programme/activity.

Column 2: Who changes?

Depending on the specific family learning programme, you may identify changes for several different groups (stakeholders). In addition to individual learners, changes might happen in families, among peers or in the prison itself. In this column, provide a brief description of the group/s that experience change because of the programme. For example:

- Learners (offenders)
- Family members (adults)
- Family members (children)
- Tutors
- Prison staff
- Other prisoners (e.g. peer mentors)

Column 3: How do they change?

It is important to understand what changes for the different groups. This includes expected change i.e. the effects the learning activity was intended to have and unanticipated changes (both positive and negative). This is especially important for a new programme/activity where you may be

uncertain what the outcomes will be. Don't be afraid to acknowledge negative outcomes, for example extra work for prison staff supporting a family learning programme. Collecting feedback from staff, in this example, will help you to understand more about any negative outcomes and to take steps to address them.

See the Outcomes Framework Categories on page 36 for examples of changes that might occur under each headline outcome category. This list is not comprehensive and you will probably want to include other changes that occur on your programme.

Also, consider how many learners you think will change and later, record the number that changed.

Capturing the evidence

Column 4: Tools/methods to capture

This is where you consider the best way (methods) to collect information from your stakeholders to help you understand what has changed, for whom, and how much?

To do this, you need to decide exactly what you are going to measure. This will help you to select the right tools.

Different methods generate different types of data. This can be quantitative (can be counted or measured) and/or qualitative (descriptive). It will strengthen your case, when presenting your evidence, if you can collect both types of data. Whatever methods you choose, make sure that the planned data collection is proportionate to the scale of the activity and manageable within your resources.

For an existing programme, you probably already have some systems to collect information, for example, evaluation forms, feedback forms, notes from sessions or attendance records. Start with these and consider if they are going to provide all the information you need. If not, you might be able to adapt these systems to collect additional information. If you can't use these methods, you will need to choose and develop some new methods/tools.

Some examples of methods include:

- Questionnaires
- Focus groups/group discussions
- Interviews
- Learner diaries
- Observations

Using questionnaires, such as a self-assessment questionnaire, allows learners to report directly on the impact their learning has had in relation to the expected outcomes of the programme/activity. In these questionnaires, the learner gives themselves a score on a scale in relation to different criteria, for example, how confident they feel; how motivated they are etc. Using the same questionnaire at the start and end of a programme helps you to measure changes over the course of the programme.

There are some freely available scales online which you might want to consider, including:

- Mental wellbeing - **Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (WEMWBS)**³⁹
- Self-esteem – **Rosenberg's Self Esteem Scale**⁴⁰

39 NHS Scotland., University of Warwick., & University of Edinburgh (2008) The Short Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale [SWEMWBS]. Accessed at http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/med/research/platform/wemwbs/swemwbs_7_item.pdf
40 Accessed at <http://www.emcdda.europa.eu/html.cfm/index3676EN.h>

Learning and Work's **Social Metrics** project worked with community learning providers to test validated tools to better evidence the wider outcomes of community learning. The tools were tested on four social metrics; Confidence & Progression, Health and Wellbeing, Social relationships and Empowerment.

Tools tested included:

- Office for National Statistics Personal Wellbeing Tool⁴¹
- The New General Self Efficacy Scale (GSES)⁴²

You may want to consider using interviews in addition to questionnaires. Interviews allow learners, families, or tutors for example, to describe their experience of the learning in more detail and can be a good way of collecting individual stories to present as case studies in your evidence.

Collecting data from more than one source will help to provide different perspectives on the impact of the learning and will strengthen your evidence. Sources of data for your family learning activity might include;

- Learners (prisoners)
- Tutors
- Family members including partners and children
- Prison officers/staff
- Support workers
- Peer mentors (and external volunteers)
- Prison data which is already collected e.g., prison incident records

Column 5: When will we collect it?

To effectively measure changes resulting from your programme/activity it is essential to collect information at different stages of the programme.

In most cases, at the very least, you will need to collect information at the start of the programme or activity (baseline data) and then again at the end of the activity.

Depending on the type and duration of the programme you may also want to consider collecting information at one or more points throughout the programme or a short while after the programme ends. For shorter activities, for example one day courses, it may be sufficient to just collect data once, usually at the end of the activity.

You may also want to think about contacting learners sometime after they have left the project e.g. six months, to find out if the programme has made a difference in the longer term, although it is acknowledged that maintaining contact with prisoners, who may be moved, or post-release, can be difficult, particularly for smaller providers.

Column 6: Evidence of change

How will you know that the change has happened? And how much change has happened? For this column, think about what information will show if your outcomes have been achieved or if progress is being made towards achieving them. These are your outcome indicators.

41 Office for National Statistics (2015) Harmonised Concepts and Questions for Social Data Sources Interim Harmonised Principle: Personal Wellbeing

42 Accessed at <http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/109442810141004>

For example:

If the outcome is “improved relationship with children”, the evidence of change might be learners saying that they have started to talk about homework with their children on the phone.

If the outcome is “increased self-esteem” the evidence of change might be that learners show improvement on a scale such as the Rosenberg self-esteem scale.

What else to collect

The focus of this tool is collecting information on outcomes.

To effectively evaluate your programme, you will also need to record information on the work you deliver, including numbers of learners (outputs) and information on who you work with (diversity data) to understand how different groups of people access, experience and benefit from your family learning programme. Diversity data includes ‘protected characteristics’ such as age, gender, ethnicity, disability, religion, and sexual orientation. The Equalities Toolkit has information and good practice in equalities monitoring.

To help you get started, worked examples of the tool are shown on the next pages. These have been developed in partnership with learning providers in HMP/YOI Doncaster and HMP Bullingdon.



Family Learning in Prisons Outcomes Planning and Capture Tool: HMP & YOI Doncaster

Brief description of family learning programme/activity: HMP &YOI Doncaster: A Level 1/2 accredited Parenting Skills Programme completed over 6 weeks. A peer mentor supports the tutor to embed and enhance English skills throughout the course. Mentors have the opportunity to complete a Level 1 volunteering qualification

Outcome category	Who changes?	How do they change?	Tools/methods to capture information	When will we collect it?	Evidence of change (what will we measure?)
(High level/headline area of change)*	(Brief description of group of stakeholders e.g. learners, family members, tutors, prison staff, peers)	(Positive/negative, and intended/unintended changes) e.g. improved relationship with children; increased self-esteem)	(e.g. questionnaires, interviews, learner diaries, tutor notes)	(e.g. at the start and end of the activity, after each session)	(e.g. learners reporting increased self-esteem, number moving on to further learning)
Family relationships	Learners (offenders)	Improved communication and understanding with partner	Learner Journey Booklets - My Story form & Evaluation form Family session feedback form	Beginning, during and end of the course At end of family visits	Learners report reduced arguments and negative phone calls. Learners say they are better able to support partners. Partners say that they have more positive interaction with learners
Family relationships	Learners (offenders)	Improved relationship with children	Learner questionnaire Learner focus group	Beginning and end of course At end of course	Learners show improvement on a scale in relation to confidence to help their children learn Learners say they are more involved in supporting children with homework
Other social relationships	Learners (offenders)	Improved relationships on the wing and with other learners in the classroom	Feedback from prison officers Learner Journey Booklets - Evaluation forms Interview with Families First tutors	At the end of the course At the end of the course At end of the course	Prison officers say that learners behaviour and attitude on the wing has improved. Learners say they are getting on better with other men on the wing Tutors say relationships in the classroom have got better.
Other social relationships	Mentor/s	Improved relationship with other offenders	Interviews with Families First workers Interview with mentor	At the end of the course At the end of the course	Families First tutors report more positive engagement with learners Mentors say they are getting on better with other offenders on the wing
Learning	Learners	Increased motivation and confidence to learn new skills	Learner Journey Booklets: My Story form & Evaluation form Learner focus group	During and end of course At end of course	Learners comments show an interest in pursuing further learning Learners say they intend to start another course.
Employability	Learners	Increased literacy skills	Evaluation form Interview with tutor	At the end of the course At the end of the course	Learners report improved skills Tutors feedback that learners skills have improved
Employability	Mentor/s	Gain skills for work through volunteering	Mentor questionnaire Interview with mentor ILR?	At beginning and end of course At end of course At end of course	Mentor questionnaire shows improvement on a scale in relation to confidence in finding a job Mentor says they feel more positive about finding work Mentors gain volunteering qualification
Mental health	Mentors	Increased involvement in positive activities	Mentor questionnaire Interview with mentor	At beginning and end of course At end of course	Mentor questionnaire shows improvement on a scale in relation to feeling confident to get involved in organised activities Mentor says they feel better as a result of their mentoring role

*Outcome categories: Health & Wellbeing; Family relationships; Other social relationships; Employability; Learning; Personal progression; Other

Family Learning in Prisons Outcomes Planning and Capture Tool HMP Bullingdon

Brief description of learning programme/activity: Reading With Kids is a short programme (9 hours) which helps prisoners develop the skills and abilities to read expressively with their children. It is delivered alongside the Library where learners can go on to produce a CD of a story. The prisoners will be given their own copy of the book which they can use on Family Visits with their children.

Outcome category	Who changes?	How do they change?	Tools/methods to capture information	When will we collect it?	Evidence of change
(High level/headline area of change)*	(Brief description of group of stakeholders e.g. learners, family members, tutors, prison staff, peers)	(Positive/negative, and intended/unintended changes e.g. improved relationship with children; increased self-esteem)	(e.g. questionnaires, interviews, learner diaries, tutor notes)	(e.g. at the start and end of the activity, after each session)	(what will we measure?) (e.g. learners reporting increased self-esteem, number moving on to further learning)
Health & Wellbeing	Learners (participants)	Increased self-esteem	Learner questionnaires	Beginning and end of the programme	Questionnaires show improvement on a scale in relation to learners self-esteem
Family relationships	Learners (participants)	Improved relationship with families	Learner focus group Family feedback form	End of programme After family visit days	Learners say that communication with their partner has improved Partners/family members report more positive engagement with learners
Family relationships	Children	Improved relationship with children	Focus Group Learner questionnaires	End of programme At beginning and end of programme	Learners say they speak to their children more often on the phone and have more to talk about. Learners questionnaires show improvement on a scale in relation to feeling confident to engage in activities with their children
Other social relationships	Learners (participants)	Improved relationship with peers (other learners)	End of course evaluation Interview/discussion with tutor	End of programme End of programme	Learners say they felt more supported by peers Tutor say that relationships have improved in the classroom.
Other social relationships	Learners	Improved prisoner/staff relationships on the wing	Entries on the prisoners record Conversation with prison officer Learner focus group	Sampled periodically End of programme End of programme	Records note improved behaviour Prison staff say that learners attitude and behaviour on the wing and at family visits has improved Learners say they are getting on better with prison staff on the wing
Learning	Learners (participants)	Improved skills in 'reading with kids'	Interview with tutor ILPs	At the end of the course	Tutors report that learners skills have improved Learners produce a CD
Learning	Learners (participants)	Improved motivation to move on to further learning	Learner focus group ILPs Self referrals (Apps)	At the end of the course	Learners say that they intend to start a new course Learners apply for further learning
Learning	Learners (participants)	Going on to do further learning	Learner records, Tutorial evidence	At the end of the course & monthly	Learners start a new course
Other	Prison	Increased use of library	Library use monitoring tools	Monthly	The library is used more and by more people

*Outcome categories: Health & Wellbeing; Family relationships; Other social relationships; Learning; Employability; Personal progression; Other

Family Learning in Prisons Outcomes Framework Categories

Examples of changes under each headline outcome category.

HEALTH & WELLBEING

Physical health

Improved physical health

Improved diet

Mental health

Improved mental health

Improved mental wellbeing

Increased involvement in positive activities

Reduced anxiety and stress

FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS

Improved family relationships

Improved relationship with children

Improved communication with partner/adult family members

OTHER SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS

Improved relationship with other offenders

Improved staff/prisoner relationships

Positive relationships with non-prison staff

LEARNING

Increased motivation and confidence to learn new skills

Moving on to further learning

New skills gained

EMPLOYABILITY

Increased literacy skills

Increased maths skills

Gaining work related skills

PERSONAL PROGRESSION

Increased self-esteem

Increased communication skills

Increased confidence

OTHER (e.g. changes for organisation; changes for tutors; changes for community)

Increased tutor morale

Increased prison staff morale

CONCLUSION

On a normal visit, an offender has to remain seated on the “red chair” and cannot properly interact or play with his children. The Family Learning Programme provides a structured approach to family relationships where both parents learn about important parenting skills and mum and dad can play and interact with their children together. It has required strong support from senior managers, and staff also needed to be on board. But it’s made such a difference. Family bonds are much stronger and children really look forward to the visits. Offenders appreciate their families more and learn how to be better parents. They are less angry and frustrated and so their behaviour in prison improves.’

Sandy Watson, Children and Family Development Manager, HMP The Wolds⁴³

This publication began by drawing attention to the recognition given to the role of families in rehabilitation, in the emerging, national policy framework of extensive prison reform. It offered a definition of and charted the various forms of family learning available in prisons; identified the absence of a consistent and standardised data collection process; and drew attention to the importance of the future role of Governors in commissioning services crucial to the position of families in supporting and enabling rehabilitation.

The Prison and Courts Reform Bill (2017) gives Prison Governors control over their budgets for education, employment and health and introduces a new system of league tables and performance standards, resulting in revisions to how education (in its broadest sense) is commissioned in prisons.

This provides an opportunity to develop and expand family learning provision in prisons. However, to argue successfully for this in a space crowded with interventions and offers, providers must make a strong case for family learning in the new commissioning context.

Family learning contributes to multiple agendas including reducing reoffending, strengthening positive family ties and supporting offenders’ resettlement, rehabilitation and reintegration in their communities.

Our examination of family learning in prisons concurs with previous research⁴⁴ and finds that the delivery of family learning programmes in prisons results in a range of benefits for offenders themselves, their children and their families:

For **offenders**, family learning programmes help them to:

- Examine and change their attitudes to parenting, including reassessment of parental priorities, a realisation of the importance of the parent’s role, or a greater awareness and acceptance of parental responsibilities
- Understand the importance of spending quality time with children
- Explore and understand their responsibilities as adults in their relationships with their children

43 Ofsted (2011) Good practice resource – Inclusive family learning in a prison setting: HMP Wolds

44 Halsey, K., Johnson, A., Kaur, S. and Harland, J. (2004). A World Apart? Evaluation of Family Learning Programmes in Prison: Summary of Key Findings. Slough: NFER.

- Adopt positive discipline strategies e.g. using reasoning and good behaviour
- Have a broader knowledge of activities to share with children, e.g. games, arts and crafts
- Maintain, rebuild and strengthen their family relationships
- Continue their own learning
- Support their children's learning, academic, social and emotional
- Increase their own self – esteem
- Improve their skills in Maths and English
- Improve their skills in emotional intelligence and expression

For **children**, family learning helps to:

- Maintain, improve or rebuild father/mother-child relationships and sibling relationships (where brothers or sisters may be in custody)
- Explore and understand the nature of the custodial experience
- Develop their social skills and emotional intelligence
- Increase their confidence
- Improve early learning

- Encourage and support them to learn and achieve at school
- Encourage and support them to participate as positive members of their families
- Understand the role that they can play in supporting family members who are serving a prison sentence

For **families**, family learning helps to:

- Build strong family relationships
- Bring families closer together
- Increase family contact with prisoners
- Increase dialogue and interaction between parent and child, or siblings
- Increase the time which, when released, parents spend with their children or contributing positively to their children's lives
- Ensure that, when released, parents are more involved in their children's lives, and that wives, husbands, partners are better able to work as a team in the nurturing and support of their children and each other.



For **prisons**, family learning has a positive impact on prisoner behaviour and on prison staff.

Family learning helps:

- Improve prisoners' social interactions with each other and with prison staff
- The process of prisoners settling down into and coping with prison life
- Improve prisoner behaviour and conduct, including improved behaviour on the wing, in employment, workshops and education etc.
- Give prison staff a more positive view of prisoners.

However, the quality of evidence is inconsistent, with gaps in the evidence base, particularly in relation to longer term impact.

Although most large scale programmes include formal evaluation, that is less common for smaller scale programmes, and where evaluation does take place, it is often limited and inconsistent across prisons and programmes. This makes it difficult to compare evidence of the impact of different programmes.

The "Family Learning in Prisons Outcomes Planning and Capture Tool" included at the end of the publication can be used flexibly in various family learning programmes to gather and record data about the impact of family learning. Data gathered through the tool can be recorded as a measure of the impact of family learning programmes and as a permanent record of improvement for prisoners.

More needs to be done to convince commissioners of the value of family learning. Many prison staff (including Prison Governors) do not fully appreciate or understand what family learning is, how it is delivered or how it can support their priorities.

More rigorous and consistent evaluation is needed to convince them of the value of family learning. However, good quality evaluation increases the cost of delivery, which can be particularly challenging for smaller scale programmes.

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

Organisations and services

Action for Prisoners' Families and Family Lives

work for the benefit of prisoners' and offenders' families by supporting families who are affected by imprisonment

www.familylives.org.uk/.../action-for-prisoners-and-offenders-families

Adfam aims to improve the quality of life of families affected by drug and alcohol use.

http://www.adfam.org.uk/about_us

Barnardos deliver a wide range of family support services in prisons <http://www.barnardos.org.uk/>

Geese Theatre Company is a team of theatre practitioners who present interactive theatre and facilitate drama-based groupwork in prisons and young offender institutions.

<http://www.geese.co.uk/>

i-HOP offers information and advice services for all professionals working with children and families of offenders, including frontline staff from the Criminal Justice System, voluntary sector, education, health, housing and social care, as well as those responsible for strategic development and commissioning.

http://www.i-hop.org.uk/app/about_us

Jigsaw Visitors' Centre is a registered charity that works in partnership with HMP Leeds to manage visitor bookings and offer support to those visiting their loved ones www.jigsawvisitorscentre.org.uk

Mentoring West Midlands provide solutions based therapy techniques in custody <https://www.mentoringwestmidlands.co.uk/>

Nepacs is a charity working in the north east of England delivering services to prisoners and their families in visitors' centres, in prisons and in the community.

<http://www.nepacs.co.uk/>

Ormiston's Unite Programme supports children and their families who have been affected by offending behaviour to stay together

<https://www.ormiston.org/>

Prison Advice and Care Trust (Pact) is a national charity which supports people affected by imprisonment, providing practical and emotional support to prisoners' children and families, and to prisoners themselves.

<http://www.prisonadvice.org.uk/>

Partners of Prisoners and Families Support Group (POPS) supports anyone who has a link with someone in prison, prisoners and other agencies, offering assistance to enable families to cope with the stress of arrest, imprisonment and release.

<http://www.partnersofprisoners.co.uk/>

Information about the U.S. Parenting Inside Out programme.

<http://www.parentinginsideout.org/>

Prisoners Families and Friends Service provides support, friendship and advice to the families and friends of anyone sentenced to imprisonment or remanded in custody.

<http://www.pffs.org.uk/>

Safe Ground deliver a range of accredited relationship and parenting programmes for offenders and their families.

www.safeground.org.uk

Spurgeons support families in crisis and children affected by the Criminal Justice System with a wide range of support.

<http://www.spurgeons.org/families-and-criminal-justice/>

St. Giles Trust is a charity providing prison and community based support to offenders to break the cycle of re-offending.

<http://www.stgilestrust.org.uk/>

Information on **Triple P** 'Positive Parenting Programmes'

<http://www.triplep-parenting.uk.net/uk-en/about-triple-p/positive-parenting-programme/>

Resources

Equalities Toolkit provides information and good practice in equalities monitoring
www.equalitiestoolkit.com

Learning and Work Institute (2013) Family Learning Works: Report from the Inquiry into Family Learning in England and Wales
<http://shop.niace.org.uk/family-learning-inquiry-report.html>

National Family Learning Network: Ongoing collection of family learning resources by type, target audience, category and subject
<http://www.familylearningnetwork.com/resources>

Guidance on the **NIACE Wider Outcomes Planning and Capture Tool**, developed to support learning providers to recognise and capture the wider outcomes of adult learning.
<http://shop.niace.org.uk/wider-outcomes-tool.html>

i-HOP (2017) Supporting children and families affected by a family member's offending - A Practitioner's Guide
http://www.i-hop.org.uk/app/answers/detail/a_id/886

Criminal Justice Family Support Network (2015) Good practice guidance for the support of families affected by imprisonment
<http://www.familiesoutside.org.uk/content/uploads/2015/04/CJFSNGoodPrac-Mar2015.pdf>

Good practice resource – Inclusive family learning in a prison setting

This example from Ofsted shows how a family learning programme allows families to regularly interact in prison in a fun and developmental way, reducing the likelihood of reoffending. It includes a case study, video and audio recording exemplifying family learning in HMP Wolds
<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20141124154759/http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/good-practice-resource-%E2%80%93-inclusive-family-learning-prison-setting-hmp-wolds>

Theory of Change

New Philanthropy Capital resources include an introduction to Theory of Change (TOC) and a practical guide on creating your own TOC
<http://www.thinknpc.org/publications/theory-of-change/>
<http://www.thinknpc.org/publications/creating-your-theory-of-change/>

A report from **Prisoner Learning Alliance (PLA) and New Philanthropy Capital** (2016) *What is prison education for? A theory of change exploring the value of learning in prison*, examines how we can measure the benefit of education in prison, and how we can improve its provision
<http://www.prisonerseducation.org.uk/data/files/Theory%20of%20Change%20Report.pdf>

Prison Fellowship – Sycamore Tree project theory of change
<http://www.clinks.org/sites/default/files/Prison%20Fellowship%20-%20Sycamore%20Tree%20theory%20of%20change.pdf>



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