

Children of Prisoners Europe Annual Report 2015



Overview

In 2015, COPE was successful in initiating a Written Question for the European Commission on children of prisoners, and a subsequent Written Response; in lobbying with Children's Ombudsman, Croatia to include children of prisoners as part of the group of vulnerable children in CoE child rights strategy 2016-2021; in strengthening the commitment at a European level to address the needs of children of prisoners in EU and CoE countries: MEP Jean Lambert, MEP Julie Ward, MEP Anna Maria Corazza Bildt (Chair, Child Rights Intergroup, European Parliament), Ilina Taneva (Council for Penological Cooperation, CoE), Regina Jensdottir (Child Rights Coordinator, CoE); in participating as the sole NGO at the Annual Conference of Prison and Probation Directors (Council for Penological Cooperation, CoE); and in securing an EU Operating Grant. Its annual campaign, "Not My Crime, Still My Sentence," was selected as the Charity Campaign of the Month by The Guardian newspaper.

This report contains highlights of achievements in four strategic areas:

- Advocacy: Putting the child at the heart of policy making
- Giving children and young people a voice: videos, child rights
- Enhancing network expertise (framing, minimising violence)
- Developing the COPE network: financially, geographically, professionally

Introduction: Putting the child at the heart of policy making

Children of Prisoners Europe and its network of organisations working with and for children across Europe have been influencing policies and fostering the exchange of good practice for fifteen years now-identifying the problems; highlighting children's rights and needs; articulating positive solutions and strategies; and spearheading further collective action across Europe and beyond. In 2015 alone, COPE and its 83 members, experts and affiliates organised/participated in 200+ events in 17 countries Europe/worldwide-seminars, workshops, policy groups, conferencespromoting prisoners' children's rights, building network capacity to better support these children, disseminating support solutions and raising awareness. The 2015 network activity log and COPE policy developments round-up provide highlights of these achievements—merely a glimpse of the work that COPE and its members are doing on international, European, national, regional and local levels. As a result of these long-term collective efforts, awareness of the existence of children of prisoners as a group in its own right, and the rights of these children has grown. A good case study illustrates this: Ten years ago, thanks to a small grant that COPE (then Eurochips) secured from George Soros's Open Society Institute, Maja Gabelica of the Children's Ombudsman's Office Croatia came to Paris to participate in what COPE billed as the first major conference on prisoners' children in Europe. At the time, the issue of children separated from a parent in prison was a little-known issue in Croatia; at yesterday's conference, we witnessed the extent of the progress made since then, thanks to Maja and the Ombudsman for Children's office. There are many similar "case studies" nearly half of COPE's members have been part of the network for over a decade; some since the founding of the network in 2000, former president Ria Wolleswinkel and founder, Alain Bouregba, for example. And there are so many milestones as well—Bambinisenzasbarre's MoU, PACT's Charter for Children and winning the Longford Prize; FREP's 20th year conference, QUNO's side events for the UN Human Rights Council, NIACRO's Justice Series Seminar, BAGS-e.V.'s lectures to prison staff; BUFFF's Child Talk and COPE conference—the first time a head of state participated in a COPE conference; Exodus's Day of Action; FFP's Behind the Wall exhibition; Families Outside's framework for families affected by the justice system; POPS's inauguration of the Farida Women's Centre, Czech Helsinki Committee's launch of assisted visits for children from orphanages and foster families to visit imprisoned parents; REPR Switzerland's input for UN Committee on the Rights of the Child recommendations for the fourth period report of Switzerland, Treffpunkt's Projekt TAKT for prison staff and police, and many more. For COPE, we mention the beautifully handwritten pledge cards from our 2015 Annual Awareness Campaign, where children in six different countries put into words one change they'd like to see to improve their experience of having a parent in prison. All MEPs on the European Parliament Intergroup on Children's Rights have since received them.

A next step in this process has been to sustain this awareness and action in treaties, conventions, resolutions, strategies and organisations; important developments have taken place, and COPE

has played a role in bringing them about. The European Commission (DG Justice) and UNICEF now include children of prisoners on their lists of vulnerable children, a recent European Parliament resolution specifically recognises children with imprisoned parents. And most recently, the newly launched Council of Europe child rights strategy 2016-2021 includes children affected by parental incarceration as a group of vulnerable, marginalised children, expanding the frame for these children, previously considered solely from a criminal justice perspective. These come on the heels of MEP Jean Lambert tabling a Written Question to the Commission about prisoners' children and their rights, introducing the child's perspective into EU legislation (CFD 2008/909/JHA transfer of prisoners). Human Rights Commissioner Vera Jourova's Written Response mentioned prisoners' children as a vulnerable group needing support, highlighting COPE's role, and EU support for COPE (Operating Grants 2013, 2015). COPE President Lucy Gampell's Report to the 2016 General Assembly mentions Bambinisenzasbarre's landmark Memorandum of Understanding, which certain magistrates and judges in Italy are drawing upon to grant leave for family events outside the prison, as well as longer, more frequent meetings in prison. Efforts are currently underway to replicate it in the Netherlands (through Exodus) and Croatia (through the Children's Ombudsman's office). Likewise, the Quaker United Nations Office has been working to promote the implementation of standards on the prisoners' children's rights by showcasing the MoU and replicable good practice; COPE has been participating in this through the Child Rights Connect group. The President's report also highlights the newly launched Europris Expert Group on Family Ties to enhance support initiatives for prisoners' children and develop a shared agenda with EU Member State prison services; the group was established after COPE was the sole NGO asked to present at the 20th Council of Europe Conference of Directors of Prison and Probation Services (CDPPS, June 2015) attended by senior representatives from CoE committees (e.g. Council for the Prevention of Torture; Council for Penological Co-operation); prison governors and chief probation officers from CoE countries. In short, our work is becoming increasingly systematised and we are making further inroads in establishing policies and measures to support meaningful action for children, coming a step closer to promoting a cultural shift both inside prison and out.

How we have achieved this progress

COPE has achieved this progress through the increasing support and involvement of the Board, for which we are truly grateful; through its dedicated staff; and through the involvement and commitment of its members across Europe, with a greater number of member-initiated activities now being launched. COPE above all strives to be a participatory network.

Balancing slow growth and rapid expansion.

Another factor in achieving this progress has been working to striking the right balance between slow growth and rapid expansion. Underpinning the advocacy efforts described above, COPE has been building strategic alliances, expanding and grounding the network, and deepening cohesion among network members since its founding in 2000, thanks to the long-standing support of the Bernard van Leer Foundation (BvLF). With BvLF, COPE has taken a "slow growth" approach to network development and expansion: a reflective, strategic approach to build and consolidate quality relationships with network members while reaching to new strategic partners. The injection of European Union funding (a three-year Framework Partnership in 2015, secured by Claudia) brings a valuable endorsement and a degree of short-term stability, as well as the European Commission's expressed desire for more vigorous cross-sectoral growth throughout EU Member States. Yet these at-times competing dynamics remain a challenge for a small staff, determined not to sacrifice network cohesiveness for all-too-rapid expansion. Strategic outreach in 2015 included Portugal, a country lacking representation that has been a stumbling block (conference, OG Mission to meet with the Provedor de Justiça, UNICEF, social workers, academics and researchers; a new affiliate, a social worker from Lisbon); and Romania, through cooperation with Alternative Sociale on a Romanian translation of the good practice guide (now Applicant Member). A partnership with Turkey grew out of a project piloted by the Youth Re-autonomy Foundation of Turkey (Türkiye Çocuklara Yeniden Özgürlük Vakfı, Children Outside Prison Project) to observe good practice onsite (new affiliate). We are currently exploring new partnerships in Bulgaria, Poland and Spain.

Balancing action and reflection, a competing yet complementary dynamic.

Another factor in achieving progress has been learning how to balance action with the enhancement of network expertise through reflection. The objectives for the BvLF grant (2014-2017) seek to capacity-build the network by enhancing expertise in two domains: Communicating messages more efficiently through framing and Minimising violence for young children.

Framing, the focus of our afternoon workshop, explores how COPE and its member organisations can network more efficiently and with greater impact by using a frame-sensitive approach to advocacy. Outcomes include a more cohesive coalition to effect change for children of prisoners, and enhanced

knowledge on how to maximise the degree to which an issue resonates when communicating positive solutions to powerholders.

The minimising violence strand involves developing positive solutions to help reduce risks for children throughout the criminal justice process, with an eye to enhancing support schemes for imprisoned parents that can offset the alienation, exclusion and humiliation frequently experienced in prison which can distort the parent-child relationship, with the child "taking charge" of the parent emotionally. Without adequate support, prisoners risk experiencing difficulties in readjusting to life at home, resorting to withdrawal, repeat offending or violence towards themselves, their children. Support initiatives for imprisoned parents can reduce the incidence of these risks, helping prisoners maintain their appropriate role as a parent and granting children the freedom to be children. A consensus seminar in 2015 involving Relais Enfants Parents France, Relais Enfants Parents Belgique, Relais Enfants Parents Romand in Switzerland and Bedford Row Ireland helped define the parameters of this strand of reflection. To harness this new knowledge and make it more visible, a newly released video featuring Alain Bouregba provides an overview of the risks involved in parenting in prison and concrete pathways for supporting the child-parent relationship to minimise these risks. Available in French only for the moment, it is one of a series of new promotional tools and publications developed to fulfill EU Operating Grant objectives (2015). We hope to film a second part to the video, drawing on the information gathered during the COPE workshops in Stockholm following last year's General Assembly.



Giving children and young people a voice.

Our videos and campaign have focused both on informing children and on using their messages to inform policy makers. Because It's Our Right is a child rights video for children aged 8-12 to inform them about their rights, in line with EU OG objectives to boost child rights literacy for children across Europe and foster awareness about child rights and best practice (made by a filmmaker who worked with Sesame Street, and with the participation of POPS and Families Outside). Rebalancing the Scales and It's Time to Act are two new video messages aimed respectively at sentencers and at policy makers and decision-makers (Chris led on these two, with input from staff, board and St Nicholas Trust/University College Cork legal consultants). 800,000 Voices, as Lucy mentioned, was based on Families Outside's video 27,000 Voices, as part of COPE's 2015 annual campaign activities.

Professionalising the annual awareness-raising campaign



Since 2010 every year, throughout the month of June, COPE runs a pan-European campaign entitled 'Not My Crime, Still My Sentence'. Campaign objectives include awareness-raising about the rights and needs of children with imprisoned parents; and effecting policy change for children of prisoners,

using the Italian model of the Memorandum of Understanding. A secondary objective is fundraising and donations. Targets include national and international policy makers, EU and Council of Europe officials, the media and the general public. Under Project Coordiantor Hannah Lynn's command, the fifth annual "Not My Crime, Still My Sentence" campaign (2015) was selected as the Charity Campaign of the Month by The Guardian newspaper (https://www.theguardian.com/voluntary-sector-network/2015/jul/02/campaign-children-parents-prison-european).

"So what's different about this campaign?", wrote The Guardian. "The sheer variety of groups involved, from some smaller prison reform groups to large children's welfare charities and from Croatia to New York." They highlighted the concerted effort to preserve and support children's voices; FFP's Behind the Wall photo project—through the eyes of children of prisoners in Europe, whereby young people with imprisoned parents were allowed to bring cameras into a high-security prison; and Exodus's Day

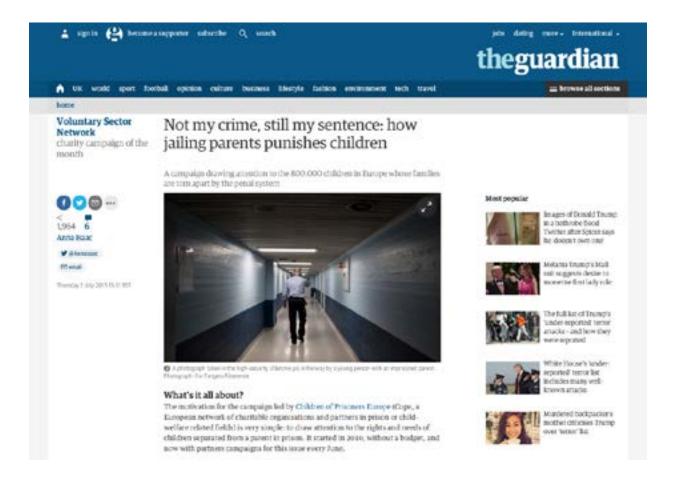
of Action involving members of parliament in the Netherlands. The campaign was entirely funded by cosmetics company LUSH, and charity pot moisturisers were produced featuring the COPE logo and a child's drawing (see image).



Main campaign activities included:

- Pledge cards sent to network members with Child Rights Champions in their country (MEPs who have signed the Child Rights Manifesto). Members had children write a "change they wish to see" on the pledge card, with examples including "longer visits", "private visits", "visits outside school hours", or "special leave for the child's birthday". Dalia Wexler of Relais Enfants Parents Belgique and Hannah Lynn of COPE staff took the handwritten cards to the European Parliament.
- The aforementioned awareness-raising animated video using the voice recording of Families Outside's 27,000 Voices video clip (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PkjG-k7_zUI&noredirect=1) was translated and recorded in French, Italian, Norwegian and Dutch. Revamped campaign site and new campaign logo at: www.notmycrimestillmysentence.org.
- Translation of Italian Memorandum of Understanding (English, French, Croatian, Spanish, Dutch, German, Czech, Norwegian).
- Dissemination of Good Practice Guide (English edition).
- "Charity Pot Party": event at Paris LUSH boutique, speaking to shoppers about children with imprisoned parents, selling charity pots and distributing flyers.

The campaign, which The Guardian liked because it was "international, collaborative, and unashamedly policy heavy", embodies the best of what a network can offer: the co-development and sharing of tools, and collaboration between members on the ground and the COPE Paris office, with translations of the animation, pledge cards and Memorandum spearheaded by the members across Europe. Thanks to members' support on social media, the campaign gained COPE 55 new followers on Twitter and 33.3K Tweet impressions (times a user is served a Tweet in timeline or search results) throughout the month of June. During June 1,760 people visited COPE's Twitter page.



Spotlighting issues, recommendations and developments through pan-NGO efforts

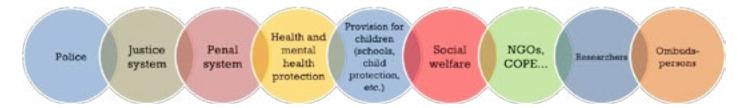
COPE drew on longstanding partnerships forged during the FP7 Framework Coping Study (2010-2012) at the Coping Study Impact Workshop organised by the University of Huddersfield (October). The workshop brought together NGOs and academics from the consortium, including COPE, QUNO, POPS, Treffpunkt Germany and Alternative Sociale (Romania), to explore how the study had impacted their work and the field three years on. The developments across Europe were impressive. Pan-NGO efforts can have powerful impact, such as PACT, Clinks, POPS, Nepacs, Spurgeons, Jigsaw, Storybook Dads and Barnardo's co-hosting the 200,000 Reasons to Care Event to showcase their work and lobby for a national government strategy for children of prisoners.

"Converting" academics and scholars

In 2015, COPE launched its bi-annual European Journal of Parental Imprisonment, now in English, French, Italian and Croatian, to foster a more in-depth study of issues relevant to children with imprisoned parents and the entitlements, policies and practices that promote their wellbeing. The Journal features contributions by scholars and experts in child rights, child welfare, criminal and social justice, psychology, penal affairs and other disciplines. Equally important to the content of the Journal is the process itself: Renowned scholars who don't necessarily have expertise on children of prisoners contribute to drafting the journal and so increase their awareness of the existence of these children as a group, and of relevant child rights, child welfare issues and instruments. The launch issue on child rights, for example, featured a contribution by Helen Stalford, Director of the European Children Rights Unit at the University of Liverpool, who drew on her expertise on child rights entitlements in the EU to look more specifically at entitlements for children of prisoners in the EU. For the second Journal, on sentencing, Ann Skelton, who played a key role at the 2011 UN Day of General Discussion on children with imprisoned parents, looked more closely at the landmark 2008 decision S v M in South Africa to provide information on its follow up, specifically the lesser wellknown 2011 case S v the State. The third Journal, currently in preparation, will focus on community issues and restorative justice.

Developing the network for sustainability

COPE continues its efforts to strengthen the network's financial sustainability and tackle certain challenges. COPE's work is abstract, intangible as we are working towards systemic change. We need to create soft appeal through our members, as a result. There are also challenges with respect to the topic of parental incarceration, a difficult subject for some and one that touches on so many levels: judicial system, penitentiary systems, education, social services, etc.



Source: Maja Gabelica

Challenges

There are challenges with respect to measuring success and quantifying change. How do you measure change when evaluating the success (or lack thereof) of preventive schemes? When success does come, it is long in the making, and when successes in policy development do come, few funding possibilities exist within targeted organisations (e.g., Council of Europe).

With these challenges in mind, COPE continues its efforts to fundraise, diversify funding and work towards long-term network sustainability. As mentioned, receiving EU funding has provided us with a degree of stability which has allowed us reflect on long-term stability, while focusing on our work for children of prisoners. We received smaller grants from the RSBC Charitable Trust and the Network for Social Change Platform. We also received our first corporate sponsorship through the support of LUSH, a cosmetics company that also backs social causes, particularly those working for systemic change; LUSH has financed, for example, the campaign video and the translation of the Memorandum of Understanding. We further raised our profile with funders on the Ariadne Network. The EU Operating Grant has also allowed COPE staff to work more closely with our geographically dispersed Board through face-to-face meetings with members, most of whom are well-seasoned fundraisers within their own national contexts. They bring their expertise and energy to the COPE network, and a subcommittee on fundraising has been active in a challenging landscape of limited funding available for work at a European level.

We need to employ other strategies regarding fundraising and sustainability; to find alternative avenues for identifying funders and establish longer-term relationships; to learn more efficient ways to find these funders, to realise our goals, and to continue enhancing our appeal. Overall objectives include working further towards donor education; liaising with funders' affinity groups to raise COPE's profile; soliciting Bernard van Leer Foundation's help in inventorying potential grant-givers interested in our topic and strategies; exploring different ways of approaching funders; capitalising on BvLF's offer to bring grantees in touch with other funders; and learning more about critical issues, "no-go" areas and pitfalls. The importance of our work and the children's voices demand secure funding.

Other 2015 activities

Jan-April: Preparing the Annual Network Meeting (ANM, 22-24 May), held in Stockholm, which kicked off with a conference on child rights organised by BUFFF and chaired by Lucy Gampell. Featured speakers included Her Excellency, Mrs Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca, President of Malta; Martina Blombergsson of the Children's Ombudsman's Office Sweden, Karoliina Taruvuori of the Finnish Prison Service and Corin Morgan-Armstrong of Family Interventions, HMP Parc, Wales. The General Assembly that followed approved modifications to COPE bylaws (cf. § 3.7 Individual membership: "People are invited by the Board to become individual members; individuals from the general public can sign up for individual affiliate status only"). Klaus Roggenthin was voted in as an individual member of COPE; and Marie-Jeanne Schmitt, Edoardo Fleischner and Nancy Loucks were endorsed as Board members.

Sept-Dec: Translation of COPE's good practice guide into Croatian, Italian, Romanian

Oct-Nov: Applying for the 2016 EU Framework Partnership Grant (DG Justice and Consumers)

Nov: COPE Board Strategy Meeting, Berlin, with great thanks to Henriette Heimgaertner for organising the meeting.

Ongoing: Developing a network activity log 2015, and database mapping the implementation of child rights across Europe, both part of EU objectives. To continue in 2016. The creation of these resources has involved significant work for COPE members who have contributed enthusiastically. In line with both EU and BvLF imperatives, continue compiling a compendium of pilot projects on data collection for children of prisoners —liaising with POPs in the UK, DataKind - Irish Prison Reform Trust - Child Development Initiative in Ireland.

In short, COPE made progress in achieving its stated objectives, in making further inroads in introducing the child's perspective into decision-making processes and in advancing state recognition of their needs.

Thank you to all network members, to Board members, and to past and present presidents.

Liz Ayre
Executive Director
Children of Prisoners Europe
May 2016

COPE member organisations (2015)

Action for Prisoners' and Offenders' Families (APF)

15-17 The Broadway

Hatfield

Hertfordshire AL9 5HZ

http://www.prisonersfamilies.org.uk

ASBL Relais Enfants Parents Rue de Bordeaux, 62A 1060 Brussels, Belgium

http://www.relaisenfantsparents.be

Associazione Bambinisenzasbarre O.N.L.U.S Via Antonio Baldissera 1 20129 Milan, Italy http://www.bambinisenzasbarre.org

Bedford Row Family Project Lower Bedford Row Limerick, Ireland http://www.bedfordrow.ie

Bufff Stockholm Magnus Ladulåsgatan 6A 118 66 Stockholm http://bufff.nu

Czech Helsinki Committee Štefánikova 21 150 00 Praha 5, Czech Republic http://www.helcom.cz/cs/co-delame/

Families Outside 13 Great King St, Edinburgh EH3 6QW, United Kingdom http://www.familiesoutside.org.uk

La Federation des Relais Enfants Parents (FREP) 4-6 rue Charles Floquet 92122 Montrouge, France repidf@club-internet.fr For Fangers Pårørende (FFP) (The Organisation for Families and Friends of Prisoners)
P.B. 6710, St. Olavsplass,
0130 Oslo, Norway
http://www.ffp.no

NIACRO
4 Amelia Street
Belfast BT2 7GS,
United Kingdom
http://www.niacro.co.uk

Office of the Ombudsman for Children Croatia Teslina 10 Zagreb, Croatia 10000 http://www.dijete.hr/en.html

Prison Advice and Care Trust (PACT) 29 Peckham Road, London SE5 8UA United Kingdom http://www.prisonadvice.org.uk

Relais Enfants Parents
4-6 rue Charles Floquet
92 122 Montrouge,
France
repidf@club-internet.fr
For info: emmanuel.gallaud@gmail.com

Relais Enfants Parents Romands Rue du Tunnel 1 CH- 1005 Lausanne, Switzerland http://repr.ch

Service Treffpunkt
19 rue Pasteur,
L-3543 Dudelange, Luxembourg
http://www.etat.lu/annuaire/?idMin=5361

Solrosen Andra Lnggatan 29, 2 tr 413 27 Gteborg, Sweden http://www.raddningsmissionen.se St Nicholas Trust 34 Paul Street, Cork, Ireland http://www.stnicholastrust.ie

Treffpunkt e.V. Fürther Str. 212 90429 Nürnberg, Germany https://www.treffpunkt-nbg.de

Applicant Status:

Exodus Nederland Morssingel 5 2312 AZ Leiden, Netherlands http://www.exodus.nl

Hoppenbank e.V. Andra Lnggatan 29, 2 tr 413 27 Gteborg, Sweden http://www.hoppenbank.info

POPS

1079 Rochdale Road, Blackley, Manchester M9 8AJ, United Kingdom http://www.partnersofprisoners.org.uk

Quaker United Nations Office (QUNO) 13 Avenue du Mervelet 1209 Geneva, Switzerland http://www.guno.org

SAVN

http://www.savn.dk/

Affiliate Status:

BAG-S e.V. Oppelner Str. 130 53119 Bonn, Germany http://www.bag-s.de

Barnardo's Northern Ireland 234 Ormeau Road, Belfast, BT7 2FZ, United Kingdom http://www.barnardos.org.uk/what_we_do/barnardos_today/northernireland.htm

Children Heard and Seen PO Box 1589, Oxford OX4 3JJ, United Kingdom http://childrenheardandseen.co.uk/

The Croft (Visitors' Support and Advice Centre, HMP Barlinnie)
St. Enoch's,
19 Smithycroft Road,
Glasgow G33 2RH,
United Kingdom
http://croftglasgow.org/

Freedom Gate Greece http://freedomgategreece.blogspot.fr

Heilsarmee Gefängnisdienst Laupenstrasse 5, Postfach 6574 3001Bern, Switzerland http://www.heilsarmee.ch/2012/02/23/

Instituto de Infancia (IFAN) Av. Padre Antonio Toms, 2420 Aldeota, Fortaleza, CE, Brazil http://www.ifan.com.br

Irish Penal Reform Trust MACRO, 1 Green Street, Dublin 7, Ireland http://www.iprt.ie

Kriminaalihuollon tukisäätiö (KRITS) Kinaporinkatu 2 E 39, 00500, Helsinki, Finland http://www.krits.fi/fin/krits_in_english/ Morning Tears Deutschland e.V. Paracelsusstraße 35, 70771 Leinfelden-Echterdingen, Germany http://morningtears.de

Person Shaped Support (PSS) 18 Seel Street, Liverpool L1 4BE, United Kingdom http://www.psspeople.com

Pillars
PO BOX 21209
Christchurch 8143,
New Zealand
http://www.pillars.org.nz

Relais Enfants Parents Haute-Normandie (RE-PHN) 11 rue de la Mare aux boards 76000 Rouen, France

Scottish Families Affected by Alcohol and Drugs 21 Elmbank Street, Glasgow G2 4PB, United Kingdom http://www.sfad.org.uk

Service Network for Children of Inmates 1835 E. Hallandale Beach Blvd #387 Hallandale Beach, Florida 33009 United States http://www.childrenofinmates.org

SEUM Child Welfare Practice 133, Yanghwa-ro, Mapo-gu, 1605, Seogyo Tower Officetel, Seoul, 04032, South Korea Tel. (+82) 02-6929-0936 Mobile. (+82) 10-5685-0936 Fax. (+82) 70-8162-0937 E-mail. childseum@naver.com Blog: www.iseum.or.kr www.Facebook.com/childseum

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