



Child Talk

A Reflective Toolkit for Prison Administrators and Staff on Supporting the Child-Parent Relationship

Children of Prisoners Europe





Children of Prisoners Europe (COPE) is a pan-European network of non-profit organisations working on behalf of children separated from an imprisoned parent. The network encourages innovative perspectives and practices to ensure that children with an imprisoned parent fully enjoy their rights under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, and that action is taken to enable their wellbeing and development.

Children of Prisoners Europe is a non-profit organisation registered in France under French Association law 1901.
SIRET: 437 527 013 00019

December 2018
Copyright © COPE 2018



This toolkit has been produced with the financial support of the Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme of the European Union. The contents are the sole responsibility of Children of Prisoners Europe and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the European Commission.

Contents

Contents	3
Introduction	4
Background	4
Dynamic Security: Children, Prison Staff	5
The Role of COPE	6
Relevance	7
Four Pillars: A Checklist for Prison Administrators and Staff	8
Rights	9
1. The Right to Dignity	10
2. Right to Contact	16
3. Right to Information	23
Relationships	26
1. Child-Parent Relationship	38
2. Family-Prison Relationship	38
3. Prison-Stakeholders Relationship	40
4. Children Living in Prison	43
Case Study: Papa Plus	28
Resources	51
1. Funding	52
2. Training	53
Responsibilities	56
1. Data Collection	57
2. Review	61
Bibliography	62

Introduction

The Council of Europe's recent landmark "Recommendation CM/Rec(2018)5 of the Committee of Ministers to member States concerning children with imprisoned parents" offers a much needed framework for working hand in hand with the criminal justice system in accounting for children of imprisoned parents. While awareness about the impact of parental incarceration on children has grown among prison administrations, policy makers and other stakeholders, policies and programmes that put children's rights, needs, and perspectives first have yet to experience widespread implementation.

This toolkit is offered up to prison administrators and staff in recognition of the central role they play in supporting and mediating the relationship between an imprisoned parent and their child. Framed around a four-pillar structure—Rights, Relationships, Resources, and Responsibilities—it reorganises the articles of Recommendation CM/Rec(2018)5 so as to impart suggestions and good practice to prison administrators and staff more accessibly and with greater emphasis on the human scale and human potential involved in working in prisons.

It intends to reach prison administrations and prison staff throughout Europe, as well as the non-governmental organisations that work with them. A practical complement to both Recommendation CM/Rec(2018)5 and the accompanying Implementation Guidance Document written by Children of Prisoners Europe (COPE), the toolkit is designed to be an organic document that allows for ongoing updates, information and ideas on how to keep children's needs front and centre and better support the child-parent relationship.

With each recommendation put forth in this toolkit comes the underlying assumption that practices for supporting children and families through work with prison administrations, social services, children's ombudspersons, and organisations governmental and nongovernmental, can always improve and see change. It follows that a large part of COPE's role is to advocate for broadened campaigns for data collection and information sharing.

Background

The imprisonment of a parent weighs heavily on the life of a child, starting from the arrest, followed by detention and imprisonment, and during the eventual process of reintegration after a sentence is served. On any given day, an estimated 800,000 children in the European Union are separated from an imprisoned parent (2.1 million in Europe broadly). These children are not a homogeneous group; both the circumstances of a parent's imprisonment and the child's relationship with that parent are unique, as are the child's skills and resources in coping with the parent's incarceration. Yet children of imprisoned parents often do have common experiences, beyond having to cope with the absence of a

parent in their daily life. Some articulate the experience of being stigmatised in the community, particularly at school; some construe the separation as abandonment by the parent, particularly when there is a lack of communication and discussion about the imprisonment. Many experience anxiety and loss of self-esteem.

The imprisonment of a household member is one of ten Adverse Childhood Experiences known to have a significant impact on long-term health and wellbeing.¹ The more ACEs a child suffers, the more likely this is to impact negatively on outcomes in terms of health, school attainment and later life experiences. Recent research in the UK has highlighted the impact of ACEs² and looked at how recognising and responding to ACEs is key to improving life chances.³ The higher the number of ACEs, the greater the likely negative impact on a child's future. The impact of ACEs can be mitigated when children have the support of a trusted adult, which fosters resilience. In one study, children experiencing four or more ACEs were asked whether, as a child, they had an adult they trusted and could talk to about their problems; even those experiencing four or more ACEs were four times less likely to end up imprisoned if they had an adult they trusted to talk about their problems with.⁴

Dynamic Security: Children, Prison Staff

Supporting children with imprisoned parents is a challenge accomplished through a web of reciprocal relationships, which prominently includes prison administration and staff. Stakeholders working with and in prisons inherently mediate the child's development of healthy relationships with their parent and others; recognising this fact—and the fact that promoting the child-parent relationship positively benefits the prison atmosphere—makes the child-parent relationship a crucial consideration for prison administrators and staff.

This web of relationships functions at many levels. Support for the child more fundamentally means supporting the child's agency to form positive connections. And just as children benefit from this healthy relationship, the opportunity to remain supportive and active in their role as parent strengthens the parent's sense of responsibility and self-worth, thus benefiting the parent during imprisonment and during their reintegration into home life. Prison administrations and

¹ Felitti, V.J., et al. (1998). Relationship of Childhood Abuse and Household Dysfunction to Many of the Leading Causes of Death in Adults. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine* 14(4), 245-258. The ten items recognised as key as Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) are: physical, emotional and sexual abuse; physical and emotional neglect; mental illness; mother treated violently; divorce; substance abuse; incarcerated relative.

² Public Health Wales NHS Trust (2015). ACEs and their impact on health-harming behaviours in the Welsh adult population.

³ Health Scotland (2017). Tackling the attainment gap by preventing and responding to Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs).

⁴ Bellis, M. (no date). ACEs, Resilience and Equity: Setting course for a healthier Wales. Presentation. Public Health Wales

staff stand to benefit, in turn, from a more calm and respectful prison atmosphere where both prisoner and prison staff recognise their role in supporting children whose parents are imprisoned.

This focus on child-friendly visits and on supporting prisoners as parents is a form of dynamic security that rests on the notion that support for the child-parent relationship increases trust between prisoners, families and prison officers. Security, prisoner rehabilitation and protocols informed by human rights standards are not only feasible goals for prisoner treatment, but can be mutually compatible and productive. Support for the parent acts as a means of conflict prevention aside from traditional security protocols, instead relying on positive expectations and respectful treatment of the prisoner.

Dynamic security also expands the role of the prison officer, imbuing it with a certain investment in or responsibility for the prisoner's rights and rehabilitation. The Directorate of Norwegian Correctional Services reflected on the impact of dynamic security on the prison officer him or herself in a response to a question submitted to EuroPris in March 2017:

[Prison officers] are not merely prison guards in the old-fashioned sense of the word, but they have a key role in making the inmates wanting to choose to live a life free of crime after completing their sentence. We look upon them as “agents of change.” This expansion of the role of prison staff, however, means that more training and education is necessary. In the Norwegian Correctional Service, we put a lot of emphasis on giving our staff a proper training and recruits have to undergo a two-year education, where the consciousness about ethics, attitudes and a humanistic approach, plays a central role.⁵

Promoting measures such as child-friendly visits and family training programmes—while facilitating more respectful relationships between prison staff and prisoners—can in this way be considered a form of dynamic security. In centring the rights and wellbeing of children and promoting the relationship between children and their imprisoned parents, the prison atmosphere improves. Prison officers take a more humanistic approach to their job, with mutual respect at its core.

The Role of COPE

COPE works closely with the EuroPris Expert Group on Family Relations to foster the exchange of information and positive solutions, and to increase opportunities for meaningful contact between children and imprisoned parents. The col-

⁵ <https://www.euopris.org/epis/kms/?detail=173>

lective aim is to reduce the stigma attached to imprisonment; to promote human rights-informed standards for imprisonment; to improve prison conditions and staff professionalism; and to develop innovative practice that supports the child-parent relationship. Cooperation between prison services, families and multi-sectoral support networks both inside and outside prisons is crucial.

COPE is the only pan-European network for children with imprisoned parents. Working hand in hand with its 85 members, experts, and affiliates, COPE is committed to ensuring children and young people's voices are heard; using their messages to inform decision-makers; refining and systematising training and support initiatives; building new strategic alliances; and maximising network impact. COPE plays a crucial role in bringing together child rights and penological issues to effect change for children and ensure that national criminal justice policies and legislation incorporate a child rights perspective when a parent is imprisoned; and that government policies for children address the rights and needs of children with imprisoned parents, protecting their healthy development.

Key Resource

COPE and EuroPris collectively wrote the EuroPris [Expert Group on Family Relations Good Practice Collection](#), published in 2017. The report includes chapters regarding good practice in visiting facilities and physical structures, community involvement, communication, intervention programmes and staff training.

Relevance

This recommendation is especially of relevance to, *inter alia*, EuroPris, Consultative Council of European Prosecutors (CCPE), Consultative Council of European Judges (CCJE), European Committee on Crime Problems (CDPC), Council of Europe's Council of Penological Cooperation (PC-CP); Council of Europe child's rights coordinator (campaign for change, updating European Prison Rules). European Commission's DG Justice, EU Fundamental Rights Agency, Council of Europe's annual conference for prison governors (CDAP conference), prison administrations across Council of Europe countries and beyond.

Four Pillars: A Checklist for Prison Administrators and Staff⁶

Rights

- ✓ Is the child's right to maintain contact with their parent honoured in prison system practices and protocols?
- ✓ Are decisions about prison protocols made with due consideration of children's voices?
- ✓ Is child-friendly information about prisons made available to children with an imprisoned parent?

Resources

- ✓ Is money and time allocated to improve the conditions of children with a parent in prison?
- ✓ Are resources allocated for programs to train prison staff in child-friendly tactics?
- ✓ When budgeting resources, do developments in programs and infrastructure (i.e. telecommunication, visiting rooms) reflect a dedication to facilitating the child-parent relationship?

Relationships

- ✓ Is the parent seen as a positive resource in the prison's maintaining of the child-parent relationship?
- ✓ Do prison administrations make decisions regarding children with an imprisoned parent in cross-sectoral collaboration with government decision makers, Child Ombudsman, social services and relevant NGOs?
- ✓ Are family programs in place in prison to support the child-parent relationship?
- ✓ Are efforts in place to preserve the dignity of prisoners and their children and to enhance respect between prisoners, families and prison staff members?

Responsibilities

- ✓ Are prison programs and protocols reviewed regularly with specific focus on child and family support?
- ✓ Is data being collected sufficiently and at appropriate times during the process of parental imprisonment, from arrest to release?

⁶ This checklist is based off a graphic prepared by the organization Eurochild, from their "Eurochild Conference 2018 Background Paper," subtitled, "Children's participation in public decision-making: A review of practice in Europe."

Rights



1. The Right to Dignity

Article 1

Children with imprisoned parents shall be treated with respect for their human rights and with due regard for their particular situation and needs. These children shall be provided with the opportunity for their views to be heard, directly or indirectly, in relation to decisions that may affect them. Measures that ensure child protection, including respect for the child's best interests, family life and privacy shall be integral to this, as shall be the measures which support the role of the imprisoned parent from the start of detention and after release.

Article 20

A designated children's space shall be provided in prison waiting and visiting rooms (with a bottle warmer, a changing table, toys, books, drawing materials, games, etc.) where children can feel safe, welcome and respected. Prison visits shall provide an environment conducive to play and interaction with the parent. Consideration should also be given to permitting visits to take place in the vicinity of the detention facility, with a view to promoting, maintaining and developing child-parent relationships in as normal a setting as possible.

Something to consider

- ✓ Child-friendly spaces should be in place to "soften" the impact of a stressful prison visit and to provide as comfortable a space as possible to allow for normal interaction between child and parent.
- ✓ Thoughtful curation of these spaces is paramount; child-friendly staff should ensure that play areas are clean and equipped with age-appropriate toys and opportunities for non-verbal contact.

Practical suggestions

- ✓ Ensure that visiting spaces where children will be present meet country specific minimum standards for hygiene, ventilation, light, a child-friendly atmosphere, utilities for taking care of infant children (changing diapers; heating meals, toys, etc.) and furniture that is adapted to the use of children of different ages.

- ✓ Consider allowing for visits in the vicinity of the prison, which may offer a more relaxed atmosphere and allow children to avoid some of the more intrusive prison security regulations.
- ✓ Consider making the location of child-centred visits more flexible, by including areas where children can move about more freely and by physically active: gardens, gymnasiums, play areas, and the like.
- ✓ Offer visits with separate sections that have age-appropriate activities, pastimes, and materials (naps, mattresses on the ground, toilet facilities for children, nappy-changing facilities, etc.).
- ✓ This could also be an opportunity to partner with NGOs or national authorities who can provide their support by helping to organise and equip these spaces with toys, changing tables, bottle warmers, etc.

Examples of good practice in Europe

- ✓ All Finnish prisons are required to have special visiting rooms for children where they are allowed physical contact with their parents. Imprisoned parents can also apply for special “family visits,” up to a few days in length, which take place in rooms that resemble a living room, with a table, a couch and toys for children and their parents to play with. Finland’s Vanaja Open Prison has a separate family house containing four apartments where family meetings can be arranged for a period of several days.
- ✓ In Italy, COPE partner Bambinisenzasbarre has introduced [“Spazio Giallo”](#)—children’s waiting areas in prisons that are painted yellow, and that have toys and activities—allowing children an opportunity to play while waiting to see their parent. Children follow a brightly decorated path laid out with giant footsteps, which intends to make the approach to the visiting room less scary.
- ✓ Relais Enfants-Parents Asbl’s [“trilieux” spaces](#) in several Belgian prisons provide three types of environment where children can play, create things or relax and read with their parents, depending on their mood. In certain prisons, a special committee of imprisoned parents sets up the “trilieux” area with toys and books in preparation for the visit.
- ✓ Prisons in Estonia, Germany, Czech Republic, Netherlands, Sweden, Norway, Croatia and Finland have separate family meeting rooms.
- ✓ Scottish and Irish prisons, as well as some prisons throughout England and Wales, offer Visiting Centre facilities where families can meet with prison employees and volunteer workers, receive information on matters relating to imprisonment.
- ✓ Greece’s Grevena prison is the subject of a pilot project wherein private family visits are allowed for twelve hours in an apartment setting.

Article 21

Measures should be taken to ensure that the visiting context is respectful to the child's dignity and right to privacy, including facilitating access and visits for children with special needs.

Something to consider

- ✓ Prisons should be adapted to provide information and be accessible to disabled children.
- ✓ Except in cases when a child could be harmed, privacy should be afforded both child and parent.

Practical suggestions

- ✓ When designing visiting spaces, assure their accessibility to people in a situation of disability;
- ✓ Provide disabled visitors information, including information about public transport to the prison and the layout of the prison's handicap accessibility. Information provided should be in a format accessible to the disabled.
- ✓ Accommodations such as private visiting rooms should be made available to children with special needs such as autism.

Examples of good practice in Europe

- ✓ In the United Kingdom, visits have been made available in private rooms for children with autism and other specific needs.
- ✓ Sweden's prison service disseminates information for people with hearing impairments on the [Prison Service website](#).
- ✓ In Belgium, the website of the Federal Public Service for Justice is accessible to people with a disability. It obtained an Any Surfer Label, a quality label for accessible websites.
- ✓ In Croatia, the prison staff helps guests with special needs, adapting the environment to allow for accessible prison visits or cooperating with the Association of Deaf and Blind when necessary.

Article 23

Any security checks on children shall be carried out in a child-friendly manner that respects children's dignity and right to privacy, as well as their right to physical and psychological integrity and safety. Any intrusive searches on children, including body cavity searches, shall be prohibited.

Practical suggestions

- ✓ The child should be prepared before the body search takes place and be informed how the procedure will be carried out, with deference to the child's age and maturity.
- ✓ Something as simple as the prison officer bending down to the child's level when searching them prior to entry to the prison can reduce the tension in a security check.
- ✓ Prison officers carrying out security procedures can explain to children what they are doing and why.
- ✓ Child-sensitive officers often develop their own ways of searching children in a playful manner, preserving their integrity in as unobtrusive a manner as possible; pretending to look for treasure, for example, or using their electronic search baton as a fairy wand.
- ✓ Analogies with searches for air travel can be useful in normalising the process and destigmatising the need for such checks and offering them with dignity.
- ✓ Introduce any search dogs to children as if they were being introduced to a pet.
- ✓ Always honour the dignity of the child-parent relationship. In instances where an infant's diaper is being searched, for instance, invite the mother to remove the diaper, as opposed to a prison officer.

Examples of good practice in Europe

- ✓ Swedish prison guards aim to make the body search more playful and less unpleasant by using a hand puppet that distracts from the use of a portable detector.

Article 24

Any searches of prisoners prior to visits shall be conducted in a manner that respects their human dignity in order to enable them to interact positively with their children during visits. As far as possible, children shall be authorised to leave the visiting area prior to the imprisoned parent, as this can be traumatic for some children. Where prisoners are provided with clothes by prison authorities, this clothing shall not offend their dignity, particularly during visits with their children.

Something to consider

- ✓ Prisoner searches should not be violent in general, especially before an imprisoned parent is about to visit with their child. Preservation of dignity remains the most essential consideration, especially when it comes to treatment of the family.

Practical suggestions

- ✓ Have parents wear normal clothing instead of uniforms when their children are visiting.
- ✓ Ensure that any searches or security measures for prisoners before visits with children are uncontentious and preserve a prisoner's dignity. A prisoner with a positive attitude coming into the visit will have a more meaningful and effective interaction with their child.
- ✓ Invite visitors to leave the visiting area first, because the end of the visit may be particularly difficult for children and parents, and children seeing their parent leave in response to prison officers' orders can exacerbate this difficulty.

Article 45

Any new policies or measures designed by or for the prison administration that may impact child-parent contact and relations shall be developed with due regard to children's rights and needs.

Something to consider

- ✓ The fundamental rights of children should take precedent above all else, that the children of imprisoned parents should not be merely the unfortunate recipients of a parent's mistake. Article 3 of the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child* (1989) states that:
 1. In all actions concerning children, whether undertaken by public or private social welfare institutions, courts of law, administrative authorities, or legislative bodies, the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration; and,
 2. State parties undertake to ensure the child such protection and care as is necessary for his or her well-

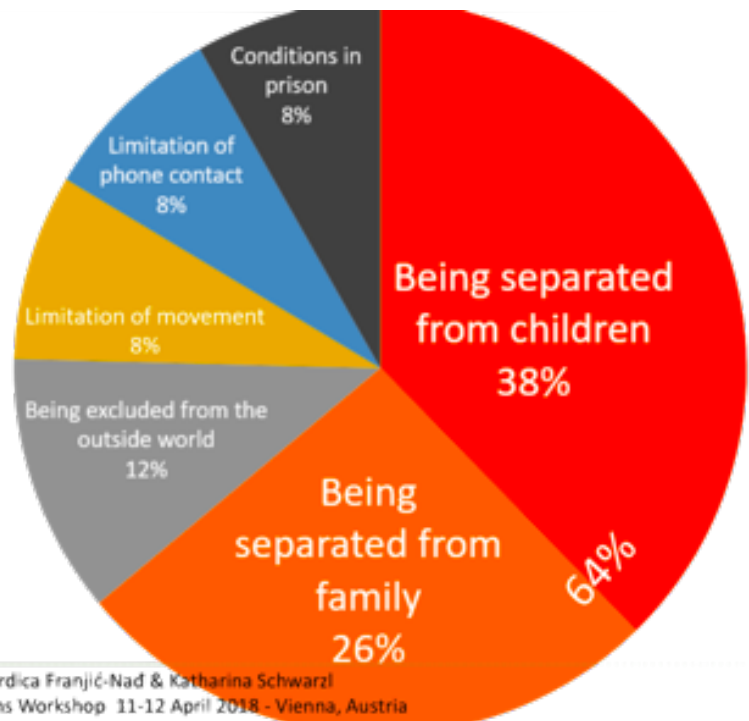
Practical suggestions

- ✓ Include as part of the criteria evaluating future prison policies how the proposed policies will affect children's ability to visit their parents and the rights of these children
- ✓ Evaluations of this nature should be made at the local and national level when considering new policy.

Examples of good practice in Europe

- ✓ In Norway, each prison designates child-responsible persons to ensure that the child perspective is adequately considered when new policies are being considered.

What is hardest for me at the prison?



Bernardica Franjić-Nad & Katharina Schwarzl
Family Relations Workshop 11-12 April 2018 - Vienna, Austria

2. Right to Contact

Article 3

Whenever a parent is detained, particular consideration shall be given to allocating them to a facility close to their children.

Article 4

When deciding to transfer sentenced persons to or from a State in which their children reside, due regard shall be given to the best interests of the child when considering the rehabilitation purpose of the transfer.

Practical suggestions

- ✓ Make all relevant information on the location of the prisoner's children available to the appropriate authorities when considering transfers.
- ✓ Ensure that proximity to the children of the prisoner is an integral component of the decision-making process for the transfer.

Article 9

Enforcing restrictions on contact of an arrested or a remanded parent shall be done in such a way as to respect the children's right to maintain contact with them.

Something to consider

- ✓ Restrictions on contact should only be implemented in exceptional cases where contact is not in the child's best interests. In all other cases, prisons should respect a child's right to maintain contact with their parent.

Practical suggestions

- ✓ Policymakers, legislators and criminal justice institutions should work together to develop policies and measures to remove restrictions where they exist during the arrest, pre-trial, and remanded custody reflecting a child's rights to see their detained parent.
- ✓ Upon or shortly following arrest, families should be informed by police or social services of their rights to visit the arrested family member.
- ✓ Create informational materials that outline a child's right to see their parent, the procedures necessary to take part in a visit, and what restrictions may prevent a visit.

Examples of good practice in Europe

- ✓ Sweden and Romania provide rules, details about the visit system and information about numbers of visits, length of visits, numbers of visitors, etc., to the families and prisoners upon arrival at the prison, in the remand period.

Article 16

Apart from considerations regarding requirements of administration of justice, safety and security, the allocation of an imprisoned parent to a particular prison, shall, where appropriate, and in the best interests of their child, be done so as to facilitate maintaining child-parent contact, relations and visits without undue burden either financially or geographically.

Practical suggestions

- ✓ When assigning prisoners to a facility, consider placing prisoners as near to their homes when possible.
- ✓ Provide families with information about public or private funding possibilities if the travel cost to visit is prohibitive.
- ✓ Put families in contact with the appropriate government and non-governmental organisations who can facilitate travel to a distant prison.

Examples of good practice in Europe

- ✓ The prison administration of Cyprus has a budget specifically for transporting children to and from prison during visiting hours.
- ✓ Germany's prison administrations allow inmates who have been allocated to far-flung prisons to transfer temporarily to prisons that are closer to families.
- ✓ The UK's [Assisted Prison Visits Scheme](#) provides help for low-income families to ensure regular contact between children and imprisoned parents.

Article 17

Children should normally be allowed to visit an imprisoned parent within a week following the parent's detention and, on a regular and frequent basis, from then on. Child-friendly visits should be authorised in principle once a week, with shorter, more frequent visits allowed for very young children, as appropriate.

Something to consider

- ✓ Regular visits to parents in prison have been found to be a factor in promoting resilience in children.
- ✓ Studies in Denmark and the UK have demonstrated the importance of an early first visit, ideally within a week following the incarceration, to reassure children that the parent is safe .

Practical suggestions

- ✓ Engage prison management as to how child's visits can be made possible as early as pre-trial detention.
- ✓ Suggest that prison management offer shorter, more frequent visits for very young children and longer visits for older children.
- ✓ Child-centred visits can be offered outside regular visits and are not always counted as part of the maximum number of hours allowed for visits. They can be longer than standard visits.

Article 18

Visits shall be organised so as not to interfere with other elements of the child's life, such as school attendance. If weekly visits are not feasible, proportionately longer, less frequent visits allowing for greater child-parent interaction should be facilitated.

Practical suggestions

- ✓ Consider implementing a system for booking visits by phone in advance that can help children plan visits that do not conflict with the rest of their everyday lives.
- ✓ Explore implementing visits that vary proportionally in frequency and length depending on individual children's availability to see their parent.
- ✓ Reach out to children and parents to see if the visitation schedule is convenient for the children and their caregivers. Ask how the schedule can be improved.
- ✓ Review visiting times and booking arrangements, paying attention to the importance of scheduling visits on Sundays, public holidays, and outside of school hours.

Article 19

In cases where the current caregiver is not available to accompany a child's visit, alternative solutions should be sought, such as accompanying by a qualified professional or representative of an organisation working in this field or another person as appropriate.

Practical suggestions

- ✓ Standard practices should be in place to facilitate communication between children, prison services, social services and NGOs.
- ✓ Seek out and develop channels of communication with NGOs that will provide child-sensitive people to accompany children into the prison and through security.

Examples of good practice in Europe

- ✓ Affiliates of the NGO Fédération des Relais Enfants Parents, which functions throughout France, Belgium and Switzerland, organise prison visits wherein volunteers and psychologists accompany children throughout the visiting process.
- ✓ Swedish NGO Solrosen (The Sunflower) provides volunteers and professionals trained to accompany children to prison or on custody visits.
- ✓ Catalonia's Niños Sin Barreras accompanies children on visits when caretakers are not available; social workers from professional treatment teams are responsible for coordinating with Niños Sin Barreras.
- ✓ Italy has outlined a standardised framework accompanying children's visits in Article 2 of their [Memorandum of Understanding](#), which states that children under the age of 12 are provided with options for accompaniment to prison, if they cannot be accompanied by a parent or guardian.

Article 22

When a child's parent is imprisoned far away from home, visits shall be arranged in a flexible manner, which may include allowing prisoners to combine their visit entitlements.

Practical suggestions

- ✓ Provide families with information about existing programs offered by the state and NGOs to facilitate travel to distantly incarcerated parents.
- ✓ Explore the feasibility of financial resources or subsidies available for transit costs where they do not exist.
- ✓ Reach out to NGOs or national authorities to partner in programmes to provide subsidised transport.
- ✓ When travel time limits the frequency of visits a child may engage in, offer proportionally longer visits.

Examples of good practice in Europe

- ✓ In Russia, prison visits may last several days in a row and the family stays in the prison, or in its immediate vicinity, during this period because of the long-distance travel involved.
- ✓ Germany's prison administrations allow inmates to transfer temporarily to prisons that are closer to families.

Article 25

In accordance with national law and practice, the use of information and communication technology (video-conferencing, mobile and other telephone systems, internet, including webcam and chat functions, etc.) shall be facilitated between face-to-face visits and should not involve excessive costs. Imprisoned parents shall be assisted with the costs of communicating with their children if their means do not allow it. These means of communication should never be seen as an alternative that replaces face-to-face contact between children and their imprisoned parents.

Practical suggestions

- ✓ Offer to participate in experimental video calling or restricted access mobile phone programs if they are offered by the national government.
- ✓ Ensure that telephone calling is available to all parents.
- ✓ Consider partnering with government or non-governmental actors to subsidise the cost of calls from prison if they are prohibitive.

Something to consider

- ✓ Allowing children to initiate phone communication themselves, taking into consideration the child's own sense of autonomy in his or her relationship with an imprisoned parent. For a child to be able to phone their parent when something significant happens in their daily lives can be important in affirming the relationship with their parent.

Examples of good practice in Europe

- ✓ The German organisation Treffpunkt e.V. has created a programme to facilitate Skype "visits" between children and parents in an interest to connect with children who are temporarily unable to visit, and to enable children and parents to speak more often.

Article 26

Rules for making and receiving telephone calls and other forms of communication with children shall be applied flexibly to maximise communication between imprisoned parents and their children. When feasible, children should be authorised to initiate telephone communications with their imprisoned parents.

Examples of good practice in Europe

- ✓ In Northern Ireland, prisoners at HMP Magilligan are allowed access to Skype to keep in contact with their family; initiatives for Skype contact currently are being developed in the Czech Republic and Norway, and imprisoned individuals in Cyprus's prison are allowed full access to Skype for prolonged parts of the day.
- ✓ In Sweden, following acceptance of an application, prisoners are allowed fifteen minutes of free calls with an extra five minutes per child each week.
- ✓ Four Greek prisons have piloted "E-visits" through Skype, with plans to expand the program

Article 30

Special measures shall be taken to encourage and enable imprisoned parents to maintain regular and meaningful contact and relations with their children, thus safeguarding their development. Restrictions imposed on contact between prisoners and their children shall be implemented only exceptionally, for the shortest period possible, in order to alleviate the negative impact the restriction

might have on children and to protect their right to an emotional and continuing bond with their imprisoned parent.

Article 31

A child's right to direct contact shall be respected, even in cases where disciplinary sanctions or measures are taken against the imprisoned parent. In cases where security requirements are so extreme as to necessitate non-contact visits, additional measures shall be taken to ensure that the child-parent bond is supported.

Something to consider

- ✓ Where non-contact visits are imposed (which should be the exception and not the rule), consideration needs to be given to how children can retain contact, if in their best interest.
- ✓ Whilst it may be possible to offer a child-friendly space for children during a non-contact visit, the fact of seeing their parent behind glass may be traumatising for a child.

Practical suggestions

- ✓ Use Skype and other forms of telecommunication or letters for short periods when non-contact visits have been imposed. This could reduce the trauma of seeing their parent behind glass.
- ✓ Create child-friendly spaces inside of non-contact visit facilities.
- ✓ Make a prisoner's parental role a criterion when considering disciplinary sanctions.



3. Right to Information

Article 14

On admission and on a prisoner's transfer, prison authorities shall assist prisoners who wish to do so in informing their children (and their caregivers) of their imprisonment and whereabouts or shall ensure that such information is sent to them.

Something to consider

- ✓ Good judgment should be used both in the language used and in the manner in which children receive information; it is not usually in the child's best interest to hear news of a parent's imprisonment from someone other than a parent or caregiver.

Practical suggestions

- ✓ Provide parents the opportunity and encouragement to inform their children upon their admission to or transfer to a prison, either by phone or in person;
- ✓ Ensure that a child's primary caretaker is made aware of the admission or transfer of a parent to prison, so that they may inform the child;
- ✓ Ensure that prison staff and prison authorities involved in the admission and transfer process are made aware of children's right to information about their parent's whereabouts and imprisonment.

Examples of good practice in Europe

- ✓ Swedish NGO Bufff has made an animated film called Emilia film along with additional materials that assist telling a child about imprisonment; it can be found online at: <http://www.riksbryggan.se/material.html>

Article 15

Support and information shall be provided by the prison, as far as possible, about contact and visiting modalities, procedures and internal rules in a child-friendly manner and in different languages and formats as necessary.

Something to consider

- ✓ Accurate, child-friendly information about the procedures for visits can make prisons less daunting, impenetrable spaces, so as not to discourage children from visiting their parents in prison.
- ✓ Information regarding a parent's daily life in prison can help to provide a degree of familiarity with a parent's situation inside prison; being transparent, honest and supportive reassures children experiencing separation, without denying the gravity of the situation. Article 15 also asks that rules be made available in a child-friendly manner and in different languages.

Practical suggestions

- ✓ Create child-centred informational material, like posters, leaflets and even maps of the prison that illustrate the rules and procedures of visits. Additionally, have this material available in other languages.
- ✓ Provide these informational materials to families or NGOs before a visit so that the children can come to a visit equipped with knowledge about procedures.
- ✓ Encourage prison staff interacting with children to answer any questions the children pose about visiting modalities, procedures and internal rules in a friendly, reassuring way.

Examples of good practice in Europe

- ✓ The Italian 'map' of the prison for children, '[Trovo papà](#)', which has been replicated in Germany as "Bear Buddy", is a good example of such child-specific information. In some countries, posters illustrate the search process adopted for children, including that search dogs will be used, to inform and reassure children.
- ✓ Many countries, including Sweden, have developed brochures and materials for children for prison visits. A good example is a colouring book that describes prison, which a child receives at the beginning of a visit to reduce stress and provide them with information about the prison.

Article 29

Children shall be offered the opportunity, when feasible and in the child's best interests, and with the support of an appropriate adult, to visit or receive information (including images) about areas in which their imprisoned parent spends time, including the parent's prison cell.

Something to consider

- ✓ Providing children with information about their parent's daily life in prison, with the intention that accurate details about prison conditions will prevent children from imagining that their parents are being poorly treated.
- ✓ Information provided to them in a sensitive manner can dispel their fears and worries. In some cases children may be able to see a parent's room in the prison. The information should be accessible to children with special needs including those with sensory and other disabilities.

Practical suggestions

- ✓ NGOs may be able to work in partnership with the prison services to publish information for children.
- ✓ Child-sensitive information can be in the form of storybooks, maps, videos, cartoons or animations.
- ✓ Prison services can make their web platforms accessible to individuals with visual and auditory impairments by reaching out to specialised associations that work with the disabled.

Examples of good practice in Europe

- ✓ Denmark has a number of films that contain general information about imprisonment and custody. These films aim to give children of different ages insight into what to expect when visiting a parent or relative in prison, and to inform children about where to seek more information/help.
- ✓ In Finland, there is an animated film about having a parent in prison. This film tells the story of a ten year-old girl and her brother and their experience of their father being sent to prison.
- ✓ Sweden facilitates information for people with hearing impairments on the Prison Service homepage by pressing the "lyssna" button. In Belgium, the website of the Federal Public Service of Justice is accessible to people with a disability. It obtained an Any Surfer Label, a quality label for accessible websites.

Relationships



Case Study: Papa Plus

The Papa Plus Programme came out of a Bulgarian action designed by COPE and the organisation Child & Space at Bulgaria's Sliven prison, with the participation of over twenty prison officers and social inspector staff. The backdrop to the initiative was to learn more about prison staff experiences with imprisoned fathers and children visiting them in prison; to highlight the situation of those parents not in contact with their children; and to look at the various ways in which prison impacts the child-parent relationship and makes it difficult for some parents to remain a parent in prison.

The ultimate aim of Papa Plus is to enhance the protection of children's rights and wellbeing by supporting the bond between father and child, and in so doing supporting a more respectful and calm prison atmosphere.

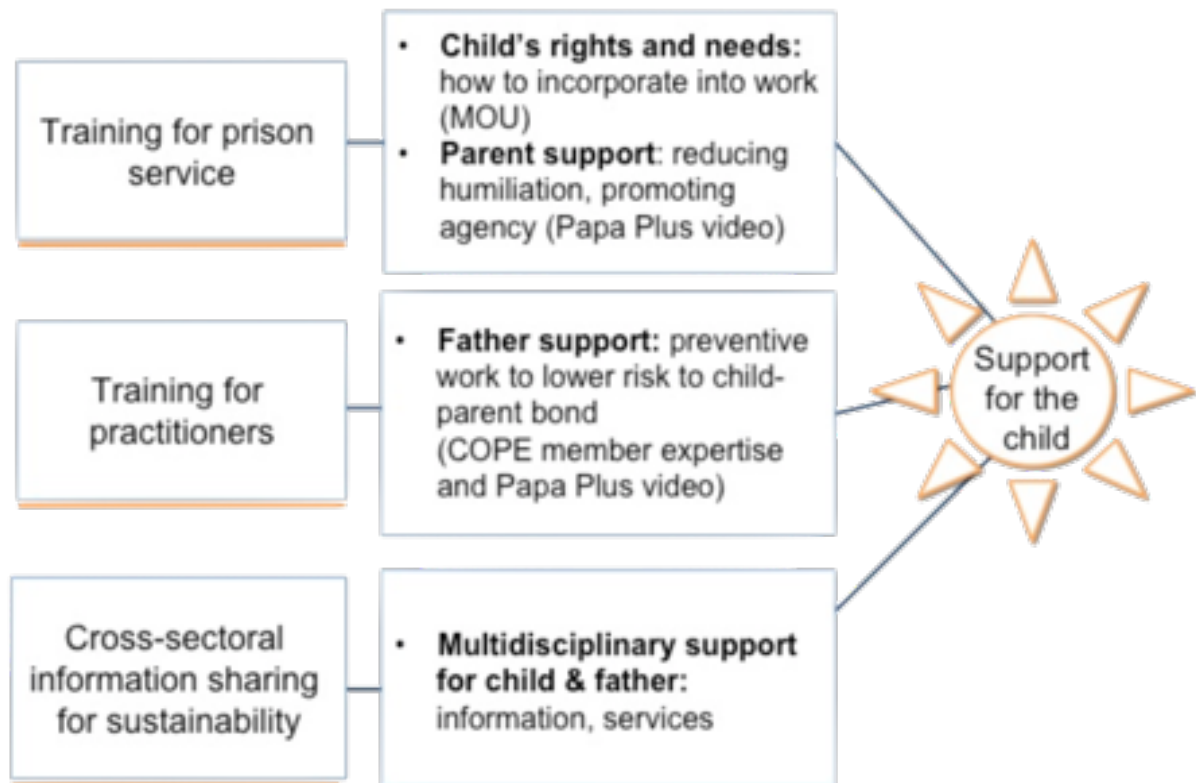
Dynamic security—the idea that promoting family contact calms the prison atmosphere—is a central tenet of Papa Plus, which is a good example of the kind of reciprocal relationships that can emerge when prison administrations and staff work with prisoners to support them as parents.

The Papa Plus video, below, developed by COPE, is an indispensable education and training tool central to this toolkit.

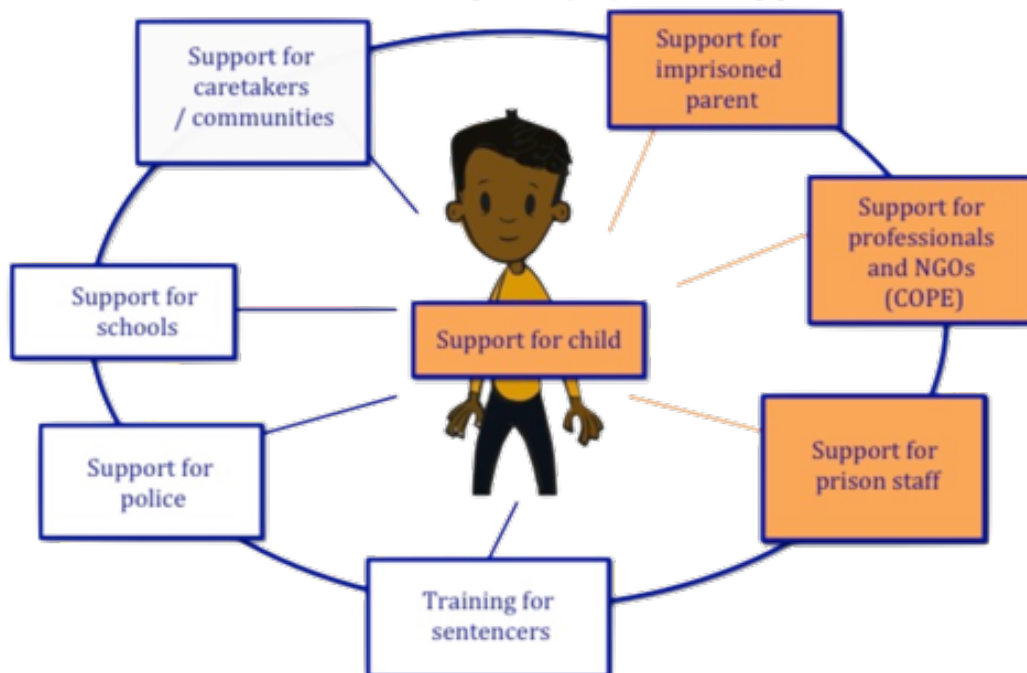


<https://childrenofprisoners.eu/videos/papa-plus/>

Papa Plus Parent Support Model



Papa Plus in COPE's multidisciplinary systems approach



1. Child-Parent Relationship

Article 11

Significant events in a child's life – such as birthdays, first day of school or hospitalisation – should be considered when granting prison leave to imprisoned parents.

Something to consider

- ✓ While opportunities for leave are most often available at the end of a sentence to facilitate reintegration, is it possible that home leave for parents be considered at an earlier stage of incarceration to help preserve the parent-child bond?

Practical suggestions

- ✓ Allow for temporary permissions and leaves of absence to enable a parent to be present at important moments in their child's life.
- ✓ Where temporary leave is not available consider offering special prison visits where the families can celebrate significant events in the child's life.

Examples of good practice in Europe

- ✓ Georgia's prison administration allows both remand and sentenced inmates to take temporary leave from the prison grounds in the case of the death of a close relative, a life-threatening illness or "for the performance of certain social activities."
- ✓ Finland provides outdoor visiting areas at some prisons that allow for the possibility of organising family days and special events for families.

Article 12

Prior to, or on admission, individuals with caregiving responsibilities for children shall be enabled to make arrangements for those children, taking into account the best interests of the child.

Something to consider

- ✓ It is in the interest of children to be cared for by the most appropriate person in their parent's absence, and in the interest of an imprisoned parent to have autonomy in their role as a parent. The process of detention should cause as little disruption as possible to the life of their child.

Practical suggestions

- ✓ Ensure that following an arrest a parent is given the means to make arrangements for their children (e.g. over the telephone or in person).
- ✓ When circumstance permits, allow parents to return home in order to make arrangements for their children before serving their prison sentence.

Examples of good practice in Europe

- ✓ In Norway, prison sentences are not always served immediately, and the person is allowed to prepare his or her personal affairs prior to detention, including the arrangement of appropriate childcare.
- ✓ Mothers who receive a prison sentence in the Netherlands can be given time before beginning their sentence to make childcare arrangements.
- ✓ In Slovenia, if both parents are sentenced to prison, it is possible for them to alternate serving their sentences to provide continuity for children.

Article 27

Arrangements should be made to facilitate an imprisoned parent, who is invested in doing so, to participate effectively in the parenting of their children, including communicating with school, health and welfare services and taking decisions in this respect, except in cases where it is not in the child's best interests.

Something to consider

- ✓ It is in the best interest of both the child and their parent for an imprisoned parent to take an active role in making decisions concerning their child; a prisoner's ability to exercise their parental responsibility is an important factor in reducing recidivism.
- ✓ Reminding and encouraging prisoners to take an active role in the educational, health and welfare decisions of their child not only fosters a stronger child-parent bond, but it also helps to preserve imprisoned parent's sense of purpose and responsibility.

Practical suggestions

- ✓ Parental responsibility programmes should become commonplace within prisons, and should expand to the community, through partnerships with other civic organisations such as schools and social services.
- ✓ Educators, healthcare professionals and social workers who work with a child with an imprisoned parent should seek out the counsel of both parents when it is in the child's best interests.
- ✓ Prisons should make telephones or video calling available to parents, so that they may communicate with professionals to make decisions about their child.
- ✓ Counselling for parents in prison should remind them that they are still responsible for their children.
- ✓ Explore the possibility of parental leave permits so that detainees can attend meetings about their children with schools.

Examples of good practice in Europe

- ✓ In Scotland, parents have been able to attend meetings with the school and to speak to teachers on the telephone and prisoners regularly attend the children's panel, which makes well-being decisions about children.
- ✓ In Italy, prisoners can sometimes communicate with staff at their children's school via Skype.
- ✓ France's Relais Enfants Parents organises craft workshops, where imprisoned parents make gifts for their children, which reinforces the feeling of parental responsibility and offers a forum for prisoners to talk about and reflect on their responsibility.
- ✓ A French project entitled "Aide aux devoirs" (help with homework) at Chateaudun prison, where imprisoned fathers were able to see their children's report cards, with the aim of supporting the parenting role in a child's education. The fathers worked on homework with their children. The project drew on a project run by Families Outside (Scotland).
- ✓ Bulgaria's Plovdiv prison implements a programme called "Active/Positive Paternity" for fathers of children up to eighteen years old with the intention to include fathers in child care and to "[debunk] the myths regarding the role of the father in the upbringing of children."
- ✓ Turkey has implemented a "Family Training Programme," developed by the Ministry of National Education and administered to child psychologists and social workers alike, which works with parents of children under eighteen to raise awareness of and sensitivity to children's physical and psychological development.

Article 28

Child-parent activities should include extended prison visits for special occasions (Mother's Day, Father's Day, end of year holidays, etc.) and other visits to further the child-parent relationship, in addition to regular visits. Consideration on such occasions should be given to prison and other staff in visiting areas being dressed less formally, in an effort to normalise the atmosphere.

Something to consider

- ✓ Positive festive experiences provide both the opportunity for prisons to help foster meaningful child parent contact, and for the rigid tone of the prison atmosphere to be softened.
- ✓ Events like these, and measures such as wearing casual clothes, normalise the prison atmosphere and soften the protocols that define the prison atmosphere and calcify divisions between staff, prisoners, parents and children.

Practical suggestions

- ✓ Plan events on special occasions and holidays which the child can recall in the future.
- ✓ Reach out to NGOs with experience hosting holiday parties or visits to help organise these events.
- ✓ During special events, staff may dress up differently (a sweatshirt or no hat and tie or wearing civilian clothing), distribute presents, sing songs, etc., to create as normal an atmosphere as possible so that the child is reassured that the parent is treated well.
- ✓ Hold the events in a large open space conducive to play or even outdoors.

Examples of good practice in Europe

- ✓ The 2014 Italian Memorandum of Understanding sets guidelines that "allow the parent, during detention, to be present at important moments of their child's life, especially if they are underage, such as birthdays, first day of school, recitals, exhibitions, degree, festivities."
- ✓ Relais Enfants Parents offers special visits for children on mother's day, father's day and Christmas in French prisons.
- ✓ Germany's Schleswig-Holstein prison holds special events for prisoners and their children such as: Christmas baking in the prison bakery, puppet theatre, magic shows, etc.

Article 32

With a view to protecting children from the frequently harsh prison environment, preparing them for their parent's return, and having their parents present at significant events in their lives, home leave for prisoners should be granted and facilitated, where possible. This is especially important during the period before their release, providing more opportunities for them to prepare for resuming fully their parental role and its responsibilities on release.

Practical suggestions

- ✓ Consider issuing parental leave before a prisoner is to be released, especially when the parent has the opportunity to participate in a significant event in the child's life.
- ✓ Partner with NGOs and/or social services to which can provide information and social support for parents and children during the reintegration process.

Examples of good practice in Europe

- ✓ In Scotland, public social partnerships have been formed with NGOs like Families Outside to help reintegrate parents into their families once they are released.
- ✓ Prior to release, families of individuals detained in a Belgian prison have access to family counselling and family psychotherapy in preparation for reentry.

Article 41

In order to promote positive parenting, consideration shall be given in sentence planning to include programmes and other interventions that support and develop a positive child-parent relationship. Specific support and learning objectives include preserving, and exercising as far as possible, their parental role during imprisonment, minimising the impact of imprisonment on their children, developing and strengthening constructive child-parent relationships, and preparing them and their children for family life after release.

Something to consider

- ✓ Sentencing decisions and the planning that follow should take into consideration and ultimately treat imprisoned parents as active participants in a relationship that has profound bearing on the well-being of their children, and promote positive parenting with that in mind.
- ✓ The child's best interests are served when their parent exercises their parental responsibility to the best of their ability, which can be significantly helped by family counselling programs and open communication between parents and prison staff.

Practical suggestions

- ✓ If a parent must be sentenced, consider the use of open prisons, which offer better opportunities for communication and contact with children.
- ✓ Consider a prisoner's parental role when determining eligibility for home leave.
- ✓ Take advantage of technology like electronic monitoring for parents.
- ✓ During the release and reintegration process, consider proximity to children when assigning a parent to a halfway home.
- ✓ Offer prisoners home leave when feasible and thus reduce the need for children to physically visit prisons.

Article 42

In order to enhance child-parent relationships, prison authorities shall utilise options such as home leave, open prisons, halfway houses, electronic monitoring and community-based programmes and services to the maximum possible extent, to ease transition from prison to liberty, to reduce stigma, to re-establish contact with families at the earliest possible stage and to minimise the impact of a parent's imprisonment on children.

Practical suggestions

- ✓ Offer parenting courses to allow parents to explore their role as a parent and develop strategies for the future. Can be a multiagency or NGO partner programme.
- ✓ Multiagency and NGO partners can also be enlisted to create workshops informing prisoners about their rights as parents.
- ✓ Counselling for parents in prison should reinforce the idea that they are still responsible for their children and encourage prisoners to actively seek to make decisions as a parent about their children's lives.
- ✓ Offer craft workshops in which imprisoned parents create objects for their children, such as those run by Relais Enfants Parents associations (France, Belgium).

Examples of good practice in Europe

- ✓ In Berlin, imprisoned mothers in open prisons can go home every day to take care of the children. The scheme allows her to spend sixteen hours a day at home taking care of family and household; she leaves prison in the early morning, goes home, wakes up the children, prepares breakfast and takes school-aged children to school, then returns home and takes care of the other children and household.
- ✓ In Norway, prisoners have access to regular home leave once they have served one third of their sentence.
France offers Unités de Vie Familiale where the families of prisoners can visit with an imprisoned parent for up to three days at a private apartment facility at certain prisons.

Article 43

For the same purpose, decisions regarding early release shall take into account prisoners' caregiving responsibilities, as well as their specific family reintegration needs.

Practical suggestions

- ✓ Prioritise granting home leave or additional visits to prisoners who are about to be released so that they can begin to build a strong relationship with their children as they reintegrate.

Examples of good practice in Europe

- ✓ Swedish prisons offer a programme called “study circles” where prisoners, in groups facilitated by prison staff and former prisoners, can talk together about their experiences as a parent. This opportunity for reflection resulted in increased engagement by imprisoned parents with their children, i.e., more visits, telephone calls, requests for home leave by participants.
- ✓ In Spain, the NGO Niños sin Barreras offers Legal workshops covering the law as it relates to the parenting function and the rights of the child, including input from jurists.
- ✓ Relais Enfants Parents and the Italian association Bambinisenzasbarre run support groups for imprisoned mothers and fathers. These information groups are staffed by psychologists, judges, social workers and representatives of institutions to raise awareness on the different aspects of the child-parent relationship and parental roles. The groups also help reinforce parenting skills.
- ✓ Germany’s Saxony prisons staff a “family member coordinator”; North Rhine-Westphalia prison and social education workers, who function as liaisons and family counselors.

Case Studies: Dynamic Security through Parenting Programmes

- ✓ Comprehensive program of training on parenting issues addressed to mothers in prison (Catalonia).
- ✓ Program for male inmates focused on parenting skills, emotional resiliency and availability (Ninos sin Barreras, Catalonia).
- ✓ “Prisoner as a Parent” programme, developed by prison staff (Croatia).
- ✓ “Ties Unbroken: Attachment Parenting in prison (NGO Parents in Action Roda, Croatia).
- ✓ “Let’s Talk about Children,” to help imprisoned parent during and after prison, main focus interests of the children (Finland).
- ✓ Parenting programme led by Scottish Prison Service, focus on own experience of being a child, development of life skills, etc. (Scotland).
- ✓ Special training programmes on parenting, led by an external family counselor (Germany)
- ✓ At the end of the programme the prisoners organise a family visit including games and activities for their children (Germany)
- ✓ Training by external family counsellor and staff with a family visit at the end (Romania)
- ✓ “Dad in Prison” – four-week-long programme, including meetings with their families) (Norway)
- ✓ “VINN” female offenders (mother-child relationship) (Norway)
- ✓ Parental group programme (study material developed by the NGO Buff, Sweden).
- ✓ In more open conditions - the prisoner’s family can also participate in some courses (the prisoner and their family are able to stay in a house on their own for a week or two) (Sweden).

2. Family-Prison Relationship

Article 33

To ensure child protection and well-being, every effort shall be made to enhance mutual respect and tolerance and prevent potentially harmful behaviour between prisoners, their children and families, prison staff or other persons working in or visiting the prison. Good order, safety and security, in particular dynamic security, underpin all efforts to maintain a friendly and positive atmosphere in prison.

Something to consider

- ✓ Staff often acknowledge that children humanise the prison environment and thus contribute to greater mutual respect of rights and well-being within the prison community.
- ✓ Some prison authorities take the view that optimising visits and developing relationships with the families contributes to dynamic security, good order, improved safety, and prisoner engagement in positive activities.

Practical suggestions

- ✓ During staff training, emphasise that children do not pose a threat to security but rather they can have a positive impact on the prison environment. Imprisoned parents who have regular contact with their children have been shown to have fewer behaviour issues, and studies have shown that the prison atmosphere is calmer after a visit.
- ✓ Encourage and reward positive respectful interactions between prison staff and detainees, especially during visits where children are present. This will help reduce tension between all parties involved: staff, prisoners and children.
- ✓ Use training as an opportunity to raise awareness about the stereotypes and biases staff bring with them; allow prison officers opportunities to explore their own attitudes and mindset.
- ✓ Encourage the prison staff to be positive role models for prisoners.

Examples of good practice in Europe

- ✓ Germany, Schleswig-Holstein: The Ministry of Justice provides staff training focused on family relations. Among the key aspect is the importance of supporting the inmates to improve close links to their children.

Article 46

Staff who come into contact with children and their imprisoned parents shall respect their rights and dignity. Prison administrations should select, appoint and resource designated “children’s and/or family officers” whose role should include support for children and their imprisoned parents, facilitate visits in child-friendly settings, provide guidance and information, in particular to children newly confronted with the prison environment, and liaise with relevant agencies, professionals and associations on matters related to children and their imprisoned parents.

Something to consider

- ✓ Through sensitivity training and the implementation of child-friendly policies, prisons can help mitigate the traumatising effects that children face in the context of the tense, rigid, often fearful environment of the prison.
- ✓ The presence of responsible, well-trained staff members in accompanying and counselling children throughout the visiting process, especially when staff members can share information in a child-friendly manner, can act as an important buffer for children visiting prisons.

Practical suggestions

- ✓ Prisons provide appropriate training about the needs of, the rights of, and sensitivity towards children to designate staff members that supervise prison visits, conduct searches and manage visitor reception.
- ✓ Suggest that prison management appoint trained and specialised prison officers whose role is to support children and their imprisoned parents during each visit; the officers chosen to participate in the training should be decided by the prison administration heads.

3. Prison-Stakeholders Relationship

Article 44

In order to promote healthy child development and to help former prisoners re-integrate with their children and families, support and care shall be provided by prison, probation or other agencies specialising in assisting prisoners, as appropriate. Prison authorities, in co-operation with probation and/or social welfare services, local community groups and civil society organisations, shall design and implement pre- and post-release reintegration programmes which take into account the specific needs of prisoners resuming their parental role in the community.

Something to consider

- ✓ Children need parents to exercise their parental role in the community as soon as they reasonably can and it is often helpful if parents can re-develop familiarity with this role prior to being released.
- ✓ Prison services, probation agencies and social services provide an important outlet through which prisoners in the resettlement process can receive parental guidance and important familial counselling that help imprisoned parents to gain insight into the issues affecting their child and their parenting.

Practical suggestions

- ✓ Seek out partnerships with NGOs and social services to create programmes and support groups inside prison that encourage good parenting skills and focus on the unique challenges of parenting from prison.
- ✓ Provide information about support offered by social services or NGOs to parents and their families, even if they are reintegrating after a short sentence.
- ✓ Encourage prisoners to stay involved in the counselling and group parenting programmes that they participated in during prison as they are released and reintegrated.

Examples of good practice in Europe

- ✓ Catalonia: The Mothers Unit is a comprehensive training programme on parenting issues addressed to mothers in prison. There is also the possibility for mothers from the Mothers Unit (inside prison) to attend parenting courses in a Dependent Unit for mothers with children located outside prison. In addition, there are residential spaces offering parenting courses that can be attended by female prisoners during their permits. Courses are offered on subjects that relate to parenting, such as sexual education, health and maternity.
- ✓ The Croatian “Prisoner as a parent programme” (PaP) is carried out by specially trained treatment and security staff. The programme aims to enhance parental competence of prisoners who, in the supportive environment of workshops through experiential and group work, share their parenting experiences as well as learn and acquire new skills; reinforce responsibility for their own parenting processes, for the quality of the relationship with the child and for maintaining family ties.
- ✓ Network after ended sentence (NES) Oslo, Norway has a network of 160 volunteers who follow up regularly with 280 participants, all of whom share the fact that they are seeking a new social network without crime or substances. Between the 280 participants, they have a total of over 400 children. One of the most important tasks of this programme is to assist participants in their role as a father or a mother, and provide them with positive experiences that they can build on.

Article 49

The relevant national authorities should adopt a multi-agency and cross-sectoral approach in order to effectively promote, support and protect the rights of children with imprisoned parents, including their best interests. This involves cooperation with probation services, local communities, schools, health and child welfare services, the police, the children's ombudsperson or other officials with responsibility for protecting children's rights, as well as other relevant agencies, including civil society organisations offering support to children and their families.

Key Resource

In 2014, the Italian organisation and COPE member Bambinisenzasbarre developed a [Memorandum of Understanding](#) between the Italian Ministry of Justice and the National Ombudsman for Childhood and Adolescence. The Memorandum is a great example of the multi-sectoral collaboration possible between governmental organisations, NGOs and prison administrations.

Something to consider

- ✓ In order for each child to receive the most appropriate support, all agencies need to be aware of the potential challenges that those children face.
- ✓ Given the number of actors who affect the child in the criminal justice system through police, courts and prisons; and the child welfare, health and education services and relevant NGOs, a holistic, multi-agency and multi-disciplinary approach is required.

Examples of good practice in Europe

- ✓ In Scotland, for example, a wide variety of agencies deciding on child protection and offending issues, as well as teachers and social workers, can attend training sessions in the prison to understand both the issues and the reality of visiting for children. These sessions are organised by a national NGO.
- ✓ The COPE network is looking to promote the establishment of cross-sectoral, multidisciplinary support systems across Europe and to reach towards those children affected by a parent's imprisonment who are not in contact with the parent or not receiving support [Noah: bambini item was repetitive with box on previous page]



4. Children Living in Prison

Article 34

In order to ensure the right of a child to the highest attainable standard of health, appropriate pre-natal and post-natal health care, support and information shall be provided for imprisoned mothers. Pregnant women shall be allowed to give birth in a hospital outside prison. Instruments of restraint shall never be used on women during labour, during birth and immediately after birth. Arrangements and facilities for pre-natal and post-natal care in prison shall respect, as far as practicable, cultural diversity.

Something to consider

- ✓ The focus in such cases should be placed on the utmost humane treatment of mother and child in the pre-natal phase, during labour and in the post-natal phase, to the same standards that mothers and infants are privy to in the outside community.

Practical suggestions

- ✓ Allow for ante-natal and post-natal care and treatment *equivalent to that available in the outside community.*
- ✓ When infants and young children are held in custodial settings, their treatment should be supervised by specialists in social work and child development.
- ✓ Prisons authorities should provide the nutritional requirements for the ante-natal period to a pregnant prisoner.
- ✓ Provide access to hospitals outside prison where pregnant mothers can give birth.
- ✓ Prison regulations or rules should be reviewed and revised to include an explicit prohibition of restraints on women who are in labour, who are giving birth and who have just given birth.
- ✓ Make it possible for obstetricians, gynaecologists or other relevant specialists to visit a pregnant prisoner for ante-natal and post-natal care.
- ✓ Prison rules and practices should never discourage or prevent mothers from breastfeeding their babies.

Examples of good practice in Europe

- ✓ In its tenth General Report, the (European) Committee for the Prevention of Torture (CPT) made general recommendations on ante- and post-natal care of women in prison: “Every effort should be made to meet the specific dietary needs of pregnant women prisoners, who should be offered a high protein diet, rich in fresh fruit and vegetables.”
- ✓ In the Netherlands, in the 1970s, some Roma women living with their children in prison breastfed until the child was one and a half years old. Authorities have since ruled that a nine-month period should be sufficient. This also became the rule for the maximum stay of a child in a closed prison in the Netherlands.

Article 35

A child born to an imprisoned mother shall be registered and issued with a birth certificate without delay, free of charge and in line with applicable national and international standards. The birth certificate shall not mention that the child was born in prison.

Something to consider

- ✓ Following UNCRC Articles 7 and 8, and provisions in the Nelson Mandela Rules, children have a right to an official name and forms of identity that do not indicate their mother's imprisonment. This ensures that children born to mothers in prison are not stigmatised from the start by a birth certificate which indicates their mother's imprisonment.

Practical suggestions

- ✓ Review the formatting of birth certificates issued in prisons to ensure that there is no indication that the certificate was issued inside a prison.
- ✓ Ensure that there are no barriers (financial or procedural) that an individual born in prison must overcome to receive a birth certificate.

Article 36

Infants may stay in prison with a parent only when it is in the best interests of the infant concerned and in accordance with national law. Relevant decisions to allow infants to stay with their parent in prison shall be made on a case-by-case basis. Infants in prison with a parent shall not be treated as prisoners and shall have the same rights and, as far as possible, the same freedoms and opportunities as all children.

Something to consider

- ✓ While opinions diverge on the appropriateness of allowing children to stay with a parent in prison, it is in an infant's best interests to remain with their mothers unless there are serious reasons for separating them.
- ✓ The child's emotional and physical wellbeing, his or her development of strong early attachment to their mother, and the psychological and somatic bonds of breastfeeding are fundamentally important considerations in assessing the best interests of each child. A cross-sectoral support network is key for both the infant and their mother.

Practical suggestions

- ✓ Ensure that the decisions about allowing a child to stay with an imprisoned mother are made on a case-by-case basis. There should be thorough consideration for each individual child if it is best for him/her to stay in prison;¹
- ✓ Conduct a review of the number of and ages of children cohabitating to ensure that only infants are living in prison with their mother and to inform decisions about providing adequate facilities.

Examples of good practice in Europe

- ✓ In Denmark, where it is seen as a right of prisoners (both male and female) to have their child live with them in prison, and where in one of the open prisons, children may stay up to the age of seven, social welfare authorities make the decision about where the child will live according to their best interests.
- ✓ Norway allows no infants to live in prison on the basis that it is not in their best interests. Instead mothers have the option to serve part on their sentence inside of "mother and child houses" operated by third parties outside of the prison.

Article 37

Arrangements and facilities for the care of infants who are in prison with a parent, including living and sleeping accommodation, shall be child-friendly and shall:

- *Ensure that the best interests and safety of infants are a primary consideration, as are their rights, including those regarding development, play, non-discrimination and the right to be heard;*
- *Safeguard the child's welfare and promote their healthy development, including provision of ongoing health-care services, and arranging for appropriate specialists to monitor their development in collaboration with community health services;*
- *Ensure that infants are able to freely access open-air areas in the prison, and can access the outside world with appropriate accompaniment and attend nursery schools;*
- *Promote attachment between a child and their parent, allowing the child-parent relationship to develop as normally as possible, enabling parents to exercise appropriate parental responsibility for their child and providing maximum opportunities for imprisoned parents to spend time with their children;*
- *Support imprisoned parents living with their infants and facilitate the development of their parental competency, ensuring that they are provided with opportunities to look after their children, cook meals for them, get them ready for nursery school and spend time playing with them, both inside the prison and in open-air areas;*
- *As far as possible, ensure that infants have access to a similar level of services and support to that which is available in the community, and that the environment provided for such children's upbringing shall be as close as possible to that of children outside prison;*
- *Ensure that contact with the parent, siblings and other family members living outside the prison facility is enabled, except if it is not in the infant's best interests.*

Something to consider

- ✓ The primary aim should be to produce a child-centred environment, free from the trappings of incarceration, that affords children equality of health, sense of self and access to the same opportunities afforded to their peers.
- ✓ Emphasis should be given especially to efforts not to stigmatise children who reside with a mother in prison, and above all, children staying with their mothers in prison should never be treated as prisoners themselves.

Practical suggestions

- ✓ Ensure that the child lives in a safe, child friendly facility within the prison. Ideally this environment would use an open scheme;¹
- ✓ Provide a private facility for mothers and children, with the mother's space in the cell separate from that of the child and a communal setting in a variety of colors.
- ✓ Ensure that cohabitating children can regularly attend day-care centres and preschool establishments;
- ✓ The child's psychomotor, cognitive and linguistic development requires sensory-stimulating features incorporated into the child's surroundings, with conditions promoting maximum freedom to move about and an open door policy within the nursery area when possible;
- ✓ Ensure that the child has direct access to natural light.
- ✓ Ensure that the infant can visit paediatricians, appropriate medical specialists, and other medical professionals, so that they are afforded the same standard of care as children outside of prison environment;
- ✓ Partner with NGOs or social services that can accompany babies on excursions to the outside world to acclimate them to the environment or to nurseries and day care facilities;
- ✓ Make outdoor areas, like gardens, available for mothers and their children to play and spend time in;
- ✓ To the extent that is feasible, offer facilities or opportunities for parents to look after their children, to cook meals for them, to get them ready for nursery school, and to spend time playing with them, both inside the prison and in open-air areas;
- ✓ The psychological/emotional needs of such children should be closely monitored to assess any adverse effects of living in a closed institution and measures taken to reduce the negative psychological impact of institutionalisation, based on individual needs;¹
- ✓ Offer visiting opportunities to the infant's father and other members of the family outside prison to spend time exclusively with the infant;¹

Examples of good practice in Europe

- ✓ In some Croatian and Greek mother-baby units, children staying in the prison go out on excursions or to a community nursery accompanied by volunteers from local NGOs.
- ✓ Spanish prisons house mothers with children in "external mother units" that allow mothers to exercise the parental role, allow children to attend schools in their community, and outside of prisons where mothers can exercise their parental roles in a way that better promotes the child's normal development.

Article 38

Decisions as to when an infant is to be separated from their imprisoned parent shall be based on individual assessment and the best interests of the child within the scope of the applicable national law.

Something to consider

- ✓ It is vital that infants transitioning to life outside the prison are supported to the greatest extent possible by the State or other social service agencies, including the provision of appropriate alternative care for the child.

Practical suggestions

- ✓ Child welfare agencies should have primary responsibility for assessing the advantages and disadvantages of removing a child from prison. The assessment should be undertaken in coordination with the health care specialist who has been responsible for the health care of the child in prison, the prison social worker and psychologist, who has been involved in the child's developmental care;
- ✓ Issues to take into account should include: the conditions in prison; the quality of care children receive in prison and what quality of care they can expect to receive outside prison; and the remaining length of sentence of the mother. The child, if capable of forming his or her own views, the mother and other family members/relatives outside prison should be consulted during the decision-making process;
- ✓ Preparation for separation needs to begin from the onset of the prison sentence, when feasible. When not feasible, at least six months prior to separation.
- ✓ Apply the statutory suggested limit for cohabitation with flexibility so that children are not separated from their parents prematurely.
- ✓ The process should focus on the individual child; the decision must be made on a case by case basis;
- ✓ Prior to separation, provide several family visits where the child can be introduced to the entire family and continue to build relationships that will ease the child's integration into the outside world.

Article 39

The transition of the infant to life outside prison shall be undertaken with sensitivity, only when suitable alternative care arrangements for the child have been identified and, in the case of foreign-national prisoners, in consultation with consular officials, where appropriate.

Something to consider

- ✓ Case-by-case focus on the individual is vital to meet the needs of children in the process of moving out of a mother's care within the prison to a longer-term, better adjusted living situation.
- ✓ Attention to context, environment, and the child's ability to make such an adjustment is of the utmost importance, as is due consideration as to whether the child is ready to transition out of the prison environment and the proximity of the mother.

Practical suggestions

- ✓ The decision to remove a child from prison should only be undertaken when satisfactory alternative care arrangements have been identified.
- ✓ Partner with NGOs and social services that can offer information and social support to families as the child is reintegrated into their family (see article 32).
- ✓ During the transition, provide the child with overnight visits to his or her family outside of prison where the child can be introduced to the entire family and continue to build relationships that will ease the child's integration into the outside world.

Article 40

After infants are separated from their parent in prison and they are placed with family or relatives or in other alternative care, they shall be given the maximum opportunity possible and appropriate facilities to meet with their imprisoned parent, except when it is not in their best interest.

Practical suggestions

- ✓ Information should be provided to the mother and the child about the alternative care arrangements and how the mother and child will be able to keep in contact with each other following their separation.
- ✓ Once a child has been removed from prison and placed with other family members, relatives or an institution for children, prison authorities and those responsible for the child's continued upbringing should work in cooperation to ensure that the child can visit his/her mother as frequently as possible and that the mother is allowed frequent home leave to visit her child, unless exceptional security considerations exist.
- ✓ Formerly cohabitating children are entitled to the same visitation and communication rights as any other child with an imprisoned parent.

Examples of good practice in Europe

- ✓ The Danish Prison and Probation Service trains specially appointed prison officers to become "child officers" in every prison. They are trained to be aware of the family relations of the prisoners, of the importance of having appropriate visiting facilities, and to provide information to the family. The "child officers" are trained to make special arrangements for the children, supporting the possibilities for the prisoners to maintain good and evolving relations with the children. The "child officer" provides colleagues with general knowledge of children of prisoners. The "child officers" are trained to cooperate with NGOs such as the Red Cross and SAVN, which are supporting the issues surrounding children of prisoners.
- ✓ Ireland: Family Liaison Officers are selected and trained to deliver a bespoke parenting programme both within the prison and also within the community.
- ✓ Finland: Family Liaison Officers in Finland speak with prisoners about their children, partnership and support prisoners to preserve healthy family relations. They also prepare family meetings in order to find out about a visitor's / family member's background before the meeting (safety matters) together with the official responsible for the safety of the prison.
- ✓ Finland's "Let's Talk about Children" program works with prison social workers to discuss the role of prison staff in the treatment of affected children.
- ✓ Every Swedish prison has a trained "children's ombudsman" tasked with the responsibility to advocate for the best interest of children with imprisoned parents.



Resources



1. Funding

Article 6

National authorities shall endeavour to provide sufficient resources to State agencies and civil society organisations to support children with imprisoned parents and their families to enable them to deal effectively with their particular situation and specific needs, including offering logistic and financial support, where necessary, in order to maintain contact.

Article 53

Funding shall be made available to support research on children with imprisoned parents in order to contribute to policy development and to promote best practice in this area.

Something to consider

- ✓ The reciprocal relationship between prison services, social services, and government should be considered fundamental to the well-being of children with imprisoned parents. Funding programs that safeguard children and provide for an environment that allows children to thrive as individuals in their own right, as opposed to as wards of prisoners, should be a commonsense priority for modern states concerned with human rights and the advancement of society.

Examples of good practice in Europe

- ✓ Policymakers, legislators and ministries should work together to develop policies and measures to provide financial support research on children with imprisoned parents;
- ✓ Research should be funded in all disciplines (including psychology, law, sociology, early childhood studies etc.) that are identified as important require adequate State funding.

2. Training

Article 7

Appropriate training on child-related policies, practices and procedures shall be provided for all staff in contact with children and their imprisoned parents.

Things to consider

- ✓ All prison staff who interact directly with the children of prisoners should receive appropriate training on child-related policies, practices and procedures.

Practical suggestions

- ✓ Offer prison staff training sessions on children's rights and needs.
- ✓ If child-friendly training measures do not exist or whose standards have depreciated, reach out to NGOs, social services, or the children's ombudsperson to fortify or craft new policy.
- ✓ Appoint trained and specialised prison officers whose role it is to support children and their imprisoned parents during each visit.
- ✓ Review the prison's existing security procedures for children visiting their parents in order to make them child-sensitive.

Examples of good practice in Europe

- ✓ Greece's Ministry of Justice, Transparency & Human Rights has organised training for prison staff with the aim to educate staff on the importance of maintaining family ties, and more specifically: (a) to support the smooth development of children; (b) to provide opportunities for practicing the parental role from distance; (c) to assist the reintegration of the prisoners and the role they can have in the process.

Article 47

Staff who come into contact with children and their imprisoned parents shall receive training in areas including how to respect children's needs and rights, the impact of imprisonment and the prison setting on children and the parental role, how to support imprisoned parents and their children and better understand the specific problems they face, how to make visits child-friendly and to search children in a child-friendly manner.

Something to consider

- ✓ Staff members who are attuned both to the sensibilities of children and to the potentially harmful impacts of being searched or otherwise alienated can help to soften the impact of rigid prison protocols and regulations in an intimidating environment.
- ✓ Trained staff members can also serve as a mediating buffer in familial situations that have the potential to be emotionally traumatising.

Practical suggestions

- ✓ Prison staff training should raise awareness about: the existence of this group of children; the numbers of children affected by parental imprisonment; children's experiences throughout the process from arrest to release; and how their attitude and approach in dealing with children will have an impact on the child.
- ✓ Interactive learning, where prison staff experience through roleplay or otherwise what a child with a parent in prison experiences, can change their perspective.
- ✓ Ensure that the prison staff understands the provisions of the UNCRC and Council of Europe Recommendation, so that all prison staff members understand that positive treatment of children is mandatory and not a "soft option."
- ✓ Staff need to learn: child sensitive methods of searching; making visits child-friendly; the importance to the child's well-being and development of supporting parents to exercise their parental role while in prison and in preparation for release.

Examples of good practice in Europe

- ✓ Many States (e.g. England and Wales, Italy, Norway, Sweden, among others) offer training on the impact of imprisonment on children and the needs of imprisoned parents as part of their initial training for prison officers.
- ✓ Latvia: The State Inspectorate for Protection of Children's Rights in collaboration with the Local Governments Training Centre of Latvia trains Latvian Prison Administration staff on a regular basis on children's rights.
- ✓ The Children's Ombudsperson of Sweden's Prison and Probation Service (PPS) is specifically responsible for any issues concerning children with imprisoned parents, and all staff receive an introductory children's perspective training, which includes issues about family relations, especially focused on the needs of the children.

Article 48

In order to ensure efficiency and quality of the support, protection and care provided to children and their imprisoned parents, staff training programmes shall be evidence-based, reflect current national law and practices and international and regional human rights law and standards relating to children, and shall be revised regularly.

Practical suggestions

- ✓ Ensure that the staff training covers the provisions of the UNCRC, the Council of Europe recommendation, and other contemporary national, European, or international laws.
- ✓ The content of any training programmes needs to keep pace with changes nationally, regionally and internationally.
- ✓ Review training procedures at regular intervals to ensure that they are in line with current legislation.
- ✓ Turn to the expertise of NGOs that have assisted prison administrations in developing relevant training programmes with research based findings.

Examples of good practice in Europe

- ✓ Because of the presence of a Children's Ombudsperson in the Swedish Prison and Probation Service (PPS), training programs for staff members in contact with children and for those responsible for leading Parental Groups receive regularly renewed training. Training programmes are developed in conjunction with the Swedish NGO Bluff (Children and Youth with Parent/Family member in Prison).

Responsibilities



1. Data Collection

Article 5

The prison administration shall endeavour to collect and collate relevant information at entry regarding the children of those detained.

Things to consider

- ✓ Not only does data collection allow prisons to play a role in accounting for the welfare of children in an immediate sense, but rigorous data collection at the prison level will lay the groundwork for the development of better practices and will contribute greatly to policy development.
- ✓ The number of children that have parents in a European prison is still unknown, and will remain an extrapolation without a standardized approach to data collection at the level of prisons.

Practical suggestions

- ✓ Collect data from prisoners upon entry and registration to ensure the child's safety (e.g., the number of children affected, their age, their primary caregiver).
- ✓ Incorporate data collection regarding imprisoned parents and their children into the roles and subsequent training of prison administrators.
- ✓ Explain to prison management how data collection can positively impact the services available to children.
- ✓ Design surveys that collect data in a way that is sensitive to both prisoners and their children.
- ✓ Normalise the collection of data at all stages, from the parent's arrest to resettlement, and in communal and cultural institutions (i.e. through standardising entry surveys in schools).
- ✓ Encourage local and national governments to require systematised data collection on the topic.

Article 13

At admission, the prison administration should record the number of children a prisoner has, their ages, and their current primary caregiver, and shall endeavour to keep this information up-to-date.

Something to consider

- ✓ Incorporating the collection of key statistics like the number of children a prisoner has, their ages, and their current primary caregiver into the admissions process can quickly and easily fill the statistical void about children with imprisoned parents and ensure that the rights of these children are protected and supported.

Practical suggestions

- ✓ Incorporate the collection of data about parental status into the collection of other vital statistics from a prisoner upon their admission.
- ✓ Review what data is already collected to identify what information needs to be collected.
- ✓ Design surveys, which would collect this data in a way that is effective and sensitive for both prisoners and their children.
- ✓ Update databases so that they are formatted to store: the number of children a prisoner has, their ages, and their current primary caregiver.
- ✓ Make the aggregated information about the total number and ages of children with imprisoned parents available to national and European policy makers.

Article 51

Multi-disciplinary and multi-agency expert groups, involving children with imprisoned parents, should be established in order to assess how children experience parental imprisonment, contact and relations with their imprisoned parent and to suggest improvements to current policies and practices.

Something to consider

- ✓ Research regarding children with imprisoned parents is rapidly developing and is carried out in different cultural contexts. Children in different countries may experience things differently.
- ✓ Multidisciplinary and multiagency expert groups, involving children with imprisoned parents, should be established in order to assess how children experience parental imprisonment, including the nature and scope of contact they have with their imprisoned parent. Such groups would be best placed to suggest improvements to current policies and practices.

Practical suggestions

- ✓ Define the multi-disciplinary/multi-agency group's purpose and concrete objectives.
- ✓ Make a list of all relevant stakeholders (agency representatives, NGOs, social workers, child welfare professionals, psychologists and criminologists) who should be invited to join the working group.
- ✓ List the expected results and cross-sectoral benefits of the working group and present them to the relevant stakeholders.
- ✓ Set up a clear plan detailing the frequency and duration of meetings; ensure each group member's role is defined and agreed upon.
- ✓ Foster ownership: once the group is established, suggest that each stakeholder take the lead on monitoring the implementation of one particular area of improvement to current policies and practices.

Examples of good practice in Europe

- ✓ The Scottish Prison Services (SPS) works closely and collaboratively with a wide range of statutory public services and voluntary ("third sector") organisations such as COPE member Families Outside to support the families of those in prison. The SPS recognises that the third sector has a particular contribution to make in certain public policy spheres and that organisations in this sector can often make inroads where the state and market cannot.
- ✓ For Fangers Parørende, the Organisation for Families and Friends of Prisoners (FFP), COPE's member in Norway, has an inter-disciplinary staff team. FFP is in close dialogue with the prison service and other authorities, and carries out awareness-raising, lobbying and educational work on the consequences of imprisonment on families.

Article 52

Statistical data from prison and child welfare sources should be systematically collected and published together with information on children with imprisoned parents and inventories of good practice.

Something to consider

- ✓ The development of extensive data resources stands not only to facilitate the design of new policy, but has immediate impacts on the approaches and practices at all levels of children's engagement with the prison system. As data and research becomes broader in scope, the network through which to share best practices should become deeper as well; children and families stand to benefit through the implementation of better training and more sensitive programming when information is shared and change is adopted organically.

Practical suggestions

- ✓ Meet with prison management to explain how data collection can positively impact the services available to children;
- ✓ Explain what kind of data should be systematically recorded, updated and made available to the public (e.g., the number of children affected, their age, their primary caregiver);
- ✓ Design surveys, which would collect data in a way that is effective and sensitive for both prisoners and their children;
- ✓ Advise that statistics should be made public and presented to national and international data collection bodies (e.g. Eurostat);
- ✓ Data about children with imprisoned parents should not be collected in a way that will allow for further stigmatisation or discrimination.

Examples of good practice in Europe

- ✓ On 6 December 2017, the German Institute for Human Rights (Deutsches Institut für Menschenrechte) published its second annual report on the human rights situation in Germany. The report is based on various sources of information and data, including a questionnaire on children separated from a parent in prison sent to all Justice Ministries in the 16 German federal states in April 2017. The answers to the questionnaire provided information on the relevant regulations and practices on a regional level.
- ✓ Children of Prisoners Europe released a 2018 Data Report, the first of its kind, which collected data from prison administrations and social services across Europe. It provides a crucial baseline understanding of how European prisons moderate the relationship between prisoners and their children, with an eye to improving the situation of both children and parents and ensuring their rights are respected.

2. Review

Article 50

The competent ministries, as well as children's ombudspersons or other national human rights bodies with responsibility for protecting children's rights, shall monitor, report regularly on and take any appropriate measures regarding the recognition and implementation of the rights and interests of children with imprisoned parents, including infant children living in prison with their parent.

Practical suggestions

- ✓ Monitor, regularly review, and report on the extent to which the rights of children with a parent in prison are protected, on the degree to which the best interests of children with imprisoned parents are being served, and on how the best interests of children with imprisoned parents are being determined.
- ✓ Law enforcement and partner organisations should ensure that they meet regularly to exchange information on individual cases, as well as to evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of joint operation.
- ✓ Child-friendly practices and policies, including international standards relating to children with imprisoned parents, must be regularly reviewed and evaluated.
- ✓ Opportunities to evaluate child friendly policies can be offered to children and families visiting a parent in prison by making consultations with prison staff or suggestion boxes in waiting rooms available.

Examples of good practice in Europe

- ✓ The Croatian Ombudsman's Office team regularly visits prisons to monitor visiting facilities for children and to meet with prison staff.
- ✓ Norway's Organisation for Families and Friends of Prisoners (FFP) organises workshops that allowed children of imprisoned parents to give input on their experience visiting their parents and to provide feedback as to how the experience could have been changed.

Bibliography

Children of Prisoners Europe. (2017). *Implementation guide: Italian memorandum of understanding on children with imprisoned parents*. Retrieved from https://childrenofprisoners.eu/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/2018.03.02_2016-MOU-English-edits-FINAL.pdf

Children of Prisoners Europe. (2018, August 28). *Papa Plus: Supporting the bond between children and imprisoned dads* [Video file]. Retrieved from <https://childrenofprisoners.eu/videos/papa-plus/>

Council of Europe. (2014, February 19). *Recommendation CM/Rec(2014)4 on European rules on electronic monitoring*. Retrieved from <https://pjp-eu.coe.int/documents/3983922/6970334/CMRec+%282014%29+4+on+electronic+monitoring.pdf/c9756d5b-be0e-4c72-b085-745c9199bef4>

Council of Europe. (2017, March 23). *Recommendation CM/Rec (2017) 3 on the European Rules on community sanctions and measures*. Retrieved from <https://rm.coe.int/168070c09b>

Council of Europe. (2018, February 21). *Explanatory Memorandum to Recommendation CM/Rec(2018)5 concerning children with imprisoned parents*. Retrieved from <https://rm.coe.int/explanatory-memorandum-to-cm-recommendation-2018-5-eng/16807b3439>

EuroPris Family Relations Expert Group. (2017, September). *Good practice collection family relations*. Retrieved from <https://www.europris.org/file/expert-group-family-relations-good-practice-collection/>

Muth, Bill, Kevin Warner, Kaura Gogia, and Ginger Walker (2016). A Critique of the prison reentry discourse: futurity, presence, and commonsense. *The Prison Journal* 96(3). 392-414.

Penal Reform International & Thailand Institute of Justice. (2013, October). *Guidance Document on the United Nations rules on the treatment of women prisoners and non-custodial measures for women offenders: The Bangkok rules*. London: Penal Reform International.

Philbrick, K., Ayre, E. & Lynn, H. (2014). *Children of Imprisoned Parents: European perspectives on good practices*. Paris, France: Children of Prisoners Europe.

Feletti V.J. et al. (1998). Relationship of Childhood Abuse and Household Dysfunction to Many of the Leading Causes of Death in Adults: The Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Study. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine* 14(4), 245-258.

United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime. (2015). *The United Nations standard minimum rules for the treatment of prisoners: The Nelson Mandela rules*. Retrieved from https://www.unodc.org/documents/justice-and-prison-reform/GA-RESOLUTION/E_ebook.pdf