

# **Maintaining family ties for children of prisoners: From Evidence to Practice**

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# Introduction

- About SCIE
- Our work on children of prisoners:
  - What we did
  - How we did it
  - What we found

# SCIE

- Better knowledge for better practice
- England, Wales and Northern Ireland
- Evidence-based practice
- FREE resources
- [www.scie.org.uk](http://www.scie.org.uk)

# What we did

- Funding
- Literature review
- Questionnaires to Local Safeguarding Children's Boards
- Practice survey/focus groups
- Prison visits

# Advisory group

- Action for Prisoners Families
- Youth Justice Board
- Thames Valley Partnership
- Ormiston Children and Families Trust
- Family Welfare Association
- Department for Schools, Children and Families
- Kids VIP
- Revolving Doors Agency
- Story Book Dads
- Institute of Criminology, University of Cambridge
- Prisoners families and friends
- West Midlands Family pathways project

# How we did it

- Evidence from the literature review
- Responses from questionnaires
- Focus groups:
  - Northern Ireland
  - Scotland
  - Norwich
  - Halton Borough
  - Banbury
  - Telford
  - Devon and Cornwall
  - Partners of Prisoners (POPS)

# The practice survey

- Strategy
- Funding
- Policies and procedures
- Partnerships
- Training
- Practice
- Links with prisons
- Outcomes
- Challenges and obstacles
- Lessons for practice

# What we found - Literature review

- Evidence not conclusive but definite correlations
- Considerable gaps in provision
- Poor info sharing
- Not all children of prisoners are children in need.
- We don't know exact numbers
- There is good practice
- Lack of awareness among social care and education professionals
- Interface issues

# What we found - questionnaire

- Most did not identify they had a role
- None knew about numbers locally
- Need for training and awareness raising
- Mixed support for foster carers
- Confusion as to responsibility
- Gaps in provision
- Would welcome products/guidance
- All want to receive copy of report

# What we found – practice survey

- Relies on voluntary orgs
- Funding short-term and inconsistent
- Lack of communication and information sharing
- Training and awareness raising is crucial
- Local multi-agency work essential
- Different models of practice are available – continuum of emerging to established
- Little in the way of strategy
- Need for national guidance
- Lots of obstacles and gaps

# The resource guide

- Free
- <http://www.scie-test.org.uk/publications/resourceguides/rg11/index.asp>
- Pulls together the evidence base and highlights gaps
- Contacts and resources
- Examples of practice

# E- learning

- Complementary to resource guide
- In development- complete July 08
- Three interactive learning resources
- Diverse utility
- Awareness raising- reach new audiences
- Links to materials and resources

# Conclusion

- Not all doom and gloom
- Models of good practice are out there
- People are willing to share
- <http://www.scie-test.org.uk/publications/resourceguides/rg11/index.asp>

Please have a look and let us know what you think!

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