

Prisoners · Families · Communities · A Fresh Start Together

Visiting Mum



Pact & Women

- First Night in Custody
- Kinship Care Service at HMP Holloway
- Family Engagement Workers
- New roll-out of FEWs in women's estate



‘Suicide and self-harm rates amongst imprisoned women are far higher than in the community, or amongst imprisoned men’

Corston Report, 2007

46% of women prisoners report having attempted suicide at some point in their lives, compared with 7% of women in the general population

MOJ 2013



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49% of women in prison suffer from anxiety and depression and 25% report symptoms indicative of psychosis

Half of women in prison report having suffered domestic violence and one in three has experienced sexual abuse

Prison Reform Trust 2014



‘Prisoners in the women’s estate are far more likely to be anxious about their home and family life than the prison environment or other prisoners’

Prison Reform Trust, 2007



Focus Groups

- Contact with children is the biggest concern; two main barriers identified to maintaining contact:
- Distance from home and the consequent cost of travel, and
- The lack of an available adult to bring children to visit



Children

Only 9% of children whose mothers are in prison are cared for by their fathers in their mothers' absence and only 5% remain in the family home

Half of women who had lived, or were in contact with, their children prior to imprisonment had not received a visit since going to prison

At least a fifth of mothers are lone parents before imprisonment, compared to around 9% of the general population



Prison Reform Trust 2014



Visiting Mum Project

- Funded from the Big Lottery Wales innovation grant
- Helps women from Wales to keep in touch with their children
- Partnership with Sova
- 3 years



Objectives

- Reduce impact of imprisonment on child and mother
- Contribute to reducing rate of reoffending amongst mothers in prison
- Reduce anxiety caused by separation, leading to fewer incidents of self-harm
- Use learning from the project to support further practice and policy



In the prison

- Assesses women coming into prison
- Those from Wales who feel that they will not receive visits from their family receive intensive intervention to maintain contact
- Close working with other professionals and community agencies
- Parenting and relationship courses



In the community

- Help is offered to the child and family in the community through trained Sova volunteers
- Volunteers will take a child to visit their parent where there is no other alternative
- Pre- and post-visit support offered to child, carer and parent in prison



For professionals

- Resource for separated families being developed
- Close working with social workers
- Training and events for professionals
- Mum's the Word book



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