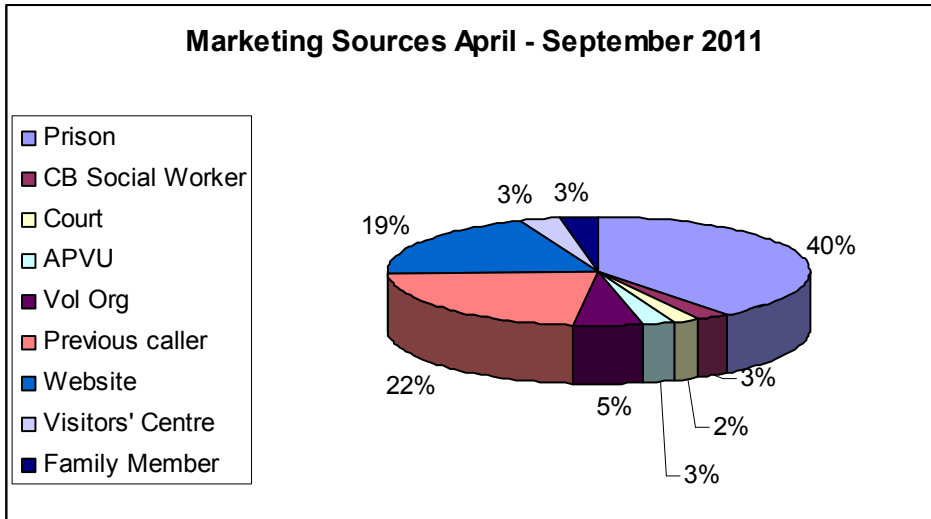


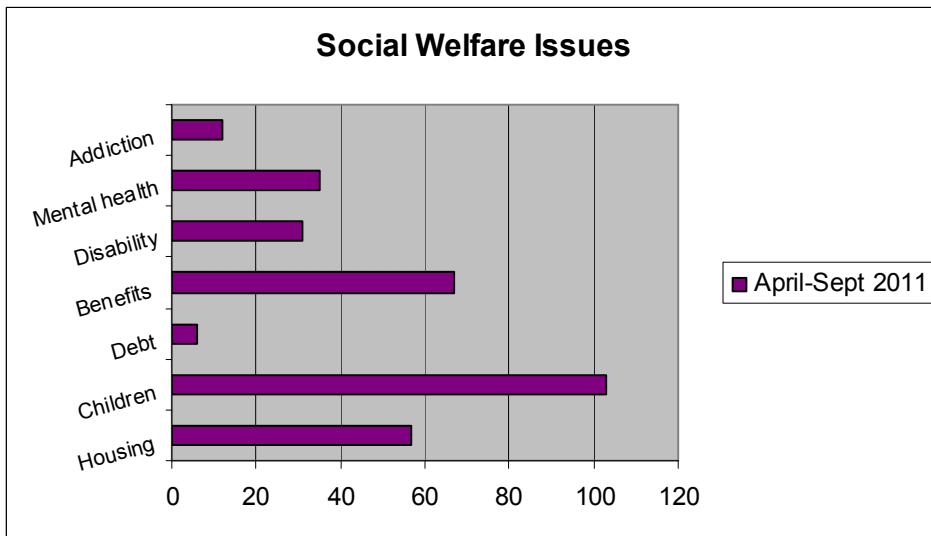
**Families Outside Support & Information Line
Bi Annual Statistics
April 2011 – September 2011**



voicing the needs
of families affected
by imprisonment

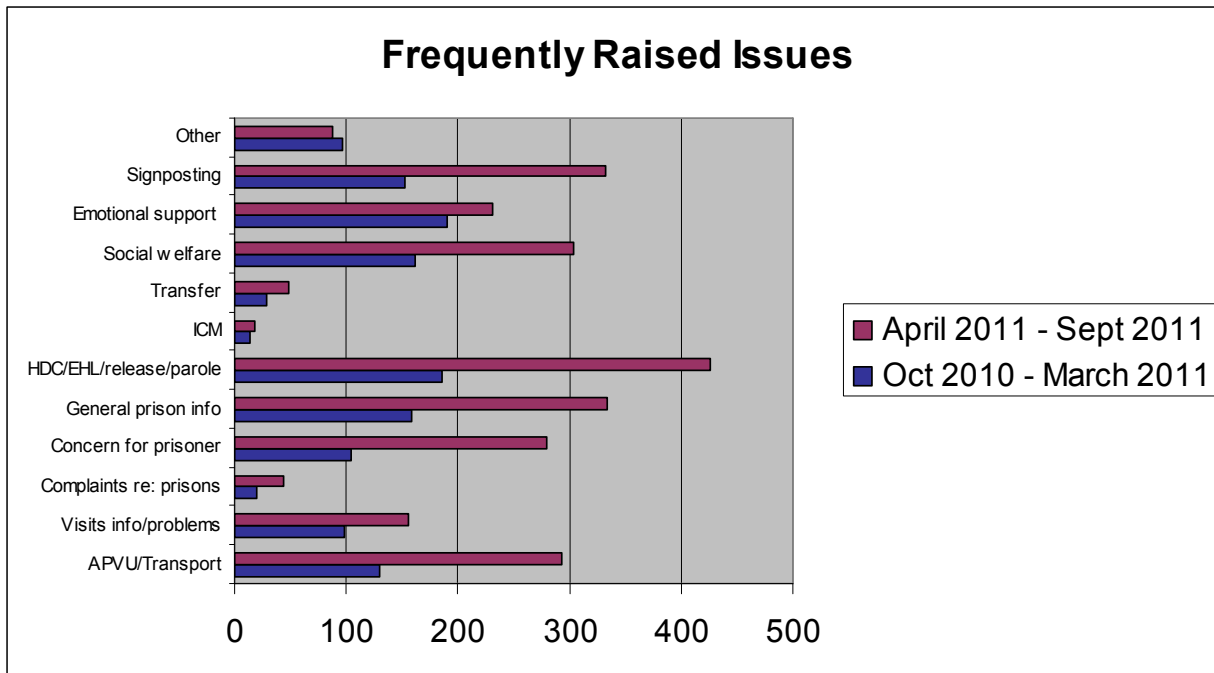


Calls to the Support & Information line are analysed for many reasons but not least as a means of gauging how services users learn about Families Outside. This provides Families Outside with evidence about the effectiveness of the dissemination of publicity information and specific awareness raising activities. In this 6 – month period the largest percentage of callers were made aware via prison sources. Last year this percentage stood at **33%** and this period is showing a **6% increase** proportionally. Possible reasons might include: improved positioning of information and/or increased staff awareness of the need for family support. Nearly a fifth of callers learned about the service via the website with repeat callers forming 22% of calls during this period.

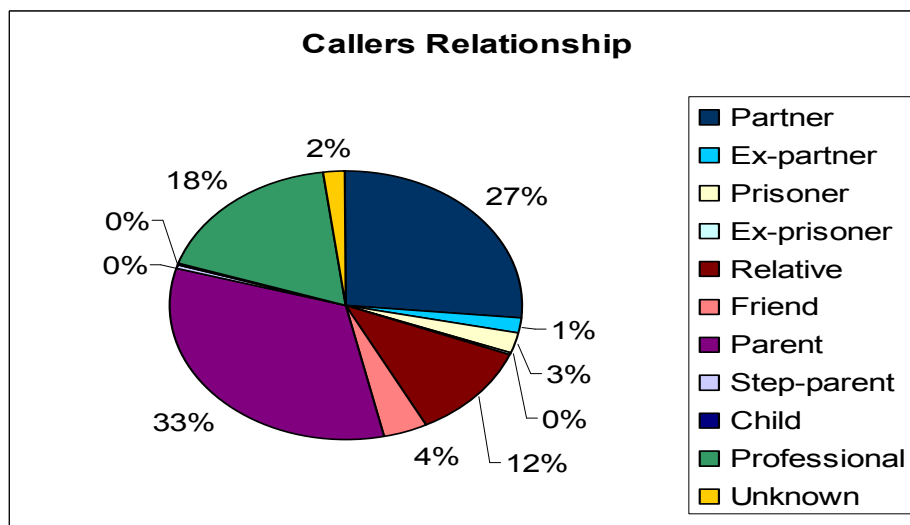


The above graph gives a breakdown of the social welfare calls received on the helpline. Social welfare covers a range of issues which can impact on a prisoner’s family. As we can see above, the highest volume in this period is around **children**. The impact of imprisonment on children and young people can be profound and of course many families struggle with whether they tell children (the facts) or not and this is a common theme on the helpline. Children’s behaviours can alter when they lose a parent to imprisonment and families can be anxious about how this is playing out at school and what impact this will have in the longer term. We can discuss a range of options and empower families to choose what best suits their specific needs. **Benefits** and **housing** form a substantial proportion and often the two are interrelated – the financial impact of someone being imprisoned can

be acute for many families. The loss of an income can result in families having to rely on benefits and/or be fearful of their tenancy/mortgage.



In all issues except “other” there has been an increase in call volume over this six month period. The combined issues of **Home Detention Curfew (HDC)**, **Extended Home Leave (EHL)**, **Release** and **Parole**, form 17% of the total issues. HDC is a constant for the helpline and EHL calls have increased as a result of a piece of joint work between the Open Estate and Families Outside. The aim of this initiative is to elicit the thoughts/feelings/experiences of families who have someone out on EHL. This is ongoing, but so far has provided a useful insight into some of the positive and negative experiences. Two families have been supported (during this period) on an ongoing basis around progression, programmes and parole. **APVU/Transport** issues have increased substantially and this is not entirely negative but could evidence that more people are in the system and needing clarification about eligibility, different methods of travel and the timescales involved in processing claims. One of the calls was from a prison chaplain trying to facilitate contact with a young man and his mother. She lived a fair distance from the prison and had some health issues as well. The chaplain was keen to find a solution as he felt the contact would be beneficial in terms of the prisoner’s mental health



Parents typically form the biggest percentage in this analysis, with partners not far behind. We are encouraged that a wide range of professionals are accessing the helpline for information for themselves or their clients. These include Social Workers, Health professionals and Education, for example. Teachers are increasingly aware of the impact imprisonment can have on their pupils and some positive collaborative work has been achieved both on the helpline and with our family support service.