

# Families Outside

Voiceing the needs of families affected by imprisonment in Scotland

## Bulletin – July 2016

[www.familiesoutside.org.uk](http://www.familiesoutside.org.uk)



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### Visitors' Centre Coordination

#### Bringing Prison Visitors' Centres Together

Seems like such a long time ago, but we now have our National Prison Visitors' Centre Coordinator in post. Laura van der Hoeven joined the Families Outside team in April. There are significant benefits to the prisoner, the prisoner's family, the prison and to wider society if prisoners can maintain positive family ties while serving their sentence. However, visiting prison can place significant stress on families. Three-quarters of prisoners' families are accessing no support, and nearly half of prisoners lose contact with their families while they are inside. Providing a Visitors' Centre service is a tangible way in which prisons can support the families of those in their custody, and the Scottish Government is providing £1.8 million over the next three years for these services. Laura is already in contact with several prisons that do not yet provide a Visitors' Centre to develop proposals for new services from the next financial year. She is also working with the existing providers and the Scottish Government to develop national standards for Visitors' Centre services. Watch this space for more information on these as they are developed.

In June, the National Prison Visitors Centre Steering Group hosted the "Supporting Prisoners' Families" conference, offering existing providers and prisons seeking to set up new services an opportunity to share knowledge and ideas about how Visitors' Centres can make a positive difference to families' lives within the new funding and governance arrangements. Since the conference, many prisons are already taking steps to improve their support offered – many have beaten a path to Laura's door to open discussions about how they could design a funding proposal for a new service, and one prison has already established a "welcome desk" to provide basic advice and information in advance of hopefully bringing in a full Visitors' Centre service in the next financial year. One form of support every family can access right now is of course the Families Outside's freephone Support & Information Helpline:

**0800 254 0088** or email [support@familiesoutside.org.uk](mailto:support@familiesoutside.org.uk) or text **FAMOUT** followed by the message to **60777**

<http://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/fo>

**EASYFUNDRAISING**

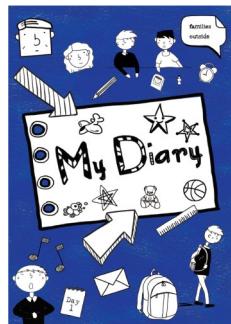
<http://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/fo>

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### KIDS' BOOK LAUNCH - 22 SEPTEMBER

The experience of having a mother, father, brother, sister, other family relative or even a friend go to prison can be incredibly traumatic for a child. Children with a family member in prison can become **isolated from their community**, including school, and may become the **victims of bullying** or display bullying behaviour themselves as they struggle to manage their anger and confusion. These children are more likely to have **problems at school**, with increased risk of school **exclusion** and **disengagement from education**. Often they are not told what is happening, which is **confusing and worrying**, or they are asked to **keep it secret**, which puts enormous strain on them.

With Families Outside's 25 years experience and awareness of the difficulties these often marginalised children face, we are launching a new publication aimed at addressing the ordeals experienced by young children in such distressing circumstances. To attend the launch at the Scottish Story Telling Centre, click on the book...



### NANCY FINALLY GETS HER MEDAL

We were delighted to see Nancy finally receive her OBE from the Queen, recognising Nancy's hard work and passion in supporting families affected by imprisonment, while also campaigning for improvement in the recognition of this group. Recognition of the service of Families Outside's Chief Executive was also highlighted on the Royal Family Twitter account [@RoyalFamily](#), again something that has delighted staff, the Board of Trustees, partnership organisations, and key stakeholders, all of whom work hard to improve the lives of some of the most vulnerable children and families in society.



### FAMILIES OUTSIDE'S 25TH ANNIVERSARY EVENT

Thanks to all those who joined us for our 25th Anniversary celebration, and to those who sent their best wishes. The event was well attended by professional colleagues, staff, stakeholders, and service users alike. Part of the event drew highlighted the work of our Helpline of 19 years, launching its new number: **0800 254 0088**

To watch a short video of faces past and present talking about the work of Families Outside, click on the chorus line below...



### CROSS PARTY GROUP - EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

Following the start of the new Parliamentary session the Cross Party Group on Children and Families Affected by Imprisonment will be reconvened by Mary Fee MSP. If you wish to attend, please can you note your interest with Rebecca Joyce [rebecca.joyce@familiesoutside.org.uk](mailto:rebecca.joyce@familiesoutside.org.uk)

## YEAR OF THE DAD EVENTS

We are delighted to see so many Year of The Dad events going ahead at prisons across Scotland. Families Outside participated in events at HMP Addiewell alongside [Circle](#) and [Dads Rock](#). HMP Greenock has also taken up the challenge, holding an events week in July. Working in partnership with parents in prison, prison education designed a poster for parents and their children with the theme 'I love my Mum/Dad because...' and 'I love being a mum/dad because...' This allowed parents and their children to work together during visits during the week. The prison also held a Children's Sports Day, which included games, races and challenges, and a BBQ after the event for children and their families. As well as this, HMYOI Polmont, along with [Barnardo's Parenting Matters](#) service, have been working with some of the young dads to produce a DVD about their experiences including a unique performance of Julia Donaldson's *The Gruffalo*. These events highlight the positive impact fathers can have in their children's lives, showing that being in prison does not have to stop you from being a good dad.

## CINEPHILE'S CORNER

Grantchester (2016) Series 2 ITV

Created by Daisy Coulam

Ok, so it's a television series rather than a film. Grantchester is an ITV detective drama set in a 1950s Cambridgeshire village, featuring a local vicar Sidney Chambers (James Norton) who develops a sideline in sleuthing with the initially reluctant help of Detective Inspector Geordie Keating (Robson Green).



Series 2 includes a sub-storyline showing how the village turns against the mother of a young man convicted of the murder of a teenage girl in the village. Sidney and his household become the only ones willing to support the mother, despite the fact that she too will be losing her son, in this case to the death penalty. This sub-plot is a powerful portrayal of how the family can be treated as guilty by association, despite the obvious evidence to the contrary. Towards the end of the series, we see some hope in the consolation the two mothers – the mother of the victim, and the mother of the eighteen year old son hanged for the death – finally share with each other.

## MORE NEW STAFF

We are delighted to announce the further expansion of our family support work in the north with the addition of Caroline Cooper to our team. Caroline joins us as a Family Support Coordinator and comes to us with a background in working with disadvantaged young people. Based in Inverness, the post is funded by the Northern CJA for six months, though we are looking for ways of extending that beyond the initial period.

We also have another Caroline joining us: Caroline Creamer will be working as an Assistant Administrator in Edinburgh to help ease the pressure of an ever-growing workload. Her support one day a week will be invaluable to the team at Great King Street, and we welcome her with open arms.

Two 'CCs' - this will cause bedlam with our personnel systems!

## KIN: VIDEO BY YOUNG PEOPLE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

KIN is an arts collective of 16-25 year olds with experience of the imprisonment of either a parent or sibling. It is an ambitious project – seeking to support the experts in familial imprisonment to tell the stories of what that's like in order to open up the conversation across Scotland.



"Each member of KIN has our own experience, our own reflections and our own hopes for the future – for ourselves and wider society. By creating art that is informed and inspired by our experiences, we hope to engage a wide variety of audiences in thinking, discussing and creating together to shed new light on an issue that affects many young people in the country, but is so often unspoken, unseen and unknown. This video is our introduction; our starter for ten. Come with us as we go deeper and further into this issue, creating art that stimulates thought and is a catalyst for change. Please share this video – talk to your friends and families about how it makes you feel. Create your own art and share it with us."

KIN is a partnership between Vox Liminis & Families Outside.

## A YEAR OF OUR WORK 2015/2016...

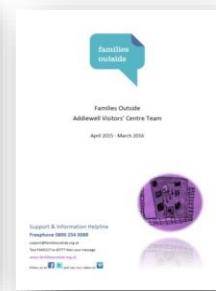
We are pleased to release three reviews detailing the work of our family support services in 2015/2016: our Helpline, our Family Support Team, and our Visitors' Centre at HMP Addiewell. Each service has a unique role to play in the bespoke, holistic support we provide for families throughout Scotland. The three reviews showcase the work these services delivered in the 2015/16 financial year, and all are well underway to delivering similar positive outcomes for families this year. Click on the reports to read them, and we welcome any [feedback](#) you can give.



Helpline Support



Family Support



Visitors' Centre

**Families Outside**  
**Support & Information Helpline**  
**Freephone 0800 254 0088**  
[support@familiesoutside.org.uk](mailto:support@familiesoutside.org.uk)  
**SMS Text Service 60777 Text**

