

Families Outside 20th Anniversary Conference

Families Outside hosted its biennial conference in November 2011 at the Falkirk Wheel. The conference, entitled "It's Everybody's Business: What is your Role in Supporting Families affected by Imprisonment?", also marked the 20th anniversary of Families Outside.

The event, attended by 230 delegates, was facilitated by Brigadier Hugh Monro CBE, HM Chief Inspector of Prisons in Scotland. The programme included a range of speakers and six interactive workshops which set practitioners the task of assessing their role in relation to families affected by imprisonment. A number of families spoke about their personal experiences, followed by a panel discussion.

Many thanks to our sponsors for the conference: The Big Lottery, Sodexo Justice Services, and The Robertson Trust.

Fireside Chat – Inspectors on Families

This special event, held in February 2012 at the Royal Society of Edinburgh, marked the 21st birthday 'coming of age' of Families Outside.

For the first time, the current and three previous Chief Inspectors of Prisons came together for a retrospective discussion of their views and experiences. Alan Bishop CB, Clive Fairweather CBE, the Very Reverend Dr Andrew McLellan CBE, and Brigadier Hugh Monro CBE focused their discussions on families affected by imprisonment. The event was well attended, in fact much oversubscribed, by a specially invited audience of people who have supported Families Outside since its inception. Discussion topics included a timeline of the developments and changes that have taken place in the last 21 years, the issues for prisoners families, and what more could be done to consolidate family support work in a prison setting. A webcast of the event is available via the Families Outside website.

Families Outside continues to develop and deliver training packages for a range of professionals and interest groups on the impact of imprisonment on a family member, with about 2,000 people reached each year. Our work in this area continues to grow, with bespoke sessions delivered to new recruits to the Scottish Prison Service, existing prison staff, Children's Panel members, police and court personnel, social workers, voluntary organisations and a range of students – from the LifeTime project in Lothian & Borders schools in partnership with a number of other criminal justice partners, to social work and psychology students at various universities.

In July 2011, Kids VIP merged with the Prison Advice and Care Trust (pact), handing on its work in Scotland to Families Outside. Through this work, Families Outside now advises prisons on child-friendly facilities and offers accredited training on the impact of imprisonment on children and Safeguarding Children in the Prison Environment. This continues apace, and feedback has been very positive.

The new Kids VIP role within Families Outside also includes support for the prison play coordinators' network, which meets annually to discuss concerns and share practice.

“Wasn't quite sure what to expect but has helped me look at things a lot differently now.”

2011/12 was a landmark year for policy and discussion regarding the children and families of prisoners. Families Outside was privileged to be one of four Scottish delegates at the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child's Day of General Discussion, which focused for the first time on the children of prisoners. Almost uniquely, children themselves spoke at the main session which, with 250 participants, is likely to have been the biggest ever.

Prior to this, Families Outside hosted a Parliamentary event to gather the voices of children and families of prisoners, key professionals and interest groups in order to feed in to the United Nations' Discussion and inform Scottish policy in turn.

Our involvement with Community Justice Authorities (CJAs) and their support for our work has developed in a number of ways:

- Lothian & Borders and South West Scotland CJAs have Family Strategy Groups chaired by Families Outside;
- We also chair Glasgow CJA's Women Offenders' Group;
- South West Scotland CJA's Family Strategy Group welcomed around 75 representatives from a range of disciplines to an event at HMP Kilmarnock that focused on support for children and families affected by offending;
- We were grateful to receive funding from Glasgow CJA to update *It's No Holiday*, our DVD on teenagers with a family member in prison, and develop this into a web-based resource.

Opportunities for input continued to expand, such as through membership by invitation to the Ministerial Early Years Task Force and the Scottish Working Group on Women Offenders. We also submit feedback regularly to Scottish Government consultations and Commissions, such as by invitation to the Angiolini Commission on Women Offenders.

The 2011/12 financial year saw many new developments for Families Outside. Beyond the new Kids VIP training role and doubling of hours for the Helpline, noted above, we were also accepted as members of the European Network for Children of Imprisoned Parents (EUROCHIPS), which is an active network of partners across Europe that seeks to raise awareness, innovate, and share practice on issues concerning prisoners' children.

Importantly, this year saw the instigation of the Cross-Party Group on Children & Families Affected by Imprisonment. Convened by Mary Fee MSP, this group provides an essential means of raising and maintaining the profile of this issue in Parliament and beyond.

Families Outside experimented with awareness-raising amongst new audiences through a special screening of *Winter's Bone* at the Edinburgh Filmhouse, followed by a panel discussion. For the first time, and thanks to a donation of over 180 gifts from Greyfriars Church in Lanark, we distributed Christmas presents to children supported by ourselves and by Circle, and to children visiting five different prisons.

Finally, 2011/12 has been a busy year for publications, including a new brochure outlining all publications available from Families Outside. These include new Helpline posters and a new leaflet summarising the work of our organisation, along with the following:

- *In Brief 6* - Prisoners' Families: The Value of Family Support Work
- Two new Factsheets on "Preparing for a Prison Sentence" and "What to Expect When Starting a Prison Sentence", prepared at the instigation of and with support from an ex-prisoner
- "Prison and Parenting", in Parenting Across Scotland (2012) *Scotland: the best place in the world to bring up children?*

We have also updated our website to include Frequently Asked Questions, a 'jargonbuster', and feeds from our Facebook and Twitter accounts.

Reflecting over the past year identifies yet further opportunities to support children and families affected by imprisonment. Our essential core activities such as the Helpline, direct support work, training, campaigning, and development of policy and practice will continue, though we will build on these in a number of ways. In 2012/13, we can look forward to these activities including:

- In collaboration with Strathclyde Police, South West Community Justice Authority, and the Lighthouse Foundation, launch an information card for families at the point of arrest.
- Campaign through the UN's Universal Periodic Review of Human Rights regarding the UK's treatment of children with imprisoned parents.
- Linking with prisons, develop work within schools to support children of prisoners.
- Continue development of a web-based resource for professionals in justice, education, health and other sectors.
- Continue to promote the use and development of prison Visitors' Centres, including start-up of our own at HMP Addiewell.
- Pilot and review the use of Child & Family Impact Assessments at key stages in the criminal justice process.
- Provide further opportunities for family members to come together, talk and listen in a safe environment and feed more directly into our work.
- Produce *In Brief 7* on support to children of prisoners through schools and *In Brief 8* on the financial impact of a family member's imprisonment.

We look forward to bringing you up to date on these initiatives in our next report.

We have had yet another successful year at Families Outside, with our income increasing by £14,730, or 3.8%.

Funding from The Brook Trust was received in 2011/12 but will be carried forward in unrestricted reserves to 2012/13 when, by agreement, we will make use of the funds. We would also like to thank The Michael & Shirley

Hunt Charitable Trust, St Clair's Trust, The Moffat Charitable Trust, The Big Lottery, Sodexo Justice Services, the Friends of Families Outside and everyone else who supported our work throughout the year.

In addition, we were grateful to receive a grant from The Alexander Moncur Trust. This will be applied to the coming financial year 2012/13.

Income £s	2011	2012
The Scottish Government	134,348	132,712
The Scottish Prison Service	29,521	29,892
The Robertson Trust	35,230	18,040
The Monument Trust	-	40,000
The Wise Group	61,066	53,228
The LankellyChase Foundation	15,000	24,750
Lothian & Borders Community Justice Authority	17,145	-
The Gannochy Trust	-	5,000
RS Macdonald Charitable Trust	15,000	15,000
The Henry Smith Charity	25,000	25,000
Crossreach	6,652	15,804
Anonymous Donor	7,000	5,000
The Brook Trust	15,000	15,000
Others	22,578	18,844
	383,540	398,270

Expenditure	2011	2012
Cost of generating funds	12,154	15,390
Charitable activities	302,982	344,012
Governance costs	9,300	10,015
	324,436	369,417

Net Incoming (Outgoing)	2011	2012
Resources for the period	59,104	28,853
Balance brought forward at 01/04/11	65,586	124,690
Balance carried forward at 31/03/12	124,690	153,543

Summary of Balance Sheet	2011	2012
Fixed Assets	4,678	1,038
Current Assets	120,012	152,505
Net Assets	124,690	153,543

Funds	2011	2012
Unrestricted	120,839	146,935
Restricted	3,851	6,608
Total Funds	124,690	153,543



Families Outside has now reached its 21st year and has truly 'come of age'. From a research base hosted by Save the Children and a part-time secondee from the Scottish Prison Service in the early 1990s to a small but nationally based independent staff team, we have grown in both reach and influence.

"I nearly lost my faith when this happened, I didn't think anyone cared... Without your support I don't know what I would have done. Your support was a light in the dark."

The financial climate continues to be challenging, which increases the pressures on vulnerable families but, despite this, we have managed to continue to grow modestly and to innovate. We are extremely grateful to all those who fund us and support us in other ways. Highlights of the year include another very successful conference, the fireside chat with four Chief Inspectors of Prisons and our invitation and initial steps towards running a prison visitors' centre.

The Board continues to work well together, ably supported by Nancy and our excellent and dedicated staff team. In the year ahead, the financial and service challenges will not go away, but as our reputation and influence grows, we are optimistic that we can face them and continue to work with others in the interests of prisoners' children and families.

"The Key to the Door"

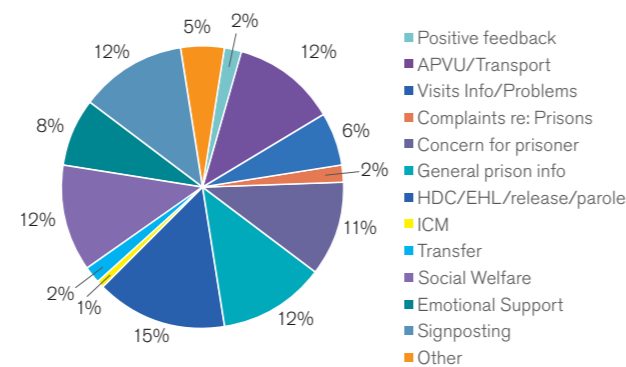
As we commemorate our 21st birthday, the Scottish tradition of giving 'the key to the door' seems particularly fitting for Families Outside. It recognises the maturity of our work as an organisation but equally reminds us of why we are here: that we are here to open doors and promote links between agencies and, most importantly, between families of prisoners and their loved ones.

Families Outside's profile and reputation is now well-established, with positive relationships built with key statutory and voluntary agencies in the criminal justice sector and beyond. This includes opportunities to contribute actively to a range of policy and practice initiatives, with 2011-12 seeing the new Cross-Party Group on Children & Families Affected by Imprisonment, special events and conferences, and contribution to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child's Day of General Discussion in Geneva, which for the first time focused on children of imprisoned parents. This year we also doubled the operating hours of our Support & Information Helpline and delivered Family Support Work throughout Scotland for the first full financial year.

As an organisation we continue to grow and innovate, as this year's Annual Report shows. After 21 years we still have a long way to go, with families of prisoners often facing the same difficulties they always have with access to information, awareness of the wider impact of imprisonment, and lack of involvement in the decisions that affect them. As the prison population continues to grow, so does the number of families in contact with a system that is complex, alienating, and yet central to how they and their children will fare both at the time and in future.

Families Outside has come a long way in its 21 years, not least due to the energies of our staff and Board and the support of our funders, for which I am continually grateful. We are committed to continuing our support the children and families affected by imprisonment until the need for this is no longer evident.

This year the Families Outside Support and Information Helpline doubled its opening hours to 9am-5pm Monday to Friday. The helpline received 1,781 calls, emails and text messages asking for support and information on more than 4,900 issues.



Families continue to contact the helpline at varying stages of the criminal justice system, at the time when they feel they are ready to access support in their own right. Emotional support is a key component in many of the calls to the helpline and, as such, each caller receives bespoke support determined by their individual needs.

Nearly 40% of calls to the helpline last between 5-10 minutes, but the skills utilised in this time to assess a query, build a rapport and provide additional support can be considerable. Many of the practical issues raised, such as travel and transport, financial assistance and visiting information, can be addressed through provision of up to date information which requires helpline staff to be proactive in sourcing this.

However some calls can often be more challenging and complex, with 34% of calls relating to non-prison issues. Even a short-term custodial sentence of a family member can have a dramatic effect, with many callers' needs unlikely to be resolved in the short-term. As such, liaison with other agencies on the caller's behalf, as well as the need to signpost to additional services, remains an integral part of the work of the helpline.

The highest percentage of calls last year related to preparing for a relative's release from prison. Having a family member return home can be difficult for families. Separation, loss of consistent communication, and a change in family dynamics can result in difficulties arising when someone is finally released from prison. The Support & Information Helpline provides support throughout each stage of imprisonment, up to and including when someone is due to be released.

"Thank you, your support has lifted me from such a dark place today."

The Support & Information Helpline received a call from a local Citizens Advice Bureau worker who was supporting a man whose son had died in custody. The caller explained that the father was not on any benefits and was unable to pay the funeral costs. With the help of the Helpline, the father of the prisoner was able to access pastoral care from the Prison Chaplaincy team who, once they were aware of the situation, contacted the Local Authority to arrange a burial and facilitate a service.

"Thank you for all your help during a hard five weeks. Things are going to work out for the best now."

The Support & Information Helpline received a call from a woman whose partner was due to return to her address for Extended Home Leave. The caller had supported her partner throughout his 5 years in prison, visiting regularly, and had been involved in his sentence management but was now feeling anxious about him returning home. The Helpline staff talked over the caller's concerns and supported her over a 5-week period. During this time the caller decided that she had become more independent and self-reliant and was overwhelmed with having him home. After discussing this with her partner, they decided they could better work on their relationship if he returned to another address.

Family Support work provides holistic, solution-focused support designed to meet the needs of families affected by imprisonment throughout Scotland. This year, our family support workers received 313 referrals, with the number of people supported totalling 764 (488 adults and 276 children).

"I felt very alone and isolated until I was introduced to [Family Support Worker]. She provided me with information, emotional support and a non-judgemental ear to listen. Any questions I had were answered quickly."

Life Coaches from the Routes Out of Prison (ROOP) partnership continue to account for the largest single source of referrals to our Family Support staff. The high number of referrals consequently reflects the value of dedicated support for families within related projects. The value of having a Family Support Worker based in a prison Visitors' Centre is also clear, as our worker at the Edinburgh Prison Visitors Centre worked with 117 families, 38 of whom were referred from staff working at the Visitor's Centre.

In all referrals, the workers provide one-to-one support, either by telephone or through face to face meetings. Most referrals take place while a prisoner is serving a prison sentence, when families are faced with a range of issues such as (most commonly) a need for emotional support; housing and financial difficulties; health and wellbeing of families and prisoners; and prison-based issues including visiting procedures, Home Detention Curfew and moving to the Open Estate.

Family Support Workers respond flexibly to the needs of families as they arise, helping them identify and address further areas of concern, and ultimately aiming to enable families to build resilience and resources to cope with their experience.

"You're a godsend; people do jobs because it's their work, but you do your job because you care."

Prof. Nancy Loucks	Chief Executive
Elaine Stalker	Support & Development Manager, Regional Coordinator (Glasgow/Fife & Forth Valley), Helpline Worker
Fiona Allan	Support & Development Coordinator, Regional Coordinator (Lothian & Borders/Lanarkshire), Helpline Worker
Susan Cross	Regional Support Coordinator (North Strathclyde/Southwest Scotland), Family Support Worker (including Routes Out Of Prison through June 2011)
Tracey Burns	Family Support Coordinator (Glasgow/Lanarkshire) – ROOP
Kerry Knox	Family Support Worker (Lothian & Borders) – job share
Hazel Rendall	Family Support Worker (Lothian & Borders) – job share
Charlene Kenny	Regional Support Coordinator (Tayside/Northern)
Michelle Martin	Helpline & Information Administrator
Jonathan Goodfellow	Office Administrator

BOARD

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Sheila Gupta	Individual
Janice McGowan	Individual
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Jackie McFie		

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