



supporting families affected by imprisonment



Who We Are &

What We Do

Families Outside is the only national charity in Scotland that works solely to support children and families affected by imprisonment. Our purpose is to improve outcomes for children and adults affected by imprisonment so they can live lives free from stigma and disadvantage. This booklet highlights our services, how to access them, and the issues they aim to address.

Prison affects whole families

On any given day, about 8,000 people are in prison in Scotland. This means that 8,000 families – mothers, fathers, partners, brothers, sisters, grandparents, children – are affected by imprisonment each day.

How we support families:

Each year we support thousands of families from across Scotland, helping with issues such as housing, finance, stigma, and isolation.

If you have a family member in prison, or are working with families affected by imprisonment, our Family Support Team can help.

Our Family Support Team provides:

- Emotional support
- Detailed knowledge of the justice system
- Information on prisons and prison procedures, including visiting
- Information on housing, finance, and benefits
- Access to community services and specialised support including health, domestic abuse, and substance misuse

Our Values:



Responsive



Accessible



Independent



Knowledgeable

Helpline



The Families Outside Helpline, **0800 254 0088**, provides impartial information and support and is often the first port of call for families and professionals looking for help and guidance.

To contact the team:

Call **0800 254 0088**

Visit **www.familiesoutside.org.uk**. Our Webchat Service can translate most modern languages

Email **support@familiesoutside.org.uk**

Text **Famout** followed by your message to **60777**

“Thank you so, so much for your help during these horrible days. You have been such a lifesaver, and I am endlessly happy that there are organisations such as Families Outside who will do so much to support families in despair.” Family member supported by the Helpline

Regional Support



If family members require more in-depth support, our Helpline Team will refer the case to our Regional Family Support Coordinators who are on hand throughout Scotland and provide local, face-to-face support.

We provide a person-centred approach ensuring that the support we provide is needs-led. We work with children and adults and use a range of tools and methods to address their individual needs.

"Excellent support, it's always forthcoming. As a mother I find it so difficult to cope with my son's situation and would probably be unable to support my son without this support. I personally feel very overwhelmed with the issues that my son has, my anxieties are lessened with the support I receive. [Families Outside] always manages to help where I fail. I should have made contact with you sooner." Family Member in Inverness

Peer Support



Families Outside hosts a number of peer support groups throughout Scotland, bringing children, young people, and adults together to support each other through their shared experiences.

Our peer support groups provide a safe, accessible space where group members are able to communicate with one another openly, sharing problems and using their own experiences to help each other.

"Before I came to the peer support group I was in a bad way and I wouldn't really talk about my feelings, but now people have helped me I can speak more about my feelings."
Liam, aged 11

Criminal Justice Process



Pre-Arrest

Arrest

Trial

Pre-sentence

Imprisonment

Pre-release

Release

Post-Release

Families Outside has provided direct, independent, and confidential support to families affected by imprisonment since 1991. Our knowledge and experience helps thousands of families each year – at every stage of the criminal justice process.

Visiting Prison



People in prison who maintain family ties are 39% less likely to reoffend than those who do not receive visits. (Ministry of Justice 2014)

Prison Visitors' Centres provide a crucial service for families – not only in improving the visit experience but also providing information and support to families when they visit.

Families Outside manages the coordination, development, and oversight of family visitors' centres, ensuring that there is an agreed set of standards for centres to follow so that families receive the best possible experience, irrespective of which prison they are visiting.

We will also work together with visitors, Visitors' Centre service providers, and the Scottish Prison Service to recognise and respond appropriately to the needs of families affected by imprisonment. This will include the development of appropriate services to respond to unmet need.

For information on visiting prisons, including detailed information on existing visitors' centres, please visit www.familiesoutside.org.uk/families/visiting-prison

"I would not have survived without you. You have made me realise that there is light at the end of the tunnel." Quote from family member supported at Addiewell prison visitor centre

Training



Feelings of shame can deter families from seeking help and support, and as a result, many of them are isolated and alone. (Codd 2008)

To combat this, Families Outside provides a range of Training & Development opportunities to professionals that come into contact with families affected by imprisonment, ensuring that support is accessible from a number of 'trusted' routes.

From health care professionals and teachers, to prison staff and social workers, our training sessions increase awareness of the issues and challenges faced by families so they can receive the support they need where and when they need it.

For more information, visit www.familiesoutside.org.uk/professionals/training

*"Thanks for hosting a very informative, worthwhile and inspiring Professional Learning Event. It has sparked a real recognition for action in relation to my work with students at Strathclyde... With this in mind I contacted the course director at Strathclyde and suggested that every undergraduate education student had to learn about your work and perspectives on imprisonment."
Email from University lecturer*

Influencing Change



We regularly undertake research into the issues and impacts that imprisonment has on families so that we can influence key decision-makers and policy-makers at a local and national Government levels.

Our input has had a huge positive impact and includes (but is not limited to) the introduction of:

- A Family Strategy at the Scottish Prison Service
- All existing Visitors' Centres across the Scottish prison estate
- Family Contact Officers in all Scottish Prison Service prisons
- Children's Visits across the prison estate
- The Cross-Party Group on Children & Families Affected By Imprisonment
- A Framework for Support to Families Affected by the Justice System
- Council of Europe's Recommendations regarding children of prisoners

"Families Outside's unique service is paramount in supporting families and children affected by imprisonment. Their support in my role as a Member of the Scottish Parliament has allowed me to raise the issues affecting families and children with the Scottish Government and press for action to better support this extremely vulnerable group. Dr Nancy Loucks and all the staff at Families Outside are committed to supporting people, and I will continue to support them in their work too." Mary Fee MSP



Share your voice

Help us to put the views of families in the centre of the Criminal Justice System by sharing your voice.

- Contribute to consultations and give your views on the political issues that affect you
- Respond to research requests providing greater evidence of the challenges faced by families affected by imprisonment
- Engage with the media, giving them the facts they need to report responsibly
- Share your stories so that other families can learn from your experiences
- Influence change so that you and other families have more positive experiences of the justice system

To help us create meaningful change for you, your family, and thousands of other families affected by imprisonment, contact admin@familiesoutside.org.uk

We support families through our helpline, training, visitors' centres, events, direct support, research, publications, policy, campaigns, and donations.



For information and support:

Freephone 0800 254 0088

Text FAMOUT followed by your message to 60777

Email support@familiesoutside.org.uk

Visit www.familiesoutside.org.uk



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European Social Fund
Investing in a Smart, Sustainable and Inclusive Future

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