

HELP FOR FAMILIES & FRIENDS OF SOMEONE IN PRISON



A Briefing to inform & encourage Friends' action in providing practical support to the families and friends of someone who is in prison

"No welfare people or probation officer ever got in touch with me, I had to do all the fighting by myself. I always felt there could have been someone who could occasionally get in touch with me to tell me how he was and how he was coping. Nobody tells you what is going on, you only find out by being pushy and asking. There was no support for next of kin. I don't know if it is different if he had a wife or partner, but there was nothing for me."



“Justice should be compassionate, forgiving and healing – restorative, not retributive. We want to change attitudes and encourage the criminal justice system to move towards this vision of justice.”

Quaker Peace & Social Witness
Crime, Community and Justice Sub-Committee, July 2009

A prison sentence affects many more people than the person who has been convicted, their family and friends; the victim and their family and friends; the wider community. The person sent to prison could be a child, parent, wife, husband, partner, grandchild, brother, sister, nephew, niece, cousin, grandparent, carer, best friend, work mate, neighbour to someone. The person in prison may have family and friends whose lives will be disrupted by their absence, and who will need help and support.

We believe that greater understanding of the effect of judicial sentencing upon all concerned is a step towards creating change. It can then become possible to avoid the potential damage to individual lives and wider society, and to see what might be more constructive responses. Our *Learning from Experience: Personal narratives from the criminal justice system* project was designed to help us to do this.

During 2010/2011 Friends (Quakers) collected real stories from real people about their experiences of the justice system. These personal narratives provide instances of real experiences in Britain from the 1970s to today and powerfully illustrate what the human cost can be of a prison sentence.

The personal narratives are from adult men and women of varying ages, backgrounds and life experiences. Some are from the person who received the custodial sentence; others are from friends or relatives of someone who has been imprisoned. Some of the stories are in the person's own words, others are 'as told' to the Friend who collected them for us.

All the extracts used here have been edited to some extent, mostly to ensure anonymity or make them more accessible to readers.

Families and friends of people sent to prison will almost certainly need help and support of some kind, usually across a range of every-day issues, and often very quickly. The questions we list are some of those most frequently asked of the advice and support agencies referred to in this document. They also, of course, arise from the *Learning from Experience* stories.

This Briefing suggests some ways which Friends (and others) can provide practical help and support to those families and friends.

Quaker Peace & Social Witness
Crime, Community and Justice Sub-Committee
August 2014

KEY SOURCES OF INFORMATION

There are many organisations providing services to help with specific difficulties. The problem is finding the right one, in the right place, and at the right time. This Briefing does not attempt to provide a comprehensive list of all these organisations: we are offering pointers to organisations in England, Wales and Scotland that can provide detailed information on a range of topics. The three bodies below all give easy access to a wide range of contacts, help, support and advice for the families and friends of prisoners. **It is always worth checking with one or more of these when seeking information and offering any help.**

- **Action for Prisoners' Families [APF]** (England & Wales)
25 Corsham Street, London N1 6DR. / T: 020 7553 7653
E: info@prisonersfamilies.org.uk / W: www.prisonersfamilies.org.uk
- **Families Outside** (Scotland)
13 Great King Street, Edinburgh EH3 6QW / T: 0131 557 9800
E: admin@familiesoutside.org.uk / W: www.familiesoutside.org.uk
- **Inside Information** (England, Wales, Scotland)
PO Box 251, Hedge End, Hampshire SO30 3XJ / T: 08443 356483
E: (none) / W: www.insidetime.org/info-home.asp

HELPLINES

Directly available to the families and friends of prisoners (and anyone else wanting information):

- **Families Outside Support & Information Helpline 0500 83 93 83**
Monday to Friday (answer-phone if not available). Freephone from landlines. Texting service send FAMOUT to 60777. An independent service for families and friends affected by imprisonment. (Scotland) W: www.familiesoutside.org.uk
- **Offenders' Families Helpline 0808 808 2003**
Monday to Friday 09:00 to 20:00; Saturday & Sunday 10:00 to 15:00. Freephone including from mobiles. Translation service. Run by Partners of Prisoners and Families Support Group (POPS) for the government. (England & Wales)
W: www.offendersfamilieshelpline.org
- **Prisoners' Families and Friends Service [PFFS] Helpline 0808 808 3444**
Monday to Wednesday 10:00 to 16:00 Freephone from landlines. An independent voluntary agency helping the families and friends of anyone sentenced to imprisonment or remanded in custody. (England & Wales) W: www.pffs.org.uk
- **Families & Friends of Prisoners Service [FFOPS] Helpline 01792 458 645**
Answer-phone 24 hours. Voluntary organisation helping families and friends and ex-offenders. (Wales) W: www.ffops.org.uk

WHERE HAVE THEY BEEN TAKEN?

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“His family, including father, wife and children were in court when sentence was passed, and watched him being taken away without any opportunity to say goodbye. The worst thing was the distress of my daughter in law who suddenly lost her best friend and advisor, father of her three small children, sent down to the cells.”

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“The solicitor did not know where he was being held. After a bit of research on the internet I rang Prison X to ask if he was there. He wasn’t. Mercifully, on the Sunday afternoon I had a phone call from him from Prison Y. He asked me to ring his line-manager next morning to check they knew he was missing, as he was due to meet a client off site. I got his prisoner number so I was able to keep writing, but didn’t hear anything [for 2-3 weeks].”

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“Sentence was given [and he] was immediately sent to prison. ... [Six months later] he was moved without warning to a different prison.”

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My family member/friend was given a prison sentence and taken away from the court – but where have they been taken? Have they gone straight to prison? Which prison? Where is it? When can I see them? Can I phone them? How can I find out how they are? What does all the jargon mean?

Other sources of help available for friends and families:

Finding a prisoner when you don't know which prison they are in

- **Families & Friends of Prisoners Service [FFOPS]** (Wales)
W: www.ffops.org.uk
- **Gov.uk/prisons and probation** (England & Wales)
W: www.gov.uk/find-prisoner
- **Prisoners' Families and Friends Service [PFFS]** (England & Wales)
W: www.pffs.org.uk

Finding a prison

- **Ministry of Justice** (England & Wales)
W: www.justice.gov.uk/contacts/prison-finder
- **Scottish Prison Service** (Scotland)
W: www.sps.gov.uk

About the prison sentence the court has given

- **Gov.uk/prisons and probation** (England & Wales)
W: www.gov.uk/types-of-prison-sentence
- **Scottish Government Justice Department** (Scotland)
W: www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Justice

How you could help:

- Get the information for the person who needs it by looking on the websites listed above and/or using the sources shown on page 3.
- Help to explain the jargon and acronyms used in the criminal justice and prison systems. Glossaries and explanations are available from Action for Prisoners' Families, Families Outside, and Inside Information – see page 3.

WHAT WILL IT BE LIKE IN PRISON?

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“Being entirely new to the prison regime, I had no idea what part I had to play as B’s only contact with the outside world. It was not until he went to Prison X that I received a letter telling me exactly what he could take into prison, both in terms of clothes and entertainments and when they could be seasonally changed.”

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“Once in prison he was in full security, which meant he was only allowed out of his cell for one hour a day and shared a cell with a murderer who had committed a particularly horrible offence. After two weeks he was put on to working so he was allowed out of his cell to work.”

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“On one occasion I tried to take him some trainers. When he was sentenced he was taken away in the suit and shoes he had gone to court in, and had no other clothes. His smart shoes were uncomfortable, but they wouldn’t let him have the trainers. I argued with the wardens and eventually they relented. Eventually he was given a prison uniform, but this was at least a week later.”

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Can prisoners wear their own clothes? Suppose they don’t get their medication? Will the prison staff speak their language? Will the prison be able to cope with their disability? Can prisoners buy the things they need? Can I send money to a prisoner? Can I send them clothes, toiletries or gifts? What can I do if the prison isn’t looking after them properly? I’m worried about their mental health, what should I do?

Other sources of help available for friends and families:

- **Families & Friends of Prisoners Service [FFOPS]** (Wales)
W: www.ffops.org.uk
- **Gov.uk/prisons and probation** (England & Wales)
W: www.gov.uk/life-in-prison

How you could help:

- Find out about local prison conditions by looking on the websites listed above and/or using the sources shown on page 3.
- Get in touch with the Quaker Prison Chaplain working in the prison where the person has been sent. (England, Wales, Scotland) Contact: Marleen Schepers, Quaker Prison Chaplains' Support Officer, Quaker Life, Friends House, Euston Road, London NW1 2BJ. T: 020 7663 1143
E: marleens@quaker.org.uk / W: www.quaker.org.uk/qpc

HOW DO WE KEEP IN TOUCH?

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“His brother and I both fielded a lot of anxious enquiries from his friends who couldn’t make contact with him.”

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“After about four weeks in the local prison J was transferred to one further away. This put great pressure of course on J’s elderly wife and family. The prison was a 2-3 hour journey from the family home by car and a day’s travel by public transport. The first positive thing after incarceration was the provision by the prison service of a phone card enabling contact with his wife and family.”

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“A family friend told me to keep writing to him which I have every week – posted something off to him, interesting articles on subjects I know he likes, also cheque sent each month mainly towards phone cards as he calls us and friends so has helped him keep in touch with outside.”

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Can they write to me? Can they phone me? How are the calls paid for? Will prison staff read our letters? Do they listen to our phone calls? Can I send photographs of myself or the children? What happens in an emergency? How will I know if they’ve been moved to a different prison? Can they be moved to a prison closer to home? Can they be moved without me knowing?

Other sources of help available for friends and families:

- **Email a Prisoner** (England, Wales, Scotland) enables emails to be sent from any computer so that it can be printed, processed and delivered to the recipient by prison staff.
W: <http://emap.prison-technology-services.com/about.cfm>
- **Gov.uk/prisons and probation** (England & Wales)
W: www.gov.uk/staying-in-touch-with-someone-in-prison

How you could help:

- Get the information for the person who needs it by looking on the websites listed above and/or using the sources shown on page 3.
- Find out about, and then explain, the telephone system in prison.
- Join up to *Email a Prisoner* and send messages on someone's behalf.

HOW DO I PAY THE BILLS?

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“His imprisonment causes significant stress for his wife who holds power of attorney for him and is trying to bravely carry on and look after his interests.”

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“My parents had extreme difficulty in renewing their house insurance because a criminal (me) lives in the house. When they finally did find an insurer, the cost more than doubled.”

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“He had lost his flat as I was unable to continue paying his rent for him and had to clear it out of his personal belongings. I had to leave his furniture as I did not have anywhere to store it. He had therefore to move in with me and my children [on release] which affected my claims for housing benefit and working tax credit.”

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Will the power be cut off? Can prisoners claim income support? What about claiming jobseeker's allowance or housing benefit? Does a prisoner earn any money inside? Can I claim Working Tax Credit if my partner is in prison? How can I try to make sure we don't lose our home? Can I get the mortgage paid while my partner is in prison? And the Council Tax? S/he was not living with me, so what can I do to help them keep their home?

Other sources of help available for friends and families:

Benefit payments and housing

- **Citizens' Advice Bureau** (England & Wales)
W: www.citizensadvice.org.uk
- **Citizens' Advice Bureau** (Scotland)
W: www.cas.org.uk
- **Gov.uk/prisons and probation** (England & Wales)
W: www.gov.uk/browse/justice/prisons-probation

Family Information Service (FIS)

Every local authority should have one, able to direct enquirers to what is available for prisoners' and offenders' families in their area.

- **Day Care Trust** (England & Wales)
W: www.daycaretrust.org.uk/nafis
- **National Association of Family Information Services** (England, Wales, Scotland)
W: www.daycaretrust.org.uk/nafis

How you could help:

- Get the information for the person who needs it by looking on the websites listed above and/or using the sources shown on page 3.
- Help with filling in the forms for claiming benefits etc.

WHAT DO I TELL THE CHILDREN?

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“His younger siblings have both been on the receiving end of bullying and as a result have become less socially inclined. They, and we, are dismayed by press reports which declare him to be ‘wicked’ and portray him as a monster. We, his family, know that he is not.”

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“My wife is devastated by our relatives’ sentence ... our children are also extremely concerned by the situation and need our support to help them understand what is happening and what, if anything, can be done. The sentencing has affected the wider family enormously, and we feel we are ALL being punished.”

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“My children were also badly affected and I am not sure how justice was truly served in this case as I am sure is the same for many, many others.”

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How can they keep in touch with the children? What can I do about the children being bullied at school? And the bedwetting? How can I help them cope with this? Should I tell their teachers? Will we have to move school? How can I cope with them on my own? Will they be taken into care? How do I keep the family together?

Other sources of help available for friends and families:

In some prisons there are courses on aspects of relationships and parenting such as basic childcare courses and workshops for prisoners with babies, or courses for couples and parents in prison who have young children.

Some prisons may also have an Integrated Family Support service in which paid support workers are based in prisons, providing one to one support, family conferencing, information, advice and guidance, and parenting and relationship education courses. Many of these workers also act as the key contact point for safeguarding issues within prisons. They will usually be helped by a small team of volunteers or students on placements, working both inside the prison and in the community.

- **Family Lives** provides a free 24 helpline, online chat-room and advice website offering support for all aspects of family life, including bullying and parenting. (England & Wales) T: 0808 802 008
W: <http://familylives.org.uk>
- **Pact** [prison advice and care trust] (England & Wales)
W: www.prisonadvice.org.uk
- **POPS** [Partners of Prisoners and Families Support Group] (North West England, Yorkshire, Humberside)
W: www.partnersofprisoners.co.uk

How you could help:

- Find out about courses available in prisons and the community by looking on the websites listed above and/or using the sources shown on page 3.
- Volunteer with relevant organisations (see ‘Other practical things you could do’).

WHAT WILL IT BE LIKE VISITING THE PRISON?

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“I took my children to visit him. We were searched, including the children – in ears, under long hair, under tongue. During our visit my 10 year old daughter wanted to visit the toilet and had to have a guard sit outside the toilet door and then search her again when she came out. This all needed explaining to the children as they did not understand why.”

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“We were allowed to visit once every two weeks. I used to have to stop on the way home to cry. All this time there was nobody to give me any information. Visiting was very hard, I had to ring up to get a pass, I would start ringing at 8a.m. and it was engaged, and press re-dial repeatedly for about 3 hours before I could get through. We had to queue outside the prison before they would open the gates, then leave all our possessions and be frisked. ... Visiting was an awful stressful experience.”

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“I wished I’d brought a present with me, but I knew he’d only want cigarettes, which I didn’t want to give him (my mother died early from cancer through smoking), and at the same time I hated myself for being so picky when he was in such dire circumstances and needed all the comfort he could get. Maybe chocolates? Probably best not to take anything, I argued to myself, because they’d only suspect that whatever-it-was was full of drugs. There isn’t a book called ‘Do-It-Yourself Prison Visiting’.”

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“It is difficult to get visiting orders normally, but when the person you are wishing to visit suffers from such a disability (as paranoia and Aspergers) then the process becomes fraught with uncertainty. The indignity that some people felt at the way they were treated on visits by the prison staff and the prison regulations caused some people to abandon their attempts to see him altogether.”

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How do I get there? How do I go about visiting someone in prison? How many visits is a prisoner allowed? What if it’s a long way away and I can’t afford the fares? Or find it impossible to travel? Will I be searched? What can I take with me? Will I be able to touch them? What do I do with the children when I’m visiting the prison? Can they come too? How many people can visit at once? What do I need to take with me when I go to visit? What if I turn up for a visit and find they’ve been transferred?

Other sources of help available for friends and families:

Prison visiting information – procedures, opening times, directions etc.

- **Families & Friends of Prisoners Service** (Wales)
W: www.ffops.org.uk
- **Scottish Prison Service** (Scotland)
W: www.sps.gov.uk

Help with the travel costs

Visitors can apply to the Assisted Prison Visits Unit for help with travel costs if they are visiting a close friend or relative in prison in England, Wales and Scotland.

- **Assisted Prison Visits** (England, Wales, Scotland)
Unit PO Box 2152, Birmingham B15 1SD T: 0300 063 2100
W: www.gov.uk/assisted-prison-visits
- **Sacro** provides transport to Scottish prisons to maintain contact between prisoners and their families and friends. (Scotland)
W: www.sacro.org.uk

Support for visitors

Family and visitors' centres can give prisoners' families access to a range of activities and workshops aimed at supporting them. Some have a tea bar and a safe play area for children while the adults talk. Some visitors' services are run by the Prison Service, others by independent charities.

Some prisons allow special visits which provide a much more 'hands on' experience for parents in prison than routine domestic visits, where prisoners are unable to leave their visiting table.

- **Pact** [prison advice and care trust] Runs services in 35 prisons including Family Support Caseworkers, Visitors' Centres, children's play, tea bars, and relationship and children education courses. (England & Wales)
W: www.prisonadvice.org.uk
- **Visitors' Centres** (England & Wales) Ministry of Justice
W: www.justice.gov.uk

Support for children visiting prison

- **Kids VIP** (England & Wales) c/o pact
W: www.prisonadvice.org.uk
- **Kids VIP** (Scotland) c/o Families Outside
W: www.familiesoutside.org.uk

- **NEPACS** [North Eastern Prison After Care Society] (prisons in North East England)
W: www.nepacs.co.uk
- **Project HAPPY** [Helping And Protecting Prisoners' Youngsters] (Scotland)
W: www.h-a-p-p-y.org.uk

How you could help:

- Find out about local prison visiting arrangements and facilities, including visitors' centre at the prison and local support groups, by looking on the websites listed above, using the sources shown on page 3.
- Help make an application to the Assisted Prison Visits Unit.
- Lend or give the person the fare; or provide transport.
- Volunteer with a visitors' centre or support services.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN THEY COME OUT?

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“His first priority was to get a job, but it was very difficult. He was offered a job and accepted it, but the paperwork that he was to bring back when he started work, it required him to sign that he had no criminal record, so he rang to say he couldn't sign it. It looked hopeless. He started work again [after 16 months un-employed]. He is earning much less, but likes his job and the people he is working with.”

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“As he has grown older the offences have become more serious. The pattern now is that he has these short periods in prison, comes home, and demands entry to the house. ... He was given hostel places, but always lost his temper with a staff member or another resident, and back he went to prison. ... When he comes out and is homeless he knows what kind of offence to commit to get himself back there, which he does within days. ... He gets to the gym in prison and gets stronger each time he is there.”

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“We had a family get-together at [his brother's] home at the weekend. It was heart-warming to see how delighted his 14-year old nephew was to see B and he said to me that he was overwhelmed by the love of his family.”

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When will they be released? What is temporary release? What does parole mean? Can they claim benefits if they've lost their job? What about clothes to wear to come home in? Are newly released prisoners entitled to benefits? How can I help them get back to having their own home and job? Are they given any money on release? Are there grants available for anything? Can prisoners get their National Insurance paid? I've got used to being on my own: how do we pick up our lives together?

Other sources of help available for friends and families:

- **Gov.uk/prisons and probation** for information about e.g. Parole Board hearings, probation, temporary release on licence. (England & Wales)
W: www.gov.uk/browse/justice/prisons-probation
- **Criminal Justice Social Work Services** (Scotland's probation service)
W: www.scotland.gov.uk
- **Pact** [prison advice and care trust] runs resettlement projects. (England)
W: www.prisonadvice.org.uk
- **Sacro** runs a Throughcare Service for prisoners and their families before and after release. (Scotland)
W: www.sacro.org.uk
- **UNLOCK** helps people with convictions with advice on a range of practical matters. (England) Helpline: 01634 247 350
W: www.unlock.org.uk

How you could help:

- Get the information for the person who needs it by looking on the websites listed above and/or using the sources shown on page 3.
 - Volunteer with these organisations (see 'Other practical things Friends could do').
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IS THERE ANYONE I CAN TALK TO?

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“She carries the pain of knowing that there is no hope without J receiving therapy to address the difficulties that he has probably always faced in life. She is frightened and has simply had enough. He is held in a place difficult to get to by public transport. The stress of all this together is proving too great for his wife and total family breakdown seems imminent.”

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“I thought about setting up a support group for mothers who found their sons or daughters in prison, but had no idea how to go about it and did not feel strong enough personally to do so. I was sure that many mothers were in a state of shock as I was, but found myself struggling too.”

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“Two relatives of mine have been imprisoned for several months now for an alleged crime that I certainly do not believe they committed. It has changed my life profoundly, in many ways. I have needed to explain to friends and colleagues about my relatives. This has not been easy for several reasons; firstly that a custodial sentence is very uncomfortable to discuss. Secondly, once a sentence has been passed, there is an assumption that the parties are guilty, because we supposedly live in a society that has a justice system that is fair. Thirdly, the case became very complex and this is not easy to explain to people, without appearing to be obsessive about it, which could easily bore them.”

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What do I tell my friends, and the rest of the family, and the people at work? How do I deal with the neighbours calling us names? How should I deal with the local press printing details and giving out our address? How can I cope with all this on my own?

Other sources of help available for friends and families:

Talking with other families

- **Action for Prisoners' Families** online resources include special interest groups and forums where relatives can talk to other family members about who or what has helped to support them. (England & Wales)
W: www.prisonersfamilies.org.uk
- **Families Outside** and **Prisoners' Families and Friends Service** helplines' staff and volunteers are happy to listen, as well as offering information – see page 3.
- **Grandparents Plus** offers advice for grandparents caring for grandchildren in difficult circumstances. (England & Wales) T: 0300 123 7015
W: www.grandparentsplus.org.uk

- **Prison Chat UK** is a free online site, run by prisoners' families for prisoners' families. (England, Wales, Scotland)
W: www.prisonchatuk.com
- **Prisoners' Families Voices** is a blog where families can post their comments and concerns. (England, Wales, Scotland)
W: <http://prisonersfamiliesvoices.blogspot.co.uk>

Support for the families of serious and sex offenders

- **Action for Prisoners' Families** is supporting work with the families of serious and sex offenders, and the families of offenders facing or experiencing life or long prison sentences. (England & Wales)
W: www.prisonersfamilies.org.uk
- **Affect** is a support group for relatives of serious offenders. Based in Hampshire but offers telephone counselling and befriending nationally.
W: www.affect.org.uk

How you could help:

- Get the information for the person who needs it by looking on the websites listed above and/or using the sources shown on page 3.
- Offer small practical help such as meeting for a weekly or monthly meal, providing transport to a school or work, or helping to fill in application forms.
- Help someone set up a support group (Action for Prisoners' Families has a guide on how to do this).
- Offer the use of your Meeting House as a place for a support group to meet.

OTHER PRACTICAL THINGS YOU COULD DO

By giving information directly to families and friends of prisoners

Local support groups and services

Many areas have voluntary organisations providing services to the families of prisoners. Finding out what is your area may take a bit of research, and Action for Prisoners' Families, Families Outside, and Inside Information are always good places to start looking. You can also try libraries, the local prison and CAB offices.

Factsheets

Available on a wide range of topics from:

- **Action for Prisoners' Families** also has guides on e.g. social media, dealing with the media, setting up a Support Group. (England & Wales)
W: www.prisonersfamilies.org.uk
- **CAB Advice Guide** is for prisoners rather than their families but with useful information. (England & Wales)
W: www.adviceguide.org.uk.
- **CAB Advice Guide** is for prisoners rather than their families but with useful information. (Scotland)
W: www.adviceguide.org.uk/scotland.htm
- **Families Outside** (Scotland)
W: www.familiesoutside.org.uk
- **Inside Information** (England, Wales, Scotland)
W: www.insidetime.org/info-home.asp
- **Prison Reform Trust** website has a comprehensive list of factsheets from various organisations, with a direct link to the document. (England & Wales)
W: www.prisonreformtrust.org.uk
- **Prisoners' Families and Friends Service** (England & Wales)
W: www.prisonersfamiliesandfriends.org.uk

Other resources

- **Action for Prisoners' Families:** other services include Family Members Advisory Group to enable families to feed into policy development and speak for themselves. (England & Wales)
W: www.prisonersfamilies.org.uk
- **Inside Time:** a monthly newspaper for prisoners. (England, Wales, Scotland)
W: www.insidetime.org/info-home.asp

By making the sources of information more widely known

- Get information posters and leaflets displayed in public places such as local doctors' surgeries, libraries, CAB offices, and anywhere else you think would be appropriate. Supplies of these available from:
 - **Action for Prisoners' Families** (England & Wales)
W: www.prisonersfamilies.org.uk
 - **POPS** [Partners of Prisoners and Families Support Group] (North West England, Yorkshire, Humberside)
W: www.partnersofprisoners.co.uk
- Have information posters and leaflets in your own Friends Meeting House. Supplies of these available from:
 - **Action for Prisoners' Families** (England & Wales)
W: www.prisonersfamilies.org.uk
 - **POPS** [Partners of Prisoners and Families Support Group] (North West England, Yorkshire, Humberside)
W: www.partnersofprisoners.co.uk
- Get information into schools through posters and talks.
- Distribute through Quaker groups such as **Quakers in Criminal Justice**. (England, Wales, Scotland)
W: www.qicj.org,
- Distribute through other networks and groups, Quaker and non-Quaker, that you belong to or know of – including your Area Meeting. (England, Scotland, Wales)
- Have useful guides available to give people (e.g. 'Outside Help' from **Action for Prisoners' Families**; single copies free to prisoners' and offenders' families).
W: www.prisonersfamilies.org.uk

As volunteers

- Family Befrienders offer emotional and practical support to people affected by the imprisonment of a relative, either through home visiting or by telephone. This could include offering a supportive listening ear, giving information about prison, accessing financial support or acting as an advocate.
- On a helpline.
- At a family and visitor centre.
- On a relationship and parenting education course in prisons and the community.

More information about what is required and how to get involved is available from:

- **Action for Prisoners' Families** has links to a wide variety of member organisations that welcome volunteers and offers training for volunteers. (England & Wales)
W: www.prisonersfamilies.org.uk
- **Families Outside** can refer you to local organisations that work directly with families, such as for support in prison visitors' centres, play provision for children, and assistance with travel and transport. (Scotland)
- **Inside Time** has a searchable database of organisations (England, Wales, Scotland)
W: www.insidetime.org/info-home.asp
- **Talking Justice: What can I do?** – comprehensive guide to volunteering in the criminal justice system and pressing for reforms in England & Wales. Produced jointly by Pact/Prison Reform Trust. Available from either organisation.
W: www.prisonreformtrust.org.uk/GetInvolved or W: www.prisonadvice.org.uk
- **What Can I Do? – a guide to volunteering opportunities in the criminal justice system in Scotland.** Produced jointly by the Joint Faiths Advisory Board on Criminal Justice/General Meeting of Quakers in Scotland. Available from JFABCJ, c/o Scottish Churches Parliamentary Office, 43-45 High Street, Edinburgh EH1 1SR.
W: www.actsparl.org/resources/what-can-i-do-.aspx

As professionals

- **Action for Prisoners' Families** has a number of publications and contacts for different professionals working with prisoners' families. (England & Wales)
W: www.prisonersfamilies.org.uk
- Family Engagement Workers: some prisons have family support workers who can provide useful links for professionals working in the community. Information from:
 - **NEPACS** (North East England)
W: www.nepacs.co.uk
 - **Pact** (England & Wales)
W: www.prisonadvice.org.uk
 - **POPS** (North West England, Yorkshire, Humberside)
W: www.partnersofprisoners.co.uk
- **Families Outside** has tools which help develop more positive engagement between professionals and the families they work with. (Scotland)
W: www.familiesoutside.org.uk
- **i-HOP** is a national one-stop information and advice service to support all professionals working with children and families of offenders (England & Wales)
W: www.i-hop.org.uk

- **Inside Information** has a range of prison-related fact sheets and database listings for solicitors and barristers. (England, Wales, Scotland)
W: www.insidetime.org/info-home.asp

Through training

- **Hidden Sentence** is a training course for professionals who work with prisoners' and offenders' families. Run by Action for Prisoners' Families, it provides a range of strategies and resources to help you support them. (England & Wales)
W: www.prisonersfamilies.org.uk
- **Families Outside** delivers bespoke training and awareness-raising for families who have a relative or friend involved in the criminal justice system. (Scotland)
W: www.familiesoutside.org.uk

As supporters

- Whoever you are, you can join the **Action for Prisoners' Families** network (England & Wales)
W: www.prisonersfamilies.org.uk
 - Organisations, individuals and prisoners family members can join the mailing list or become Friends of **Families Outside**. (Scotland)
W: www.familiesoutside.org.uk
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This is one in a series of publications arising from the *Learning from Experience: personal narratives from the criminal justice system* project of the Quaker Peace & Social Witness (QPSW) Crime, Community and Justice Sub-Committee (CCJS).

Others in the series are:

Action and Resources: a Briefing to support Friends wanting to take action to encourage action in the criminal justice system in England, Scotland and Wales (2013)

Women in Prison: a Briefing to inform & encourage Friends' action for improvements in this area of criminal justice (2013)

Why Prison?: a Framework to encourage discussion about the purposes, effectiveness and experience of imprisonment as a response to criminal actions (2013)

Experiencing Quakers: a Compilation of stories from *Learning from Experience* to inform & encourage Friends in supporting those who are affected by a custodial sentence (2013)

Copies of all these publications are freely available on the BYM website or from the Programme Manager at Friends House.

QPSW is part of the central organisation of Quakers in Britain, and CCJS supports and represents Quaker concerns in the area of criminal justice.

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