Taking Stock

An Inventory of Family-Sensitive and/or Family-Friendly Practices in Correctional Facilities Around the World

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Overview of Presentation

• Introduction to INCCIP
• Need for family-friendly practices
• Survey overview
  • Survey in development stage
  • We hope to get your input
• Respondents
• Survey questions
• Implementation challenges
Bridging nations to strengthen global support for the lives of children with imprisoned parents.
Introduction to INCCIP

**Born** out of international collaboration – when Ben Raikes visited Francis Ssuubi at Wells of Hope, Uganda

**Formed** at International Prisoners Families conference (Dallas, Texas) in May 2015

**Reached out** to researchers, organisations, advocates and others worldwide – mailing list of nearly 600 people

**Named**, logo developed, and conference organised
Our first conference

- Held in Rotorua, New Zealand in March 2017
- Over 60 presentations including advocacy work, research, and community organisations
- Keynote speakers included 12 year old Madison Strempek – child-inclusive process
- Strong sense that despite differences in context, problems, and cultures, core issues are similar everywhere
- Led to the possibility of combined international research work on core topics of interest across nations
We shared concerns about what happens inside prisons:
• There are few opportunities for children to have good visits
• Prisons appear to have little interest in keeping families together
• Opportunities for rehabilitation and successful reintegration seem largely absent everywhere

We were all interested in the very robust program at Parc Prison in Wales (and a small number of other programs)

We saw that a focus on family-friendly children’s practices provided a useful focus for our first international study
Need for family-friendly practices
Why are family-friendly practices needed in prisons and jail?

- “Collateral consequences” (US research)
- “Not our crime, still our sentence” (COPE slogan)
- Judicial systems “have provided a limited response to the needs of children” (Australia)
- In breach of UNCROC (s. 2 and 9 in particular)
- Bill of Rights for the Children of Incarcerated Parents (SFCIPP, USA)
- Treasury (2016) – children of people on prison most vulnerable to poor outcomes
- Prisons in NZ make things worse for children (Pillars) – current models are not working
• United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCROC) confers three broad categories of rights: protection, provision, and participation
• Too much focus on protection – not enough on provision and participation
• Cannot meet s. 9 goals re separation against children's’ will, and working for the well-being of children, using just a protective approach
• How do Correctional systems know practices meet the needs of children – when are children consulted?
• USA not a signatory to UNCROC
Why family-friendly practices in prisons and jails?

- Improves quality of life for children and families of incarcerated people
- Reduces likelihood of people returning to crime and imprisonment
- Recognises that the achievement of these goals requires substantive partnerships in the community
- Improves ‘civic reintegration’
A question of security

- Generally viewed as a continuum with family-friendly practices at one end and security concerns at the other
- In reality there is no conflict between the two – family-friendly practices in prisons and jails can be achieved without compromising security
- Family-friendly practices can promote security; e.g., Parc prison – marked reduction in drug incidents once family-friendly programmes were introduced
Survey Overview
Survey Purpose

• Gather information on “noteworthy” child-sensitive or child-friendly policies or practices worldwide

• Ultimately leading to an international register of policies and practices supporting children with incarcerated parents
Survey Respondents

• Recruit partners in as many countries as possible
  - Utilizing INCCIP membership network

• Partners will recruit respondents
  - And coordinate translation of survey if necessary
Survey Respondents

• Staff from prison or jail systems
• Staff from non-governmental organizations (NGOs) working inside prisons and jails
• Staff from other government agencies that serve prisons and jails
• Family members of people in prison or jail
Survey
Question Domains
Context

- Type of facility
  - prison or remand/jail
- Size of facility
  - small, medium, large
- Location of facility
  - rural, urban, suburban
- Who is incarcerated in the facility
  - men, women, transgender people
  - youth, adult
- Security level
  - low, medium, high, mixed, reentry
Survey
Question
Domains

Policies and Practices

• Maintaining or re-establishing relationships between children and incarcerated parents
• Visits between children and incarcerated parents
• Communication between children and incarcerated parents
• Children living in prison
I. Maintaining or Re-establishing Relationships Between Children and Incarcerated Parents

☐ Parenting classes or other types of family support classes are offered in the prison
☐ Family members in the community are involved in care planning meetings for incarcerated parent at the prison
☐ Incarcerated parents can visit sick relatives or attend funerals (subject to security/risk assessments)

Briefly describe the programs you checked above: ____________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________

II. Visits Between Children and Incarcerated Parents

☐ Children are allowed/authorized to visit their incarcerated parent
☐ The prison has a Visitor Reception Center/Area with activities and/or toys for children while they wait for visits
☐ Search and entry procedures are child-sensitive and appropriate
☐ The prison authorizes contact visits that allow children to have physical contact with their parents during a visit
☐ There is a child friendly space within the prison visiting room with things such as toys, books, play rug, play structure
☐ Visiting times are child friendly and include time for visits after school hours and/or on weekends (policy?)
☐ Information about visiting policies and rules is made readily available for visitors (online or on paper) and in multiple languages (policy?)
☐ Transportation support is provided for children and caregivers to travel to correctional facility for visiting

Briefly describe the programs you checked above: ____________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________
Implementation Challenges
Problem of Contact

- How to identify partners?
- Challenges with distribution and representation?
- Paper, electronic, or both?
- How do we encourage different respondent groups to complete the survey?
- Thoughts/Suggestions?
Problem of Content

- Different meanings in different jurisdictions
- Language/term differences
- Thoughts/Suggestions?
Complexities of researching in this area

- Language and meaning
- Differing systems
- Targeting the right people – problems of consistency
- Targeting the right people – problem of policy and practice
- Family-friendly prison systems under the radar – how to introduce
- Concept is controversial and contested – almost need to make the case before the survey starts, but requires educational approach
- Almost certainly very low response rate – how do we prevent this?
- Other complexities?