

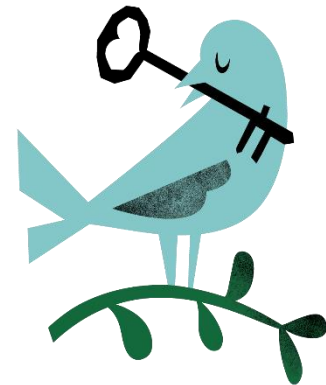
Maintaining Family ties during sentencing

Bente Carol Grambo, Senior Counsellor

The Organization for Families and Friends of Prisoners (FFP)



- NGO, founded in 1992
 - The only organisation in Norway whose primary task is to give support and advocate for family and friends of prisoners
 - Dialogue with the Correctional Service and other authorities
 - Information, lobbying and educational work
 - Member of Children of Prisoner Europe (COPE)
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- Advice and support
 - Activities
 - Councelling and therapy



Agenda

- Children with imprisoned parents have rights
- Children speaking out
- Film: *800 000 voices* (Families Outside, COPE)
- Maintaining family ties - examples of good practice in Norway



Children have rights



- CRC art 3 Best interest of the child
- CRC art 9 Maintaining family contact
- CRC art 12 Share their opinions and be listened to



Situations where FFP speak with children

- Family consultations
- Individual consultations with children
- Activities for children and families
- Support groups
- Group meetings/theme nights
- Online counselling
- Facilitate for children to be heard



Getting their views on new regulations and law proposals



Listening to their perspectives, wishes and needs



Joining them behind the walls with cameras

and situations where children speak out

- Children's Ombudsman's expert groups
- Hearings with children
- Dialogue with the correctional services (Dialogue meeting, photo project)
- Children speaking out at conferences
- Children speaking out in the media



Preparing for children's hearing with UN CRC representative



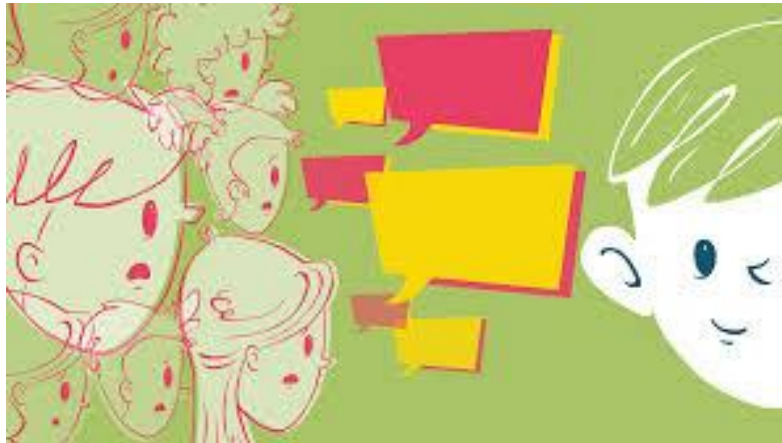
Sharing experience and views at a conference



Interviews on television

To know what is in children's best interest, we must listen to what they say!

Film: *800 000 Voices* (Families Outside, COPE)



15.06.2016

<https://vimeo.com/128154625>

<http://childrenofprisoners.eu/video-800000-voices/>

Keeping contact - described by children

- *If it hadn't been such a long way, I would prefer shorter visits, but more often than today*
- *You never get to say the important stuff when it happens. You forget about it and then it loses its meaning*
- *I need to talk to my dad when I have something to say*
- *The metal detector is a bit scary. I'm afraid of doing something wrong*
- *It would be nice to be outside also, not just inside that small room*
- *You only have 20 minutes to say everything you want to say. It's not like an ordinary phonecall.*



Maintaining family ties

- examples of good practice in Norway

- Children's ambassadors in every prison and probation office since 2014
- Prisons are obliged by law to facilitate child friendly visiting conditions (2001)
- Separate visiting apartments for families; overnight stay possible in some prisons
- Possibility to use a garden/playground during visits in some prisons
- Prisoners may apply for additional visiting hours, longer phone calls and extra leaves to maintain contact with children
- Skype



- Provide child-appropriate information leaflets
- Web-pages for children
- Information meeting and guided tours in the prison
- Offer visits to the prison prior to the imprisonment
- Offer children to see the parent's cell
- Family events in some prisons
- Offer parental programmes for imprisoned parents
- Offer relationship workshops for parents
- Prisoners make videos and audiobooks for their children



In the best interest of the family - and the society

- Reduce negative impact of parental imprisonment
 - Children have rights and The Correctional services has obligations
- Rehabilitation as a goal
 - Maintaining family ties has a positive effect on rehabilitation
 - Stable family relations reduces the risk of re-offending
- Not my crime – still my sentence
 - Heart for children campaign

