Children of Prisoners, Interventions and Mitigations to Strengthen Mental Health (COPING)

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COPING

Children of Prisoners, Interventions and Mitigations to Strengthen Mental Health

Kathryn Sharratt, University of Huddersfield
Lesley Ward, Partners of Prisoners (POPS)
• European Union Seventh Framework

• 3 year project

• UK, Romania, Germany, Sweden

• Ten partner organisations

• UK = University of Huddersfield & Partners of Prisoners (POPs)

• Two pan-European “umbrella” organisations
• Estimated 700,000 children affected by parental imprisonment in the EU

• Aim: to explore characteristics of children with imprisoned parents, their resilience, and their vulnerability to mental health problems

• Positivist approach

• Child-centred methodology
Work Package 1
Questionnaire based survey

- 250 children & non-imprisoned parent/carer
- Age 7-17
- Recruited via visitors centres
• Demographic information
• Support received/ desired support
• Rosenberg Self Esteem Scale
• Goodman Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire
• Kidscreen Questionnaire
• WHO Quality of Life Questionnaire (parent)
Work Package 2
In-depth Interviews

• 40 family units:
  - child
  - Non-imprisoned parent/carer
  - Imprisoned parent/carer
Work Package 3
Stakeholder Consultations

- Prison staff
- NGO staff
- Social workers
- Care givers
- Staff at children's homes
Work Package 4
Mapping of Services & Interventions

- Services/ interventions targeting:
  a) the child
  b) the imprisoned parent/ carer
  c) the non-imprisoned parent/ carer

- Four categories:
  a) Prison-based specialised interventions
  b) Community-based specialised services
  c) Community-based non-specialised services
  d) Mental health services for children & young people
### Prison-based Interventions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>UK</th>
<th>Germany</th>
<th>Romania</th>
<th>Sweden</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. of prisons</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Response rate</td>
<td>84 (62%)</td>
<td>137 (96%)</td>
<td>17 (53%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With interventions</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>17</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of interventions</td>
<td>198</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>8</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
## Community-based Specialised Interventions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>UK</th>
<th>Germany</th>
<th>Romania</th>
<th>Sweden</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. of services</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of interventions</td>
<td>421</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
COPING project has received funding from the European Community’s Seventh Framework Programme (FP7/2007-2013) under Grant Agreement no 241988

**NGO Role in the Research**

- Offenders Families
- Telephone Helpline
- Arrest
- Court
- Community Sentence
- Prison Visitor Centre
- Release
- Family Link Workers
• POPS bring our expertise of working with offenders families for over 20 years

• Our knowledge of working with the prison service

• Our ‘needs led ethos’ and our ability to engage with families
• POPS have been involved in all Work Packages

• WP1 has been the most time consuming

• We were actively involved in the pilots for WP1 and WP2

• University of Huddersfield trained POPS staff to complete the questionnaires

• The families trust and feel comfortable with POPS staff

• They take the time to talk to children and carers about the issues that they have raised
• Children have raised issues about being bullied in the interviews and POPS staff have been able to offer support to the family

• We have identified different issues for children depending on the category of prison

• We are able to positively challenge families, for instance the £10 voucher alone could not be the incentive

• Completing the questionnaires has enabled our staff to work more closely with families who may not have previously engaged
• POPS have played and active role in the child centred approach of COPING

• We have engaged and facilitated a child focused group with University of Huddersfield

• We have advised on all other Work Packages:
  - WP3 – Stakeholder Consultation
  - WP4 – Mapping of Services and Interventions

• Attending Conferences and workshops with European Partners

• Management Activities
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