



What does October bring? It's not all doom and gloom as we say most definitely goodbye to our Indian summer. Clocks going back may bring darkness but it is an extra hour in bed after all. Halloween parties with the excuse for dressing up and of course beautiful autumnal leaves everywhere you look and maybe even a half term if you're lucky!

Special points of interest:

- Action for Prisoners' Families
- Parent's Point of View
- Dates for your diaries

The Link is now travelling further a field so we would like to take the opportunity to welcome all Outreach Workers and Children's Centre Managers. We hope you find it a useful resource and are always eager for any comments and ideas regarding the newsletter.

From this edition onwards we will include a "starters" and "leavers" section as requested by some of you. It is a great idea to keep everyone in the loop with how areas are changing and growing and a way of saying thank you to colleagues who are moving on to pastures new.



You will also find at the end of the newsletter a brand new "Dear Team" article. This resource is for anyone who would like to send in any concerns or worries related to their work anonymously and hopefully get them answered. There is a tear off slip provided on the back page for any questions. Once completed please send in to Anna Linehan, 3rd Floor, Quadrant Court, 35 Guildford Road, Woking, Surrey, GU22 7QQ.

Best wishes

Parent Support Advisory Team

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Discussion Point	1-2
West Surrey Mental Health Fair	3
Personal Safety	3
Parent's Point of View	4
Dates for your diaries	5
Leavers and Starters	6



Action for Prisoners' Families

Ryan was fast asleep when the police came. It was six in the morning when they raided the house, handcuffed his dad and bundled him into a police car. The next time Ryan saw his dad he was in prison. He has nightmares about the arrest and sometimes wets the bed. He misses his dad and worries about him. His school work has started to suffer and he is starting to get in trouble. He would like someone to talk to but his mum has told him it's a family secret.

Hundreds, possibly thousands of children in Surrey are in Ryan's situation. Nobody knows how many children have family members in prison, but the official 'guestimate' is that 160,000 children have a parent sent to jail every year. That's 2.5 times the number on the child protection register and six times the number in care. In fact, there are more children affected by imprisonment than divorce.

This group is both invisible and vulnerable. There is no routine information collected about them and there is no one body responsible for their needs. What we do know is that these children are more likely to be bullied, stigmatised and suffer from mental health problems than their peers. In addition, a parent being sent to prison can also plunge a family into poverty, force them to leave their home and expose them to hostility or even violence from the local community. In short, prisoners' children are at severe risk of not meeting the Every Child Matters outcomes.

Supporting this group is difficult. There is no established way of identifying these children and families are understandably not always keen to come forward. Consequently, parental imprisonment is often discovered almost as a side issue, for example when a child has become very disruptive at school.

Professionals can help support this vulnerable group firstly by fostering a non-judgemental attitude – remember the child has done nothing wrong. Do not ask about the crime and respect confidentiality where appropriate. There are many worksheets and children's books available to help children and families talk about this difficult issue (see below for details). Displaying information, such as the Prisoners' Families Helpline poster in your school's reception area will let families know that you are interested in their situation and may encourage them to come forward. Above all, listen to the family – everyone's experience of imprisonment is different.

Sam Hart
Training and Development Officer

Please find below some useful resources. Please be aware some are downloadable and free and some come with a charge.

The Outsiders Series

- Sent to Prison
- Telling the Children
- Preparing for Release
- Living with Separation

£1 each for Professionals, free for Prisoner Families
www.prisonersfamilies.org.uk

Visiting my Dad / my Mum

Downloadable resources to help children talk about their visit
www.ormiston.org

'Danny's Mum' and 'Tommy's Dad'

Books for younger children about having a parent in prison
www.prisonersfamilies.org.uk

Prison Service Website

Contains information about all the prisons in England and Wales, including information for visitors.
<http://www.hmprisonservice.gov.uk>

Prisoners' Families Toolkit

A very useful free resource including worksheets to help children talk about their feelings
<http://www.youngsouthampton.org/workforce>

'Finding Dad'

A book and CD for older children
www.prisonersfamilies.org.uk

'It's a tough time for everyone'

Cartoon book for older children/teenagers
www.prisonersfamilies.org.uk

Pact

A useful short film, which shows the step-by-step process of visiting a prisoner
http://www.prisonadvice.org.uk/vc_wandsworth?q=wandsworthfilm

For more information, details of training or to order publications please contact Sam Hart from Action for Prisoners' Families on sam@actionpf.org.uk 07791 178241 or visit www.prisonersfamilies.org.uk

West Surrey Mental Health Fair

On Wednesday 17th November Woking Cornerhouse will be hosting the West Surrey Mental Health Fair. This is an opportunity for all those with an interest in mental health issues to meet and find out about the services that exist in our area and to learn more about mental health. There will be talks from a number of mental health professionals and a workshop run by Surrey and Borders Mental Health Community Services.

The event will take place at the HG Wells Suite in Woking from 11am-4pm. Admission is free and open to all and there will be refreshments available.

For information visit <http://www.wokingmentalhealth.org.uk>

Please find attached to your email a flyer with all the necessary details.

And in another area..

Epsom Mental Health Week will be held from 10th - 16th October. There are a number of events taking place all week, including events for carers and looking after yourself. All are welcome to attend. Details of the event can be found at www.epsommentalhealthweek.org.uk

Personal Safety tip of the month..



The team are aware that not everyone uses their car to help out children and families as part of their role, but if you do fall into that category check with your insurance that you are completely covered. Insurance companies do differ with their charges, some make no charge at all and others have been noted to charge up to £25.

Did you know that even if you are transporting materials in your car periodically as part of your role that Business insurance is needed on your insurance cover?

Have you reported any incidents or near misses at work recently relating to your personal safety?

Your first port of call should of course be with your Line Manager/Headteacher.

After this all accidents / incidents relating to your lone working can now be reported using the web address below. There is an online tutorial on the front page of the reporting system, which will guide you through the reporting process. You do not need to log in to report an accident or incident, just click on 'report an incident'.

The website address is:

<https://surreycc-safety.net/scc/>

Click on the hyperlink and then again on 'Report an Incident'. Once you have logged the incident you will then be given a reference number for your records.

If you are comfortable and happy for your ADO to read the incident report made, the next process is to email us, include in your email, permission to read and the reference number given from the website.

Parent's Point of View

This week one of the team has been out in their area talking to families about how they have found the HSLW service.

Cathy a single mum of five who had relocated to Woking area a couple of years ago, describes her views on how the provision has worked for her and her family.

"The first time I heard of a HSLW was when the school contacted me about my son who was having problems in class. We had not been living in the area long and I had no support and I didn't know which way to turn. The school explained to me about Ruth, but I was still really worried because I thought it was something to do with Social Services.

On first meeting Ruth she explained really clearly what she was about and how she could help, I can't tell you how much she has taken off my shoulders. Everyone should have "a Ruth".

My son probably had 2 weeks off school every month before we had Ruth, he used to cry and tell me he didn't feel well, hide his school uniform, you name it, he did it. Now his attendance is much better. She has helped with stuff to read about certain things the family are dealing with and also attended school meetings with me. I used to worry about going into school but I am so much more confident now, talking with the school about problems is ok.

It's not just my son either, Ruth has helped out with my other children, sorting out speech therapy appointments, school admissions and really important financial help, helping me understand there are other agencies out there that can help. I am in a much better position to cope now, everything seems to have levelled out".

At the end of the interview there was time to speak to Cathy's son about how he felt. He described school being about "a 5" before he met Ruth and how now school was "a 10". He was more than keen to show off his recent art work and then proceeded to tell us all about Salvador Dali, describing in detail the paintings by name and colour.

Cathy ended the interview by saying that without the service she would have had to give up work because the pressures were just far too great.

Rachael is a 32 yr old mum of four boys, ages 11, 9, 5, and 3. She has lived in the Woking area for 12 years and has a great network of friends. She first heard about HSLWs through a friend who had told her what fab work they do.

"My situation is probably a bit different as I self referred to Kelly. I had listened to my friend talk about her and I thought it was definitely somebody I could talk to about my situation.

My son does not have problems at school really, it is more at home that I struggle but that impacts on my other three boys and my husband. Kelly is like a best friend, she supports in so many ways. She is at the end of the phone, she has involved me and my husband on the parenting programme, she has helped out with routines and in the holidays she has even found us activities to do with the boys. I am just waiting to hear whether I can attend the MEND programme with my son which will be so good. It will give us a chance to spend quality time together. I have seen a real change in my son since the support started and I feel I am in a much better position to deal with situations now. I would be devastated if the service disappeared, the help is just unbelievable".

Both Cathy and Rachael gave consent for the articles to be published and did not want their names to be changed.

Dates for your diaries



ID badges – Surrey Safer Staffing

Last month the team conducted an audit on the number of HSLWs who had taken up the offer of a Surrey Safer Staffing badge. The audit shows there are still over half the workforce without ID working in the community. Please see below dates for accessing this vital piece of personal safety equipment.

4th October – County Hall, Penrhyn Road, Kingston-upon-Thames, KT1 2DJ 11-12.30pm
 6th October - Absolute Building, Lyon Way. Frimley, Surrey. GU16 7ER 8.30-12.30pm
 11th October – County Hall 11-12.30pm
 13th October - AO2 East Surrey Area Office, Lesbourne Rd, Reigate RH2 7JA 8.30-12.30pm
 18th October - County Hall 11 –12.30pm
 19th October - AO3 South West Area Office, Grosvenor House, Cross Lanes, Guildford, GU1 1FA 8.30-12.30pm
 21st October - Fairmount House, Bull Hill, Leatherhead, KT22 7AH 8.30-12.30pm
 26th October - Runnymede Centre, Chertsey Road, Addlestone, KT15 2EP 8.30-12.30pm
 28th October - Quadrant Court, 35 Guildford Road, Woking, GU22 7QQ 8.30-12.30pm

Please remember to email Julia Bennett julia.bennett@surreycc.gov.uk prior to attending with date and estimated time of arrival. These sessions are no longer running as “drop in” sessions. You will need to bring all your relevant documentation with you i.e. current CRB, passport or photo driving license, proof of current address, utility bill.

Supervision dates

11th October - Day Three of Supervision Training for professionals who previously attended Day One & Two in July. Venue: Parkview Community Centre, Sheerwater, Woking. GU21 5NZ

2nd, 3rd and 25th November - 3 day Supervision Training course 9:30-16:30

Please note the change of date for Day Three.

North: 2nd & 3rd November - Parkview Community Centre, Sheerwater, Woking. GU21 5NZ and
 25th November - Surrey History Centre, 130 Goldsworth Road, Woking, Surrey GU21 6ND.

South: 2nd, 3rd and 25th November - Guildford Library, 77 North Street, Guildford, Surrey. GU1 4AL

Lone Worker Personal Safety *

Tuesday 16th November 9:30-16:00 (9:00 refreshments)

North: Horsa Building, The Hythe School, Egham, Surrey, TW18 3HD

South: St Francis Centre, Southway, Guildford, Surrey, GU2 8WZ

**Please note lunch requirements are the responsibility of the participant.*

Only tea and coffee refreshments will be provided.

West Surrey Mental Health Fair - ‘Linking Minds’

Wednesday 17th November 2010 11am-4pm

H G Wells Conference & Events Centre

