

WE ARE THE
CHILDREN AND
YOUNG PEOPLE
WHO HAVE
EXPERIENCED
A PARENT
OR BROTHER
OR SISTER
BEING ARRESTED,
TRIED,
AND
IMPRISONED.

WE BELIEVE
THAT WE SHOULD
HAVE THE
FOLLOWING
RIGHTS.

OUR VOICE: THE CHARTER FOR
CHILDREN'S & YOUNG PEOPLE
WITH A FAMILY MEMBER IN PRISON

www.prisonadvice.org.uk/ourvoice



OUR VOICE



The Charter for Children's & Young People with a family member in prison


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FOR HOMES TO BE RESPECTED

1. We want there to be more consideration for the rest of the family when an arrest takes place.
2. We don't want our homes to be raided.
3. We don't want force to be used in front of us.
4. We want our homes to be cleared up and fixed after a raid.

TO BE INFORMED

1. We want to know how our family member is.
 2. We want to know if they are safe.
 3. We want to know if they are coping.
 4. We want to be told directly where they are.
 5. We want to know more quickly if they are transferred and where to.
 6. We want to know what options we have for visits.
 7. We want to know what will happen if our parent or guardian doesn't want to take us to visit our other parent or family member in prison.
 8. We want to know more about the visits process.
 9. We want trained staff to speak to us and not just the adults.
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TO BE HEARD

1. We want to be considered and listened to from the beginning.
2. We want an advocate/adult who can ensure we are heard.

TO HAVE A CHOICE

1. We want to have a choice about whether we visit or not and who with.
2. We want to be considered when the prison location is agreed.

NOT TO BE JUDGED

1. We do not want to be punished for standing by our family. It does not mean we agree with what they have done.
2. We want the authorities to understand how imprisonment affects children and young people.

TO BE OFFERED EMOTIONAL SUPPORT

1. We want targeted support.
2. We want to be able to talk to someone who has experienced a similar situation.
3. We want more access to group support from our peers without the presence of our parents.
4. We want schools to be supportive and authorise time off to go to visits.
5. We want to know what support is available.

TO BE RESPECTED

1. We want our needs to be considered throughout the whole process.

ACCORDING TO THE MINISTRY OF JUSTICE, 200,000 CHILDREN WILL
EXPERIENCE THE IMPRISONMENT OF A PARENT THIS YEAR.

Pact works inside prisons, from prison visitors centres, and in the community, to support families affected by imprisonment.

Last year, Pact supported 30,741 children to visit parents, siblings and other relatives in prison. Of these, over 9,000 were younger children who benefited from supervised play schemes.

Pact Family Engagement Workers provided 8,541 families with personalised support, to help them cope with the impact of a prison sentence.

Pact also supported hundreds more children & families through parenting and relationship education schemes, including our 'Time to Connect' programme.

www.prisonadvice.org.uk/our-services/sup-children-fams/ttc

We support prisoners' children because

- they are the forgotten, hidden victims of crime
- they suffer stigma, social isolation, shame and fear
- they are often left behind and placed at risk by the removal of parents
- they are at higher risk of suffering mental illness, homelessness and poverty than other children
- they are at higher risk of getting involved in anti-social or criminal activity later in life
- keeping families together reduces the risk of re-offending

But most of all..

Because they are children, full of promise and potential.

What do prisoners' children want?

Pact has worked with prisoners' children since we were founded in 1898.

In 2014, Pact worked with groups of children and young people in London whose parents have been supported by the Prisoners Families and Friends Services (www.pffs.org.uk). We ran a series of workshops in inner London with children and young people between the ages of 13 - 17. We asked them what they wanted from adults in power; from their parents, the police, teachers, magistrates and judges, prison staff, and from charities such as Pact.

Together, they have created this Charter.

Please support these children now. You can sign up, as an individual or an organisation, to the Charter at www.prisonadvice.org.uk/ourvoice

Signing up shows you take these children and young people seriously, and that you will work to improve practice in response to their reasonable requests.

This charter is supported by COPE - www.childrenofprisoners.eu

