



# Independent Evaluation of Hear our Voice:

A project supporting children  
and young people with a  
family member in prison

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Prisoners · Families · Communities  
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# Introduction

It is estimated that there are two hundred thousand children with a parent in prison in England and Wales (Ministry of Justice, 2012) and a much larger and unquantified number of children affected by the imprisonment of grandparents, siblings and other close family members. Children with a relative in prison remain a largely unrecognised group in much public, policy and political debates on crime and punishment. This remains the case despite the efforts of organisations that work to reform criminal justice processes so that the impact of prison on children and families is recognised. There is also an increase in evidence from within academic circles on the effect of imprisonment on the family.

It has been established that having a parent in prison is a strong risk factor for a range of adverse outcomes for children, including higher levels of emotional distress, mental and physical health problems, lower levels of education attainment and involvement in the criminal justice system (Murray and Farrington, 2008). Children in this situation also must cope with the trauma of parental separation and feelings of loss associated with imprisonment and are exposed to stigma associated with crime and offending (Gill, 2010).

Hear Our Voice is the Prison Advice and Care Trust's (Pact) London based project that aimed to support children affected by familial imprisonment in three ways.

- Provide direct community-based support with peer support elements to children affected by familial imprisonment to reduce isolation amongst this group.
- Advocate on behalf of children affected by familial imprisonment so that their needs and rights are understood.
- Raise awareness and improve practice in relation to children affected by familial imprisonment within schools, the courts and the police.

This combination of community-based support, advocacy and impact on practice made Hear Our Voice an innovative project because it aims to positively affect the lives of individual children and their families. It wants to change the wider context so that the needs and rights of children are acknowledged and considered.

This report presents the findings of the independent evaluation of two of the projects' three stands of work.

1. The community-based support provided to young people affected by familial imprisonment
2. The work conducted to raise awareness of the needs of the children of prisoners amongst schools and officers serving in the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS).

The purpose of this evaluation is to:

- Present an overview of the programme of activity between 1<sup>st</sup> January 2016 and the 31<sup>st</sup> of January 2018.
- Independently verify programme monitoring data collected between the 1<sup>st</sup> January 2016 and the 31<sup>st</sup> January 2018.
- Use programme monitoring and evaluation data to assess the extent to which Hear Our Voice met its stated aims and outcomes and provide insight, where possible, on the impact of the programme.
- Identify programme strengths and opportunities for organisational learning.
- Provide recommendations for the future development of working with children and young people with a family member in prison.

It is hoped that this provides helpful insights for Pact, the project funders and others in how to build and develop this work in the future.

## Background and Context

The Prison Advice and Care Trust is a registered charity that has worked with prisoners and their families in England and Wales since 1898. Alongside the Hear Our Voice project, Pact delivers a range of other complimentary projects in the community and in prisons designed to support the needs of prisoners and their families. This includes:

- Pact helpline
- Courts Volunteers to engage with and offer support to people who experience the imprisonment of a family member
- Befriending service for prisoners' families
- Prisoners' families peer support group
- A network of family engagement workers (FEWs) in prisons who help support prisoners to establish and maintain contact with friends and family during their sentence
- Groupwork delivery with relationship and parenting programmes that support prisoners and their family members to strengthen their relationships
- Visitor support services in visitors' centres across England and Wales.

## Management and Delivery

Hear Our Voice operates from the Pact London office and had two part-time members of staff responsible for implementation and delivery, a Children and Young Person's Advocate and a Youth Engagement Worker.

The Children and Young Person's Advocate was responsible for the day to day management of the Hear Our Voice project in addition to networking and building relationships with, and training, schools, magistrates and the police. The advocate joined the project in January 2016 and stayed with the project until October 2017 when she took up a position in another organisation. She was replaced by a member of the Pact team with significant experience of working with prisoners' families.

The Youth Engagement Worker was responsible for identifying and accessing children and young people affected by familial imprisonment that could benefit from support offered by Hear Our Voice. They were also tasked with working with children and young people affected by familial imprisonment and their families and other professionals where needed. Over the duration of the project there have been two people in this role. The first was employed from January to September 2016 and the second from October 2016 to the end of the project. During the short period of time when this role was vacant, the Children and Young Person's Advocate continued to publicise the youth engagement work by building relationships with relevant institutions and organisations in order to seek referrals for children affected by familial imprisonment. They also worked directly with children and young people who were referred to the project.

Overall responsibility for Hear Our Voice sat with the London Services Manager.

# Programme Aims and Outcomes

As detailed in the original bid, Hear Our Voice aimed to achieve the following project outcomes for these two strands of work.

Outcome 1: Children and young people affected by familial imprisonment feel less alone and experience less distress

- A. 60 children over the lifetime of the grant engage in support sessions and attend a variety of peer to peer support activities.
- B. The young person's section of the website is accessed 219,000 times over the duration of the grant. Young people viewing it are able to access and download materials created by their peers which offer practical and emotional support and advice about visiting a prison and how to cope with their feelings.
- C. In partnership with Place2BE, training is delivered to School Project Managers in 100 different schools in how to work with, and support children and families affected by imprisonment and 400 children over the lifetime of the grant receive this support.

Outcome 2: Frontline Professionals have a better knowledge and understanding of the welfare needs of children affected by familial imprisonment

- A. The Metropolitan police in 6 different London boroughs are trained over the lifetime of the grant and report a better understanding of the trauma carrying out a raid on a family home can have on children.
- B. 300 Magistrates Courts in England and Wales receive guidance and follow up information.
- C. 20 schools in London receive our 'Train the Trainer' training and score an 80% increase on average in understanding the issues surrounding children and familial imprisonment on their evaluation forms at the end of the training.

## Evaluation Questions

The key research questions addressed by this evaluation were:

1. What were the experiences of project staff in developing and delivering the Hear Our Voice project?
2. What were the experiences of children and young people who engaged with project activities and what difference did it make to their lives?
3. What were parents and carers experiences of Hear Our Voice and what were their views on the difference it made to the lives of their children?
4. What are the experiences of professionals involved in the delivery and content of training?
5. What level of knowledge and understanding of the issues faced by children and young people affected by familial imprisonment exists amongst professionals?
6. Did the training delivered to professionals change practise, policy or procedure?

## Evaluation Methodology

The final methodology used to evaluate the Hear Our Voice project was mixed-methods and utilised both qualitative and quantitative research approaches.

### Quantitative

- Secondary analysis of all project data linked to all community-based youth support and raising awareness amongst the police and schools.
- Paper questionnaires for all professionals involved in the training that asked their views on the delivery and content as well as measuring differences in knowledge and understanding of the issues faced by children and young people affected by familial imprisonment.
- Online questionnaire for police officers (sent a minimum of two months post-training to examine the short to medium term impact of the training on police practice, specifically the execution of arrest in the home).
- Online questionnaire for families and professionals sent to them at least two months after the start of engagement to explore whether support had made a difference to the young person and family.



## Qualitative

- Interviews with project staff that explored implementation and delivery of the project.
- Telephone interviews with a sample of the population (n15) who attended the schools training a minimum of two months post training to explore its short-term impact.
- Telephone interviews with (n4) parents and carers whose child(ren) or young person had received support from Hear Our Voice to explore their views on the support and whether it had made a difference to the child(ren) and family.
- Participant observation at schools Train the Trainer day and youth support sessions – this was limited to observing a Teen Family Day delivered at HMP Brixton after other observations planned to take place during summer activities were cancelled by project.

## Data Analysis

- A descriptive statistical analysis was conducted on all quantitative data.
- After transcription, a thematic analysis was conducted on the qualitative data.

## Research Ethics

This research was designed and conducted in adherence with the British Sociological Associations Statement of Ethical Practice.<sup>1</sup>

- All participants were informed of the purpose of the evaluation and how the data they contributed would be used.
- Consent was obtained from all research participants before any data was gathered.
- Participants were made aware that their involvement is voluntary, and they could withdraw from the research at any point without the need to provide a reason.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.britisoc.co.uk/ethics>



- All information provided by the participants remained confidential and was only used for the purposes of the research.
- The privacy of participants was protected through strict data management processes and the removal of all identifiable information at the reporting stage.

## Reflections on the Methodology

This study did not include a control group, so outcomes experienced by participants cannot be directly attributed to Hear Our Voice project activity. However, differences occurred during the project lifecycle and/or were attributed to Hear Our Voice by project participants can be used as evidence of change on an individual basis.

### Children and Young People

- One-to-one interviews with a sample of young people supported by Hear Our Voice were planned but did not take place.
- Short discussion sessions with the children and young people attending the summer activities were due to take place, but the participant observation was cancelled by the project with no alternative made available to the evaluator.
- The number of interviews with parents and carers and responses to the online survey was much lower than planned because of changes to the programme activity (discussed in more detail later in the report).
- The number of responses to the online questionnaire for professionals was much lower than expected, partly because of changes to the project activities but also due to difficulties faced by the project in engaging external professionals.
- Project staff and management did not collect data that was required from attendees of the schools training on the numbers of children and young people they supported post-training.

### Raising Awareness Amongst Professionals

- Originally, the design included interviews with police officers but access to them could not be negotiated and so the online questionnaire was used as an alternative.

# Project Activity: supporting children

The diversification of activity in this strand of work occurred because of challenges in identifying children affected by familial imprisonment and difficulties recruiting children to the project who were identified.

In the first four months of the project, activity was focused on developing partnerships so that children affected by familial imprisonment could be identified and referred to the project and ensuring appropriate policies and procedures were in place before the first planned session.

Project documents show that during this period:

- Contact was made with all secondary schools, Further Education colleges and youth clubs in Southwark giving details of Hear Our Voice and referral information.
- Meetings with London prison-based Family Engagement Workers took place to arrange promoting Hear Our Voice in prison visitor centres.
- Agreements were made with The Safer Schools Police Liaison Officers for Southwark to promote project within schools and signpost young people.
- Team meetings with Southwark's Safer School Police Liaison Officers took place to discuss Hear Our Voice with officers from both the North Unit and South Unit.
- The Southwark Safeguarding Board was informed of the project and a meeting with the Head of Assessment and Interventions took place.
- Posters publicising Hear Our Voice were distributed to schools, youth groups, police officers and the Safeguarding Board in Southwark and all Visitors Centres of London-based prisons.
- The Youth Engagement Worker promoted Hear Our Voice HMP Wormwood Scrubs, HMP Belmarsh and HMP Holloway Family Days and met with Visitor Centre Managers at HMP Feltham, HMP Pentonville and HMP Wormwood Scrubs to promote the project.

By May 2016 Hear Our Voice had received and processed fifteen referrals, four of whom had confirmed they would attend, but despite this no young people attended the first two support sessions held on the 28<sup>th</sup> of May and the 11<sup>th</sup> of June 2016.

Informal feedback from schools to project workers was that:

- Children were reluctant to be identified as having a family member in prison and so were reluctant to attend a project targeted at this group,

- Children felt unsure about engaging with an organisation and people they were unfamiliar with.

At this point the youth engagement strategy was revisited and redesigned. New options to identify and engage children affected by familial imprisonment were considered and pursued alongside continuing to build on relationships already established. The new pathways were:

- Offering one-to-one mentoring support to young people to enable relationships and familiarity to be established between young person and the Youth Engagement Worker.
- Running tailored visits for teenagers in HMP Brixton, a local resettlement prison, to introduce Hear Our Voice and begin to build relationships with young people and families unknown to Pact.
- Engage with Pact's existing family support groups to raise awareness of the project.
- Include eleven-year olds in the project with a view to offering support to them and older siblings.
- Contact and raise awareness of the project amongst professionals working in Troubled Families teams, Children's Centres and Children's Services Teams.
- Contact alternative educational providers and educational provision for those with Special Educational Needs to raise awareness of Hear Our Voice.
- Work with Place2Be professionals in primary and secondary schools as an alternative identification and referral route.
- Extend the geographical boundaries of Hear Our Voice from Southwark and include Greenwich and Lewisham.

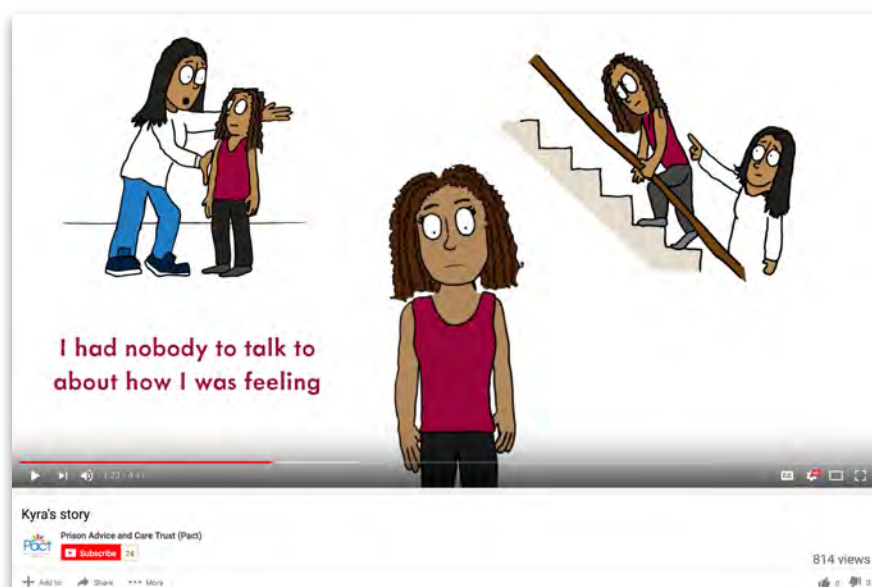
Over the lifetime of the project the following activity took place in the community-based youth support strand of work.

1. 11 community-based youth support groups were held in May 2016, June 2016, December 2016, May 2017, July 2017 (x2), August 2017 (x3), October and December 2017.
2. 67 mentoring sessions were held with 13 young people aged between 11 and 17 years old. 7 of these young people also attended community-based youth groups after being mentored.
3. 5 Teenager Prison Visits were held at HMP Brixton between April and December 2017 – a sixth was cancelled because of security concerns at the prison.

The adaptations made to the project activity in supporting young people happened because of challenges faced by the project and project staff in working with others to identify children who would benefit from the support offered by Hear Our Voice (these are discussed in more detail on pages 22-23 of this report). Being agile and adaptable in the face of such difficulties is evidence that project staff and management were able to think creatively and adapt their strategies and approach when necessary. Furthermore, contacting more and different agencies that could work or have knowledge of children affected by familial imprisonment and creating a pipeline from mentoring and the teenage prison visits are viable ways to increase the number of children referred into the project and raise awareness of the project to children and families.

It does, however, mean that understanding the difference the project made is more difficult because not all children who engaged with the project did so in the same way. Some attended community-based youth groups, some were mentored, others attended community-based youth groups and were mentored, and others went along to a teenage prison visit. The following needs to be taken into consideration when considering the outcomes of the project.

- Community-based youth groups, for example, had a strong peer support element, which was not present in the one-to-one mentoring and was marginal to the teen visits. It was also delivered in a neutral space away from home and school and gave children access to project staff.
- Teen prison visits provided one off support (only two children attended more than one visit) and were focused on supporting and strengthening bonds between families and not just meeting the specific needs of the child. Children at these visits did not have access to project staff on a one-to-one basis, unless they contacted the project subsequently.
- One-to-one mentoring did not involve peer-support and was focused on meeting the specific needs of the child and involved interaction and engagement in the home and at school.



# Key findings on outcomes: supporting children

The following outcomes were in the original project bid for the community-based support for children strand of the project.

Children and young people affected by familial imprisonment feel less alone and experience less distress

## **A. 60 children between 12-17 over the lifetime of the grant engage in support sessions and attend a variety of peer to peer support activities.**

Between January 2016 and December 2017 Hear Our Voice engaged 58 children between the ages of 11 and 17 years in project activities. The data is presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Number of children 11-17 supported by Hear Our Voice

Support type	Young people between 11-17 years of age
Community-based youth groups only	9
Community-based youth groups and one-to-one mentoring	7
One-to-one mentoring only	6
Teen prison visits	36
<b>Total</b>	<b>58</b>

As Table 1 shows, 9 children attended community-based youth groups, 7 attended community-based youth groups and were mentored, 6 children were mentored, and 36 children participated in point of contact support via a tailored teen prison visit at HMP Brixton.

Of the 58 children who engaged with Hear Our Voice over the lifetime of the project, 16 children attended community-based youth groups where direct peer support was available.

Support at community-based youth groups was provided to children by project staff and peer-to-peer. Sessions were planned around an activity and included space

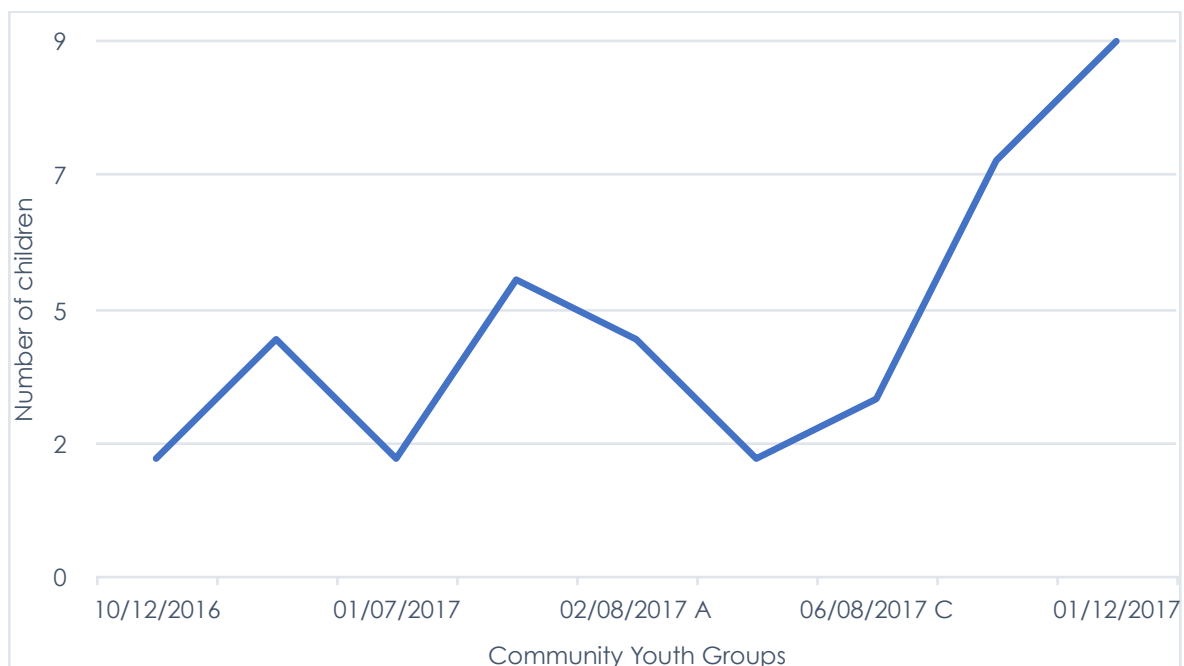
where children could talk to project staff and each other and get support. Activities for the 9 sessions children attended were animation/stop motion workshop (x3), bowling, graffiti art, cinema, rock climbing, football and ice skating.

Of the 16 who attended community-based youth groups, project data shows that:

- 9 children attended 1-2 sessions
- 6 children attended 3-4 sessions

1 child attended 5 sessions or more (7 sessions in total) Figure 1. below shows that attendance at the youth groups fluctuated between 2 and 5 children from December 2016 to August 2017 but grew in the final two groups run in October and December 2017 to 7 and 9 children.

Figure 1. Attendance at community youth groups, January 2016 – December 2017



## Gender

The target for engagement of children in Hear Our Voice activities was 50% boys and 50% girls. Data was provided for 50/58 children and showed that 19 (38%) girls and 31 (53%) boys engaged in activities over the lifetime of the project. Data was missing for 8 (14%).

## Ethnicity

Data on ethnicity was not collected systematically across project activities. Data on ethnicity was provided for 27 out of 58 children who attended the project. Table 2 shows that of these, just over half were from black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds and just under half were white British.

Table 2. Ethnicity of children engaged in Hear Our Voice

Ethnicity	Community-based support (mentoring and youth group)	Teen prison visits	Total
White British	7	6	13
Black British, Black African, Black Caribbean	8	3	11
Asian	2	0	2
Mixed ethnicity	1	0	1

## Feedback on community-based youth groups

Some feedback from the children who attended youth groups was shared with the evaluator. The feedback sheets covered three out of the nine youth group sessions (15 children) so should not be over interpreted but it does show that children did enjoy the sessions.

Analysis showed that:

- 14/15 children rated the day 'good' or 'excellent'
- 12/15 children felt that the opportunity to do the activity was the best thing about the session
- Attendees enjoyed was making new friends (n10) and having a chance to talk (n9)
- 12/15 children said they would attend another session.

## One-to one mentoring

One-to-one mentoring was developed and offered by Hear Our Voice because of the challenges the project faced recruiting to the youth support sessions. Between August 2016 and October 2017 67 mentoring sessions were held with 13 young people aged between 11 and 17 years old. Seven of these young people also attended community-based youth groups because of being mentored. The mentor



was the Hear Our Voice Youth Engagement Worker and mentoring took place at home and at school.

Project data shows that:

- 6 children participated in 1 or 2 mentoring sessions
- 1 child participated in 3 or 4 mentoring sessions
- 1 child participated in 5 to 10 mentoring sessions
- 4 children participated in more than 10 mentoring sessions
- No data was provided for 1 child
- The highest number of sessions attended by a child on the project was 18

Of the 6 children who participated in 1 or 2 mentoring sessions:

- One child was identified as needing specialist mental health and referred to MIND for support.
- One child was doing well but had questions about imprisonment that project staff were able to answer over two mentoring sessions.
- One child was unable to continue for health reasons.
- Reasons were not in the project data for the other three children.

Data on referral pathway was provided for 12/13 children. This showed that referrals to Hear Our Voice came from the Pact helpline (n1), social workers (n2), schools, including Place2Be (n5), family support worker (n3) and Pact Family Engagement Worker (n1).

Project data show that during mentoring sessions children were encouraged to explore their feelings, share any difficulties and ask for additional help and support. The mentor used a range of tactics and resources to encourage the young people to speak and reflect on the challenges they faced such as anger icebergs, written diaries, alternative family tree, positivity charts and circles of control. There was no opportunity for peer-to-peer support for children who were mentored and did not attend the youth group.

- Safeguarding concerns were raised by project staff for two mentored children. One child was moved to a different foster placement as a result of this action.
- 16 referrals were made by the mentor for the mentees to MIND, the Pact befriending service, Pact Christmas present appeal, ADHD support and Flip (an organisation that provides short breaks for children living in challenging circumstances).

- The mentor attended a range of meetings with mentees and at times acted as an advocate for mentees. Project data show that the mentor attended 26 meetings with schools, 3 safeguarding meetings, 3 Looked After Children meetings and 4 with meetings with Place2Be. The mentor also had telephone contact with social workers and head teachers.

Materials and resources for the website were also created by the young people who were mentored.

- Three mentees audio recorded and created animations of their experiences with a professional animator. '[Kyra's story](#)', '[Ollie's story](#)' and '[Brandon's story](#).'
- Other mentors co-produced (with the mentor) resources that told their story and shared their feelings about events. All of these resources are available on the [Children](#) and [Young People's](#) sections of the Pact website, which is designed to raise awareness amongst professionals of the issues young people affected by imprisonment face, and to help other young people in similar situations feel less alone.

Hear Our Voice received more referrals for mentoring than the Youth Engagement Worker had capacity for. Enquiries about mentoring were not confined to London but were received from across England and Wales from individuals, institutions and organisations who had been made aware of the project and wanted to access the mentoring service on behalf of a child. This suggests there is demand for one-to-one mentoring support with children affected by familial imprisonment.

### **Teenager Prison Visits**

The teen prison visits were developed in September 2016 as another alternative way to provide support to the target population and link children into the community-based youth groups. The appointment of the new lead for families at HMP Brixton was used as an opportunity by project staff to develop teen family days in this establishment. During the set-up period, HMP Brixton became a resettlement prison and this meant that children who attended teen prison visits were more likely to live in London than those visiting family members at other establishments.

5 teenager prison visits were held at HMP Brixton between April and December 2017 – a sixth was cancelled because of security concerns in the prison. The purpose of the teenage prison visits was to support children to connect with their family member (usually father) and raise awareness of the community-based youth groups to those who lived in London.

36 children aged between 11-17 years of age attended and participated in the activities at one of these 5 visits, and 6 of these young people subsequently attended a community-based youth group.

Visits were facilitated by Hear Our Voice staff and involved activities and games that gave opportunities for young people to meet each other and connect with the

family member in prison. Sessions also enabled Hear Our Voice to identify and continue to support families that were not aware of the project or work of Pact.

48<sup>2</sup> feedback sheets were completed by children and young people at these sessions.

Analysis of this data show that:

- 87.5% (n42) preferred the teenager visit to a normal visit.
- 89.5% (n43) would attend another teenager visit.
- 69% (n33) felt that the best thing about the visit was having the activities to do together as a family.
- Other things young people considered good about the day was having fun (18%; n8) and socialising with other families (8%; n4).
- 69% (n33) said that having more time would improve the visit. `1 young person said the visit would be improved if they could have a 'sleep over.'

Examples of qualitative feedback from young people

Today, I had a lot of fun doing activities with my family and the people were so friendly and kind.

Today was good. This service was a good idea.

Today was great. We caught up and socialised for a very long time. We had fun and we are all happy.

I found today fun and warming for us as a family. Presents, pictures and quiz takes your mind off things and helps.

Feedback sheets were also completed by 15 adult family members and 24 prisoners (23 fathers and 1 uncle). Analysis of this showed that:

- 96% (n23) of prisoners and 87% (n13) of adults were very positive about the visit and having the opportunity to spend time with their children.
- 92% (n22) of prisoners and 87% (n13) of adults preferred the teen family day to a normal visit and 100% (n24) of prisoners and 93% (n14) of adults would attend another day were it to be offered.
- Having more time was the most suggested improvement.

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<sup>2</sup> Some children under the age of 11 did attend and completed feedback sheets.

### Examples of qualitative feedback from prisoners

It was a good day and it was good to see the kids in a better environment.

I loved the family visit with my son. I am grateful and appreciate Pact for organising the event.

I really enjoyed it, a little bit of normality for the kids.

I feel like it was just a community gathering near our own home, took my thoughts outside prison.

### Examples of qualitative feedback from adults

It was really good. I like the way the activities introduced the families together.

Seeing my partner and my children seeing their dad and drawing a picture for him was special.

Today was so lovely, to spend time laughing and being happy.

A Teenage Prison Visit at HMP Brixton was observed by the evaluator in June 2017. Data from this observation showed that:

- The session was very well facilitated by project staff, who established a good rapport with the young people and families in attendance.
- The atmosphere in the visits hall was relaxed and informal and there was a lot of physical contact between young people and their family member. This is a stark and very positive contrast to the usual visit regime.
- After being introduced, families talked to one another and shared conversations.
- The session plan worked well and the families engaged enthusiastically with the activities.
- The adults took visible pleasure out of watching their children participate in activities with other young people.
- Activities provided the rare opportunity for families to work together to solve problems and complete tasks.

- The activities provided the opportunity for children and young people to work with their relative in prison and have positive conversations about what made the family strong. This is vital work as it challenges the dominant narrative that families affected by familial imprisonment are only weak and fractured.
- Young people only had limited opportunity to engage with each other – so limited peer-to-peer support - as the activities were family-based
- Young people had no opportunity to access direct support from project workers during the sessions but were given details of the community-based youth sessions and mentoring offered by Hear Our Voice.

'The atmosphere in the visit hall was calm and relaxed. Families seemed to genuinely enjoy the opportunity to interact with each other and spend time working in small family groups talking about what they mean to each other. There was a lot of physical interaction, with young people having the opportunity to hug and play with their dad.'

(Fieldnotes, Teen family day June 2017)

## What difference did the support activities make to children who engaged?

In the original proposal Pact stated that the project would:

- Monitor changes in self-confidence and mental well-being of one quarter of the total target population (15 from a target of 60) by using an adapted version of their relationship radar tool.
- Invite a number of the core group of young people (8) to form a focus group and will use questionnaires for them to record improvements in their mood as well as noting what changes they would like to see made to the criminal justice system in order to better support them as young people.

Changes to the project delivery meant that there were changes to how the project monitored outcomes. Records to changes to mood and views on the criminal justice system were not systematically collected via a focus group. Relationship radar data was also not systematically collected.

Relationship radar data for 9 children were shared with the evaluator. Of the 9, baseline data only was provided for 1 child and so is not used here because it does not show change over time.

Findings from the analysis of this data are presented below but should be used with caution and any use of it to make claims about the difference the project made to children should be avoided because:

- It is a very small sample size because data was not systematically collected for all children who attended the community-based youth groups or were mentored by project staff.
- Problems experienced by the Youth Engagement Worker using the relationship radar tool means that this data was produced retrospectively by another project worker using case notes at the end of the project – the data is, therefore, less reliable.
- It includes children who attended 2 or more sessions of either the community-based youth group and/or were mentored or both and so any difference cannot be said to have occurred at the same time a child was engaged with a single type of intervention.

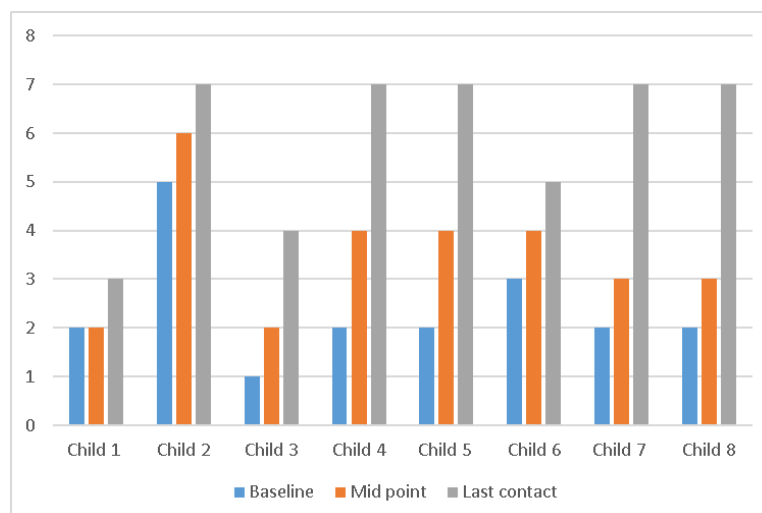
Analysis of the data has been included here because it does provide some insight into the needs of the children involved with Hear Our Voice and what happened to those children during the time they were engaged with the project.

The relationship radar tool scored four elements of the children's lives – environmental, psychological, educational and relationships. Each element was scored on a scale of 1-10 where 10 was excellent and 1 was poor.

### Environment

- The environment category encompasses physical environment, money, household circumstances and stress.

Figure 2. Relationship radar data: environment

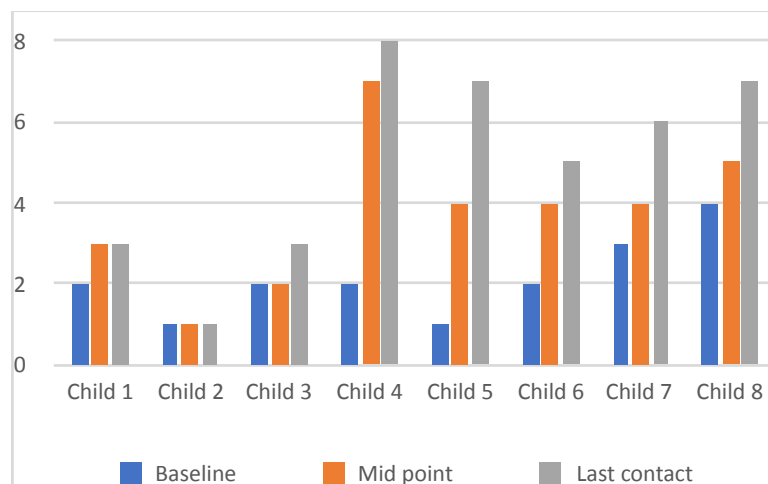


- Figure 2 shows that at baseline all children but Child 2 were scored 3 or below which indicates that their environment was challenging and included all or a combination of high stress, financial difficulties, poor quality physical environment and difficult household circumstances.
- Every child but Child 1 had improved environment scores at the mid-point in contact with Hear Our Voice.
- At the final contact all children had improved environment scores, which are indicative of a combination of less stress, better financial situation, improved physical environment and household circumstances, however the scale of improvement differed between children.
- Child 4, Child 5, Child 7 and Child 8 had a 5-point increase whereas Child 2, Child 6 and Child 3 had a 3-point increase and Child 1 had a 1-point increase.

### Psychological

- Psychological is a category that encompasses emotional health, wellbeing, mental health, special education needs and ADHD.

Figure 3. Relationship radar data: psychological



- Figure 3 shows that at baseline all children were scored 4 or below which indicates that they were experiencing challenges with emotional and mental health and wellbeing and/or had special educational needs and/or ADHD.
- 6/8 children had improved psychological scores at mid-point in the contact with Hear Our Voice.

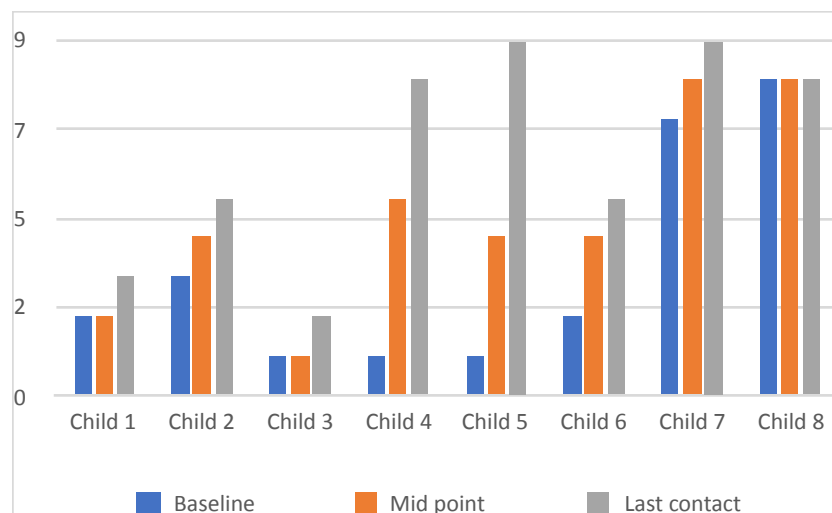


- All children but Child 2 were judged by project staff to have an improved psychological situation at the last point of contact compared to the beginning, which is indicative of improved emotional and mental health and wellbeing and/or help-seeking or improvement in support with special education needs or ADHD.
- The scale of the improvement was different for different children with Child 1 and Child 3 improving by 1-point, Child 7 and Child 8 by 3-points and Child 4 and Child 5 by 6-points.
- At the end of contact 3 children still had scores of 3-points or under, which shows they were considered to still have poor psychological health.

### Educational

- The education category encompasses school situation, friends, academic attainment and relationship with teachers.

Figure 4. Relationship radar data: educational



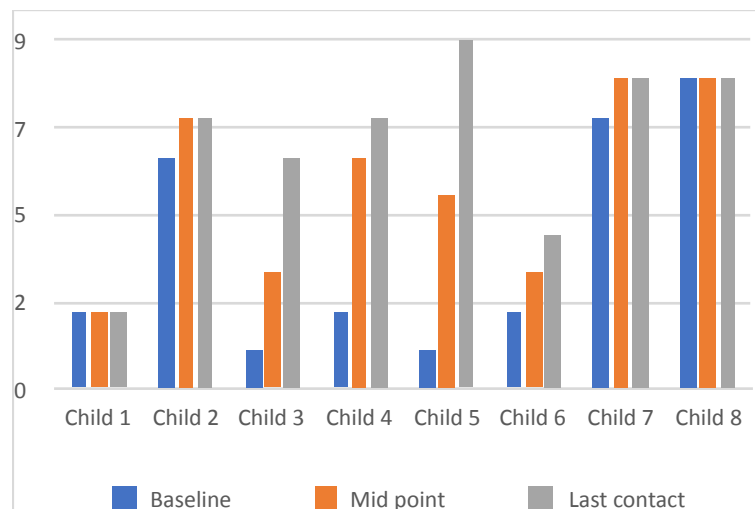
- Figure 4 shows there was a much wider variation in children with Child 7 and Child 8 given scores that indicate a good educational context and 6 children scored with very poor in educational terms.
- At mid-point 5/8 children's education score had improved and 3/8 stayed the same.
- At last contact all children but Child 8 (who had a score of 8 for education during contact with Hear Our Voice) had improved education scores.
- Improvement varied between children with Child 4 and Child 5 experiencing the most significant change with a 7 and 8-point improvement.

- At the end of contact with Hear Our Voice four children had education scores of 5 or less and this suggests their educational situation remained challenging.

## Relationship

- The relationship category encompasses relationships with parents/carers, siblings and others, plus communication ability.

Figure 5. Relationship radar data: relationship



- Figure 5 shows that 5/8 children were scored 1 or 2 for relationships at the start of their engagement with Hear Our Voice, which suggests they have difficult family relationships and relationships and poor communication.
- All children but Child 1 (score of 2) and Child 8 (score of 8) showed improvement at the mid-point of engagement.
- All children but Child 1 (score of 2) and Child 8 (score of 8) showed improvement between the first and last contact.
- Child 5 experienced the largest improvement in this category with a 9-point increase in score.
- Two children were scored 4 or less at the end of the contact meaning that their relationships remained difficult.

At first contact with Hear Our Voice this group of children had a range of needs and were living with many challenges across education, relationships, environment and emotional and psychological health. The combined relationship radar score for the children whose data was shared did increase over time, but the scale of the change varied between children and over the domains. Some children saw quite significant increases in score across all elements, for example Child 4 and Child 5. But

others remained in difficult and challenging positions at the end of the contact with the project.

Further insights into this can be drawn from the anonymised case notes provided to the evaluator.

Child 4 was mentored and attended the community-based youth group a total of eleven times. He was referred by a Place2Be professional at his school because he was isolated and struggling to cope with his dad's imprisonment. During mentoring sessions, the project worker provided him with space to explore his hobbies and interests and over time linked him into the community-based youth groups, where he participated in animation workshops and shared his story. Over time, he became more confident and felt happier at school.

Child 5 was also mentored and attended the community-based youth group a total of ten times. He was referred to Hear Our Voice by his social worker who was concerned that he was struggling to cope with parental imprisonment. Early in his involvement with Hear Our Voice the child was moved from the care of his grandmother into foster care. He disclosed during a mentoring session that there was a serious safeguarding issue with the placement and this was shared, with his permission, with the social worker. This resulted in him moving on to a new foster placement, where he was much happier. He continued to be supported by Hear Our Voice and made a big contribution to the website content.

## Parents and Carers Views

As part of the evaluation, contact details for nine parents and carers were shared with the evaluator and four interviews were conducted. Analysis of this data show that:

- 4/4 parents/carers were pleased that Hear Our Voice provided support for their children because they felt the experience of having a family member in prison had had negative effects including; disruption to education (n3); challenging behaviour at home (n2); impact on emotional health and wellbeing (n3); increased social isolation from friends and classmates (n3); and losing their home and being taken into foster care (n1).
- 4/4 parents/carers felt that their child's involvement in the project was helpful to them because they themselves knew very little about the criminal justice system and involvement in Hear Our Voice gave them information that helped them understand what was happening (n2), they were struggling with the emotional, psychological and financial impact of imprisonment as well as parenting alone and the support provided to their child by Hear Our Voice helped them to cope (n3).

'There is no-one giving me information or telling me how things work you kinda have to figure it out for yourself, so it has been positive for me as well, if I had a question I would contact them and so oh can you let me know, before I wouldn't have known who to ask.' (Parent 2)

'I struggle just being a single parent, I am now on my own and I am extra stressed, and I don't have that support system from him for myself, but I can talk to her (youth engagement worker) about anything.' (Parent 1)

- 4/4 parents and carers felt that the support provided by Hear Our Voice was valuable and had impacted positively on their child by making them less isolated (n3), calmer at school (n2) and improving their confidence (n4).
- The best parts of Hear Our Voice for parents and carers were the activities (n3), having the opportunity to access support themselves (n3), improved behaviour at school (n1) and calmer at home (n2), improved confidence (n1) and feeling less isolated (n3)

'They loved all the outdoor activities. Anything where they are active. It also really benefits them to be with other kids in the same situation. It makes them realise they are not alone. Especially [name of child], with being embarrassed to say anything. Being around kids going through exactly the same as them is a comfort.' (Parent 1)

'He knows he is not the only kid that's got this going on, so this process has helped to say so well there are other kids like you going through, well not exactly but having the same experiences ...she [youth engagement worker] made him feel special and that's given him more confidence. He went to the youth group, which I never thought he would so that was a big deal.' (Parent 2)

'They were more calm and settled which made it easier for me. She (youth engagement worker) answered their questions which they maybe did not want to ask me.' (Parent 4)

The interviews also show there were some issues with the project and barriers to access that should be considered in any future plans.

- Parents and carers (n3) felt that the support offered by Hear Our Voice ended abruptly and that the communication with them and schools (where applicable) could have been improved. Some parents were unsure whether their child would continue to receive support even though the project had ended.
- Traveling to the youth support sessions was problematic for parents and carers for time and cost reasons. Parents and carers wanted support to be delivered more locally to them.
- Parents were unwilling to let children travel across London alone and so had to accompany them to the sessions, which was inconvenient.
- Not being able to access support for children under eleven was a barrier to participation for parents and carers who said they did sometimes stop their older child attending sessions because they did not want a younger child to miss out.

## Reflections on community-based support for children

Interviews were conducted with project staff where they were asked to reflect on this strand of work and pull out key lessons to be learnt from their experience of developing community-based support for children affected by familial imprisonment. Feedback included:

- Identifying children with a family member in prison is difficult because other individuals, organisations and institutions knew less about the issue and were more reluctant to engage as partners than anticipated.
- Although levels of awareness and engagement varied some schools, even big schools with lots of pupils, did not know of children affected by familial imprisonment and/or were concerned about what it would do to the reputation of the school if they were to raise awareness of Hear Our Voice and the support it offered.
- In a context of significant budget cuts to youth provision in London (Berry, 2017) youth workers were reluctant to refer children to other provision, even though it was additional support for the child and was not designed to take the place of any youth service activities they were already engaged in.

- Primary schools were more likely to have knowledge of families affected by imprisonment and had more knowledge and awareness of the issues faced by children in these circumstances, however, most children were too young to access the support.
- Children's services professionals, apart from social workers, were not very responsive and did not refer many children to Hear Our Voice despite working with families that could have been affected by imprisonment.
- Promoting Hear Our Voice at prison family days had limited success because it was younger children who attended.
- Retaining children was a challenge because families faced multiple pressures and struggled to engage consistently over time, although location, cost and other issues that were the responsibility of the project did also present barriers.
- Alternative forms of support should be considered in future, such as providing one-to-one mentoring/befriending or advocacy as there was demand for this over the lifetime of the project or building on the online support.
- Youth group, or youth club type of activities are not necessarily attractive to older children.

Online support for children and young people

### **Outcome 1B**

- B. The young person's section of the website is accessed 219,000 times over the duration of the grant. Young people viewing it are able to access and download materials created by their peers which offer practical and emotional support and advice about visiting a Prison, what to tell their friends and how to cope with their feelings**

The [Children](#) and [Young People's](#) sections of the Pact website were launched in March 2017. This was later than planned because building the children and young people's hub became part of a redesign of the Pact website. The hub consists of resources co-designed and created by young people who were mentored by Hear Our Voice. The resources can be used by children and young people and/or professionals working with this group who want a better understanding of their lived experience.

The children and young people's sections are advertised on the front page of the Pact website and accessible via a link.



Much of the content available on the webpages were created by young people supported by Hear Our Voice and combines young people's stories with practical advice and support.

## For young people



### Kyra's Story

Watch the story of a girl who thought her Stepdad was working away as a bus driver, but found out he was actually in prison. Hear in her own words what it was like visiting her stepdad in prison.



### Ollie's Story

Watch the story of a boy whose home was raided by police when his Dad was arrested. Hear in his own words how this experience made him feel.



### Brandon's Story

Watch the story of a boy who thought his Dad was on a business trip, but found out he was actually in prison. Hear in his own words how this experience made him feel.

There are resources on the site that explore:

- Young people's experiences of visiting prison, the execution of a police warrant in the home and discovering that a parent was in prison.
- Practical advice written in age appropriate language about all stages of the criminal justice process.
- Links and suggestions to other sources of support.

The animations and stories focus on exploring how events made young people feel and as a resource they are very powerful. They capture the fear and confusion that often accompanies having a parent or other adult involved in the criminal justice system. It is the view of the evaluator that dissemination and sharing of these with children and young people is a priority. Furthermore, that they continue to be used as a training tool to raise awareness of the impact of contact with the criminal justice system on children.





### **Resources for professionals**

The site also contains a section with high-quality resources that can be used by professionals to better understand the impact of familial imprisonment on children and young people and to help them support a child or family in this situation. The resources in this part of the site include:

- Access to 'Locked Out', a book that helps children cope with the imprisonment of a loved one.
- A link for professionals to support the campaign 'Our Voice: The Charter for Children and Young People Affected by Familial Imprisonment.'
- The Hear Our Voice animations and case studies.
- Resources for the police on how to minimise harm to children during the arrest of an adult in the home.
- Guidance for schools and social services on how to support children affected by imprisonment.

## For professionals



### Locked Out

Read 'Locked Out', a book which helps children cope with the imprisonment of a loved one which contains useful guidance and activities for children.



### Sign our Charter to ensure young people's voices are heard

Sign our Charter and help us to ensure that young people's voices are heard in the criminal justice system.



### Kyra's Story

Watch the story of a girl who thought her Stepdad was working away as a bus driver, but found out he was actually in prison. Hear in her own words what it was like visiting her stepdad in prison.

This content has been accessed via hits on the webpages and engagement via views on various social media platforms. As shown in Table 3 below, the children and young people's resources were accessed 94,603 times across multiple platforms including the Pact website.

Table 3. Levels of access to children and young people's webpages

Platform	Number of hits/views
Children and Young Person's sections of the Pact website	13,010
Facebook	38,780
Twitter	36,516
YouTube	2,976
LinkedIn	2,456
Mailchimp	865
Total	94,603

### Raising awareness and changing attitudes

The animations were also used as part of a media campaign to raise awareness of the lived experiences of children affected by familial imprisonment. Children who were supported by Hear Our Voice to tell their stories and transform them into resources for the children and young people's section of the website were featured on BBC Breakfast and Channel 5 News. All the children and parents involved in this campaign were provided with support to understand and manage any negative impact on them of telling their story in this way, this included how to manage the

response online and at school. Michael Palin was the figurehead for this campaign and appeared alongside the children on BBC Breakfast. He also met with the children and families and provided voiceovers for the animations.

The evaluator observed Ollie's story being used in the schools Hear Our Voice train the trainer training event and at a national children and young people's policing conference. The reaction from school staff and police personnel on both occasions was that the animation enabled the professionals to see the experience of home raid for the first time through the eyes of a child and it was persuasive and compelling. Furthermore, it humanised the experience and made them think about the trauma that can result from it.

## Project activity: raising awareness and changing practise amongst schools and the police

The Children and Young Person's Advocate was responsible for this strand of work. Project activity included:

- Developing and maintaining the partnership with Place2Be for the schools training.
- Developing the schools and police training packages, this includes PowerPoint presentations, resources and train-the-trainer session plans.
- Developing relationships with the Metropolitan Police Service to promote Hear Our Voice training.
- Communicating with all schools and police partners.
- Planning and delivering all training sessions.
- Collecting feedback data from all training events.

# Key findings on project outcomes: raising awareness and changing practise

## Training for schools

In the original bid it was stated that the project aimed to.

### **Outcome:**

- C. In partnership with Place2BE training is delivered to School Project Managers in 100 different schools in how to work with, and support children and families affected by imprisonment and 400 children over the lifetime of the grant receive this support.**

Project data show that over the lifetime of Hear Our Voice 8 one-day training events were held across London for School Project Managers and other education professionals.

Training was delivered to 94 staff from 127 schools, 89 from London and 38 from other parts of the country including Blackpool, Northumberland, South Shields and Glasgow.

The purpose of the training was to:

- Raise awareness of the emotional and educational support needs of children with a family member in prison
- Advise on how best to identify, engage with and respond to the needs of children affected by familial imprisonment.
- Reduce the stigma surrounding familial imprisonment by promoting a positive school environment.

The training was interactive, with a strong emphasis on bringing the voices of children and young people with experience of familial imprisonment into the day through role play, case studies, showing Hear Our Voice animations and other visual material.

Everyone who attended the training were asked to complete an evaluation questionnaire at the end of the session, and 79 completed questionnaires were passed to the evaluator. Analysis of the data showed that:

- 92% of attendees rated the overall experience of the day as either excellent (n37) or very good (n36).
- 87% rated the quality of facilitation excellent (n36) or very good (n33).
- The three most useful parts of the training for participants were: understanding the criminal justice system (including prison visits) (n22); the comprehensiveness of the training content (n15); and knowledge of a range of tools, strategies and approaches that might be used to support children with a family member in prison (n14).
- 100% of participants who responded (n78) felt they would or they might share this knowledge with other colleagues.
- 51% of the participants who responded (n72) reported that the training could have a big impact on children and young people in their school.

## Immediate training outcomes

Table 4. Change in knowledge before and after schools training

	Before today's training how would you have rated your knowledge?	After today's training how would you have rated your knowledge?	% Difference
Poor	21.52%	0.00%	-21.52
Satisfactory	37.97%	3.80%	-34.17
Good	29.11%	20.25%	-8.86
Very Good	10.13%	54.43%	+44.3
Excellent	1.27%	21.52%	+20.25

Table 4 shows that:

- Participants' knowledge of the issues facing children and young people was significantly improved by the training.
- At the end of the training 76% (n60) rated their level of knowledge very good or excellent compared to 11% (n9) at the start of the training.

- Only 3.8% (n3) rated their levels of knowledge as poor or satisfactory at the end of the training compared to 59% (n47) at the start.

Table 5. Change in confidence of supporting child before and after training<sup>3</sup>

	Before today's training, how confident were you that you were able to provide support to a child with a family member in prison?	After today's training how would you rate your level of confidence?	% Difference
I'm not sure	10.26%	0.00%	-10.26
Not confident	29.49%	0.00%	-29.49
Confident	57.69%	48.72%	-8.97
Very confident	2.56%	51.28%	+48.72

- Table 5 shows that levels of confidence attendees had in supporting a child affected by familial imprisonment increased.
- At the end of the training 100% (n79) of participants reported feeling confident or very confident that they could support a child compared to 60% (n47) the start of the training.

Participants were also asked to provide any additional thoughts or comments on the training. Analysis showed that of the 51 comments provided, 42 (82%) were positive, 2 (4%) were critical and 7 (14%) mixed.

#### Examples of positive comments

'Really great, thank you. Very informative, interesting and enjoyable. Powerful to hear child's voice.'

'Have really enjoyed today's training, it's been very useful and have learnt a lot from today. Will highly recommend the training to other people.'

'Excellent delivery and extremely useful to enable us to work more closely and sensitively with families in and out of school.'

<sup>3</sup> 78 participants responded to this question.

The negative comments were made about the lack of facilities at the venue the training was delivered in and a mix-up with the scheduling of the day.

The mixed comments were participants noting that they struggled to keep up with the pace of the day, that there were too many PowerPoint slides and more time was needed for discussion and reflection.

## Impact of schools training

15 individuals who attended the training participated in a telephone interview at least two months after they were trained. The interviews were designed to see what, if any, short term impact attending the training had had on the participant, children and young people, colleagues and the school.

All of the participants remained positive about the quality and content of the training.

'It was very, very full which is brilliant in many ways. It was quite full and therefore quite fast. It was really engaging and really useful as well, I think the content was a good balance. It offered broad information for example about how the criminal justice system works, I really didn't know about all this stuff, but then it also really focused my mind into thinking about individual children that I work with or know of or could come across. So, there were the specifics of some of the experiences that those children might be in and the knowledge from that organisation was really sort of pertinent. And some really useful resources so it had that good balance.' (Participant 10)

Participants were asked what, if anything, about their practice had changed since the training.

- 7/15 stated that they had brought the resources (booklet to help prepare a child for a prison visit, William the Bear postcard, feelings chart) to school.

'I took away leaflets and now have access to resources and a phone number at school. I know about books I can use to help children and have more awareness of what children face when a parent is involved in the criminal justice system. I feel more ready to help children and families.' (Participant 5)

- 6/15 had used a resource provided by the training with children affected by familial imprisonment that they were working with.

'I have used some of the resources that she has recommended through the charity, one of them is a postcard with a teddy bear on it where the child writes a question down or writes things down and gives it to a teacher, so they don't have to have an open conversation about it, it's done quite privately, and I have used that already.' (Participant 4)

- 11/15 were trying to raise general awareness of the issues in their school.

'Even bringing the resources into the classroom that sparks conversations with other teachers as well and I think if the school are becoming more open and aware and they are having these conversations that will filter through to families and communities and maybe help dampen down some of that shame that these families are feeling...it will spark their awareness and I think that affects their relationship with the child as well.' (Participant 3)

- 8/15 stated that they were proactively asking whether a child referred to them had experienced or were experiencing the imprisonment of a family member.
- 10/15 had shared or were planning to share the training with other members of school staff including teachers, child protection officers, school nurses.

'I'm sharing a lot of the information from the day with other school staff, who like me before the training, don't really have a clue about the issues. Especially the facts and figures...the teachers have been open to it and quite surprised, even the senior leadership team wanted to know more about it.' (Participant 6)

- 2/15 had spoken to other colleagues about implementing a school policy framework.
- 2/15 had checked with families they were already supporting to ensure they were doing all they could.



Interviewees felt able to change the way they worked, but did express some reservations about how much they could achieve at over the longer-term at whole school level because:

- Schools have many competing priorities.

'I do share it by talking to staff about it but to be honest their priorities are quite different here, they have just become an academy and have a new head so it is about timing when you are introducing something, so I am introducing parent training... and they can't wait for that, they are biting my hand off, but something that they deem to be a minority issue which I don't actually think it is, I think we don't know the numbers in this school but it won't be at the top of the list.' (Participant 12)

- There is a reluctance in some schools to acknowledge that imprisonment might be an issue for some pupils.

'It doesn't make any sense but there's a view at the school I work in that if we raise this issue people will think it's because we have a lot of children with parents in prison and that might put parents off, as the training made clear there's a lot of stigma on prison.' (Participant 3)

- Schools and professionals consider having a trained member of staff is a sufficient response and do not see the benefits of bigger change.

'I have tried to share it with the child protection officer, not hugely successfully but I have shown her what I have done with the child. It's one of those busy professional scenarios where they think if you're trained then you can do it.' (Participant 15)

## Police training

### Outcome 2

Frontline professionals have a better knowledge and understanding of the welfare needs of children affected by familial imprisonment

- A. The Metropolitan police in 6 different London boroughs are trained over the lifetime of the grant and report a better understanding of the trauma carrying out a raid on a family home can have on children.

Table 6. Number of Metropolitan Police officers trained by Hear Our Voice and training type

Borough	Type of training	Number of officers trained	Number of officers to be trained by newly trained trainers
Hounslow	Direct	224	
Haringey	Train the trainer	8	80
City of London	Train the trainer	11	110
Croydon	Train the trainer	10	100
Tower Hamlets	Train the trainer	17	170
	Total	270	460

As shown in Table 6, 270 Metropolitan Police Officers from 5 London boroughs were trained over the lifetime of Hear Our Voice. 224 officers in Hounslow received direct training delivered by the Children and Young Persons Advocate and a further 46 officers based in Haringey, City of London, Croydon and Tower Hamlets received train the trainer training. Each trainer trained is responsible for training a team of 10 other officers in their borough, this means that Hear Our Voice trauma-informed police training was planned for an additional 460 Metropolitan Police officers.

The objectives of the direct training were to:

- Raise awareness on the impact which police actions within the family home can have on children.
- Examine the benefits of trauma-informed policing
- Raise awareness on child development and how to respond to children at different stages of development.
- Discuss best practice when conducting police actions in the family home to improve relationships and reduce trauma.

The objectives of the Train the Trainer training were the same as the above and that officers:

- Feel equipped to deliver a fully interactive and engaging training.
- Have all the necessary resources to facilitate the training.
- Feel comfortable to respond to criticisms and feedback.

In addition, officers were introduced to Good Practice guidance drawn from work conducted in the USA by Strategies for Youth and published in 2013. This guidance states that:

- Police should be given specific training on the impact on children of arrest conducted in the home.
- A protocol should exist for how to make an arrest when a child may be affected.
- Clear written guidelines could help police perform impact assessments of the children's needs and use subtler methods of arrest that maintain the parent's dignity in front of children.
- Someone appropriate can speak to children at the time of arrest and ensure there is follow-up (by police, social services or others) if children are temporarily placed with neighbours or other alternative carers.

All officers who attended the Train the Trainer session were provided with a set of PowerPoint slides, training plan and training guidance.

All the officers trained were asked to complete an evaluation questionnaire at the end of each training event. Out of the 270 trained officers, feedback from 201 officers was passed to the evaluator. Analysis of the data showed that:

- 49.7% (n100) of officers rated the quality of the training very good or excellent and 36% (n73) rated the quality of the training as good.
- 54.5% (n109) officers rated the facilitator as very good or excellent and 34% (n68) rated the facilitation good.

## Immediate training outcomes

- 79% of officers stated they had a better understanding of the potential trauma of police actions in the home on children because of the training.

Table 7. Difference in knowledge and understanding of the impact of police actions on children before and after training.

	Before today's training, how would you have rated your knowledge and understanding of the impact police actions in the family home can have on children?	After today's training how would you rated your knowledge?	% Difference
Poor	3.98%	0.00%	-3.98
Satisfactor y	16.92%	3.98%	-12.94
Good	42.79%	27.86%	-14.93
Very Good	29.35%	51.24%	+21.89
Excellent	6.97%	16.92%	+9.95

As Table 7 shows, the knowledge and understanding of the impact of police actions in the family home on children was improved by the training.

- Before the training 79.1% (n159) of police officers rated their level of knowledge good, very good or excellent.
- After the training this increased to 96% (n193) – a 16.9% increase.

122/201 officers provided qualitative comments on what content from across the training day they would find most helpful in their role. Analysis of this showed that:

- Good practice guidance on executing police actions in a trauma-informed way was the most helpful element of the training for 34/122 officers (28%).

- Content on the immediate and longer-term impact of police action in the home on children and young people was the most helpful element of the training for 21/122 officers (17%).
- Content on child development was the most helpful element of the training for 19/122 officers (15.5%).
- All of the content, seeing police action from a child's perspective and the case studies were the most helpful for 9 officers (7%).
- None of the content was considered helpful to 9 officers (7%).
- The quiz was the most helpful for 1 officer.

Participants were also asked to provide any additional thoughts or comments on the training. 76/201 officers provided comments and out of these:

- 34 officers gave positive comments on the training.

'Thank you for coming. You don't need to go on a ride along; you know what you're talking about!'

'Very well presented. The trainer was very passionate on an important issue that is often overlooked.'

'Case study and exercises were great tool. First training package that hasn't sent me to sleep.'

'Good and fresh insight on the impact on children.'

'Very worthwhile raising awareness and understanding. Will have value to roll out to as many police as possible.'

- 10 officers were more critical because they felt the training was 'anti-police' or biased against the police (n3), lacked legitimacy because the trainer had not been on police actions (n3), lacked the perspective of officers (n1) or did not teach them anything new (n3).

'It was very anti police and police are in the wrong. If parents weren't arseholes, we wouldn't need to be.'

'No point of view of police officers. Have presenters been on arrests? Why no positive stories from officers?'

'I don't think this taught me anything I didn't already know-sorry!'

- Other input from officers included suggestions of how the training could be developed and what officers it would be most helpful for – the consensus being that this should be part of new officer training – and lastly some officers gave their general views on the topic.

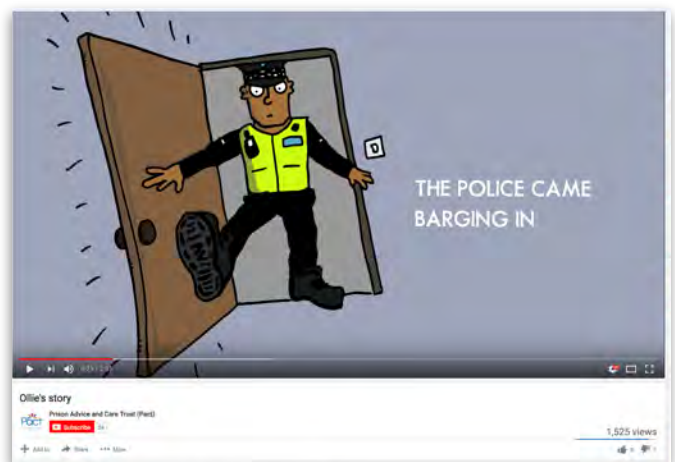
## Short-term impact of training

The original evaluation design included follow-up telephone interviews with a sample of 15 police officers to ask them if the training had led to any changes in practice, procedure or policy. The evaluator was advised that this was not going to be possible because of capacity and so an online questionnaire that focused on exploring short-term impacts of the training was developed. The questionnaire was shared with officers at least one-month post training and received 39 responses, 14% of total trained population.

Officers were asked if they had made changes to policy and practice on police action in the home when children are present because of the training.

As Chart 1 shows 59.46% (n24) of officers had changed their own practice and/or considered or changed policy and practice in this area of work because of the trauma-informed police training delivered by Hear Our Voice.

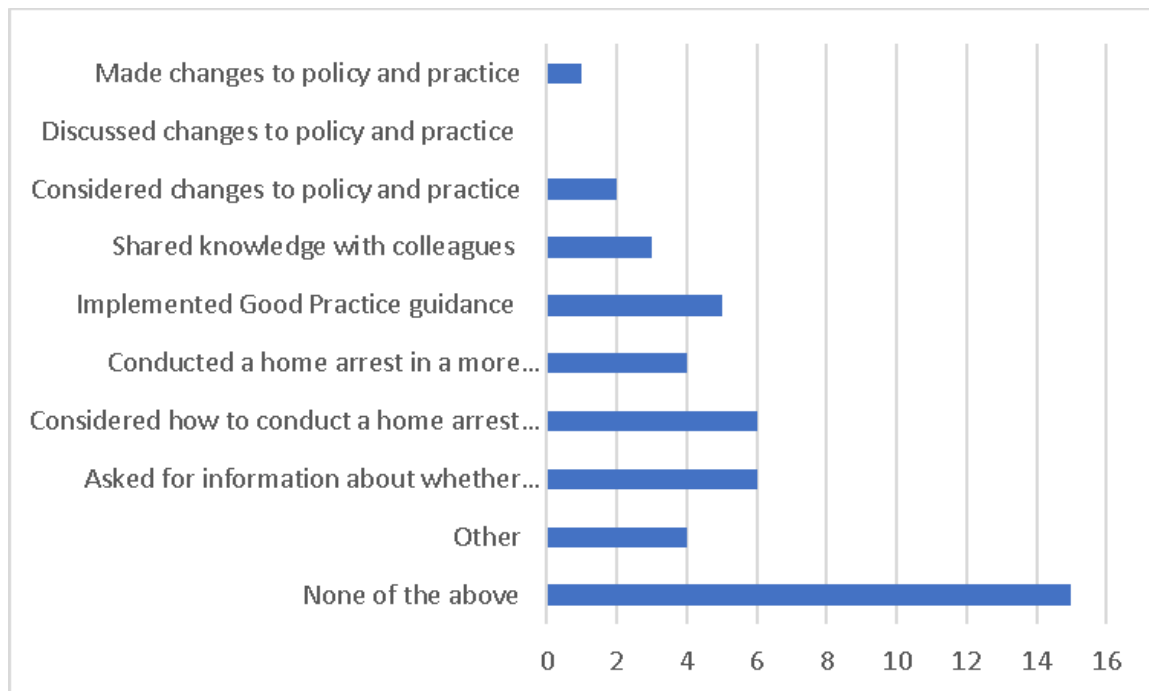
- 1 (2.7%) officer had made changes to policy and practice.
- 2 (5.41%) had considered changes to policy and practice.
- 3 (8.11%) shared knowledge with colleagues.
- 5 (13.51%) had implemented Good Practice guidance.
- 4 (10.81%) had conducted a



police action in the home in a more trauma informed way.

- 6 (16.22%) had considered how to conduct an arrest in a more trauma-informed way.
- 6 (16.22%) had asked for information on the presence of children at an address where a police action was going to take place.
- 4 (10.81%) had made Other changes – keeping children away from suspects during arrest, where possible (n2) and talking to children after police actions had taken place in the home (n2).
- 15 (40.54%) had not considered or made any changes to policy and practice in this area.

Chart 1. Impact of police training 1 month+



Those officers who had not made or considered changes to policy and practice were asked why.

- 11/15 (73%) officers said this was because they worked in a trauma-informed way before the training and so changes to practice were needed.
- 2/15 (13%) said they did not have enough resources to work in a trauma-informed way.
- 2/15 (13%) felt that more training was needed before changes in this area were possible.

## Medium to Long Term Impact

As a consequence of the Hear Our Voice police training Pact has produced a recommendations report on trauma-informed policing and the impact of police actions in the home. This report was launched in January 2018 at the annual conference for the National Strategy for the Policing of Children and Young People.

In addition, Pact is in the process of negotiating with Chief Constable Olivia Pinkney, the national police lead for children and young people, permission and access to undertake a pilot where the Good Practice guidance used as part of the training will be implemented across a single force.

If this is agreed, this will be the first pilot of its kind in the UK and will make a significant contribution to reducing harm to children and young people who will experience police action on the home and could be responsible for a major shift in the way police forces across the country think about and engage with children in these circumstances.

### **B. 300 Magistrates Courts in England and Wales receive guidance and follow up information.**

The local arrangement of the magistracy and lack of structured ongoing training programme made this group a challenge to engage with. Due to capacity issues, the following work was delivered in this area.

- Project staff met with Magistrates Association multiple times over the lifetime of the project.
- An article about the impact of a relative's imprisonment on children was written and published in the Magistrate magazine, a bi-monthly publication circulated to all members of the Magistrates Association and was available online.

## Schools Train the Trainer training

In the original plan the aim was that:

### **C. 20 schools in London receive our 'Train the Trainer' training and score an 80% increase on average in understanding the issues surrounding children and familial imprisonment on their evaluation forms at the end of the training**



One Train the Trainer session was held over the lifetime of the Hear Our Voice project. The data for this show that it involved 14 participants who worked over 22 schools, 18 of which are London schools, the other 4 are in Salford (x2), Edinburgh and Bradford.

The purpose of the training was to:

- Raise awareness of the emotional and educational support needs of children with a family member in prison.
- Advise on how best to identify, engage with and respond to the needs of children affected by familial imprisonment.
- Reduce the stigma surrounding familial imprisonment by promoting a positive school environment.
- Feel equipped to deliver a fully interactive and engaging training.
- Have all the necessary resources to facilitate the training.
- Feel comfortable to respond to feedback.

All participants were provided with a set of PowerPoint slides, training plan, training guidance and links to the downloadable resources used in the training (William the Bear postcard, for example).

All participants were asked to complete an evaluation questionnaire at the end of the training day. Analysis of the data showed that:

- Of the 10 participants who responded to the question, 100% (n10) rated the Train the Trainer training excellent.
- 14 (100%) participants rated the quality of the facilitation as very good or excellent.
- 14 (100%) rated their overall experience of the day very good or excellent.

## Immediate training outcomes

Table 7. Levels of knowledge before and after training and difference

	Before today's training how would you have rated your knowledge?	After today's training how would you have rated your knowledge?	% Difference
Poor	21%	0%	-21
Satisfactory	71%	0%	-71
Good	7%	21%	-14
Very Good	0%	71%	+71
Excellent	0%	7%	+7

Table 7 shows that there was a large difference in knowledge reported by participants at the beginning and end of the training, with 77% of participants reporting very good or excellent levels of knowledge after training and 0% before.

Similarly, Table 8 (below) shows a large improvement in levels of confidence amongst participants that they feel able to support a child affected by familial imprisonment between the beginning and end of training.

Table 8. Levels of confidence to support child before and after training and difference

	Before today's training, how confident were you that you were able to provide support to a child with a family member in prison?	After today's training how would you rate your level of confidence?	% Difference
I'm not sure	14%	0%	-14
Not confident	50%	0%	-50
Confident	36%	50%	+14
Very confident	0%	50%	+50

In addition, 12 (86%) felt ready to deliver the training in their schools, and 2 felt unsure (14%).

Participants were asked what the most useful element of the training was for their role, 14 responded to this question. Analysis showed that:

- 4 (28.5%) reported that all the material was useful to them in their role.
- 5 (35.7%) reported that training that includes the voices of children was the most useful.
- 3 (21.4%) liked the resources and training plans
- 1 (7.1%) felt that ideas for working with children affected by familial imprisonment were the most useful element of the training.

Participants were also given space to provide any additional thoughts or comments on their experience of the training. 14 provided comments and all of them were positive.

'Many thanks - a real child's view of the experiences of children with family members going through the CJP.'

'I really enjoyed this training and I look forward to delivering this.'

'Thank you - this has helped me to feel more able to begin to develop my understanding and when working with each individual affected draw on the learning on how best to support or be alongside the person.'

'An excellent training. Really well presented. Trainer was very knowledgeable.'

The evaluator attended the Train the Trainer event and observed that:

- The content of the training was covered all the key areas and was professionally presented.
- The facilitator created a productive and collaborative atmosphere in the room quickly and maintained this throughout the day.
- The training had a good balance of activities in the morning, but the afternoon session was too PowerPoint heavy.
- Using different strategies to bring the voice and experiences of children into the training (visual material, case studies, role play) was central to the days success.

# Conclusions

Hear Our Voice aimed to work with 60 children over the lifetime of the project. At the end of the two years, 58 children had attended an activity or session run by Hear Our Voice. 36 attended a teenage prison visit, 9 attended the community-based youth group, 6 were mentored and another 7 were mentored and attended the community-based youth group. Feedback that was shared about children's experiences of teenage family visits and community-based youth groups showed that they enjoyed the sessions and felt positively about the project.

Engagement was originally planned to focus on engaging children in community-based youth sessions where peer support was available. It became clear early in the project lifecycle that this was going to be a challenge to deliver because of difficulties identifying children through working with external partners, who were much less willing and/or able because of lack of knowledge to promote and refer into Hear Our Voice.

Project staff should be recognised for adapting their approach and developing alternative ways to promote the project and identify children who would benefit from the community-based support offered. The alternative strategy to promote and increase attendance at community-based youth sessions had some success. The teenager visits run at HMP Brixton involved many children and families who were previously unaware of the support offered by Pact and Hear Our Voice. The feedback from the sessions show that the opportunity to spend time with their family member as a family was valued by children, prisoners and other family members. Following the pilot, HMP Brixton will embed teenage family days into family support services at the prison because of the positive impact it had on the prisoners.

Furthermore, 7 children who were mentored subsequently attended community-based youth sessions and six children attended a community-based youth group after being introduced to the project via teenage prison family days. Nevertheless, the community-based youth groups did not attract the number of children or retain children in the way it aimed to at the start of the project. In addition to the issues with identification and referrals highlighted earlier, other barriers were highlighted in the evaluation research including having to travel to attend, the cost of travel and having a strictly defined targeted age group. It is important that these insights have emerged from the evaluation and they should be used to consider any future proposals. It is also important to acknowledge that now Pact has begun the process of identifying new families and children and developing trusting relationships with them they will be better placed to build on this going forward with the right strategy.

There were problems with the collection of outcome data and this means the evidence that the project made a difference to the children who engaged with either mentoring and/or community-based youth groups is limited. This must be addressed going forward and staff provided with training and supervision to support

this. If strategies do change then advice should be sought to enable staff to adapt measurement tools that enable project outcomes to be better captured. Project data show, however, that staff did identify the needs of children and made internal and external referrals to provide them with additional support. Parents and carers who participated in the evaluation did identify ways that their children benefitted from the project. This is important for a group that have complex and challenging needs.

Website content produced from the Hear Our Voice project was accessed 94,603 times over the lifetime of the project, so the 219,000 target was missed. The children and young people's section of the website were delayed by the redevelopment of the Pact website. Had the resources been made available at an earlier date then the figures between March 2017 and the end of the project suggest that the target could have been met.

The content produced with children and made available on the children and young people's webpages is, however, unique and distinctive. It offers both emotional and practical support for those affected by familial imprisonment and is a powerful tool that can be used in training professionals and to raise awareness of the impact of imprisonment on children and young people.

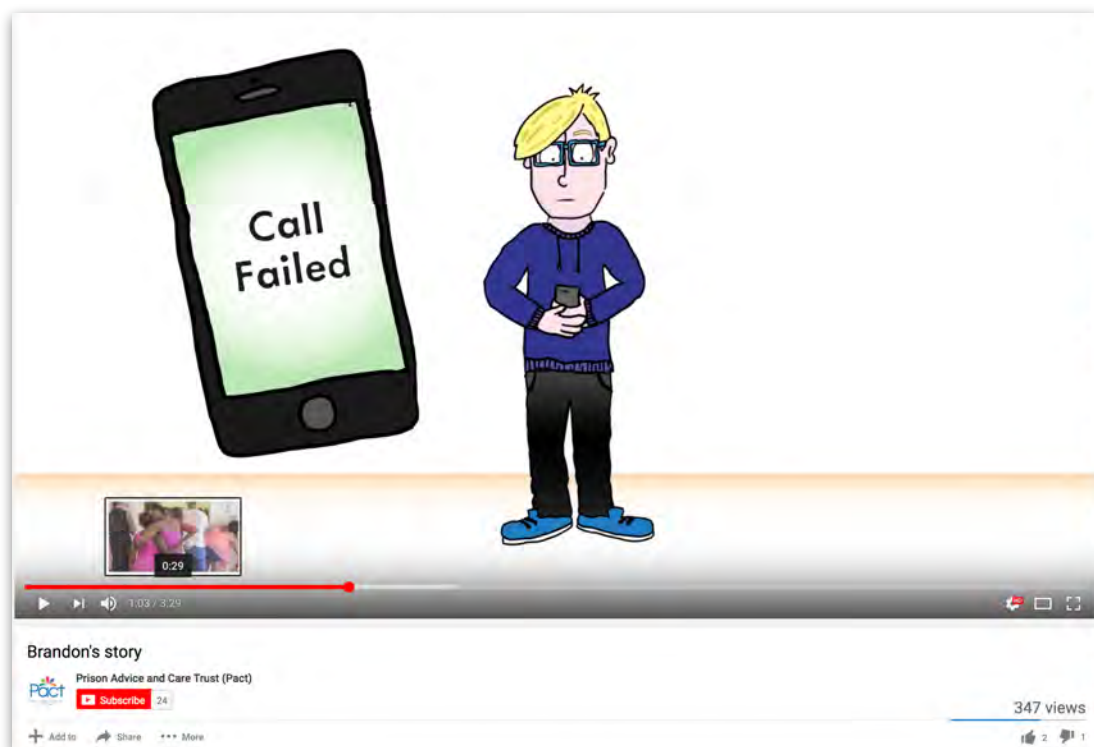
Hear Our Voice exceeded its target by delivering training to staff from 127 schools, 89 of them in London. The project should be commended for producing a high-quality training package that was very well received by participants and highly rated by them for its content and delivery. The data shows the training produced positive immediate outcomes in terms of developing participants' knowledge and understanding and increasing levels of confidence amongst participants in dealing with the issues faced by children and young people affected by familial imprisonment. It also had resulted in short-term impacts as participants returned to their schools and used resources and strategies from the training to develop their own practice whilst raising awareness of the issue and improving knowledge of the extent and complexity of the issue amongst other school staff. The data on the number of children supported by trained school staff could have provided further evidence on the outcomes and impact of the training, however, this data was not collected by the project and so cannot be reported on here.

Hear Our Voice trained 270 Metropolitan Police officers from 5 London boroughs over the lifetime of the project. Delivering training that challenges much current police practice and asks officers to think differently about how they conduct actions in risky and dangerous circumstances is a huge challenge. Some of the qualitative comments provided by the officers illustrate that the view of a minority was that adults (whether they be parents, carers or others) bore sole responsibility for any consequences for children present during police action and that this should not be a matter of concern to the police.

The immediate police training outcomes and short-term impacts data show that despite this, Hear Our Voice delivered training that improved levels of knowledge

and understanding of the issue and led to changes in practice and policy once participants returned to their day-to-day duties. The 16.9% (from 79.1% to 96%) increase in officers rating their knowledge as good, very good or excellent is a positive outcome. However, the most important outcome is that 59.46% of officers who completed the impact questionnaire reported changes to policy and practice in this area of work because of the trauma-informed police training delivered by Hear Our Voice. This is a real success and testament to the quality of the training and facilitation.

The schools' Train the Trainer event was attended by 14 staff working in 22 schools, 18 of which were London based. The training was rated positively by all participants and the outcome data showed that levels of knowledge and confidence amongst participants saw large improvements on the day. It also highlighted that the majority of participants felt confident enough to go back to their schools and deliver the training to other school staff.



# Recommendations

- Children affected by familial imprisonment need additional support to help them understand and cope with the impact of the criminal justice system on themselves and their families, but any future project aimed at working with children and young people consider the findings about the barriers to identification, joint working and access presented in this evaluation carefully.
- All staff are provided with comprehensive training about how to gather outcome data and this is closely monitored and supervised.
- Secondary schools need support to challenge stigma and better understand the impact on familial imprisonment on the pupils in their care.
- The website material produced by children involved with Hear Our Voice is very powerful and should be widely disseminated to schools and other professionals.
- Strategies about how to best promote the resources to children and young people should be developed.
- Funding should be sought to continue the train-the-trainer events for schools and the impact of this should be closely monitored.
- The recommendations made by Pact on the policing of 'home raids' should be disseminated widely, and funding sought to continue police training for officers serving in London and in other parts of the UK.
- All future evaluations should be commissioned to include all project outcomes and advice sought if interventions or strategies change during the project lifecycle.

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