

JOURNEY OF CHANGE

Last summer we asked members of our family centre what they saw as their biggest problems. They had many problems in common, and several were uncertain about where to get help. We decided the best way to meet these needs might be an intensive one to one support service. We had no experience of delivering such a service. Therefore, we set it up as a pilot project, looking to recruit volunteers with skills and experience the staff did not have. We were approached by

Alice, who is pursuing a course in Therapeutic Counselling at the University of Greenwich. She was looking for a placement to develop her counselling skills. In January, Selena, who has a psychology degree and needed a placement to support her admission to further studies, offered us her services. They both began with one centre member and now work with three each. The aim of the project is to empower the women to improve their life chances. The work focussed on the areas with

which the women told us they wanted help. These are:

- Promoting self confidence and self esteem
- reducing social isolation
- Enhancing their family relationships
- Increasing their life and coping skills
- Increasing their understanding of the criminal justice system.

All six women are making progress in moving towards achieving the outcomes they wanted and feel they have really benefitted from the empowering support they have received

from Alice and Selena. We are pleased with the outcomes achieved by the pilot project so far. We shall write a report on it this summer. We hope to build on the work undertaken so far and to make it available to more families this autumn. We are very fortunate that, out of all the placements Alice and Selena could have selected, they chose to direct their skills and talents towards our project. We readily acknowledge how much its success is due to their abilities, energy and dedication, and to the wholehearted engagement and commitment of the centre members whom they support.

with marginalized people, who are often forgotten, blamed or overlooked. She enjoys the diversity of her work for PFFS, which enables her to meet a wide range of people. She enjoys using her own initiative, making decisions and problem solving all of which are necessary in her role. She gains great satisfaction from supporting someone in Court or at Prison and introducing them to PFFS, where they can receive further help. Having learned a great deal about the criminal justice system, she wishes to continue her involvement in this area of work. Emma has a very active social life and a keen interest in vegetarianism. She is a member of London Vegans, enjoys visiting restaurants, walking and going to live rock music gigs. Alternative medicine and aromatherapy play an important part in her life.

members. Our volunteer Michelle saw several prisoners with their supporters during the morning. She was able to tell a young man from outside London that the freephone helpline and telephone befriending service would be available for his family; that it often helps to talk in confidence to someone who is

impartial and won't judge. One couple were already aware of the Swan Centre, but did not know about the befriending service. Others listened and asked questions and took the information leaflets back to the wing - where they will be passed on to other prisoners who are concerned about their families.

VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES

Court project volunteer profile: Emma Davies

Emma has been an outstanding volunteer for the Court Project since she completed her training in November 2009. She regularly attends Camberwell Green Magistrates Court and her role has now extended to Wandsworth Prison Visitors' Centre where she has been hugely successful at accessing families and friends of prisoners in need of support. Emma has always been involved in the Social Work field and has been drawn to working

FAMILY MAN AT WANDSWORTH

PFFS recently took part in the Family Man programme at HMP Wandsworth. Agencies are invited to the prison to speak to and give information to prisoners and their supporters. Supporters are usually family

Our services

Advice and Information

- A national freephone helpline
- A range of printed information fact sheets
- First instance advice to families in courts throughout London
- A court to custody booklet

Support and Friendship

- Home visits to prisoners' families in London
- Telephone befriending for families outside London
- The Swan Centre - providing advice, support, a mentoring service and a place for families to meet
- Outlook - help and support in the resettlement period
- Holiday activities for children and families
- A week's holiday in Pontins for our families

Contact Us

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Newsletter

Caring for prisoners' families

Contents

- FAMILIES ON TRIAL SCOOPS BEST DOCUMENTARY AWARD
- MONITORING AND EVALUATING OUR SERVICE
- FAMILY CENTRE
- JOURNEY OF CHANGE
- VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES

FAMILIES ON TRIAL SCOOPS BEST DOCUMENTARY AWARD

The five short films commissioned by Prisoners' Families and Friends Service and funded by the Nationwide Foundation recently won the best documentary award in the Babelgum Online Film Festival.



The Festival celebrates and rewards the best international independent short film-making. Winners received international exposure, their films being shown at the Tribeca Film Festival in New York in April.

The films were produced by Wiredvideo.net and developed

in partnership with four other charities in the field: Action for Prisoners' Families, NIACRO, Storybook Dads, Castlegate Family Trust and SHARP. The audio sound track is also being broadcast on National Prison Radio.

Over 100 agencies and individuals have ordered the DVD through our web site, and it has been shown in prisons, schools, colleges, and church groups. It has been used for training,



awareness raising and research by youth offending teams, teachers, prisoners' family support groups and journalists.

We are delighted that a wide range of people are being made aware of the issues and problems that prisoners' families face.

What people said about the film:

"I'VE WATCHED THE DVD ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS WITH DIFFERENT AUDIENCES AND IT STILL HAS AN IMPACT ON ME EACH TIME."

"WE HAVE USED IT IN OUR TRAINING AND PEOPLE FOUND IT VERY POWERFUL - MORE THAN ONE TISSUE WAS NEEDED!!"

"HAVE WATCHED THEM AND AS A MUM WITH A SON INSIDE I THOUGHT THEY WERE WELL PRESENTED, FROM THE HEART AND DEFINITELY BOUGHT HOME SOME THOUGHTS AND FEELINGS THAT I HAD HIDDEN."

"OUTSTANDING, AN EXCELLENT RESOURCE. DOESN'T PUT IN ADDITIONAL EMOTION - JUST TELLS IT LIKE IT IS."

Families on Trial can be viewed online at www.familiesontrial.org and also on the PFFS website www.pffs.org.uk. It can be ordered online via the PFFS website.



Walk This Way...

On Tuesday September 7th 2010 PFFS will be holding a sponsored walk.

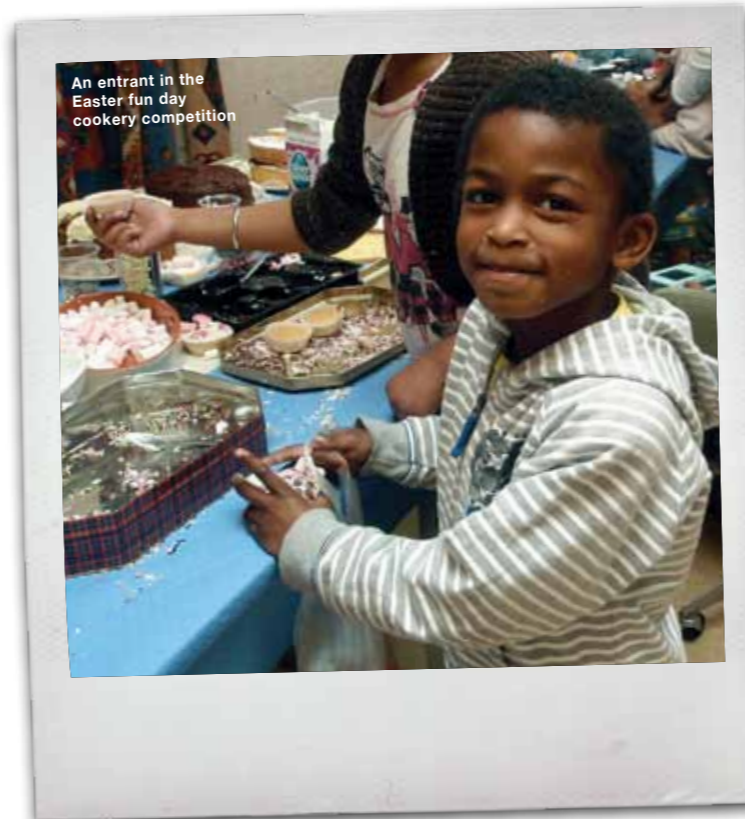
We will be taking in historic landmarks including Marshalsea Prison, Crossbones Cemetery, Clinks Prison & The Old Bailey. We will cover 5 miles of London's punitive past. If you wish to take part and for further information you can call us on 0207 403 4091 or email info@pffs.org.uk. You can download a sponsorship form from our website www.pffs.org.uk ...

MONITORING AND EVALUATING OUR SERVICE

PFFS recognises the importance of monitoring and evaluating its work. It is increasingly important for us to demonstrate the impact and effectiveness of our work, develop services in response to the needs of service users and demonstrate to funders and other key stakeholders that we do an excellent job and represent good value for

money. Users of our family centre were very clear on the areas of their lives with which they needed help. Following consultation with them, we agreed five outcomes that would form the basis of our work. We set up a sub group of the board of trustees charged with overseeing the planning and development of this area of work. A report will

be available at our AGM in November. Valerie Clyne, a PFFS volunteer, brings her expertise to our monitoring and evaluation work. All public sector bodies, voluntary organisations, businesses and charities need to continually assess the quality of their provision. Drawing from my previous professional experience, and now as a court volunteer with PFFS, I have helped the staff team and the Staff and Trustee Monitoring and Evaluation Steering Sub-Group to learn from what they are doing and how they are doing it. In other words, is PFFS efficient, effective and having an impact on what the charity is wanting to achieve? Working with the staff has been a rewarding experience for me. The organisation has produced a plan, with input from all staff, to monitor and evaluate the work, linked to improving the quality of support offered to families and friends of prisoners. The Sub-Group has met twice to consider the plans and to provide advice, support and guidance to staff. I also attended a meeting of the trustees who will play a key role in the evaluation of collected evidence. The trustees expressed interest in monitoring and evaluating the work and a determination to play their part in an ever-improving PFFS. The task of collecting and monitoring evidence is well under way.



FAMILY CENTRE

DURING THE HOLIDAYS WE ENJOY PROVIDING FUN AND STRUCTURED ACTIVITIES FOR CHILDREN APPROPRIATE TO THE SEASON.

Easter egg hunt and fundraising day
During the first week of the two week Easter break we took the children to a local park to hunt for Easter eggs. Their experience of exploring the area was great fun. It allowed them to interact with each other as a family and as a team. After the egg hunt the children enjoyed an egg and spoon race in which parents and staff also took part. The second Easter activity was a fund raising fun day held at our Centre. We encouraged the families to play an active part. They and our volunteers organised activities for the children such as:

decorating their own cup cakes, face painting, creating artwork; there were also stalls with toys, bric-a-brac, drinks, snacks and food. A raffle was held for the children and their parents, with prizes donated by the families and our volunteers. The whole day was successful and we raised enough money to put towards a day trip this year.

Come dine with Swan
The next holiday was the first week in June half term, when we invited professional chef, Sarah Moore to join us. Sarah

worked with 13 of our children preparing a healthy, fun and low cost meal that the children could help to prepare at home. The recipes were given to the families at the end of the session, which will encourage them to prepare different meals, including healthier options that children will enjoy.

