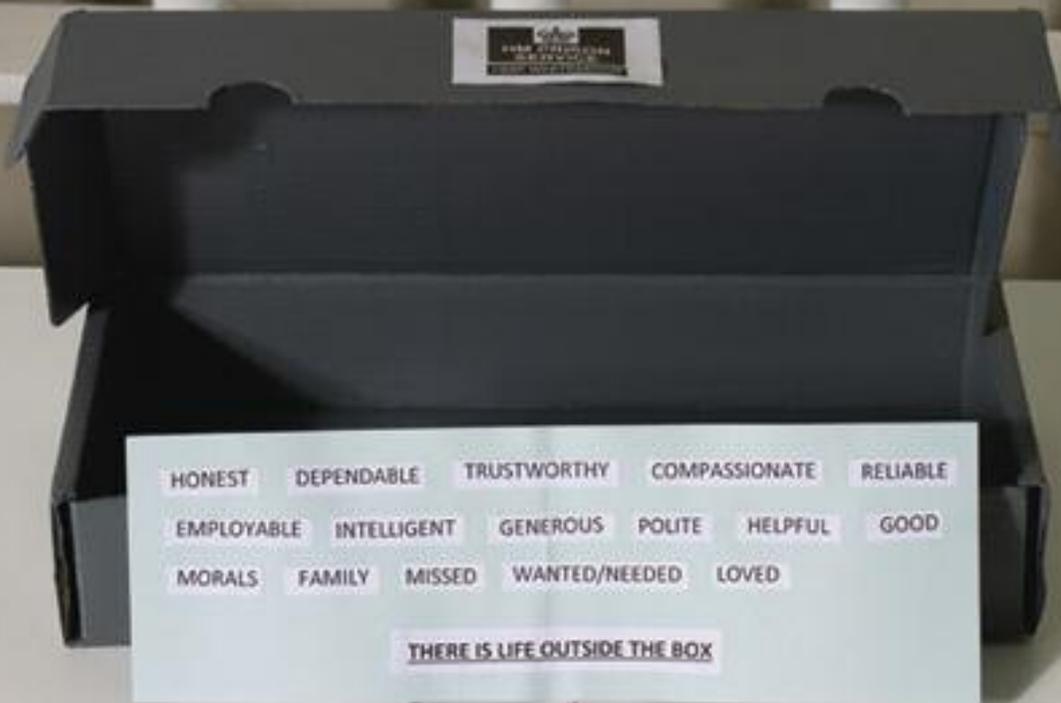


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A family oriented intervention for parental substance misuse in a male prison:

‘our family is better now than it used to be’¹

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Background

There are currently over 80,000 men in prison in England and Wales, many of whom will have a history of substance use and/or reoffending. Substance use is highly correlated with both offending and the likelihood of reoffending, particularly in the first two to four weeks post release^{2,3}. Nearly one half of adult male prisoners (44 per cent) will be reconvicted within 12 months of release; this rises to 59 per cent for those serving shorter sentences of 12 months or less.⁴ Reoffending is also associated with other challenges which many prisoners face on release: for example, only around one quarter of prisoners have a job to go to on release and approximately 10 per cent have no settled accommodation in place.⁵ Overall, the lack of support for prisoners on release has been highlighted.⁶

There are no firm data on how many children are affected by parental (mostly paternal) imprisonment but it is estimated to be in the region of 200,000⁷, which is greater than the numbers in care or who are affected by parental divorce. Many of these children will also be affected by paternal substance misuse although, again, there are no exact data available. While the numbers of children who are affected by paternal imprisonment and paternal substance misuse are unclear, the way they are affected by either or both problems is much

clearer. Impacts include loss associated with absent parenting; impact on health (physical and mental), education and relationships; feelings of fear, shame and guilt; social impacts associated with housing, unemployment and financial difficulties; and increased risks of themselves having current or future problems with substances, mental health or offending.⁸ Children can be greatly affected by the disruption to, or loss of, contact with their parent while they are in prison.⁹ This absence of contact limits opportunities to address the underlying problems in these families and improve parent-child relationships.

Yet, the importance of the family in reducing reoffending is now widely recognised. This is based on increasing evidence that regular and supportive contact with the family (including with children) can improve prisoner and family/children well-being, both during a sentence and post-release, including reoffending and broader rehabilitation.¹⁰ For example, reoffending rates are 39 per cent lower for male prisoners who have regular visits from a family member.¹¹ In his influential review of how to better support men in prison, the Lord Farmer identified family contact as a vital and ‘*indispensable*’ element of prison reform, and recognised the importance of building and maintaining community based support for prisoners so that change can continue on release.¹² In other work family and friends have been identified as ‘*the most important*

1. Grateful thanks to all those who have supported the evaluation of M-PACT at HMP Parc, particularly Corin Morgan-Armstrong (Head of Family Interventions at HMP Parc, who also commented on drafts of this paper); and at Action on Addiction, particularly Katherine Jenkins (Head of Service at Action on Addiction, who also commented on drafts of this paper).
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9. Saunders V (2017). Children of prisoners – children's decision making about contact. *Child & Family Social Work* 22, 63-72.
10. Farmer (2017). *The Importance of Strengthening Prisoners' Family Ties to Prevent Reoffending and Reduce Intergenerational Crime*. London, Ministry of Justice. HM Inspectorate of Prisons (2016). *Life in prison: Contact with families and friends*. London, HM Inspectorate of Prisons.
11. Farmer (2017). *The Importance of Strengthening Prisoners' Family Ties to Prevent Reoffending and Reduce Intergenerational Crime*. London, Ministry of Justice.
12. Farmer (2017). *The Importance of Strengthening Prisoners' Family Ties to Prevent Reoffending and Reduce Intergenerational Crime*. London, Ministry of Justice.

resettlement agency for prisoners on release'.¹³ The UK's first longitudinal study of how families manage when a man is in prison, and up to six months after his release, identified a number of predictors associated with positive resettlement. These include high quality family relationships, good communication between the father (the prisoner) and family during imprisonment, high frequency contact during imprisonment, fathers being more involved with their children prior to prison, social support from family and friends, participation in family-oriented programmes during imprisonment, more material resources before imprisonment, and less previous involvement of the father with crime and the criminal justice system.¹⁴ These findings suggest that interventions during a sentence, involving the wider family, could be beneficial to both prisoners and their families.

The Farmer review recommended that the family should be the third pillar of rehabilitation, alongside employment and education, and that a family focus can bolster the framework for reform laid out in the White Paper on prison safety and reform.¹⁵ Specific expectations around family contact (including between fathers and children) are now part of HM Inspectorate of Prisons inspection criteria.¹⁶ Furthermore, all prisons are now required to write and publish a 'Family and Significant Others Strategy', and a new Prison Service Instruction, focusing on children and families and grounded in the recommendations of the Farmer review, will be published in 2019. However, while there is an increasing number of family oriented initiatives within prisons to support prisoners to engage with their

children/families, and an increase in the support available to the children of prisoners, there are few evidence based interventions to support prisoners and their families within prison and no known interventions which target children and families affected by parental imprisonment and parental substance misuse. This paper reports findings from research which evaluated a whole family intervention which supports families where there is parental substance misuse, the Moving Parents and Children Together (M-PACT) programme, developed by the UK Charity Action on Addiction and delivered in a male prison, HMP Parc in South Wales. It is currently the only known combined substance misuse and whole family intervention available in any UK prison.

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About M-PACT and HMP Parc

M-PACT is a structured, psychosocial and educational, whole family intervention which was developed by Action on Addiction in 2006 in direct response to the Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs' *Hidden Harm* report on how children are affected by parental drug misuse. The programme's development was informed by a number of theoretical approaches and other evaluated interventions, including systemic family work¹⁷, attachment theory¹⁸, the transtheoretical cycle of change¹⁹, and the Strengthening Families approach.²⁰ At its core, through recognising the overlooked voices and experiences of children, M-PACT aims to improve the well-

being of children and families affected by parental substance misuse by targeting the intersection between substance misuse and families. This is because it is widely recognised that parental substance misuse can

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13. HM Inspectorate of Prisons (2016). *Life in prison: Contact with families and friends*. London, HM Inspectorate of Prisons (p4).
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 16. HM Inspectorate of Prisons (2017). *Expectations: Criteria for assessing the treatment of and conditions for men in prisons*. London, HM Inspectorate of Prisons.
 17. Carr A (2014). The evidence base for family therapy and systemic interventions for child-focused problems. *Journal of Family Therapy* 36(2), 107-157.
 18. Bowlby J (1969). *Attachment and Loss*. London, Hogarth Press.
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 20. See <https://www.strengtheningfamiliesprogram.org/index.html>

have a devastating impact on children and families, impeding parenting and the everyday roles, routines and rituals of family life, often resulting in conflict, secrecy and fractured relationships.²¹ Coupled with the stigma and isolation which is often present, the nuanced, multiple and complex ways in which substance misuse can affect families means that a specific response is needed to repair such damage.

An M-PACT programme brings together several families, where at least one parent has a serious alcohol or drug problem and where there is at least one child aged 8-17 years. The programme involves a comprehensive assessment and eight weekly programme sessions (combining separate work with adults and children, work with family units, and activities which brings all the families together) followed by an individual review with each family and a reunion session for all participants. The eight sessions include topics such as making sense of addiction, my family, communicating with people you care about, and feelings and beliefs. Services delivering M-PACT purchase a licence from Action on Addiction, and each programme is delivered by facilitators who have received training which is accredited by the University of Bath and delivered by experience tutors. Each M-PACT programme is delivered by a minimum of two trained facilitators, supported by volunteers and others as required. M-PACT was introduced in 2006 and is now delivered in a range of community, prison and universal settings across the UK. To date, over 700 families have engaged with M-PACT, and it effects positive change in four broad areas: support through shared experiences; understanding addiction; improved communication within families; and healthier, safer and more united families.²²

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M-PACT was introduced in to the prison estate, at HMP Parc, in 2011. HMP Parc is a Category B private male prison in South Wales, and is one of the largest prisons in the UK with approximately 500 children visiting every week. In 2005 the Parc Supporting Families model was established, in 2010 the Family Interventions Unit (FIU) was opened (the first of its kind in any UK prison) and in 2015 the Endeavour Wing for former service personnel was opened (it is still the only fully functioning veterans Wing in any UK prison). With 64 beds the FIU offers men a range of interventions aimed at improving family relationships (including M-PACT). The work of the FIU is supported by other initiatives at HMP Parc, including the visits area being managed by the family team (rather than security), and collaboration with multiple local partners across South Wales. This includes the Invisible Walls Wales (IWW) service, a jointly funded partnership between G4S and HMPPS Wales, which offers holistic and wraparound support to prisoners and families in the 12 months pre-release and up to 10 months post-release.²³ The family work at HMP has been awarded an 'Investors on Families' accredited chartermark, the first prison in the EU to achieve the standard normally awarded to schools.²⁴ The Parc Supporting Families model was reported by the HM Inspectorate of Prisons as

'excellent.....innovative....radical',²⁵ and by Lord Farmer as 'the clearest example of good practice I came across'.²⁶

This paper will summarise findings from evaluations of M-PACT at HMP Parc, and discuss how the prison has been able to introduce and sustain the programme since it was first delivered in 2011. M-PACT is one of the core interventions available to the men

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23. Clancy A & Maguire M (2017). *Prisoner's Children and families: Can the walls be 'invisible'? Evaluation of Invisible Walls Wales*. Final report, University of South Wales.
24. HM Inspectorate of Prisons (2016). *Life in prison: Contact with families and friends*. London, HM Inspectorate of Prisons.
25. HM Inspectorate of Prisons (2016). *Life in prison: Contact with families and friends*. London, HM Inspectorate of Prisons (p74).
26. Farmer (2017). *The Importance of Strengthening Prisoners' Family Ties to Prevent Reoffending and Reduce Intergenerational Crime*. London, Ministry of Justice (p56).

and their families at HMP Parc. Between 2011 and mid 2017 seven M-PACT programmes were delivered, attended by 67 participants from 18 families, including 19 male prisoners, 28 children and young people (CandYP) and 20 non-using adults. Families were primarily affected by illegal drug use although alcohol also featured, and many of the men had long histories of substance misuse and offending. Overall, there was a very high completion rate of the M-PACT programme.

Methodology

Building on an earlier (unpublished) evaluation of the first two M-PACT programmes to be delivered at HMP Parc, a further evaluation was undertaken in 2017 to understand how M-PACT helps families and why it has been possible to embed the programme so successfully at the prison.²⁷ While mixed methods were used, the focus here is on qualitative data which were collected through 28 interviews with 29 individuals:

- i. Four families who completed an M-PACT programme in 2017. Eleven interviews were completed with four fathers (all still at HMP Parc), five other adults (one spouse, one parent, one adult child, one ex-partner, and one sibling) and three CandYP.
- ii. Four families who completed an M-PACT programme between 2014 and 2016. Ten interviews were completed with four fathers (two were back in HMP Parc and two were living at home), two other adults (spouses) and four CandYP (one a young adult). A member of prison staff (and the M-PACT delivery team) was present for interviews with the two men interviewed in HMP Parc (at the request of the prisoners).
- iii. Seven professionals including HMP Parc staff/M-PACT facilitators, an individual who supported M-PACT delivery as a volunteer, and a researcher from the University of South Wales involved with the evaluation of the Invisible Walls Wales programme.

Interviewees were identified by HMP Parc. The research was approved by the National Offender Management Service and all interviewees gave written consent. Semi-structured interviews were conducted either face-to-face or by 'phone and the majority were audio recorded. Interview reports were written which included verbatim excerpts from audio recordings. Thematic qualitative analysis was undertaken with use of thematic networks to help organise the emerging codes and themes.²⁸

Findings

Two broad areas will be summarised. First, how M-PACT helps families and, second, how it has been possible to introduce and sustain an intervention like M-PACT at HMP Parc.²⁹ It is acknowledged that interviewees were identified by HMP Parc and that this may have introduced some selection bias. However, all interviewees were asked if they had any views on things which they felt were unhelpful about M-PACT or which they felt were missing. Very few responses to these questions were given. Furthermore, HMP Parc and Action on Addiction routinely ask all families for their views on M-PACT (e.g. as part of post programme reviews) and have also reported that very little negative feedback has been received. However, any feedback which does come from practitioners or families does contribute towards the ongoing evolution of the programme such as offering more flexibility and introducing after-care support. The data from HMP Parc mirrors broader M-PACT evaluation findings that participants have an overall very positive experience of the programme.³⁰

How M-PACT helps families

The findings about how M-PACT helps families in a prison environment align very closely with the broader evaluation findings reported in community settings.³¹

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27. Thanks to NOMS for approving the research, and all the prisoners, families and professionals who contributed evaluation data.

28. Attride-Stirling, J. (2011). Thematic networks: an analytic tool for qualitative research. *Qualitative research* 1(3), 385-405.

29. Quotes: MP = Male Prisoner, FM = Family Members, YP = Young Person, P = Professional.

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Namely, participants highlight: support through shared experiences; understanding addiction; improved communication within families; and more united families. A small number of participants described further benefits which will also be summarised below.

Support through shared experiences

Participants highlighted the importance of peer support through meeting other families with similar experiences.

'it's not just you....it was really nice for us all to be there for the same reason'

(FM) 'you get to know the other people there are just like you, they're in the same situation as you....you bond with them but in a way that you wouldn't bond with someone else' (YP)

The men, particularly those residing on the Family Wing, also talked about the peer support they could offer to each other, something which they found beneficial both during and after M-PACT.

'it's like one big family on here....even though we're away from our families we are like family....we're all in the same situation' (MP)

Understanding addiction

Participants talked about the role of the programme in helping them to talk about and understand the impact of addiction (and also imprisonment) on both individual family members and the family as a whole. This was something that few of the men had thought about before and for many it was a catalyst to change. However, inevitably many of the prisoners found these conversations really hard and talked about the emotional impact it had on them.

'realising some of the feelings that she had....how much she used to worry about me, how much they miss me being around.... [I] understand how they feel....I never thought about it before' (MP)

'the emotions when you go back to your cell when you break down crying....cos you go

back thinking about things [that] you done and that you talked about whereas usually you just don't want to talk....you don't acknowledge that shit....I gone back to my cell in tears....that's the first time I've mentioned this to anyone' (MP)

Improved communication

Participants described how they felt M-PACT had improved communication within the family. First, through supporting them to open up and be honest with each other about how they had been affected and how they felt.

'getting the kids to talk about how they feel and getting us to talk about how we feel about them....I found that very mind-blowing....things [that] my son writes on the paper he would never say to me on the phone [or] when we have a visit...[that] made me think oh my god he's got a lot of thoughts in his mind...I didn't know' (MP)

Participants described how they felt M-PACT had improved communication within the family.

'opportunity to talk to [child] about his behaviour....it helped us get closer....talk about things [we] didn't normally talk about.....quite hard for me to hear [what my family thought] about my behaviour' (MP)

Often, interviewees said that they were talking about such things and expressing emotions for the first time.

'that was the first time we spoke about his addiction....and how it has an impact on him, myself, the family and how much we've actually gone through with it....it was very emotional' (YP)

Furthermore, many interviewees said that it was particularly powerful to hear what children had to say about their family situations. Often, this was the first time children had shared their experiences, and the first time that their parents had heard what they had to say.

'[we] had the chance to say how it made us feel and the things we went through and I think he really got an understanding of what it's like to be without him as well' (YP)

Some interviewees talked about the positive benefits of having such opportunities to talk openly with their family.

'it was better to get things off my chest....made me feel better' (YP)

'relieved....I left there with a weight off my shoulders' (FM)

More united families

Interviewees talked about two ways in which M-PACT seemed to facilitate improved relationships within families: stronger and renewed bonds within families; and an increased recognition of the importance of the family and of being 'in it together' to tackle problems.

First, interviewees felt that M-PACT had helped them become closer as a family.

'I [didn't] have a relationship with him....so the first couple of [sessions] it was....getting to know him again I suppose and him knowing me as his daughter.... by week 4 I can sit in a room with him, I know who he is, he's my dad and I'm okay with this, it was just amazing how it all helped' (FM)

'[my children] never used to cwtch [cuddle] and things like that but now they just don't want to let me go.....it's mad, a brilliant feeling....it's brought us so much closer....even though I've been taken away from them that connection is still there....it makes me feel 10 times better' (MP)

Second, interviewees, particularly fathers, thought that M-PACT had given them an increased recognition of the importance of family and of their role as a father. Some were adamant that they would never use drugs or be in prison again.

'my family aren't worth losing for no drug or my crime....[I want] to become the father they want me to become' (MP)

'I can honestly say I've never seen him so positive, so family oriented, every time you speak to him it's always about myself and the children....he believes in himself now whereas he didn't before' (FM)

Other changes

Some interviewees talked about changes in offending and drug use. One prisoner, who re-offended after completing M-PACT and was back in prison when he was interviewed, said that his last time outside of prison (after completing M-PACT) was his longest ever time being out of prison and being drug free. Both men who were interviewed in the community, and who had been prolific offenders, had been out of prison for approximately one year — one was working and the other was a 'house husband' so his partner could work. One professional commented on the role of M-PACT in reducing offending and drug use, including with prolific offenders and serious, long-term drug users.

'some of our best successes [with M-PACT] have been with men who have had just atrocious substance misuse histories going back to their childhood....some of those men who are quite notorious have been some of the biggest successes....the ones that stand out for me are some of those families that are really written off' (P)

With regards to children (both young people and adult children), interviewees noticed how there had been changes in their mental well-being, including confidence, assertiveness, and reduced anger.

'you feel more confident in yourself' (YP)

'I'm so proud....I've seen my own daughter grow up from a cheeky teenager to smashing up the house because she's not allowed out....since we've done M-PACT and I've been out she's grown up, she's an adult' (MP)

With regards to children (both young people and adult children), interviewees noticed how there had been changes in their mental well-being, including confidence, assertiveness, and reduced anger.

Changes were also seen for children in the areas of behaviour and education, and their overall outlook on life.

'my behaviour before my dad went in, it was really really bad....now that I've done the M-PACT course and I can see my dad more and I've seen other people in the same situation as me has helped me really much cos I'm having more time with my dad and my dad's telling me good stuff so then I'm better for my mother' (YP)

'M-PACT was a big change in my life....that was the past, now he's changed, he's working....M-PACT made me realise that okay he's not here but my life still needs to go on, I can't stop my life because of something he done' (YP)

The nature of this evaluation makes it hard to assess the direct attribution of change directly to M-PACT. Nevertheless, some of the participants were clear that the changes which had taken place were associated with M-PACT.

'M-PACT has brought us back close together.... I think because of M-PACT I've got that bond back which is something I thought I had lost forever' (MP)

'I honestly think without M-PACT I don't think we'd be where we are now....we were just at complete breaking point...it was just enough for us to push us in the right direction' (FM)

Introducing and sustaining M-PACT at HMP Parc

Interviewees talked about what they felt facilitated the introduction of M-PACT at the prison, and what they felt had been the key challenges to its introduction and sustainability.

'M-PACT is a pretty mammoth undertaking in terms of what prisons are used to and what they need to get used to if they're really going

to broaden their family intervention remit....M-PACT demands all sorts of different and new things that prisons don't normally do' (P)

Thus, interviewees talked about the broader family ethos at HMP Parc (i.e. the Parc Supporting Families model), involvement of the whole family, delivery of M-PACT, wraparound support (again, part of the Parc Supporting Families model), and the challenges they had faced.

Broader family ethos

Interviewees were clear that the overall Parc Supporting Families model was a key driver behind the success of M-PACT (and other interventions and initiatives that are also available). Over the last decade a family and significant others culture has developed and become embedded across the whole prison. So, there is evidence of the holistic family approach across the whole prison — for example, the family check-in area, the family visits area (which is managed by the Families Team rather than by security), and the Family Wing itself. All of this combines to welcome and encourage families to come to the prison, and to engage with each other in a safe and 'normal'

way that removes many of the usual barriers, many of which are scary and overwhelming to children. Men on the Family Wing are motivated to be there and to engage with all of the programmes on offer to them — a perk of this is that they can have more contact with their children and use the family room for visits.

The majority of men who completed M-PACT were resident on the Family Wing, meaning that the process of change had already started. One professional talked about basic changes that they had seen in M-PACT participants residing on the Family Wing, including their behaviour and attitude on the wing, looking after their cell, getting involved in work and gaining qualifications, thinking of their appearance and going to the gym. This professional explained the importance of these changes in laying the foundations for the more substantial changes which M-PACT targets.

M-PACT was a big change in my life....that was the past, now he's changed, he's working....M-PACT made me realise that okay he's not here but my life still needs to go on, I can't stop my life because of something he done

'you can see men coming back from the first few sessions literally holding themselves differently...the process of change is beginning, you can physically see it in them....that's rare, there aren't many interventions in prison that have that impact as quickly... it has a catalyst effect and they start doing other stuff....it's all related, it's not coincidence, it all connects' (P)

Involvement of the whole family

Interviewees highlighted that the involvement of the whole family, particularly children, in M-PACT and the increased time they can spend together often served as a catalyst for men to engage with the programme.

'we'll bring your family in to do this course, it gives you the boost to think I'll have a go.... I wasn't even thinking about the course, I was just thinking that's more visits with my family' (MP)

'M-PACT stood out more because I had my daughter there telling me how she felt' (MP)

One professional said that it was unique for a family to be able to spend 2.5 hours a week together for eight weeks, saying that, *'no other prisoner in this establishment gets that opportunity'*.

'I think the concept itself.....something I can do with my partner and my children, that in itself must not be underestimated in the prison setting....it is a rare jewel to have that opportunity...the traditional prison service isolationist approach to interventions....you can't operate like that' (P)

Delivery of the course

There were a number of aspects to delivery which interviewees felt worked well in the prison environment, thereby facilitating engagement with M-PACT. First, professional interviewees thought that M-PACT worked because it was not delivered as, or seen as, a classroom course but something more encouraging and empowering, and which provided a safe space where difficult conversations about addiction and feelings could take place.

'it's not in the least bit intimidating to anybody but then you come away and think how effective that was....it's not regimental....it's not like being in a classroom, it's very natural' (P)

Second, families really like the family room where M-PACT is delivered. The family room is part of the visits centre, with sofas, toys and so on. So, when families came together every week for M-PACT it did not feel like a normal prison visit. Rather than sitting in the visits hall around a table with no physical contact families could sit together on comfortable chairs and sofas in the family room. Some interviewees described how this environment helped their participation in the course.

'I got to see him for longer and sit by him' (YP)

'the children are so natural and they feel obviously very comfortable in their surroundings because they say exactly how they feel' (P)

Overall, the men in particular made comparisons with other courses that they had done in prison, with several naming M-PACT as the best course that they had done.

'it's the best course I've ever done in jail so far...I really really enjoyed it' (MP)

'prisoners talk very enthusiastically about it...the other programmes don't get talked about enthusiastically by prisoners...they're a pain in the arse that you've got to do in order to better your chances of getting released early, M-PACT isn't talked about like that, it's talked about with more respect' (P)

Wraparound support

An important aspect of maintaining change is the wider community wraparound support available to families, another key component to the Parc Supporting Families model. A number of families talked about the benefits of involvement with Invisible Walls Wales while in prison and on release — for example, children having activity days out, a partner receiving supporting with attending appointments, liaising with the council about moving to a bigger house, help to find employment or a course, and liaison with schools.

'M-PACT to me was like laying them seeds down and then the rest of the Invisible Walls package helped to water it if you like [so] the whole thing has worked together...everything began with M-PACT...without going on this journey we wouldn't have got anywhere near where we are now' (FM)

'[M-PACT has] completely turned around some of the relationships within some of those families, particularly with the child and the prisoner, and I think [Invisible Walls Wales] can then help that to continue following release and I think M-PACT is a great starting point for many families' (P)

At HMP Parc fathers and children have been able to attend other courses, for example the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme and the Fire Fighter For A Day course, which has helped them maintain contact and strengthen relationships with their children.

'it was because of M-PACT that I did all the other courses...my daughter coming up to see me, my daughter smiling at me, telling me she loves me, me telling her I love her...that made me think okay I might do other courses' (MP)

Challenges

Challenges have included the recruitment of families; liaison with other prison staff to help with the movement of prisoners and families around the prison; the rigidity of the prison regime; staffing to deliver a programme and ensuring staff have enough time to prepare for, run, and debrief after, each session/programme; the age of the children; and the geographical proximity of families to the prison as this along with the timing of sessions and access to transport can influence attendance.

These challenges have been tackled in a number of ways. For example, a range of strategies have been used to recruit families, including building relationships

with other departments and colleagues across the prison, advertising on the Family Wing and across the prison, and inviting ex-prisoners and participants in M-PACT to speak to future cohorts of families. Word of mouth between prisoners is also important. To facilitate programme delivery, the M-PACT team has worked hard to build good relationships with key personnel across the prison, including the security team. Volunteers have supported some families to attend by driving them to and from sessions; M-PACT/prison staff have also built relationships with local schools and this has supported some children to be able to attend the programme.

'I can't believe there's volunteers that do that [drive me to and from sessions], I don't think she realises how big of a deal it is, it doesn't sound like much' (FM)

Discussion

Overall, the findings mirror those which have been seen with the evaluation of M-PACT in community settings.³² They also illustrate the potential for change through a multi-family treatment³³ in a prison environment. The three main ways in which multi-family treatments can effect change have all been identified as important for M-PACT: namely, positive therapeutic factors such as group cohesion, observational experiences, and confidence in the group therapists. Further, while resilience itself is not directly measured, there is evidence that M-PACT targets some of the individual, familial and environmental protective factors identified as building resilience in children and families including those affected by adverse family events.³⁴ Examples include improved self-esteem and wanting to achieve in life (individual); improved communication, and stronger and more cohesive relationships (familial); engaging with work or education (environmental). Further research could help enhance understanding of how an intervention like M-PACT can build resilience in individuals and families.

While there is evidence of how M-PACT can help children, the data suggest that children can remain affected and distressed by having a father in prison. It

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 34. Benzies K & Mychasiuk R (2009). Fostering family resiliency: a review of the key protective factors. *Child & Family Social Work* 14, 103-114. Velleman R & Templeton L (2016). Impact of parents' substance misuse on children: an update. *British Journal of Psychiatric Advances* 22: 108-117. doi: 10.1192/apt.bp.114.014449 Walsh F (2016). Family resilience: a developmental systems framework. *European Journal of Developmental Psychology* 13, 3, 313-324.

seemed particularly hard for children to complete M-PACT while their father remained in prison³⁵, something which can be exacerbated when contact reverts back to 'normal' prison visits after M-PACT. Having a father reside on the Family Wing can mitigate this somewhat through the increased contact that fathers can have with children, including the opportunity to have visits in the family room, and to engage in other courses and activities. The men also seemed to be emotionally affected by having to stay in prison after completing M-PACT particularly when changes had been made and relationships with their children and family had improved. Overall, there is a lack of research about the impact on male prisoners of changing father roles as a result of imprisonment.³⁶ There is qualitative evidence from M-PACT that it strengthens the men's resolve to be better fathers which may illustrate how such an intervention can build family resilience.

It is hard to report with any certainty on the potential for M-PACT to contribute to reductions in substance use and offending in the long-term. The evidence to date is largely anecdotal but includes positive stories of two men who had been out of prison for over a year when they were interviewed, and of others (long-term substance users and prolific offenders) who relapsed or offended again since completing M-PACT but who said that the period away from drugs and crime since M-PACT and before return to prison had been their longest ever. In much the same way as understanding resilience is based on an understanding of the protective factors which facilitate resilience, so an understanding of reoffending and relapse must be based on understanding the factors which need to change in order to influence reoffending and substance use rather than looking narrowly at reoffending or substance use. The findings from the Invisible Walls Wales project reflect this, as they show positive change in a number of known indicators associated with reducing reoffending, such as accommodation, employment, substance use, and attitudes towards crime.³⁷ Further evaluation of M-PACT in the prison setting should consider how reoffending and substance use outcomes can be captured more rigorously and over the longer-term, including measurement of indicators which best predict desistance from crime and substance use.

The success of M-PACT at HMP Parc has not been without its challenges, including the recruitment of families, staffing, relationships with personnel across the prison, and the wider pressures on the prison system. Yet,

M-PACT is now well established at the prison while other male prisons have not been able to embed M-PACT within their establishment. It is therefore important to understand the reasons for its success at HMP Parc. These are largely centred on the over-arching Parc Supporting Families model that has fostered an innovative, holistic and forward thinking culture and approach to imprisonment and rehabilitation. The model includes: transferring the management of the family visits area from security to the family team; the Family Wing; the growing number of evidence based interventions and other activities which prisoners can engage with including those which involve their children (and including M-PACT); the strong links which HMP Parc has with a wide range of community organisations including schools; and the success of the Invisible Walls Wales project.³⁸ To remain financially viable, M-PACT (and other programmes at HMP Parc) is internally funded through a type of social enterprise that reinvests profit from cafes in the family visits areas at HMP Parc (there are three cafes) in order to deliver a range of interventions and initiatives.

The M-PACT programme at HMP Parc is a rare example of an intervention which seems to make a real difference to families affected by the dual problems of parental imprisonment and parental substance misuse. The way in which the programme has become embedded at HMP Parc, as part of the Parc Supporting Families approach, is evidence of its potential to be successfully delivered within the confines of a prison regime. However, a huge amount of work is needed to introduce the programme in to a prison and it seems that the benefits associated with the programme will be greater, and have more chance at being sustained, if the prison itself has a wider family focus of which an intervention like M-PACT is an important part. M-PACT is a good example of the increasing recognition which is being given to the role of the family and family contact in reducing reoffending. It is also a clear response to the recommendations in the Farmer review, the revised HM Inspectorate of Prisons inspection criteria, and new Prison and Probation Service guidance to providing services to strengthen prisoner ties to their families. Furthermore, all prisons are now required to write and publish a 'Family and Significant Others Strategy' and a new Prison Service Instruction, focusing on children and families, will be published in 2019. Grounded in the recommendations of the Farmer review, the new Instruction includes a recommendation to offer whole family support including for substance misuse, a recommendation which clearly aligns with M-PACT.

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38. Clancy A & Maguire M (2017). *Prisoner's Children and families: Can the walls be 'invisible'? Evaluation of Invisible Walls Wales*. Final report, University of South Wales.