



TEA-BREAK GUIDE



In the UK currently over 312,000 children have a parent in prison. No child should be punished because they have a parent in prison.

Whilst the imprisonment of a parent/carer may be an entirely proper outcome from the Criminal Justice System, the children left behind are a vulnerable group who require additional support and a trauma informed approach from all those working with them.

Having a parent in prison is considered an Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE) which can have a profoundly negative impact on the child. It has been recognised that children of prisoners are at risk of significantly worse outcomes than children not affected by parental imprisonment. These can include an increased risk of future offending themselves, mental ill health, and poor educational attainment.

Unsupported Children of Prisoners:

- carry around feelings of guilt, shame and isolation
- are more likely than other children to suffer mental health problems
- are more likely to struggle with the effects of deprivation
- are more likely to get in trouble with the law growing up
- are less likely to achieve positive educational and health outcome

Further Reading

[Children of Prisoners Europe](#) - Children of Prisoners Europe (COPE) is a pan-European network working with and on behalf of children with imprisoned parents.

[Barnardo's](#) - No child should be punished because their parent is in prison

[Children Visiting Prisons](#) – NSCP Procedure