A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF FAMILY LITERACY PROGRAMMES IN UK AND US PRISONS

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by

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Abstract

**Background:** Studies have shown that maintaining family contact during incarceration can contribute to the rehabilitation of inmates and lower rates of recidivism, as well as make a significant impact on the family members involved. Family literacy programmes in prisons help to facilitate this contact, and allow incarcerated parents to play a role in the literacy development of their children. These programmes are becoming more and more important as incarceration rates continue to rise in the Western world.

**Aims:** This study aims to investigate the place of family literacy programmes in correctional facilities in both the UK and US. It seeks to compare the design and delivery of programmes in these countries, and suggest possible improvements in how they are carried out.

**Methods:** Semi-structured interviews were held with 3 librarians and 1 volunteer in the UK and US. An online questionnaire was distributed to librarians in both countries, which received 16 UK responses and 12 US responses. Observations of a family literacy programme took place in both a US jail and UK prison. An additional focus group was held with 4 former inmates in the US. A literature review was also carried out.

**Results:** 8 respondents, and 15 UK respondents reported running some kind of family literacy programme in their facility. Lack of funding and lack of staff prevented others from doing so. Positive impacts on both inmates and their children were noted by librarians, volunteers and former inmates. The differences in the set up of UK prisons and US correctional facilities affected how family literacy programmes were delivered.

**Conclusions:** This preliminary study shows that family literacy programmes have a positive impact on inmates and their families in both the UK and US. There is a need for more intensive research to better understand both the short-term and long-term impact of these programmes.
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Chapter 1: Introduction

“The dissolution of families, the harm to children – and the resultant perpetuation of the cycle of crime and incarceration from one generation to the next – may be the most profound and damaging effect of our current penal structure.”

(Bernstein, 2007, p. 4)

1.1 Background to Research

Her Majesty’s Prison Service has three main objectives in its effort to provide excellent prison services in the UK. As well as holding prisoners securely, and ensuring a safe and humane environment, it aims to reduce the risks of prisoners re-offending (HMPS, 2012). This final aim is unsurprising, given the high rates of recidivism in the UK. While it is difficult to measure rates of recidivism exactly, it is estimated that 47% of adults are reconvicted within one year of release (PRT, 2013). Rates of recidivism are also very high in the US. A report on the pattern of recidivism between 2005-2010 revealed that 67.8% of offenders were re-arrested within 3 years, and 76.6% were re-arrested within 5 years (BJS, 2014). There have been a number of recent initiatives implemented in prisons to aid rehabilitation and resettlement, with the particular aim of reducing recidivism. Focus has been placed particularly on the role of family contact in contributing to these efforts.

Holt & Miller’s (1972) study found that those who experienced family contact during incarceration were up to six times less likely to re-offend than those who did not. The National Offender Management Service (2004) acknowledge that “maintaining family relationships can help to prevent ex-prisoners re-offending and assist them to resettle successfully into the community” (p. 37). Maintaining contact is also important for the families of those incarcerated. With staggering increases in incarceration rates in the Western world, the number of children affected by parental incarceration is also on the rise. In the UK, it is estimated that over 200,000 children are affected (PRT, 2013). More than 1.2 million inmates in the US are parents of children under the age of 18 (Pew Trusts, 2010). The effects on children are numerous and complex, often having an adverse effect on the social, emotional and educational development of children. Research suggests that
maintaining family contact goes a long way in helping to alleviate these negative repercussions.

Despite repeated findings on the positive outcomes of family contact, the opportunities to maintain this contact are not easily available. A report by the Social Exclusion Unit in 2002 noted that 43% of remand prisoners lost contact with their families when they entered prison. One of the greatest barriers preventing this contact is the distance of prisons from the inmate’s home. The Prison Reform Trust notes that women in UK prisons are held, on average, 60 miles from their home (PRT, 2013). US statistics are even more alarming, with Bernstein (2007) noting that nearly half the parents in federal institutions are held more than 500 miles from their home. Further deterrents highlighted include set visiting times, the physical layout of visiting rooms, and the general attitudes of prison staff (Bernstein, 2007; Hairston, 2002). It is clear that positive changes need to be made within the prison service to better facilitate family contact.

A number of family literacy schemes have been implemented in facilities across the UK and US, which aim to help maintain family ties by focusing particularly on literacy and education. They enable inmates to play an active role in the literacy development of their children, while at the same time helping to improve their own literacy skills, confidence and self-esteem. According to Blumberg & Griffin (2013), prison reading programmes “feed two birds with one seed by benefiting inmates and their children in numerous ways” (p. 265). While there is an increasing amount of research regarding the benefits of family literacy programmes in general, literature is sparse regarding such programmes in prisons. This study aims to contribute to the limited existing literature on the topic. It highlights the variety of programmes which exist in both the UK and US, and the potential impact they have on inmates and their families.

1.2 Purpose and Rationale

This study arose from the researcher’s interest in prison libraries and the range of services and programmes they offer to a group of vulnerable people with limited access to information. Having previously lived and worked in the US, the researcher also has an interest in how library services are delivered to those incarcerated in the US. It was decided that conducting a cross-national comparative study would be both interesting and enlightening, and allow for practitioners in both countries to learn from each other.
the continued growth of incarceration rates in both the UK and US, the resulting increase in the number of children affected by parental incarceration, and an amplified effort by the government in both countries to reduce recidivism, it seems timely to research the impact of family literacy programmes on both inmates and their families.

1.3 Terms and Definitions

There are a number of terms that naturally differ between UK and US contexts. The researcher has attempted to make these distinctions clear, but realises that a number of terms may be more UK-friendly. Differences between correctional facilities are made clear throughout, for instance when speaking of a jail or a prison in the US. When these facilities are spoken of collectively, they are referred to as correctional facilities, establishments or institutions. It is also acknowledged that there are various terms used when speaking of incarcerated individuals. In this study, the terms inmate, prisoner and offender are used interchangeably. Finally, the terms re-offending and recidivism are also used interchangeably, reflecting recent literature patterns.

1.4 Aims and Objectives

This research has two main aims:

1) To investigate the place of family literacy programmes in UK prisons, and in US jails and prisons

2) To compare the design and delivery of these programmes in the UK and US.

The objectives are to find out:

- What family literacy programmes exist and how they are funded
- The role of libraries in the delivery of these programmes
- The perceived impact of family literacy programmes on inmates and their families
- Future considerations and improvements for family literacy programmes in both the UK and the US.
1.5 Structure of the Report

This dissertation is divided into seven chapters. This chapter provided the background to and purpose of the study, outlining its aims and objectives. Chapter 2 provides a review of recent literature on the main topics involved. Chapter 3 describes the methodology used. Chapters 4 and 5 present the main findings, firstly from the perspective of librarians and volunteers and then from those with experience of incarceration. Both sets of findings are discussed in more detail in Chapter 6. Chapter 7 concludes the study, addressing the extent to which aims and objectives have been met and suggesting topics for future research. Supporting information and ethics approval documentation can be found in the Appendices at the end of the study.
Chapter 2: Literature Review

This chapter seeks to identify and critique relevant literature related to the aims and objectives of this study. As this research focuses on two different countries, each section aims to reflect the context and society of each country, highlighting both their similarities and differences. It will first introduce the structure and goals of the UK and US correctional systems, then proceed to consider the role of libraries in serving incarcerated individuals, the impact of incarceration on families, and the benefits of family literacy programmes for both parent and child. Information was gathered from a range of sources, including library and information databases, websites of relevant library associations and arts organisations, and reports published by correctional departments and foundations such as the Prison Reform Trust (PRT) and National Literacy Trust (NLT). Much of the literature pertaining to prison libraries and family literacy programmes undoubtedly stems from the US, and it is hoped that this study will add to the limited UK research in these fields.

2.1 The Prison Environment

In order to best understand library services to the incarcerated it is important to first understand the environment in which they are carried out. The goals of the prison service will have a direct impact on the delivery of library services in each institution. There are many similarities between UK and US environments, not least the fact that both countries have two of the highest rates of incarceration in the Western world. However, there are also a number of differences as to how correctional facilities are set up in each country. This section will consider both countries separately. Similarities and differences should arise that will enable a better understanding of the context in which library services, and family literacy programmes in particular, are carried out.

2.1.1 UK Prisons

Prisons in the UK hold male, female and transgender adults and young offenders, remanded and sentenced prisoners, from different backgrounds and of various ethnicities. While most offenders in the UK are British, a report by the Prison Reform Trust (2013) showed that 13% of the population are foreign nationals. Within male institutions, prisons range from Category A (maximum security) to Category D (open prisons). Immigration removal centres, whilst not specifically identified as prisons, do hold individuals in custody and will be included in this research. Female prisons hold all categories of prisoner in one
establishment, and are relatively few in number across the UK. Many official reports and recent newspaper articles have reported on overcrowding in UK prisons. Indeed, the prison population in England and Wales has doubled over the last 20 years, rising from 45,000 to 85,000 (CJA, 2012). Unsurprisingly, this overcrowding has had negative effects on the rehabilitation of prisoners. It is one of the main reasons there has been a recent push to reduce the increasing rates of re-offending.

2.1.2 Northern Ireland Prison Service

Although heavily influenced by the prison service in England and Wales, it should be noted that both Northern Ireland and Scotland have their own separate prison services in the UK. It is worth briefly mentioning the Northern Ireland Prison Service (NIPS), as this research includes an interview with a prison librarian in Northern Ireland. Northern Ireland has three main prison sites, which hold maximum security, medium security and young offender male inmates, as well as a women’s prison. The core statement of the NIPS is not dissimilar to that of England and Wales, which is to “improve public safety by reducing the risk of re-offending through the management and rehabilitation of offenders in custody” (NIPS, 2011). Again, this makes clear that reducing re-offending rates is a top priority within the prison service.

2.1.3 US Correctional Facilities

Correctional facilities are set up somewhat differently in the US than in the UK. Prisons or penitentiaries house offenders that are serving longer sentences, and are run by the federal government or individual state. Jails and juvenile detention centres are run mostly by local counties, and are described by Clark & MacCreaigh (2006) as “way stations, either to freedom or to incarceration elsewhere” (p. 92). The US has the highest incarceration rate in the world, with a total correctional population of more than 2 million people (BJS, 2013). As noted in the introduction, rates of recidivism are also high in the US and so reducing re-offending is again a major goal for the Department of Justice. Racial disproportionality is also evident in US incarceration rates, with the BJS (2010) noting that black, non-Hispanic males are incarcerated at a rate more than 6 times higher than white non-Hispanic males. These growing incarceration rates are primarily due to America’s recent War on Drugs campaign (Alexander, 2012; McCook, 2003). Lack of space prevents exploring resulting debates about mass incarceration, an issue which has been called “the most pressing racial and social issue of our time” (Alexander, 2014). It is appropriate, however, for this study to
at least acknowledge and appreciate these statistics and the resulting devastating effects on the families of those affected.

2.2    Library Services to the Incarcerated

Literature regarding prison libraries is limited, and the majority of books and articles that do exist stem from the US. There are four main works which stand out in the field, all written by American practitioners (Coyle, 1987; Vogel, 1995, 2009; Clark & MacCreagh, 2006). These detail the history of correctional libraries, as well as sharing valuable insights from the authors’ own professional experience and discussing various library models and programmes which can be used in such a unique setting. While much of the material is transferrable to a UK setting, the US does not share UK legislation on prison libraries and as such there is a need for more substantial UK research to be carried out. This is quite a timely topic, given a recent move by Justice Secretary Chris Grayling to ban books being sent to prisoners in the UK. This has thrown prison libraries into the spotlight, and provided an opportunity for them to be “given due attention...improved where necessary...and put at the heart of a learning culture in prisons” (Clarke, 2014).

2.2.1    UK and US Guidelines

It is a statutory requirement in the UK for all prisoners to have access to a library and reading materials, and NOMs has published a set of guidelines about the desired outcomes of these services (NOMS, 2012; Bowe, 2011). Laws regarding correctional libraries in the US differ from state to state. It is usual, however, for all state and federal prisons to have access to both a general lending and a legal library. This is not always the case for county jails, which often suffer from a lack of efficient library services and rely on volunteers or public librarians to step in. There has been much discussion surrounding prison library guidelines in the US in recent years. Lehmann and Locke (2005) have been instrumental in advocating for national guidelines that recognize the importance of both planning for new libraries and evaluating existing libraries. Furthermore, in 2010 the ALA drafted a statement, “The Prisoner’s Right to Read: an Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights”, which emphasized how important it is for incarcerated people to have access to information. Despite these guidelines, there exists little information about the extent to which they are followed, and how many libraries provide such services to jails.
2.2.2 The Purpose of the Prison Library

Literature reveals some ambiguity regarding the purpose and suggested setup of correctional libraries. Most UK and US libraries are based on a public library model, and aim to offer the same range of services as would a public library. Coyle (1987), however, has criticized the public library model in prisons, charging it with not being concerned enough with institutional goals. He argues that focus has shifted too much toward the needs and interests of inmates, with services having more of a recreational than educational focus. This clashes with the views of Vogel (1997, 2009) and Clark and MacCreagh (2006), who are adamant that library services should not differ between prisoners and the public. Coyle’s argument does raise an important issue, that of the opposing ethical values of library services and correctional services. While libraries emphasise service, confidentiality and free access to information, prisons are about protection and punishment, with a strong focus on security and surveillance. However, Coyle’s argument seems less convincing when one explores in depth the goals of the prison service and the services offered in prison libraries. With the number of varied programmes focusing on recreation, literacy and re-entry offered by prison libraries, and the recent push on re-entry initiatives within the prison system, it seems possible that a good prison library service can attend to prisoner needs, at the same time as advancing the goals of the institution.

2.2.3 Literacy Programmes in Prison

As with public libraries, prison libraries serve men, women and young people from ethnically, culturally and religiously diverse backgrounds with a range of educational and recreational needs. As literacy levels are often low in prisons, it has been argued that these same services are being offered to a population with more critical and urgent needs (Lehmann, 2011; Cashman, 2009; Vogel, 2009). Two UK-based studies have highlighted the range of both formal and informal literacy programmes offered in prison libraries (Cashman, 2009; Field, 2008). Despite the positive impact these programmes can have, librarians often face a lack of support from prisons and therefore suffer from lack of funding opportunities. The significance of prison libraries seems evident to practitioners, and those benefiting from the services, but there is a definite lack of support or understanding from elsewhere. It would seem that Vogel (2009) and Stearns (2004) are right in proposing intensive research that would demonstrate the outcome of prison library services. Doing so
might highlight their worth, and encourage more support and understanding from those outside the library profession.

### 2.3 The Impact of Parental Incarceration

"Imprisonment is a family experience."

(Loucks, 2004, p. 1)

Children of prisoners are a sector of society greatly affected by incarceration, and yet for a long time have gone virtually unnoticed. Morris’ 1965 study was the first of its kind to consider, on a national scale, the impact of incarceration on families of the incarcerated in the UK. The Cambridge Study in Delinquent Development (Farrington, 1961-1981), a longitudinal study focusing on the causes of crime and delinquency, has also provided valuable insights into the possible effects of parental incarceration. More recently, there has been a growing interest in the fields of psychology, sociology and criminology on this issue and various qualitative studies have been carried out. Through lengthy interviews with affected children and those working with children, Bernstein’s (2007) work has provided a glimpse into this world from the eyes of once unseen victims. While such studies are certainly significant, the SCIE (2011) highlights the need for more large-scale studies to be carried out to trace child adjustment from before parental imprisonment into adulthood. According to SCIE (2011), the lack of existing research reflects the “pervasive social exclusion of this vulnerable population” (p. 16).

#### 2.3.1 Effects of Incarceration on Children

From the literature that does exist, it is clear there are a number of potential effects that parental incarceration can have on a child. These are difficult to ascertain, however, as such effects could be the cause of a number of issues such as poverty and other family relationships and it must be remembered that parental incarceration will not affect everyone in the same way (Hoffman, Byrd & Kightlinger, 2010; Parke & Clarke-Stewart, 2003; Deane, 1988). Despite a lack of conclusive evidence, it is widely acknowledged that one of the most noted effects is that of poor educational performance (Purvis, 2013; Parke and Clarke-Stewart, 2003; Hairston, 2001). A study by Sack et. al in 1976 reported that over 50% of children had poor grades, and instances of regression. Such statistics are also
supported by more recent studies, with Purvis (2013) adding that children tend to struggle with peer relationships, as they are often ostracized or teased by other children.

2.3.2 The Importance of Family Contact

It is widely acknowledged that maintaining family ties whilst incarcerated has a crucial role to play in the lives of both the incarcerated individual and the families affected. Holt & Miller (1972), in their much cited study of California prisoners, found that those who maintain contact are six times less likely to re-enter prison. This statistic has been widely used to promote family contact in prisons, particularly with the recent government focus on reducing recidivism. Maintaining this contact can also be a drive for children themselves to stay away from drugs and crime (Bernstein, 2007). Parke & Clarke-Stewart (2003) note that, in addition to alternative caregivers, the other major determinant of child adjustment is the opportunity to maintain contact with the absent parent. Bernstein (2007) goes as far to say that ongoing contact is the “single most important factor in determining whether a family will reunify after a prison visit” (p. 76).

2.4 Family Literacy Programmes

Much has been written in recent years about the benefits of family literacy programmes to children, parents, and society in general. It is now commonly acknowledged that the act of reading together and developing early literacy skills is not simply restricted to schools, but something that can and should take place between family members in any setting (Blumberg & Griffin, 2013; Train, 2007). Despite a lack of empirical studies, some excellent qualitative research has taken place which shows the strong impact that reading to children can have on all those involved. Studies regularly show that it positively affects the educational attainment of the child (Clark, 2009; Flouri & Buchanan, 2004; Desforges & Abouchara, 2003; Fan & Chen, 2001). It is generally concluded that early intervention in the child’s reading development is vital (Bonci, 2008; Style & Ortiz, 1999). Family literacy can also help to increase self-esteem of parents involved and lead to closer relationships in general (Style & Ortiz, 1999).

2.4.1 The Role of Fathers

Discussion surrounding family literacy has traditionally focused on the role of the mother, but there has been a recent surge of interest in the role of fathers on their child’s literacy
development, and even in their child’s life in general. A survey conducted by the National Literacy Trust revealed that young people were shown little encouragement by their fathers when it came to reading (Clark, 2012). However, a number of other studies would suggest differently. A UK-based study by Morgan et al. (2009) revealed that, while the role played by fathers was less visible than that of mothers, they certainly were involved and showed an interest in the reading habits of their children. This is backed up by international data, with studies by Avenilla et al. (2006) and Ortiz (2000) also showing positive father involvement. Raeburn (2014) has recently published a comprehensive survey of scientific research on fathers, concluding that they play a huge role in the lives of their children, even before the child is born. As well as positive social and educational implications for the child, fathers involved in family literacy develop their own storytelling and literacy skills, and experience increased confidence and self-esteem as well as an increased engagement with learning (Muth, 2006; Ortiz, 2000).

2.4.2 Family Literacy in Prisons

While there are some similarities between traditional family literacy schemes and those conducted in correctional settings, the latter poses unique challenges that must be addressed separately. Muth (2006) comments that these programmes may be even more critical, especially for incarcerated fathers as children are at risk of being hardened to their father’s absence. Unfortunately, there is little conclusive evidence to show the long-term impact of family literacy programmes. Studies tend to be descriptive rather than evaluative, with a number of studies describing the family literacy programmes run in their own facilities (eg. Blumberg & Griffin, 2013; Genesio, 1996). An extensive survey was carried out by Hoffmann et al. (2010) of state-run facilities in the US to find out what programmes existed for parents and underage children. While this survey provided a significant insight into what programmes exist in the US, there was no follow up to this survey and again the study was more descriptive than evaluative. There is a clear need for more extensive studies to investigate the long-term impact of family literacy programmes on inmates and their families.
Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1 Cross-National Comparative Research

“Comparative design...implies that we can understand social phenomena better when they are compared in relation to two or more meaningful contrasting cases or situations.”

(Bryman, 2008, p. 58)

In order to gain a more thorough understanding of family literacy programmes, it was decided to study and observe these programmes in two different countries. Cross-national research has a number of advantages over research which focuses on a single country or area. It helps to improve both international understanding and understanding of one’s own country, as well as improving one’s knowledge of how social processes operate, and simply allowing one to learn from the practices of others (Hantrais & Mangan, 2007; Livingstone, 2003). In choosing to conduct a cross-national study, the researcher was therefore able to explore family literacy programmes in different national contexts, enabling a deeper understanding of their role and impact, and the opportunity to learn from the initiatives of others. This study focuses on the UK and US, due to their similarities in social, political and economic culture, particularly within the prison system. Both countries incarcerate individuals at an alarming rate and have high levels of recidivism. Both also have an increasing awareness of the vital role that family contact can play in reducing recidivism. On a more practical level, these countries were also chosen as the researcher has previous experience living and working in both the UK and US, and a resulting familiarity with both cultures. Funding was secured by the John Campbell Trust dissertation travel bursary to cover travel costs to the US.

While cross-national research can achieve a number of aims which simply cannot be achieved in a single nation study, there are definite drawbacks to this type of research. It is almost impossible to have a complete understanding of different social contexts, and it is tempting for a researcher to be biased toward his or her own nation. This study is particularly limited as the timescale is too brief to “disentangle the social, cultural, economic and political variables” (Hantrais & Morgan, 2007, p. 1). It should be noted that this study is not intended to be an exhaustive evaluation of family literacy programmes in
the UK and US. The goal is merely to investigate programmes which have been set up in these countries, and use the collected findings to suggest possible future developments and improvements.

### 3.2 General Research Design

Given the lack of research, particularly in the UK, regarding family literacy programmes in prisons, this study is exploratory in nature and an inductive approach is taken. Conclusions are reached using findings from collected data and existing literature on the topic, rather than testing any preconceived theory (Flick, 2009). It was determined that qualitative methods would be used, as they are especially useful for exploration and discovery (Morgan, 1998), particularly when working with a relatively under-researched topic (Bryman, 2012). Qualitative research methods also allow for respondents to more freely express their opinions, which was important when hoping to gain an insight into the value of family literacy programmes. Finally, qualitative methods are also advocated when conducting cross-national research, allowing the researcher to more easily “reconcile complexity, detail and context” (Mangen, 2007, p. 20).

A number of different methods were used to collect data, in order to gain as much information as possible from a range of participants. Integrating different methods is considered particularly useful when widening one’s focus to a cross-national study (Mangen, 2007). Aside from an additional focus group carried out in the US, the same methods were applied in both countries, with conditions and sample sizes kept as constant as possible in order to relate any emerging differences to comparative dimensions of culture (Flick, 2009). Semi-structured interviews were conducted with librarians and volunteers in both countries, and questionnaires were distributed to correctional librarians. Targeting librarians and volunteers was determined to be the best way to find out what programmes exist and how successful they are considered to be. It also seemed important to triangulate this data by hearing from those who participate in family literacy programmes. For ethical reasons, it was not possible to conduct interviews with inmates or their families. Instead, observations were carried out in both a county jail in the US, and a Category B prison in the UK, and a focus group was held with former inmates in the US. These methods provided a limited view into the experiences and attitudes of inmates regarding family literacy programmes. As well as information found in the literature review, secondary data was gathered from a prison re-entry summit attended by the
researcher in Philadelphia, a video presentation given by one of the questionnaire respondents, and participant feedback provided on the Storybook Dads website.

3.3 Interviews

The aim of these interviews was to collect data regarding the opinions, perspectives and experiences of those involved in setting up and delivering family literacy programmes. Two prison librarians were interviewed in the UK, as well as one correctional services librarian and a volunteer in the US. UK interviews took place in the prison library itself, which gave familiarity with the context in which librarians work and in which these programmes take place, as advocated by Bryman (2012). This was more difficult to achieve in the US, and so both interviews took place in neutral settings. The latter was advantageous in that interviews could be audio-recorded and later transcribed. Recording devices were not permitted inside UK prisons, and so notes were taken when conducting UK interviews.

Interviews were semi-structured, as this allowed certain topics to be identified, while at the same time encouraged participants to bring up their own ideas (Bryman, 2012; Walliman, 2006). Interview schedules can be found in Appendices 1 and 2. Initial interview questions were dictated by themes and issues identified in the literature, and then adapted once early coding had taken place. For example, it became clear from early coding that the attitudes of prison staff toward prison library services was an important issue that the researcher had not initially anticipated, and this was explored in interviews that followed.

There are, of course, disadvantages to using this type of method. Bias can easily creep into interviews, and so one must be careful to be as objective as possible. Indeed, Henn et al. (2006) point out that the interview is often criticised for being a subjective method that “lacks scientific rigour” (p. 187). However, interviews clearly serve purposes that quantitative methods cannot achieve, particularly when undertaking research that aims to study perceptions, attitudes and motivations. According to Connaway & Powell (2010), the interview is good at revealing “information that is complex or emotionally laden” (p. 158).

3.4 Questionnaires

While questionnaires are traditionally viewed as a quantitative research method, the questionnaires sent to both UK and US librarians for this study were formed of mostly open-ended questions to generate qualitative data. The aim was to broaden the scope of
this research, and find out more information about existing family literacy programmes beyond what could be gleaned from interviews. This was especially important in the US, as interviews and observations only took place in Pennsylvania and New York, and it was necessary to gather information from further afield. A number of closed questions at the beginning of the questionnaire did provide useful statistical data to help generate some comparable evidence, such as how frequently programmes took place, and how many inmates participated. In order to compare programmes in the UK and US, it was important that questions remained consistent across the two countries. There were, however, slight variations in the introductory questions due to the different set up of jails and prisons in the US. A second section of the questionnaire was aimed specifically at librarians working in facilities which did not run any kind of family literacy programme. Questionnaire outlines can be found in Appendices 3 and 4.

In accordance with recommendations from Walliman (2006), Oppenheim (1992) and others, the questionnaire was piloted by a small number of MA Librarianship students, as well as a prison librarian already known to the researcher. Resulting comments and suggestions led to changes of wording, and a number of questions being removed entirely. As prison librarians often work by themselves, it was advised that they may not have a lot of time to complete questionnaires (S. Berry, personal communication, June 17, 2014). The completed questionnaires were then distributed online via the Prison Libraries JiscMAIL list in the UK, and the ALA prison libraries mailing list in the US. Questionnaires were created using Google Forms, but an alternative Microsoft Word version was attached to the email. There is often limited internet access in correctional facilities, even amongst staff, and so this alternative version was sent should the link to Google Forms not work.

A noted downside to using questionnaires is the resistance that often exists to completing them, and resulting low response rates. In this study, 16 UK responses and 12 US responses were received. While it is impossible to draw any significant statistical data from this relatively low number of responses, these questionnaires served their purpose of giving a wider view of family literacy programmes, and in complementing data collected in interviews.
3.5 Observations

Connaway & Powell (2010) note that observational research allows one to study subjects “who are unable to give verbal reports” (p. 180). While it was disappointing not to be able to hold interviews with inmates, the opportunity to observe both a UK and US based family literacy programme gave the researcher a valuable insight into how they are delivered and how participants respond to them. Observational techniques also help to identify actions that others may not see, and so this helped to add to the data collected in interviews and questionnaires. This was particularly significant in the US, where the researcher interviewed a volunteer about ‘Messages from Dad’ and later observed this same programme taking place in a county jail. In the UK, ‘Family Fables’ (an adapted version of Storybook Dads) was observed in a Category B prison. In both instances, the researcher was able to gain institutional access and thereby observe inmates participating in these programmes in their natural setting.

It was decided that observations would be unstructured, where the aim was to record events and actions in as much detail as possible with the view of later developing a narrative account (Bryman, 2008). Brief notes were taken at the time of the observation, and a more detailed account written once the programme had ended. Henn et al. (2006) warn that taking notes could distract participants, affecting their natural behaviour and so contaminating data. As these programmes deal with somewhat sensitive issues, there was a heightened chance of this happening. This may affect the validity of the data collected, as it is unlikely that the researcher recalled all events which took place. Furthermore, observation is an inherently subjective process and so every effort was made to filter out personal bias when recording the experience. While it is difficult to sufficiently and objectively analyse observational data, this method helped to achieve the goal of giving a voice to inmates, rather than hearing only from those who run family literacy programmes.

3.6 Focus Group

Due to a personal contact working in Philadelphia county jails, the opportunity arose for the researcher to conduct a focus group with four formerly incarcerated individuals. Focus groups help to “generate a rich understanding of participants’ experiences and beliefs” (Morgan, 1998, p. 11). The researcher was eager to find out how those with experience of incarceration felt about the benefits of family literacy programmes. Both Bryman (2012)
and Barbour (2007) also commend focus groups for their ability to generate insights and understanding.

It is recommended that a focus group be sufficient enough in diversity to encourage discussion, but not so diverse that a certain topic cannot be discussed in depth (Bloor et al, 2001). The group consisted of two male and two female members, all who had been parents when incarcerated. One participant had spent time in state and federal prison and had access to a reading programme, whilst the others had all been held in county jails with no access to such programmes. The aim of the focus group was to find out about their experience with library services, contact with family, and what they felt about potential benefits or drawbacks of family literacy programmes. The role of the researcher was to act as a moderator, prompting discussion without influencing its direction (Walliman, 2006; Morgan, 1998). The group was therefore approached with guiding questions (Appendix 7), but it was made clear that it was the responsibility of participants to carry on discussion. The focus group was set in the office of a re-entry organisation in Philadelphia, and so was able to be audio-recorded and later transcribed by the researcher.

3.7 Data Analysis

The analysis of interviews, questionnaires and the focus group followed Grounded Theory techniques, an approach which “uses a systematic set of procedures to develop an inductively derived grounded theory about a phenomenon” (Straus & Corbin, 1990, p. 25). The data was coded thematically, in stages, in order to find similarities, differences and patterns between the different sets of data. Initial coding revealed issues and topics which then informed subsequent interviews and focus group questions. In this way, an iterative process was adopted, in which analysis took place while data was still being collected (Henn et al, 2006). Once initial coding was completed, the researcher compared codes across transcripts and questionnaire results, drawing them together into themes.

3.8 Ethical Aspects

A number of ethical issues arose from this research, primarily because of the location of certain interviews and observations, and the vulnerable population being studied. The recurring theme in literature regarding research of prisoners is the danger of these subjects being exploited. Researchers can be guilty of taking advantage of the difficult situations of
vulnerable people to serve their own needs (Thomas, 2010; Chwang, 2009; Mobley, Henry & Plemmons, 2007). The ultimate aim of this researcher is to investigate and promote a programme which helps to improve inmate literacy skills and maintain family ties, thereby serving the needs of inmates and their families, rather than the needs of the researcher. It is also important that inmates are given a choice to participate, and not coerced, or studied under “covert observation” (Bryman, 2012, p. 138). All participants in this research – librarians, volunteers and inmates – signed a consent form agreeing to be interviewed or observed (Appendices 9-12).

Access provided another ethical issue for both my interviews and observations. Approval was gained from each individual institution, and measures were put in place to ensure safety was taken into account at all times. A final issue was that of confidentiality and privacy. Names of inmates, volunteers and librarians have been anonymised throughout this research, as has each individual prison establishment. Ethics approval for this project was granted by the Information School at the University of Sheffield (Appendix 14).

3.9 Limitations of the Study

The limitations of the study have already been highlighted in the methodology:

- A strong focus on the opinions of prison librarians and volunteers could lead to bias in results.
- Ethical restraints prevented contact with inmates and their families, which would have given a broader view of the impact of family literacy programmes.
- A relatively low response rate of questionnaires, especially in the US, means that results may not be representative of the country as a whole. Interviews and observation were focused only in the States of New York and Pennsylvania.
- Given the time restraints, this is a small-scale project and not a full evaluation of any family literacy programme.
Chapter 4: Findings: A Librarian’s Perspective

As both interviews and questionnaires were directed at librarians and volunteers, with the aim of finding out about family literacy programmes, it was decided to present the results together. UK and US results are also presented side by side, apart from the first section which describes in detail some existing family literacy programmes. Tables in Appendices 5 and 6 show the quantitative data gathered from closed questions at the beginning of each questionnaire.

In the findings below, interview participants are referred to as:

**USP1** – US Interview Participant 1 (Correctional Services Librarian)
**USP2** – US Interview Participant 2 (Volunteer who runs a family literacy programme in county jails)
**UKP1** – UK Interview Participant 1 (Prison Librarian at a YOI/Female prison)
**UKP2** – UK Interview Participant 2 (Prison Librarian at a Category B male prison)

US questionnaire respondents are referred to as **USR1** – **USR12**.
UK questionnaire respondents are referred to as **UKR1** – **UKR16**.

### 4.1 What Family Literacy Programmes Exist?

#### 4.1.1 Storybook Dads

Results clearly show that Storybook Dads is the most popular family literacy scheme run in the UK. 13 out of 15 participants who answered positively to running some kind of programme, were involved with Storybook Dads. According to its website, Storybook Dads is run in over 100 UK prisons and reaches over 20,000 beneficiaries each year (Storybook Dads, 2014a). More recently, Storybook Mums has been set up in female prisons across the UK. Questionnaires reveal that the scheme differs slightly in each prison. The general concept however is for an inmate to read a book onto CD or DVD, which is later edited to remove mistakes and add sound effects. Recordings are edited either by the individual prison if it has its own editing suite, or are sent to HMP Dartmoor or HMP Channings Wood to be edited by Storybook Dads workers. 9 respondents reported sending recordings to Storybook Dads, while 5 edit at their own prison. There is lack of consistency in how often
the programme is run. Only 4 establishments run it once a week, 5 run it once or twice a month, and 6 run it when enough application forms have been received. All are run by library staff, apart from one programme which is run by volunteers in the visitor centre. In all cases, the prison pays an annual membership to Storybook Dads, while the library budget covers the books needed. UKR8, however, notes that prisoners have to pay £2.50 for each DVD they record.

Programmes also vary in what is sent home to the child. 7 respondents send home the recording only, although may send home details of the book and where to find it. Lack of funding seems to be the main reason for not sending home the book as well. For example, UKR1 used to send books, but can no longer afford to. UKR3 sends home a book with the first recording, but does not have the budget to send out a book with subsequent recordings. Only 6 respondents note that they consistently send home a book along with the recording. Both UKR11 and UKR16 send home a book for each child, as well as a greeting card made by the inmate. UKP2 mentioned a ‘Daddy and Me Memory Book’, a project which is part of Storybook Dads. This is a scrapbook of pictures and activity sheets such as ‘10 Things You Might Not Know About Me’ and daily journal entries, filled out by both inmate and child. Pages completed by children are mailed to the prison librarian, who eventually combines sheets into a scrapbook to be sent home to the child. UKP2 notes that it was popular last Christmas, and “for those children that received it as a Christmas present it was apparently the best present ever!”

4.1.2 The Big Book Share

Another initiative run by the Reading Agency in the UK, ‘the Big Book Share’, “is all about public libraries and prisons working together to support and inspire parents in prison to share in their children’s reading” (Cashman, 2009, p. 12). Stories are recorded and sent to families, books are read together during family visiting sessions, and children and their families are encouraged to use the local library. UKP1 runs a version of this programme in her prison library, but has named it ‘Tales for Tots’. CDs are both recorded and edited in the prison, then sent home along with the book. UKP1 notes that when funding runs out, books will no longer be sent home with the CD and “this is when we will encourage parents to find the book in the local library.” Currently, funds come from a combination of the Big Book Share, the prison itself, and the local public library service. UKR5 and UKR15 also deliver this programme, sending home a book and CD to the child. UKR5 notes, however,
that she is currently unable to do any recordings due to lack of staff and funds. “I’m
determined it will become a mainstream part of our delivery in the future.”

4.1.3 Daddy & Me, Mommy & Me

This New York-based programme was set up in 2010 and is designed to encourage early
literacy interaction between incarcerated parents and their children. Following workshops
on the importance of early literacy and storytelling skills, parents record stories for their
children, which are presented on a special ‘family day’, along with the book and “a bunch of
library goodies, to get them excited about going to the library” (USP1). The workshops are
based on a curriculum used at a nearly public library. USP1 points out, “the idea’s so
simple, it’s such a basic program, and that’s why it’s so easy to do.” Funding for Daddy &
Me comes from the public library’s outreach budget, which mostly comes from the New
York State coordinated outreach funding.

4.1.4 Messages from Dad, Messages from Mom

This programme was set up and is run by a group of volunteers from non-profit, community
and religious organisations. It currently operates in 4 county jails in Philadelphia and may
expand to more in the future. The focus was initially on the children of prisoners, to
promote “love, comfort and encouragement for their future” (USP2). It soon turned into a
literacy programme which benefited both parent and child. Volunteers record inmates
weekly reading a book to their child, and mail DVDs home along with a book for each child
and a feedback form for their caregiver. Funding is secured from the organisations for
which the volunteers work, and books are donated from organisations and the general
public. Over 11,000 DVDs have been recorded since it began in 2005.

Other similar programmes noted in questionnaire data include Reaching out through
Reading: Incarcerated Fathers Read to their Children (USR2), Read to Me (USR7), Read to
the Children (USR9) and Read to Your Child (USP12). USR6 runs a programme which does
not involve book recordings. Once a year, inmates choose 3 books for their children and
can send these home with colouring pages and bookmarks. USR6 is critical of this scheme,
however, commenting that “it feels stale to me.”
4.1.5 Facilities Without a Family Literacy Programme

4 of 12 US respondents, and 1 of 16 UK respondents, report not having any kind of family literacy programme in their facility. The one UK respondent (UKR7) explained that Storybook Dads had run in the past, but they are not currently in a position to run the scheme due to lack of staff. The pie chart in Fig. 1 shows the various reasons given for not running family literacy programmes.

Most of these respondents \( (n = 4) \) agreed that a family literacy programme would be a well-received and successful programme. USR5 works in a mental health maximum security hospital, and so noted that such a programme would not be suitable as “\textit{many of the victims of our patients were children}”. USR10, while noting that it would be a “\textit{well utilized, positive addition}”, also commented that there were more pressing programmes for which to secure funding, such as other literacy programmes and a resource centre for inmates.

All 5 respondents across the US and UK run other types of literacy programmes in their establishment. There is a clear scale, however, of how involved the library is in these programmes. For example, USR4 notes that they are mainly run by the Education Department, and the library is only “\textit{peripherally involved}”. USR5 runs a reading programme in the library and is developing a peer to peer literacy programme, somewhat
similar to the Toe by Toe scheme mentioned by UKR7, UKR8 and UKR14. UKR7 describes these literacy programmes as “invaluable”. USR5 also notes their “positive effect” but laments that there is no way of testing or evaluating these services.

The findings which follow are split into themes which emerged from the qualitative data in both interviews and questionnaires:

4.2 Maintaining Family Ties

Both interview participants and questionnaire respondents noted family connection as one of the main goals of the programme:

“it’s about inmates’ connection with their children. The connection is really the goal” (USP2).

“[the program] uses books and reading to build bridges between young children and their incarcerated parents’ (USR1)”

“The program is geared to provide the incarcerated parent or grandparent the opportunity to connect with their families while incarcerated” (USR12).

It was also noted, however, how difficult it is to measure the outcomes of family literacy programmes in this respect. Positive feedback may be received from families, but as noted by USR10 they cannot “truly assess the effects of the library program”.

4.3 Engagement of Inmates

Many of the comments made by librarians show that not only do inmates take part in these programmes, but they also really engage with and enjoy the process. In particular, USP1 made very positive comments about inmate participation in the workshops:

“we talk to them about brain development and that’s usually something they really really connect with and engage with and we show them visuals about how a child’s brain develops...we bring it to them in a really straightforward way and they usually connect with it” (USP1).
USP1 went on to say that there is usually an inmate who offers to practice reading in front of the class. This engagement with storytelling is echoed by a respondent in the UK:

“their enthusiasm for storytelling never ceases to amaze me as the creativity enables them to focus their negative emotions into something that’s positive and they feel good about” (UKR5).

Both UKR1 and UKR7 noted that reading aloud to their children increased the confidence levels of inmates. The latter carried out a survey last year among inmates, which showed that “prisoners clearly draw a link themselves to the correlation between this and increased self-confidence” (UKR7).

4.4 Impact on Literacy

4.4.1 Literacy Development of Children

USP1 notes that the bond created with children during these programmes is “specifically around their education and their learning”. She tells a poignant story which shows how some fathers may not realise this role in their child’s life:

“We had a guy recently…it was just really striking because he said, ‘I just wanna be really honest in this space’ and he said, ‘I never once considered being a part of my children’s learning’, and he said ‘that’s just Mom, that’s what mom does…this is sort of revolutionizing me, that I could be part of my child’s learning and that my child will actually really appreciate that and understand that that’s part of how I love him’” (USP1).

USR7 also notes that “residents frequently have little knowledge about age-appropriate books and the various learning, growth and developmental stages of their children”. He explains that many inmates have not had the experience of a parent reading to them in their childhood, which leads to “a lack of awareness of the strong positive impact reading has on a child’s literacy development”.

Interestingly, UKP1 was asked to use a DVD rather than CD when recording books. She refused, because “A DVD takes away from the reading of a book. You want kids to follow
along on the page rather than simply watch the DVD. It takes away from the literacy side of things.”

4.4.2 Literacy Development of Inmates

Not only are these programmes significant in the life of a child, but they can simultaneously help to develop the literacy skills of inmates. Literacy skills are often low amongst inmates, and all but one respondent noted that they offer storytelling tips and techniques during their family literacy programme. UKR11, for example, notes that “all men are invited to practice, and advice is given to improve techniques to aid delivery”. Four respondents (UKR1, 3, 14 and 15) also note that they sometimes read a line of the story which is then repeated by the inmate, and later edited out before the CD is sent home.

UKR3 comments, “We use the Storybook Dads scheme as a lever to encourage poor readers to continue practising reading and to improve their reading skills.” Unfortunately, it was again noted how difficult it is to evaluate the effectiveness of family literacy programmes on an inmate’s literacy development.

4.5 Desired Improvements

Lack of funding, staff levels, and space to run an efficient programme were common themes running throughout the collected data. When asked what improvements they would like to see made, answers ranged from simple developments such as sending home a book with every recording (UKR3), to UKR1’s suggestion that “it would be nice to be able to offer a half day workshop and bring in specialist librarians to work with the men and look at reading techniques when reading to children.”

UKP2 stated, “I would like the prison to supply a sound proof recording ‘cubby hole’ and the prison staff to stop seeing it as a ‘fluffy bunny’ exercise.” This raises the issue of support from prison staff, which is was met with mixed reactions by participants.

Only 2 librarians (UKR8 and UKR11) noted that they were fully content with their programme, and did not see the need for any changes.
Chapter 5: Findings: A View from the Inside

5.1 Focus Group Findings

A focus group was held in the office of a re-entry organisation in Philadelphia, with four participants who had formerly been incarcerated. This method was an attempt to gather information from the viewpoint of those affected most by the effects of incarceration and resulting lack of contact with families. The original questions (Appendix 7) were designed to find out about the following issues:

- The importance of family contact while incarcerated
- The value of library services in jails/prisons
- The value of reading to children
- Opinions of family literacy programmes on the inside

Two further issues emerged from natural group discussion:

- Difficulties surrounding visitation
- Desired improvements for maintaining contact

The results of this group discussion are documented below, organised into these six key themes. These findings will feed into data collected from interviews and questionnaires.

5.2 Participant Demographics

Four participants took part in this focus group:

- Two women and two men
- Two identified as African-American/Black, and two as Caucasian/White
- All participants had formerly been incarcerated, three in county jails, and one in both county jail and state and federal prisons
- All participants had a child or multiple children whilst incarcerated
- Three participants had no access to family literacy programmes during this time. One participated in a story-taping programme in a state prison.
Participants are referred to as:

FM1: Female Member 1 (Incarcerated in county jail, no access to family literacy programme)
FM2: Female Member 2 (Incarcerated in county jail, no access to family literacy programme)
MM1: Male Member 1 (Incarcerated in county jail, no access to family literacy programme)
MM2: Male Member 2 (Incarcerated in county jail, state and federal prisons – took part in a story-taping programme in state prison)

All inmates were encouraged to contribute to the discussion as much as possible.

5.3 Importance of Family Contact

All participants agreed that maintaining contact with family members was important whilst incarcerated, and three commented that separation from families is the biggest challenge whilst on the inside. Phone calls in prison were discussed, with MM1 noting that fights over phone usage “makes it hard to speak to family that way”. The impact that family contact can have post-release was also discussed:

“Keeping the families together and bonding goes a long way...because a lot of these guys don’t even know if they’re gonna have a family...they don’t know what they’re coming home to. Older children don’t wanna be bothered no more” (FM1).

5.4 General Library Services

It was concluded that MM2, who had been held in both state and federal prisons, had a better experience of libraries than the participants held in county jails. He described the library in state prison as “huge – the size of this entire office, with plenty of modern books”. In contrast, FF1, speaking of county jail, noted that only a few books were available and “nothing came in from the outside, apart from maybe a church or choir”. MM1 also commented that there were no real resources to help with job applications or other re-entry issues in jail.
Despite a lack of positive experiences, participants were quick to point out the value of having access to good library services:

“especially with all this new technology, you can get overwhelmed and lost...you need to have something behind you to help you move forward. A library will help to reprogramme some of the programming we need to do” (FM1).

5.5 Bonding through reading

When asked how important they felt it was to read to their children, members of the group soon began to reflect on their own experiences of being read to as a child:

“My mum read me stories, that’s a bonding time with your child. I’m 47 years old and I remember my mum reading to me” (FM1).

“I used to love when my mum would get in my bed and read to me as a kid” (MM2).

These memories seemed to have an impact on how participants felt about reading to their own children:

“My son will actually get in bed with me. He’ll get into bed early just to get under the covers and get a book out and have me read it to him” (MM2).

FM1 recognised the impact that reading together can have on both the parent and child:

“It’s educational time – a lot of parents have limited reading skills so they’re building their own skills also, and spending some quality downtime with their kids” (FM1).

She also noted how reading to a child has added significance when one parent is incarcerated:

“You need that time. That’s something they can talk about on the phone. ‘Guess what mommy read to me last night? And I liked it.’ Or ‘Guess what I’m doing today?’ And that keeps them [the incarcerated parent] involved too” (FM1).
5.6 Family Literacy Programmes

MM2 was the only participant to have experience of a family literacy programme, whilst incarcerated in state prison. He noted the downside of having to pay for shipping of the DVD, but went on to express his appreciation of the programme:

“My son got to see me, cos I was so far away”

“It was good, cos I didn’t know when I was getting out”

“I think it encouraged him to read because when I got out, he had like a million books in his room and he has the specific book, the one I read to him, cos he watched the tape over and over” (MM2).

After listening to MM2 recount his experience, other participants agreed that this type of programme would be beneficial for incarcerated parents:

“I think it’s a good idea for the fact that you can be hours away, and it’s an easy way for communication” (MM1).

“I think it’s a great programme, the kids can see their parents and it’s kind of like being with them” (FP2).

5.7 Visitation

Much of the conversation centred around the barriers to visitation experienced by inmates’ families. All participants shared negative experiences of having loved ones coming to visit them:

“your loved ones are shipped far away, it’s like a 3 hour, 4 hour ride, sometimes you have to plan ahead” (FM1).

“It’s just as bad as being processed…you got the hard metal benches, you can’t move, you can’t do nothing” (FM2).
Both female members commented that their child’s diapers were checked before entering prison. “My daughter’s 31 now and I still get chills about that” (FM1). MM2 also informed the group that his son stopped visiting “once he was old enough to understand that I gotta have my pants pulled down to go see my dad”.

MM2 did however note positive changes in state prisons regarding the setting of prison visits:

“Upstate...they got a play area for little kids, and they got blocks and books, so you can go over there with them” (MM2).

5.8 Hope for Change

Participants discussed both their hopes for change in the prison service in general, as well as bringing forward ideas about improvements for family literacy programmes. Changes to visitation were the most noted:

“I know this is a pipe dream of mine, but to have a visiting room just for the children” (FM1).

“Free transportation by volunteer groups would be the most fanatical thing for state prisons, even county jails” (MM2).

With regards to family literacy programmes, it was suggested that children should be able to send things back to the incarcerated parent:

“Maybe they could have something where the kids send something back up so that the parents could see” (MM1).

[speaking of arts and crafts his child did in school] “that would have been cool if I could have got that in jail, and not all folded up, know what I mean? Stuff like that’s cooler than cool to get” (MM2).
5.9 Observation Accounts

Unstructured, non-participant observation of two family literacy programmes took place – one in a medium security county jail in the US, and one in a men’s Category B prison in England. The former was of a programme called *Messages from Dad*, a reading programme set up and delivered by a group of volunteers with no connection to either the correctional facility or a public library. The latter, *Family Fables*, is an adaptation of Storybook Dads and is carried out by prison librarians working in that facility. Participants were aware that the researcher was present and only brief notes were taken during each observation, as not to distract participants. Influenced by information found in both the literature review and primary data already collected, a number of aspects were noted beforehand to look out for:

- Location and setting of programme
- Those involved in delivering programme (volunteers/librarians etc)
- Jail/prison staff present
- Number of participants involved
- Length of programme
- Actions which take place
- Materials used and books chosen
- Storytelling advice offered
- Rapport between volunteers/librarians and inmates
- Behaviour and actions of inmates

Field notes were written in more detail soon after the observation had taken place, and accounts of each observation are recorded in Appendix $. These narratives are intended to provide a better insight into how family literacy programmes are delivered in different contexts and settings, and how inmates respond to them. This data will also be used to feed into data collected in interviews and questionnaires.
Chapter 6: Discussion

This chapter will discuss the findings of the research in greater detail, relating the themes that emerged back to the objectives laid out in Chapter 1. Some unexpected findings should also become apparent. Throughout the discussion, the researcher aims to make as clear as possible how family literacy programmes and library services in general differ between the UK and US, and what can be learnt from these differences.

6.1 Family Literacy Programmes

The family literacy programmes explored in this study, and the various ways in which they receive funding, were outlined in the previous chapter. It is important, however, to highlight some interesting findings about the varied designs of these programmes. All but one (USR6) involved the incarcerated parent recording a story onto CD or DVD to send home or present to their child when they visited. One of the recurring themes that emerged from questionnaire and interview data was the simplicity of these programmes. As noted by USP1, “The idea is so simple, it’s such a basic program and that’s why it’s so easy to do.” This is supported by Blumberg & Griffin (2013) who consider family literacy programmes – compared to other prison programmes – to be “far less complicated or costly to implement” (p. 262). This is particularly significant when one considers the funding and staffing issues apparent in the results. When working with a low budget or lack of staff, the programme may be scaled to accommodate these challenges. Ideally, however, findings revealing the positive impact of such programmes should help to gain more support from both prison staff and external organisations and thus help to secure more funding.

The idea that these programmes are scalable is very evident from the collected data. Projects range from simply recording a story and sending home a CD to a child, to sending home books and other gifts, or even to have accompanying storytelling sessions and parenting workshops. Here one can see quite a clear difference between UK and US projects. In the UK, prison libraries are involved in running a national scheme – either Storybook Dads or the Big Book Share – which is delivered quite similarly in each institution. Some have been adapted and expanded, for example the ‘Family Fables’ programme which was observed in Observation 2 (Appendix 8) and allows inmates to design pillows and make
cards to send home. Most, however, only allow for the recording of stories once a week, once a month or whenever enough applications have been received. Due to lack of staff and lack of funding, no accompanying workshops are provided and the services provided are not always consistent.

From the US data collected, there seems to be no national scheme similar to that in the UK. One respondent, USR12, mentions a state-wide scheme, but the rest of the findings point to projects set up in individual institutions. In county jails, inmates must rely more on external volunteers or public librarians coming in to deliver such library services. This does mean, however, that the programmes tend to be less generic than a nationwide scheme might be, and aimed more directly at the needs of inmates in those particular institutions. As seen in the programmes run by USP1 and USP7 especially, it can also mean that programmes are more intensive and have more staff devoted to delivering them. USP1, for example, runs a four-day programme for incarcerated parents before any recording takes place. This aims to teach them about the ‘Five Early Literacy Practises’ of reading, writing, playing, singing and talking. They are also able to bring in children’s librarians to help with storytelling tips and techniques.

There are advantages to both of these set ups. Having a national scheme like Storybook Dads is invaluable for often under-staffed and under-funded UK prison libraries. By subscribing to an individual fee, prison librarians can receive recording equipment, and literacy resources and guides from Storybook Dads which makes implementing the scheme much easier than if it was to be set up independently. Furthermore, CDs and DVDs can then be sent to Storybook Dads’ headquarters for editing and final touches, which takes pressure way from librarians to spend time editing the recordings. There is a possible danger, however, of these programmes becoming generic and perhaps impersonal, with little thought being given to the needs of the individual inmates in question. Librarians must be quick to avoid the trap mentioned by Muth (2011), who warns that some parenting programmes “tend to be generic and skills-oriented, insensitive to the pressing and personal needs of the parents and their distant children” (p. 245). Programmes, such as the ones mentioned in the US, that can dedicate more time to working with individual inmates on their parenting and literacy skills are less at risk of falling into this trap. However, they can also miss out on having the resources, support and funding that a national scheme provides.
6.2 The Value of Prison Libraries

It is clear from the findings that libraries have an important role to play in providing family literacy programmes, and in offering services to the incarcerated in general. The importance of the prison library was perhaps made most poignant to the researcher when speaking to an inmate during the observation of ‘Family Fables’, who commented “It’s peaceful in here. We need that. It’s peaceful compared to the craziness of the wings” (P1). While all UK inmates can benefit from that place of solitude, this is evidently not the case in all US institutions. All respondents working in state facilities reported that both recreational and law library services were available, but reported experiences of county jails were very different. All four focus group members had at one stage been held in county jails and noted little, if any, access to library services. USP1, a correctional services librarian who provides library services to local jails also noted, “my broad judgment is that most of the general and law libraries are sub-par, as are the staff members maintaining them”. This lack of efficient library services for the incarcerated in the US is acknowledged by the American Library Association, who “encourage public libraries and systems to extend their services to the residents of jails and other detention centres” (ALA, 2013).

These differences in library services have an impact on the way in which family literacy programmes are delivered to inmates. In the UK, all but one programme was run in the prison library (UKR13 noted that theirs was run by the Ormiston Trust in their visitor centre). Differences between this setting, and that of volunteers delivering programmes in county jails, were noted during the observation accounts (Appendix 8). Space was one of the most notable differences, with the volunteers in the US being confined to a small room for recording, while the UK prison library was much larger with a separate office for recording. Even more significant was the difference in how recordings themselves took place. In the US setting, inmates had only 5 minutes to record their story and there was no possibility of editing out mistakes. In the UK prison library, the librarian sat with the inmate helping to pronounce words and allowing repetition, as this could later be edited out by Storybook Dads. This may be one possible reason that participants in the US observation noted how nervous they were. These observations are, of course, not representative of all such volunteer programmes. They, do, however serve to highlight potential difficulties when an external organisation comes in without any support of the prison library or a national scheme like Storybook Dads.
Results also reveal that family literacy programmes on the inside encourage use of public libraries on the outside. As USR7 notes, “we’re making people more aware of what libraries have to offer”. He goes on to say that volunteers coming in from public libraries are able to build trust with inmates and provide a familiar face post-release. These programmes also encourage use of libraries by the families of incarcerated individuals. UKP1, for example, encourages children to find the recorded books in the local library. USP1, during family days, will provide the children with library cards and gifts from the library such as bookmarks. She also comments that they have begun ‘televisiting’ with families who have completed the programme, and this takes place in a local public library. “I think it can change what a library space can be used for”. This is one of many potential ways the public library can benefit families of the incarcerated. They could also provide resources and programmes suited to this population, as well as simply providing a safe space for them to use. As Sullivan (2013) acknowledges, public libraries are “in a unique position to provide a safe haven”.

### 6.3 Impact on Inmates and their Families

As previously indicated, this study is limited in showing the actual impact of such programmes on inmates and their families. Any impact noted is simply a perceived impact, mostly from the point of view of librarians and volunteers and therefore at risk of being biased. It would have been useful to hear from families of inmates, but as this was not possible secondary data was collected through feedback sent to individual family literacy programmes. Results show that the programmes outlined in this study have a positive effect in the following areas:

- Maintaining family ties whilst incarcerated
- Creating and/or sustaining a relationship between parent and child
- Creating awareness for the parent of how reading to their child can play an important part in both their social and educational development
- Developing the literacy skills and confidence of inmates
- Developing the literacy and reading habits of children
- Helping inmates to engage in a prison literacy programme, and encouraging them to take part in other literacy programmes available
- Creating empathy for those involved
One important, and unexpected, theme that emerged was how unaware inmates can be of the impact they, as parents, can have on their children’s education. This is true of wider society, with studies showing that “many parents have a limited understanding of their role in children’s learning” (Clark, 2007, p. 1). For inmates, it may be a lack of experience of their parents reading to them that leads to this lack of awareness, and a consequent “lack of confidence about how to go about reading to their children” (USR7). FM1 and MM2, however, did reminisce about their mother’s reading to them as children and so this cannot be said of all incarcerated individuals. All librarians reported providing help with basic storytelling techniques, so that inmates have the chance to develop this skill and increase their confidence in storytelling.

The inmates’ noted engagement and enthusiasm for these programmes is another positive impact. As well as comments from librarians and volunteers, this was evidenced in both observations which took place. In the first observation, a former inmate had decorated the recording room with a Winne-the-Pooh themed mural. The researcher was informed that similar murals had been painted by inmates in the female jails they served as a surprise for the volunteers, showing the appreciation and enthusiasm of the inmates. One of the participants in Observation 1 had chosen Old MacDonald to read to his grandchild, and sang the entire book as he was recorded. Such engagement with these programmes can encourage inmates to take part in other literacy programmes (UKR3). May (2014) notes that this is a particular strength of the prison library. Many inmates will have had negative experiences of formal education, and the library offers more informal learning and reading programmes. This can be “an important push towards the uptake of more formal learning opportunities” (May, 2014).

While it was not possible to speak directly to children who had benefited from the programme, secondary data received from feedback sheets and comments from focus group members and librarians revealed that children both enjoyed and appreciated the opportunity to connect with their parent in this way:

“To hear their Dad reading to them meant everything...I truly believe dads and children benefit from staying in contact and cannot thank you enough” (Storybook Dads, 2014b).
“Our children were extremely excited to receive the CD of their father. Our son talked back while listening to the story. It also helped me with my feeling about my husband being gone” (Marcou, 2014).

Too often the focus is placed on the rehabilitation of inmates rather than the impact these programmes can have on the wider family circle. This is why Blumberg & Griffin’s (2013) suggestion to move from an individualistic to an ecological perspective is an important one. This looks beyond the needs of the inmates and their current behaviour to addressing “unique strengths, needs and interactive skills directed toward their families and communities once released” (p. 255).

As well as these noted benefits for inmates and their children, findings show that family literacy programmes seem to have an impact on the volunteers and library staff who take part in them. Furthermore, although not all respondents considered their programme to be supported by prison staff, others commented that prison staff reacted well to these programmes. The superintendent of one facility noted, “staff benefit by being reminded that the residents are people with families just like theirs...it produces some empathy and consideration for collateral consequences of incarceration” (cited in Marcou, 2014). Blumberg & Griffin (2013) also note enthusiasm from a correctional counsellor “because of the inmates’ expressed desire to participate and, when they do, the positive and functional behaviors that are exhibited” (p. 262). This shows the possibility of how successful family literacy programmes can impact even those who are not involved directly in the programme.

Not all literature presents family literacy programmes in such a positive light. Bernstein (2007), for example, believes that they offer “something that can best be described as better than nothing”. She goes on to say that “Each also brings into painful focus the magnitude of the problem it is intended to address” (p. 91). When presented with this quote, MM2 shook his head and said, “nah, because it’s something. He got to watch that over and over and over again, you know what i mean.” One cannot deny the fact that seeing an incarcerated mother or father on DVD could cause a painful reminder to the child that they cannot be with their parent in person. However, comments from both caregivers and their children highlighted in this study show that it is more likely for the child to be excited and to appreciate that they have access to this CD or DVD whenever they wish to listen to it. A poignant story was told by USP2 of a parent who was killed soon after their
release from jail, and “the DVD was the only thing [the children] had to let them hear and see the parent”.

6.4 Future Considerations and Improvements

Before considering a number of suggested improvements for family literacy schemes, the researcher advocates that those facilities which do not currently run this type of programme should make it a priority to do so. Of course, one must consider whether or not it is appropriate for their population. For USR5, who works with inmates whose victims were mostly children, having a family literacy programme is not possible. USR10 commented that there were more “pressing” programmes for which to secure funding. However, it seems clear from the positive findings of this and other studies that family literacy programmes play a significant role in the life of an inmate and his/her family. Even if funds and staff members are scarce, findings show that they can be run in such a way that is easy to both implement and deliver. While improvements must be made in other areas of the prison service to help facilitate better family contact, family literacy programmes are a simple and effective way to do so. As such, libraries should make this kind of programme a priority if it is in their power to do so.

An important theme drawn from the collected data was that of a parent’s limited understanding of the role they play in their child’s development. It was noted that some inmates do not realize the impact they can have, perhaps because of their own lack of experience of being read to as a child. It is important, therefore, to teach inmates about this critical parental role. Speaking of imprisoned fathers, Purvis (2013) notes that they can feel “complete disempowerment to carry out the functions of fatherhood” (p. 11). This is a simple way to show incarcerated fathers, and mothers, a way of continuing to carry out parental responsibilities whilst incarcerated. Accompanying workshops, such as those run by the Daddy & Me project in New York, can help to inform parents before they record their stories. Such workshops seem to be more prevalent in the US, with USR1, 2, 6, 7 and 12 all reporting that they run some sort of accompanying workshop or session. Again, this can be scaled to more basic, one-off sessions which encourages inmates and enables them to understand how such a simple act of reading to a child can have such positive consequences.
Another potential improvement, suggested particularly by members of the focus group, is to allow children to send packages back to their incarcerated parent. Speaking simply about pictures drawn by his child, MM2 commented that “stuff like that is cooler than cool to get”. The ‘Me and My Dad’ memory book, an initiative started by Storybook Dads and mentioned by UKP2, provides a good example of this two-way involvement. It allows children to send pictures, journal entries and other writings to prison, which are eventually combined with similar entries by their incarcerated parent into one scrapbook. This allows children to play a more active role in the literacy programme, and is clearly well-received by the participants at UKP2’s facility. Family visiting days at the end of these programmes, such as those mentioned by USP1 and UKP1 are another way of involving the child and making the programme more personal.

Muth (2011) mentions the danger of allowing family literacy programmes to become generic, and advocates that those involved should consider the needs of the individual families involved and the type of programme that would best suit them. Muth goes on to describe a mural project run by Hope House, an organization in Washington DC that helps to connect children with their imprisoned fathers. For one week each summer, a camp is run for fathers and children – the highlight of which is a mural completed by both father and child. Muth acknowledges that this type of project may not be easily replicated in all institutions, but claims that it provides a “best practice” view of the potential for family literacy programmes in prisons (p. 247). Indeed, if practitioners or researchers are successful in proving the value of these programmes, and can secure more funding and support, this example shows the possibilities of providing creative family literacy programmes which help children and parents to create and sustain meaningful relationships. This also requires dedication and enthusiasm from library staff themselves. As Blumberg & Griffin (2013) state, “the success of any program depends on the dedication of those delivering the program” (p. 262).

Findings show that many correctional librarians work in partnership either with an external organisation, local public libraries, or another department within the prison. These kinds of partnerships can help to secure further funding or donations, enlist more staff or volunteers, promote the work of prison libraries services and create understanding and empathy amongst all involved. This was seen particularly poignantly in the earlier quote by a superintendent who recognized, “Residents are people with families just like theirs.” To Marcou (2014), “The idea of promoting empathy is huge”. Services for the incarcerated are
often criticised by those who do not see inmates as worthy of receiving such ‘privileges’. Creating a better understanding of the damaging effects on wider family circles might help to alter this way of thinking.

Perhaps the most important thing that can be done to raise support for family literacy programmes, thereby helping to secure future funding, is to carry out more extensive research on the impact they have. Blumberg & Griffin (2013), Muth (2011) and Hoffman et al. (2010) are all in agreement that such research is imperative if family literacy programmes are to be effective. This research needs to “systematically evaluate the short and long-term benefits” of family literacy programmes (Hoffman et al., 2010, p. 411). Existing descriptive studies, including feedback from participants currently involved in programmes, certainly point to a number of benefits. There is a need, however, for more rigorous evaluation studies that will provide more conclusive evidence of their impact on inmates and their families.
Chapter 7: Conclusion

7.1 Summary of Findings

This study has shown that family literacy programmes are provided in many institutions across the US and UK. They range from simple programmes where parents can choose a selection of books to be sent home to their children, to recording books onto CDs or DVDs for children, and accompanying parenting workshops and storytelling sessions. Prison libraries are instrumental in providing these programmes, and often work alongside external organisations or local public libraries. Facilities without access to these programmes often face funding challenges, or have a lack of staff to deliver such programmes. Some notable differences and similarities were found between programmes in the UK and US:

- Prison libraries in the UK benefit from a national scheme (Storybook Dads or the Big Book Share). In the US, some prisons benefit from state-wide schemes but most correctional librarians have implemented their own projects in individual prisons. As county jails often suffer from a lack of efficient library services, family literacy programmes are sometimes provided by volunteers or public libraries willing to provide services to incarcerated individuals.

- US projects tend to be more intensive, with accompanying workshops or parenting programmes. UK prison librarians, often working by themselves with a limited budget, are less likely to run such intensive programmes.

- Participants in both countries note a number of positive impacts, including increased family contact, development of literacy skills for both inmate and child, increased awareness of the role played by parents in their child’s literacy development, engagement of inmates and the promotion of empathy for those involved.

- Barriers to visitation were noted in both countries, although this was felt particularly strongly by US participants. It is evident that changes are needed to provide better and more child-friendly visiting opportunities.
It was also discovered that there needs to be more focus on the child and how he/she can benefit from these programmes, rather than focusing simply on the rehabilitation of inmates. More research is needed into the effects of parental incarceration on children, and how family contact can help to alleviate the problems it can cause. More extensive research is also needed to find out both the short-term and long-term impact of family literacy programmes on inmates and their families.

7.2 Research Aims and Objectives

The researcher succeeded in finding out about a number of family literacy projects across the UK and US. This was a small-scale study, however, and interviews and observations only took place in two US states – New York and Pennsylvania. Questionnaires intended to widen the scope of the research only generated 12 responses, and so it is impossible to say that the research is representative of the whole of the United States. It could be argued that the scope of this research was too broad and ambitious for such a small-scale study.

Restraints on access and data collection also limited the potential findings of this research. Focusing mostly on information provided from librarians will naturally have led to bias in findings about the impact of family literacy schemes. It would have been better to interview inmates and their families, as well as other prison staff, but this was not possible. Furthermore, to find out the actual impact of family literacy programmes a much larger-scale project would need to be undertaken. The stated objective, however, was to find out the perceived impact of these programmes. Information from librarians, volunteers and former inmates, along with family feedback given to individual programmes, helped to achieve this objective.

The role of prison libraries in delivering family literacy programmes was successfully explored, both in the US and UK. Again, however, the research was too small-scale to provide any conclusive evidence about the countries as a whole. Should the project be repeated, it might have focused on smaller geographical areas and considered those in more detail. Programmes that were discovered in the UK and US were successfully compared, and suggestions were made for future improvements.
7.3 Practical Suggestions for Librarians

A number of suggested improvements were outlined in the previous chapter, but below is a summary of these ideas for practitioners:

• Work in partnership with public libraries, external organisations and other departments of the prison (eg. Education department), to gain financial and staffing support, to promote prison library services and to promote widespread empathy for inmates and their families.

• Run accompanying workshops or programmes to educate parents on the importance of family literacy, and to provide storytelling advice and techniques.

• Consider implementing a scheme that will allow for children to send writings/pictures back to their parent, such as Storybook Dad’s ‘Memory Book’.

• Along with book recordings, try to send home a book for the child to read along. Consider also sending home cards or letters from the parent if possible, and bookmarks or other educational materials for the caregiver.

• Try to find out the needs of families of inmates in your facility, and tailor your family literacy programme to best suit these needs, rather than simply implementing a generic programme that might not be as effective for your particular population.

Many of these suggestions are dependent on having the funds or staff available to implement them, and the researcher is aware of the serious challenges faced by correctional librarians in these areas. This is why it is strongly advocated that more research be carried out to find out and promote the impact that library services, and family literacy programmes in particular, can have. Recommendations for future research are noted below.
7.4 Recommendations for Future Research

As noted throughout this study, there is a severe lack of empirical studies on programmes run by prison libraries. The need for large-scale research on the long-term effects of family literacy programmes is evident. Recommendations for future research are outlined below:

- A large-scale study on the impact of parental incarceration.

- An evaluation of a particular family literacy scheme – one which looks at both the short-term and long-term impact of participation on both inmates and their families.

- It is acknowledged that this story has a stronger focus on fathers who take part in family literacy programmes. Research could be carried out on programmes which are set up particularly for incarcerated mothers.

- Research that focuses particularly on the impact of family literacy programmes on the child, rather than how programmes can contribute to the rehabilitation of inmates. Interviews and observations could be held with children and their caregivers.

- It is important to evaluate the impact of other prison library programmes as well. A case study could be carried out of an individual prison library, examining all services provided.

It is clear that little research has previously been conducted on the impact of prison programmes available for families of incarcerated individuals. This study has highlighted the importance of carrying out more extensive research in this area. By comparing a number of programmes in both the UK and US, it is hoped that this study has exposed both the innovative and effective work being done in correctional libraries, and brought forward ideas that could be used to implement new or expand upon current family literacy programmes.

Word Count: 14,990
References


Marcou, D. (2014, January 29). Unbarred: Strengthening families affected by incarcerated [Video file]. Video posted to [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sDB2hV0u9Y&list=UUF7uvJRg2zciuT_Rcia6HOg](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sDB2hV0u9Y&list=UUF7uvJRg2zciuT_Rcia6HOg)


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Appendices

Appendix 1: Interview Schedule for Librarians

Below is an outline of the original interview schedule for librarians delivering family literacy programmes to inmates. Questions were later adjusted slightly, due to themes that emerged from early coding.

1. Can you tell me a little about your job title and role?
2. What type of facility/facilities do you provide library services to?
3. Do inmates have regular visits from their children?
4. Can you tell me about the family literacy programme you help to run, and what it aims to do?
5. How is this programme funded?
6. How do you choose stock? Can inmates choose which books to read?
7. Do you have any non-English speaking participants, and is there stock available for them to use?
8. Do you provide help with storytelling techniques?
9. What impact do you feel this programme has on both the participants and their families?
10. Have you any plans for developing this programme? What changes would you like to see?
Appendix 2:  Interview Schedule for Volunteer

An interview was also held with a volunteer in the US who helps to deliver a family literacy programme to local county jails. The prepared interview schedule, which differs only slightly from that in Appendix 1 is outlined below:

1. Can you tell me about the family literacy programme you helped to set up and run?
2. Do the jails you serve have access to library services and, if so, are library staff involved in the programme in any way?
3. How is this programme funded?
4. How do you choose your stock, and do you have stock for non-English speaking participants?
5. Do you provide any help with storytelling techniques?
6. How supportive are prison staff toward your programme?
7. What impact do you feel this programme has on both the participants and their families?
8. Have you any plans to develop or expand this programme?
Appendix 3: UK Questionnaire

Family Literacy Programmes in Prisons

Section A

1. What category is the prison?

2. What is the gender? (Please underline.) If your library serves both male and female inmates from nearby sites, please indicate in ‘Other’.

   Male                Female

   Other:

3. How many prisoners, approximately?

4. Does your prison run any of the following family literacy programmes? Please underline. (If the answer is ‘none’, proceed to section B on page 4 of the questionnaire.)

   Storybook Dads       Storybook Mums       Big Book Share

   Other: __________     None

   (eg. Local initiative)

5. For how long has this programme/programmes been taking place?

6. Is this programme delivered by library staff, external volunteers or both?

7. How often does this programme take place, and roughly how many inmates take part?

8. To what extent do library staff or volunteers help inmates with storytelling techniques, if at all?
9. If this scheme involves book recording, who is responsible for editing the CDs/DVDs?

10. Who is responsible for providing the stock for this programme?

11. Have you any non-English speaking inmates who take part in this programme? If so, please indicate whether or not you have stock suited to their needs.

12. Is a copy of the book sent home along with the CD/DVD? Is anything else included in the package?

13. How is this programme currently funded?

14. How would you describe the overall success of the scheme e.g. with regard to improving literacy skills and self-esteem of prisoners, maintaining family contact and helping toward prisoner rehabilitation?

15. Is there anything you would like to see changed or improved in how the programme is delivered or carried out?

Section B

(only to be completed by those who answered ‘none’ for Question 4)

16. Do you think a family literacy programme, such as Storybook Dads, would be effective in your prison library? Please underline, and give reasons for your answer.

   Yes
   No

   Reason:
17. Why do you think no such programme currently exists? Please underline.

Not suitable/relevant to this establishment
Lack of funding
Lack of staff to help deliver programme
Other (Please give details):

18. Does your prison library run other literacy programmes for inmates? Please give details:

19. How successful would you say these programmes are in helping to develop literacy skills and self-esteem of prisoners, and in contributing to prisoner rehabilitation in general?

20. Please add any other comments you feel would be relevant or helpful to this study.

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire!
Appendix 4:  US Questionnaire

Family Literacy Programs in US Jails/Prisons

Section A

1. What is your job title/role?

2. What type of facility do you work in/provide services for?
   (Please indicate if you provide services for more than one correctional facility)

3. Do inmates in these facilities have access to a library?
   (Please indicate if law library or other)

4. Do inmates have access to any family literacy programs e.g. story taping programs?
   (Please underline). If the answer is ‘no’, please proceed to Section B of the questionnaire.
   
   Yes  No

5. Please provide brief details about the type of family literacy program available.

6. For how long has this program been taking place?

7. Is this program delivered by library staff, volunteers from external organisations or others?

8. How often does this program take place, and roughly how many inmates take part?

9. To what extent do library staff or volunteers help inmates with storytelling techniques, if at all?
10. If this scheme involves book recording, who is responsible for editing the CDs/DVDs?

11. Who is responsible for providing the stock for this program?

12. Have you any non-English speaking inmates who take part in this program? If so, please indicate whether or not you have stock suited to their needs.

13. Is a copy of the book sent home along with the CD/DVD? Is anything else included in the package?

14. How is this program currently funded?

15. How would you describe the overall success of the scheme e.g. with regard to improving literacy skills and self-esteem of inmates, maintaining family contact and helping toward rehabilitation?

16. Is there anything you would like to see changed or improved in how the program is delivered or carried out?

Section B
(only to be completed by those who answered ‘no’ for Question 4)

17. Do you think a family literacy program (such as a reading and story taping program) would be effective in your facility? Please underline, and give reasons for your answer.

Yes
No

Reason:
18. Why do you think no such program currently exists? Please underline.

Not suitable/relevant to this establishment
Lack of funding
Lack of staff to help deliver programme
Other (Please give details):

19. Does your facility/prison library run other literacy programs for inmates? Please give details:

20. How successful would you say these programs are in helping to develop literacy skills and self-esteem of inmates, and in contributing to rehabilitation in general?

21. Please add any other comments you feel would be relevant or helpful to this study.

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire!
### Appendix 5: UK Questionnaire Data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Prison Category</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>No. of Inmates</th>
<th>Family Literacy Programme</th>
<th>How long programme has been running</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>830</td>
<td>Storybook Dads</td>
<td>8 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>598</td>
<td>Storybook Dads</td>
<td>1 year through library, unsure before that</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>850</td>
<td>Storybook Dads, Dads Aloud</td>
<td>5 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>1300</td>
<td>Storybook Dads</td>
<td>7 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>752</td>
<td>Storybook Dads, Big Book Share</td>
<td>2 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>C (Sex offenders and vulnerable prisoners)</td>
<td>Male Transgender</td>
<td>1206</td>
<td>Storybook Dads</td>
<td>Many years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>700</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>900+</td>
<td>Storybook Dads</td>
<td>A few years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>1500</td>
<td>Storybook Dads</td>
<td>18 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>625</td>
<td>Storybook Dads</td>
<td>2 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>434</td>
<td>Storybook Dads, The Big Book Share</td>
<td>6 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>B local</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>1100</td>
<td>Family Intervention Programme</td>
<td>2 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>506</td>
<td>Storybook Dads</td>
<td>10+ years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>Storybook Dads</td>
<td>4+ years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>YOI</td>
<td>Male Female</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>Big Book Share</td>
<td>10 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>B/C</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>1300</td>
<td>Storybook Dads</td>
<td>5 years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Appendix 6: US Questionnaire Data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Job Title</th>
<th>Type of Facility</th>
<th>Access to library</th>
<th>Family Literacy Programme</th>
<th>How long programme has been running</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Correctional Services Supervising Librarian</td>
<td>10 jail sites, 3 state prisons, 2 federal prisons (male and female)</td>
<td>Mostly no – only outside services</td>
<td>Daddy &amp; Me, Mommy &amp; Me</td>
<td>Since 2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Librarian</td>
<td>Medium Security state prison (male)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Reaching Out Through Reading: Incarcerated Fathers Read to their Children</td>
<td>3 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Senior Librarian</td>
<td>Level 2 State Prison</td>
<td>Yes – law and general reading</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Librarian</td>
<td>State Prison, Level III yard</td>
<td>Yes – recreational and law</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Librarian</td>
<td>Forensic Mental Health maximum security hospital</td>
<td>Yes – law and general reading</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Librarian</td>
<td>Medium Security Men’s Prison</td>
<td>Yes – recreational and law</td>
<td>Yes – not storytelling. Inmates can choose 3 books to send home</td>
<td>5 + years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Corrections Librarian</td>
<td>County Jail – male and female</td>
<td>Yes – general library collection</td>
<td>Read to Me</td>
<td>Since 1998</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Librarian</td>
<td>Various male prisons</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Various reading programs across Ohio prisons</td>
<td>10-15 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Corrections Librarian</td>
<td>Level 4 male prison</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Read to the Children</td>
<td>4 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Senior Librarian</td>
<td>Medium Security adult male prison</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Librarian</td>
<td>Medium Security Male Prison</td>
<td>Yes – general collection</td>
<td>Storytaping Program</td>
<td>7 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Corrections School Principal</td>
<td>Medium Security for adult offenders</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Read to Your Child</td>
<td>2 years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 7: Focus Group Schedule

Below is an outline of the questions asked to the four focus group members in the US. This served only as a guideline – discussion amongst participants was encouraged, and other questions naturally emerged from this discussion. The questions centred around four main issues:

1. Family Contact:
   - How easy was it for you to maintain family contact whilst incarcerated?
   - How important was it for you to have this contact?

2. Library Services in Jails/Prisons
   - Tell me about your experiences of library services or programmes whilst incarcerated.
   - What do you think about the value of correctional libraries?

3. Reading Together
   - What purpose does reading to children serve?
   - Did you read to your children before incarceration, and did you read to them after being incarcerated?

4. Family Literacy Programmes
   - Did you have access to this type of programme whilst incarcerated? If so, tell me about it. If not, would you have liked this opportunity?
   - What do you think about the idea of these programmes helping to maintain contact and encouraging parents to play a role in their child’s literacy development?
   - (After having explained and discussed family literacy programmes) – Can you think of any improvements you’d like to see for these programmes?
Appendix 8: Observation Accounts

Observation 1

July 3, 2014. 3:30 – 5:00PM. County jail, Philadelphia.

The researcher met with two volunteers in the lobby of a county jail. Following a security check, all were accompanied by a prison officer to the Education Department of the establishment. It took approximately 10 minutes to walk there, through a number of locked doors and long corridors. Two rooms were used to carry out the family literacy programme. One, larger room served as a waiting room for participants before they were individually taken to a smaller room to record their chosen story. The maximum number of participants in one session is 10, and 7 inmates took part that day. The researcher initially sat with participants in the waiting room, along with a volunteer (V1) and a prison officer. The research was explained to inmates, and all were happy for the researcher to be present and make notes whilst observing. V1 used this time to complete permission forms with participants, and to check that they were satisfied with their chosen reading material. Inmates had been able to choose these books a day in advance, bring them back to their cells and practice reading them, in preparation for recording the story.

The room used to record stories had just enough room for a desk, and a tripod to be set up in front of it for recording purposes. On the wall behind the desk was a colourful Winnie-the-Pooh themed mural, painted by a former inmate. This mural served as a backdrop for the video. The only people present in the room were the inmate, the volunteer (V2) and the researcher, although a prison officer sat outside and was able to see through a window into the room. V2 explained to each participant that he had a maximum of five minutes to record his story, and should he go over the time limit he was advised to tell his child to read the rest of the book along with their caregiver. V2 also spent time explaining to the participant what was going to happen, and offered brief tips on how to read the story. For example, V2 suggested recording a short message for the child at the beginning and end of story. When an inmate appeared to be nervous or anxious, V2 attempted to encourage him and assured him that only herself and another volunteer transferring the recording to DVD would hear it. While it was not possible for the recording to be edited, V2 also assured participants that it was normal to make mistakes and it was unlikely that the child would notice or be upset by small mistakes.
Participants seemed nervous before recording their story, but at the end commented they were glad to have participated. Some of the comments made by participants were as followed:

“I was scared, I didn’t wanna mess it up!”

“Man, I’m nervous”

“Oh wait, let me fix my uniform”

“I’m annoyed, I wanted to get my beard fixed before this video, but the barber won’t be here til later”

“It was good, real good. I can’t wait to get out and read to her in person”

One participant mentioned that he had a 5-month old child who he used to video call, and so he knew that she would recognise his face. The final participant, who both read and sang the story of Old MacDonald for his grandchild, noted that it was his second time taking part in the programme. He expressed thanks to V2, “Seriously, we really appreciate this. I know I’m probably not supposed to, but I’d keep recording them if I could.”

It was clear that inmates were recording for a range of different ages, as the books were varied in both content and length. Dr Seuss was a popular choice, as well as Dora the Explorer, Sesame Street, The Mad Rat and Goodnight Moon. Once the recordings were complete, inmates were escorted back to their cells by a prison officer. V2 shared stories of her experience of the programme, as well as expressing sadness at racial injustices apparent in the US prison service. V1 informed the researcher that while the library is not directly involved in the programme, library staff do store donated books and help inmates to choose which book to read for their child. The programme lasted approximately 1.5 hours.
Observation 2

July 24, 2014. 9:00 – 11:30AM. Category B Male Prison, London.

After progressing through security, the researcher was met by a prison librarian (L1) and guided to the prison library. The library was situated off one of the prison wings. L1 informed the researcher that they used to have a “cupboard-sized library”, but in recent years they were able to convert an old gym into the larger and more modern space they use today. Two programme participants (P1 and P2) were already seated at a table, decorating cards and pillow cases to send home to their children. L1 commented that there is usually only one staff member in the library, but when Family Fables is taking place there must be two, as one needs to be in the recording room and one in the library. Participants explained that, as well as a recorded CD and book, they are able to design and send home a pillow case, and make a card with a written message inside. P1 explained that he had recently been transferred from Jersey where his partner and 7-year old daughter still live, and so he isn’t able to see them again until he is released. He was reluctant to make a card because of lack of confidence in his artistic ability, but was persuaded by L1 to make a simple card with a short message inside. Speaking of the prison library, P1 commented, “It’s peaceful in here. We need that. It’s peaceful compared to the craziness of the wings.” P2 had previously taken part in Storybook Dads for his two sons, but this was the first time recording a book for his 2-year old daughter. He commented that she loves princesses, and so her card was decorated with castles, carriages and princesses.

There was a selection of children’s books, suited to various ages, lying on a table nearby. A second staff member (L2) helped P2 to choose an age-appropriate book to read to his daughter. He chose On the Way Home, because “it has lots of pictures. And my girl recently fell and cut her knee, and this story is about a girl who cut her knee at school.” P2 was brought into a spacious side room of the library, where a desk was set up with a voice recorder ready to record his story. L1 sat beside P2 while he read, at times correcting what was said or helping to pronounce certain words. The researcher was informed that recordings are sent to Storybook Dads’ editing suite and so any mistakes or repetitions are edited out of the final recording. A personal message was recorded by P2 at the beginning and end of the programme. He noted, “I’m not a great reader. I stutter. But I know she’ll like it.” He spoke positively about the programme and was excited to send the book home.
to his daughter. Once the recording was finished, a permission form was filled out, and P2 returned to finish his card while P1 recorded his chosen story.

A third library staff member (L3) arrived, and informed the researcher than roughly one third of inmates in this prison are foreign nationals and have low literacy skills. As they often need help with reading, L3 reads one line and the inmate repeats it, which is later edited out. L3 spoke of an Italian inmate who wanted to send home a CD of nursery rhymes, as his child was very young. L3 – a former children’s librarian – sang one line of the nursery rhyme, which he then repeated.

The whole session lasted 2.5 hours, and then the inmates were escorted back to their cells. The researcher was given a final tour of the library by L1 before leaving.
Appendix 9: Consent Form for Interview Participants

Consent Form: Interviews with Prison Librarians

Researchers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jayne Finlay</td>
<td>Briony Birdi (Supervisor)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MA Librarianship student</td>
<td>Lecturer in Librarianship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information School</td>
<td>Information School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Sheffield</td>
<td>University of Sheffield</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:jfinlay1@sheffield.ac.uk">jfinlay1@sheffield.ac.uk</a></td>
<td><a href="mailto:b.birdi@sheffield.ac.uk">b.birdi@sheffield.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Purpose of the research
My aim is to compare and evaluate family literacy programmes that are run in US and UK prisons.

Who will be participating?
I am interviewing prison/correctional librarians in the UK and US who help to run family literacy programmes in their facility.

What will you be asked to do?
You will be asked to respond to questions about prison demographics, the role of the prison library, how family literacy programmes are delivered and how successful you find them to be. Other questions may be asked during the interview, which will last for approximately 20 minutes.

What are the potential risks of participating?
The risks of participating are the same as those experienced in everyday life.

What data will we collect?
I will simply be collecting your responses to the interview questions. The interview will be audio-recorded, and later transcribed into text form to be used in my dissertation.

What will we do with the data?
The data will be stored on my password-secure laptop throughout the duration of my research. Once my dissertation is complete, and final mark received, the data will be destroyed.

Will my participation be confidential?
The data will be collected with no identifying information attached. Both the participant and facility name will be anonymized.

What will happen to the results of the research project?
The results of this study will be included in my Master’s dissertation which will be publicly available. It may also later be published in a journal article.
I confirm that I have read and understand the description of the research project, and that I have had an opportunity to ask questions about the project.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without any negative consequences.

I understand that I may decline to answer any particular question or questions, or to do any of the activities. If I stop participating at all time, all of my data will be purged.

I understand that my responses will be kept strictly confidential, that my name or identity will not be linked to any research materials, and that I will not be identified or identifiable in any report or reports that result from the research.

I give permission for the research team members to have access to my anonymised responses.

I give permission for the research team to re-use my data for future research as specified above.

I agree to take part in the research project as described above.

Participant Name (Please print) _______________________________ Participant Signature _______________________________

Researcher Name (Please print) _______________________________ Researcher Signature _______________________________

Date _______________________________

**Note:** If you have any difficulties with, or wish to voice concern about, any aspect of your participation in this study, please contact Dr. Angela Lin, Research Ethics Coordinator, Information School, The University of Sheffield (ischool_ethics@sheffield.ac.uk), or to the University Registrar and Secretary.
Appendix 10: Consent Form for Questionnaire Respondents

Consent Form: Questionnaires to Prison Librarians

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The University of Sheffield, Information School</th>
<th>A Comparative Study of Family Literacy Programmes in UK and US Prisons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Researchers
Jayne Finlay
MA Librarianship student
Information School
University of Sheffield
Jfinlay1@sheffield.ac.uk

Briony Birdi (Supervisor)
Lecturer in Librarianship
Information School
University of Sheffield
b.birdi@sheffield.ac.uk

Purpose of the research
My aim is to compare and evaluate family literacy programmes that are run in US and UK prisons.

Who will be participating?
I am inviting prison/correctional librarians across the UK and US to participate in an email questionnaire.

What will you be asked to do?
You will be asked to respond to questions about prison demographics, the role of the prison library, how family literacy programmes are delivered and how successful you find them to be. The questionnaire will take approximately 15 minutes to complete.

What are the potential risks of participating?
The risks of participating are the same as those experienced in everyday life.

What data will we collect?
I am simply collecting the responses to the questionnaire. No other data will be collected.

What will we do with the data?
The data will be stored on my password-secure laptop throughout the duration of my research, and analyzed for my dissertation. Once my dissertation is complete, and final mark received, the data will be destroyed.

Will my participation be confidential?
The data will be collected with no identifying information attached. Both the participant and facility name will be anonymized.

What will happen to the results of the research project?
The results of this study will be included in my Master’s dissertation which will be publicly available. It may also later be published in a journal article.
I confirm that I have read and understand the description of the research project, and that I have had an opportunity to ask questions about the project.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without any negative consequences.

I understand that I may decline to answer any particular question or questions, or to do any of the activities. If I stop participating at all time, all of my data will be purged.

I understand that my responses will be kept strictly confidential, that my name or identity will not be linked to any research materials, and that I will not be identified or identifiable in any report or reports that result from the research.

I give permission for the research team members to have access to my anonymised responses.

I give permission for the research team to re-use my data for future research as specified above.

I agree to take part in the research project as described above.

Participant Name (Please print) _______________________________ Participant Signature _______________________________

Researcher Name (Please print) _______________________________ Researcher Signature _______________________________

Date _______________________________

Note: If you have any difficulties with, or wish to voice concern about, any aspect of your participation in this study, please contact Dr. Angela Lin, Research Ethics Coordinator, Information School, The University of Sheffield (ischool_ethics@sheffield.ac.uk), or to the University Registrar and Secretary.
Appendix 11: Consent Form for Focus Group Members

Consent Form: Focus Group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The University of Sheffield. Information School</th>
<th>A Comparative Study of Family Literacy Programmes in UK and US Prisons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Researchers**
- Jayne Finlay
  - MA Librarianship student
  - Information School
  - University of Sheffield
  - jfinlay1@sheffield.ac.uk
- Briony Birdi (Supervisor)
  - Lecturer in Librarianship
  - Information School
  - University of Sheffield
  - b.birdi@sheffield.ac.uk

**Purpose of the research**
My aim is to compare and evaluate family literacy programmes that are run in US and UK prisons.

**Who will be participating?**
I will be running a focus group discussion with four inmates in a county jail. I (the researcher) will be facilitating the group discussion.

**What will you be asked to do?**
You will be asked to have a discussion in this group about access to library material in the jail, the kind of literacy programmes that are available to you, and what it would mean to you to be able to take part in a family literacy programme. I (the researcher) will guide this discussion, and take notes about what is said.

**What are the potential risks of participating?**
The risks of participating are the same as those experienced in everyday life.

**What data will we collect?**
I will simply be collecting your responses and comments to what is discussed in the focus group.

**What will we do with the data?**
The data will be stored on my password-secure laptop throughout the duration of my research. Once my dissertation is complete, and final mark received, the data will be destroyed.

**Will my participation be confidential?**
The data will be collected with no identifying information attached. Both the participants and facility name will be anonymized.

**What will happen to the results of the research project?**
The results of this study will be included in my Master’s dissertation which will be publicly available. It may also later be published in a journal article.
I confirm that I have read and understand the description of the research project, and that I have had an opportunity to ask questions about the project.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without any negative consequences.

I understand that I may decline to answer any particular question or questions, or to do any of the activities. If I stop participating at all time, all of my data will be purged.

I understand that my responses will be kept strictly confidential, that my name or identity will not be linked to any research materials, and that I will not be identified or identifiable in any report or reports that result from the research.

I give permission for the research team members to have access to my anonymised responses.

I give permission for the research team to re-use my data for future research as specified above.

I agree to take part in the research project as described above.

Participant Name (Please print)  Participant Signature

Researcher Name (Please print)  Researcher Signature

Date

Note: If you have any difficulties with, or wish to voice concern about, any aspect of your participation in this study, please contact Dr. Angela Lin, Research Ethics Coordinator, Information School, The University of Sheffield (ischool_ethics@sheffield.ac.uk), or to the University Registrar and Secretary.
Appendix 12: Consent Form for Observation Participants

Consent Form: Observation (Volunteers/Librarians)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The University of Sheffield. Information School</th>
<th>A Comparative Study of Family Literacy Programmes in UK and US Prisons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Researchers**
- Jayne Finlay
- MA Librarianship student
- Information School
- University of Sheffield
- jfinlay1@sheffield.ac.uk
- Briony Birdi (Supervisor)
- Lecturer in Librarianship
- Information School
- University of Sheffield
- b.birdi@sheffield.ac.uk

**Purpose of the research**
My aim is to compare and evaluate family literacy programmes that are run in US and UK prisons.

**Who will be participating?**
I will be observing a family literacy programme taking place in a correctional facility, and therefore participants will be a mixture of librarians, programme volunteers, and inmates.

**What will you be asked to do?**
You will simply be asked to run the programme (Storybook Dads in the UK, or Daddy&Me in the US) as it would normally take place, while I observe and take notes about how it is carried out.

**What are the potential risks of participating?**
The risks of participating are the same as those experienced in everyday life.

**What data will we collect?**
I will simply be collecting data about how I see the programme being carried out, the materials used, and how participants respond to it.

**What will we do with the data?**
The data will be stored on my password-secure laptop throughout the duration of my research. Once my dissertation is complete, and final mark received, the data will be destroyed.

**Will my participation be confidential?**
The data will be collected with no identifying information attached. Both the participants and facility name will be anonymized.

**What will happen to the results of the research project?**
The results of this study will be included in my Master’s dissertation which will be publicly available. It may also later be published in a journal article.
I confirm that I have read and understand the description of the research project, and that I have had an opportunity to ask questions about the project.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without any negative consequences.

I understand that I may decline to answer any particular question or questions, or to do any of the activities. If I stop participating at all time, all of my data will be purged.

I understand that my responses will be kept strictly confidential, that my name or identity will not be linked to any research materials, and that I will not be identified or identifiable in any report or reports that result from the research.

I give permission for the research team members to have access to my anonymised responses.

I give permission for the research team to re-use my data for future research as specified above.

I agree to take part in the research project as described above.

Participant Name (Please print)  Participant Signature

Researcher Name (Please print)  Researcher Signature

Date

Note: If you have any difficulties with, or wish to voice concern about, any aspect of your participation in this study, please contact Dr. Angela Lin, Research Ethics Coordinator, Information School, The University of Sheffield (ischool.ethics@sheffield.ac.uk), or to the University Registrar and Secretary.
**Consent Form: Observation (Inmates)**

**The University of Sheffield. Information School**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Researchers</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jayne Finlay</td>
<td>MA Librarianship student</td>
<td>Briony Birdi (Supervisor)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information School</td>
<td></td>
<td>Lecturer in Librarianship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of Sheffield</td>
<td></td>
<td>Information School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:jfinlay1@sheffield.ac.uk">jfinlay1@sheffield.ac.uk</a></td>
<td></td>
<td>University of Sheffield</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:b.birdi@sheffield.ac.uk">b.birdi@sheffield.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Purpose of the research**

My aim is to compare and evaluate family literacy programmes that are run in US and UK prisons.

**Who will be participating?**

I will be observing a family literacy programme taking place in a correctional facility, and therefore participants will be a mixture of librarians, programme volunteers, and inmates.

**What will you be asked to do?**

You will simply be asked to take part in the programme (Storybook Dads, or Daddy & Me) as usual, and I will take notes while observing the programme.

**What are the potential risks of participating?**

The risks of participating are the same as those experienced in everyday life.

**What data will we collect?**

I will simply be collecting data about how I see the programme being carried out, the materials used, and the ways in which you, as a participant, take part in the programme.

**What will we do with the data?**

The data will be stored on my password-secure laptop throughout the duration of my research. Once my dissertation is complete, and final mark received, the data will be destroyed.

**Will my participation be confidential?**

The data will be collected with no identifying information attached. Both the participants and facility name will be anonymized.

**What will happen to the results of the research project?**

The results of this study will be included in my Master's dissertation which will be publicly available. It may also later be published in a journal article.
I confirm that I have read and understand the description of the research project, and that I have had an opportunity to ask questions about the project.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without any negative consequences.

I understand that I may decline to answer any particular question or questions, or to do any of the activities. If I stop participating at all time, all of my data will be purged.

I understand that my responses will be kept strictly confidential, that my name or identity will not be linked to any research materials, and that I will not be identified or identifiable in any report or reports that result from the research.

I give permission for the research team members to have access to my anonymised responses.

I give permission for the research team to re-use my data for future research as specified above.

I agree to take part in the research project as described above.

________________________________________________________________________
Participant Name (Please print)                      Participant Signature

________________________________________________________________________
Researcher Name (Please print)                      Researcher Signature

Date

Note: If you have any difficulties with, or wish to voice concern about, any aspect of your participation in this study, please contact Dr. Angela Lin, Research Ethics Coordinator, Information School, The University of Sheffield (ischool_ethics@sheffield.ac.uk), or to the University Registrar and Secretary.
Appendix 13: Research Ethics Application

[The University of Sheffield.
Information School

Proposal for
Research Ethics Review

Students
This proposal submitted by:
- Undergraduate
- Postgraduate (Taught) – PGT
- Postgraduate (Research) – PGR

Staff
This proposal is for:
- Specific research project
- Generic research project

This project is funded by:

Project Title: A Comparative Study of Family Literacy Programmes in UK and US Prisons

Start Date: March 2014
End Date: September 2014

Principal Investigator (PI):
(student for supervised UG/PGT/PGR research)
Jayne Finlay

Email: jfinlay1@sheffield.ac.uk

Supervisor:
(if PI is a student)
Briony Birdi

Email: b.birdi@sheffield.ac.uk

Indicate if the research:
(put an X in front of all that apply)
- Involves adults with mental incapacity or mental illness, or those unable to make a personal decision
- Involves prisoners or others in custodial care (e.g., young offenders)
- Involves children or young people aged under 18 years of age
- Involves highly sensitive topics such as ‘race’ or ethnicity; political opinion; religious, spiritual or other beliefs; physical or mental health conditions; sexuality; abuse (child, adult); nudity and the body; criminal activities; political asylum; conflict situations; and personal violence.

Please indicate by inserting an “X” in the left hand box that you are conversant with the University’s policy on the handling of human participants and their data.
Part B. Summary of the Research

B1. Briefly summarise the project's aims and objectives:
(This must be in language comprehensible to a layperson and should take no more than one-half page. Provide enough information so that the reviewer can understand the intent of the research)

Summary:

Research has shown that prisoners who maintain contact with their families while incarcerated are less volatile during incarceration, and less likely to reoffend once released. Family literacy programmes run in prison libraries play an important role in maintaining this vital contact, as well as helping to develop the literacy skills of those involved. My overall aim is to compare family literacy programmes that are run in both US and UK prisons. I will analyse the design of the programmes, assess the role of the prison libraries in delivering them to inmates, and evaluate how effective they are. My hope is that a comparative study will illuminate particular areas of effectiveness, and prompt suggestions for improvements to be made in each scheme.

B2. Methodology:
Provide a broad overview of the methodology in no more than one-half page.

Overview of Methods:

I intend to use a mixture of interviews, questionnaires and observation methods. I hope to conduct face-to-face and/or telephone interviews both in the UK and the US, with prison librarians and volunteers who deliver the literacy programme. I will also send out a questionnaire via email to prison librarians across both countries, to gain a broader view of the success of family literacy programmes in regions I am unable to travel to. I also plan to use observation as a method of data collection. Ideally, I would like to observe first-hand these programmes in action and make note of what I experience. This could be through direct volunteering with eg. with Storybook Dads, or simply shadowing other volunteers who help with these programmes. Finally, I intend to conduct a focus groups with inmates in a US jail who are fathers but do not have access to any family literacy programme, to see how they feel it might benefit them. I will also carry out a literature review of existing literature on UK and US prison libraries, and the literacy programmes provided by these libraries.

If more than one method, e.g., survey, interview, etc. is used, please respond to the questions in Section C for each method. That is, if you are using both a survey and interviews, duplicate the page and answer the questions for each method; you need not duplicate the information, and may simply indicate, “see previous section.”
C1. Briefly describe how each method will be applied

Method (e.g., survey, interview, observation, experiment):

Interview

Description – how will you apply the method?

US interviews: I have set up an interview with a correctional services librarian in New York Public Library, and a public librarian in Philadelphia who works with inmates in the city jails. Both of these interviews will take place within a public library setting. I will email both librarians in advance with the Information/Consent form to inform them fully about my research, and allow for any questions they might have. I will record these interviews with a Dictaphone and later transcribe them.

UK interviews: I plan to interview 2-3 prison librarians, within a prison library setting. If this is not possible, I will arrange to meet them outside of the prison, but I think it would be more helpful for my research to see the prison library and learn more about its environment and materials. The prisons I plan to visit are HMP Forest Bank, HMP Foston Hall, and HMP Wakefield. I have chosen these as they are not far from Sheffield, and serve both male and female prisoners. I have completed a National Offender Management (NOMS) research application form, in order to get consent from the prison service to carry out my research. I will also get in touch with the governor of each establishment to verify that they are happy for me to visit the prison. I will email the prison librarians in advance to discuss visit times and arrangements, and to send them the Information/Consent form. I will make sure to maintain good contact with the prisons, so that they are aware of when I am arriving. Once at the prison, I will be met by either the prison librarian or another member of staff and will remain with them throughout my visit. The interview will take place in a closed office in their library. I will take notes with a pen and notebook, or a Dictaphone if permitted. I will later transcribe and analyse these interviews.

I also intend to interview 2 volunteers who help to deliver the Storybook Dads programme. As they are based in the South of England, this is likely to be either a Skype or telephone interview. Again I will first email the volunteers with the Information/Consent form, and arrange times and details of the interview. I will record and later transcribe and analyse the interview.

About your Participants

C2. Who will be potential participants?

UK and US prison librarians, and volunteers who help to deliver family literacy programmes ie. Storybook Dads volunteers (UK), or Daddy&Me volunteers/employees (US).

C3. How will the potential participants be identified and recruited?

Some I have already identified because of my own contacts who work in US jails. I will also find information from CILIP's Prison Libraries Group, and websites of the external organisations such as the Storybook Dads website. I will email or telephone the relevant people to inform them about my research and ask if they are willing to be interviewed. I will also get in touch with each prison to check that they approve of my research.

C4. What is the potential for physical and/or psychological harm / distress to participants?

It should cause no harm/distress of which I am aware.
C5. Will informed consent be obtained from the participants?

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If Yes, please explain how informed consent will be obtained?

Interviewees will be presented with the Information Sheet/Consent Form, and will be invited to ask any questions. If I am interviewing them via telephone, I will first email them a copy of the Consent form to complete. Permission to visit certain prison establishments in the UK will be sought by completing the NOMS research application form online.

If No, please explain why you need to do this, and how the participants will be de-briefed?

C6. Will financial / in kind payments (other than reasonable expenses and compensation for time) be offered to participants? (Indicate how much and on what basis this has been decided)

No

About the Data

C7. What data will be collected? (Tick all that apply)

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C8. What measures will be put in place to ensure confidentiality of personal data, where appropriate?

The participants will not be mentioned by name in my research. Instead I will use ‘Respondent 1’ or ‘Librarian 1’ etc, and so the data will be anonymized. The name of the facility will also be anonymized, so that the prison will not be identifiable. The only people with access to this data will be myself and my supervisor.

C9. How/Where will the data be stored?

I will record the interviews on a Dictaphone, then type up the important information and store it on a password-protected laptop. Only I and my supervisor will have access to this data.

C10. Will the data be stored for future re-use? If so, please explain

Once I have completed my Masters dissertation and received feedback, I will delete any of the data gathered.
About the Procedure

C11. Does your research raise any issues of personal safety for you or other researchers involved in the project (especially if taking place outside working hours or off University premises)? If so, please explain how it will be managed.

Some interviews with prison librarians may take place in the prison library. I will be fully supervised in the prison at all times, and my personal safety will of course be taken into account. As I have explained in previous sections, the prison will be fully aware of my visit due to email or telephone correspondence leading up to my visit. I will be met by a member of staff on entry and brought to the prison library, where my interview will take place in the librarian’s office. I will not be having any direct contact with inmates.
C1. Briefly describe how each method will be applied

Method (e.g., survey, interview, observation, experiment):

Questionnaire

Description – how will you apply the method?

I will create a questionnaire which consists of both closed and open-ended questions. This will be emailed to prison librarians across the UK and US, whose contact details I will find online and from CILIP’s Prison Libraries group. Once the data has been collected, I will analyse it and use it for my research.

About your Participants

C2. Who will be potential participants?

I will email the questionnaire to approximately 15-20 UK and 15-20 US prison librarians.

C3. How will the potential participants be identified and recruited?

Please see previous section.

C4. What is the potential for physical and/or psychological harm / distress to participants?

Please see previous section.

C5. Will informed consent be obtained from the participants?

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If Yes, please explain how informed consent will be obtained?

The Information Sheet/Consent Form will be attached to email, providing information about my research. Participants will be able to email me should they have further questions.

If No, please explain why you need to do this, and how the participants will be de-briefed?

C6. Will financial / in kind payments (other than reasonable expenses and compensation for time) be offered to participants? (Indicate how much and on what basis this has been decided)

No

About the Data

C7. What data will be collected? (Tick all that apply)

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C8. What measures will be put in place to ensure confidentiality of personal data, where appropriate?

Personal data in the questionnaires will again only be associated with an arbitrary number, and so the data will collected anonymously. Neither prison, nor librarian, will be identifiable.

C9. How/Where will the data be stored?

Please see previous section.

C10. Will the data be stored for future re-use? If so, please explain

Please see previous section.

**About the Procedure**

C11. Does your research raise any issues of personal safety for you or other researchers involved in the project (especially if taking place outside working hours or off University premises)? If so, please explain how it will be managed.

There are no personal safety issues with this method, as there will be no physical contact between myself and the participants.
C1. Briefly describe how each method will be applied

Method (e.g., survey, interview, observation, experiment):

Observation

Description – how will you apply the method?

US: I plan to observe the running of ‘Daddy & Me’ – the family literacy programme which takes place at Rikers Island jail in New York. Once a month, a group of volunteers travel with the correctional services librarian to the jail to work with the prisoners. I will join this group, and observe the work they do. I will travel with the librarian and volunteers to the jail and stay with the group throughout the entire session. I will simply be taking notes about the programme, and will not be talking directly to, or interviewing, any of the inmates.

UK: For observing the Storybook Dads programme in the UK, I will get in touch with both Storybook Dads and with the prison I would be visiting. This method would involve going to the prison (along with the volunteers) and observing the inmates as they record stories onto CDs/DVDs. I would be with the volunteers and prison librarian at all times. I would not be asking any direct questions to the inmates, simply observing and taking notes about the delivery of the programme.

I would then write up my observations about each programme and how they are delivered.

About your Participants

C2. Who will be potential participants?

Prison librarians, programme volunteers and inmates.

C3. How will the potential participants be identified and recruited?

Please see previous section.

C4. What is the potential for physical and/or psychological harm / distress to participants?

Please see previous section.

C5. Will informed consent be obtained from the participants?

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If Yes, please explain how informed consent will be obtained?

Again I will have to complete the NOMS research application form to gain access to prisons. I will present the Information/Consent form to all prison librarians, volunteers and inmates to inform them about my research and gain their consent. I will also provide time for any questions to be asked by all participants about the research I am carrying out.

If No, please explain why you need to do this, and how the participants will be de-briefed?
C6. Will financial / in kind payments (other than reasonable expenses and compensation for time) be offered to participants? (Indicate how much and on what basis this has been decided)

No

About the Data

C7. What data will be collected? (Tick all that apply)

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C8. What measures will be put in place to ensure confidentiality of personal data, where appropriate?

Please see previous sections. For this particular method, the prisoners will of course be given an arbitrary number and never mentioned by name. Both staff names and name of facility will remain anonymous.

C9. How/Where will the data be stored?

Please see previous sections.

C10. Will the data be stored for future re-use? If so, please explain

Please see previous sections.

About the Procedure

C11. Does your research raise any issues of personal safety for you or other researchers involved in the project (especially if taking place outside working hours or off University premises)? If so, please explain how it will be managed.

This particular method will certainly take place in a prison environment. I will however be supervised at all times, and am certain that my personal safety will be taken into account by the prison and staff members present. As stated, in the US I will be travelling to the prison with the librarian and volunteers, and will remain with them until we leave. In the UK I will be met on arrival by the librarian, and will stay with her and the volunteers throughout the duration of the programme. I will not be working one-on-one with the prisoners, or asking them any direct questions.
C1. Briefly describe how each method will be applied

Method (e.g., survey, interview, observation, experiment):

Focus Group

Description – how will you apply the method?

This method would take place only in the US, where I have a contact working in the Philadelphia county jails. It would take place in the Education building of a jail in Philadelphia, with 4 current inmates. These inmates have no access to a library in their jail. They are all fathers, but have no access to a family story-taping programme. I would therefore lead a discussion about how they would feel about having access to a programme like this, and the education/literacy services which are available to them in jail. My contact and another colleague of hers run writing classes with these inmates once a week. They would both be present for this focus group. These inmates have already expressed that they would like to be a part of this discussion. If I am allowed to bring a Dictaphone into the jail, I will record this focus group discussion and later transcribe it. If not, I will simply take notes during the discussion. It would be very useful for me to hear from inmates who do not have a chance to participate in any kind of family literacy programme, to see how they think they could benefit from one.

About your Participants

C2. Who will be potential participants?

Four inmates in a Philadelphia county jail.

C3. How will the potential participants be identified and recruited?

I have a friend working for an organisation in Philadelphia that helps to aid the re-entry of inmates into society. She has already identified these 4 participants, who are very willing to take part.

C4. What is the potential for physical and/or psychological harm / distress to participants?

This should cause no harm or distress to inmates. The conversation will focus around their lack of access to a library and to a family literacy programme. I will not be asking very personal questions about their situation.

C5. Will informed consent be obtained from the participants?

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If Yes, please explain how informed consent will be obtained?

I will present each inmate with an Information/Consent form before the focus group begins. I will read it aloud to the inmates to ensure that it is understood, and then ask if they have any questions about my research.

If No, please explain why you need to do this, and how the participants will be de-briefed?

C6. Will financial / in kind payments (other than reasonable expenses and compensation for time) be offered to participants? (Indicate how much and on what basis this has been decided)

No
About the Data

C7. What data will be collected? (Tick all that apply)

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C8. What measures will be put in place to ensure confidentiality of personal data, where appropriate?

Please see previous sections. For this particular method, the prisoners will of course be given an arbitrary number and never mentioned by name. The name of the facility will also be anonymized.

C9. How/Where will the data be stored?

Please see previous sections.

C10. Will the data be stored for future re-use? If so, please explain

Please see previous sections.

About the Procedure

C11. Does your research raise any issues of personal safety for you or other researchers involved in the project (especially if taking place outside working hours or off University premises)? If so, please explain how it will be managed.

This particular method will take place in a classroom of the Education Department in a county jail. The jail will be notified that I am coming, and my personal safety will be taken into account at all times. I will be joining two colleagues who regularly visit and hold writing classes with these inmates, and they will be present during my focus group. The discussion should only last for 20-30 minutes, and I will not at any stage be alone with the inmates. It should be noted that this is a very low security establishment, holding inmates who have been imprisoned for a short amount of time.
The University of Sheffield.
Information School

Research Ethics Review Declaration

Title of Research Project: *A comparative study of family literacy programmes in UK and US Prisons*

We confirm our responsibility to deliver the research project in accordance with the University of Sheffield’s policies and procedures, which include the University’s ‘Financial Regulations’, ‘Good Research Practice Standards’ and the ‘Ethics Policy Governing Research Involving Human Participants, Personal Data and Human Tissue’ (Ethics Policy) and, where externally funded, with the terms and conditions of the research funder.

In submitting this research ethics application form I am also confirming that:

- The form is accurate to the best of our knowledge and belief.
- The project will abide by the University's Ethics Policy.
- There is no potential material interest that may, or may appear to, impair the independence and objectivity of researchers conducting this project.
- Subject to the research being approved, we undertake to adhere to the project protocol without unagreed deviation and to comply with any conditions set out in the letter from the University ethics reviewers notifying me of this.
- We undertake to inform the ethics reviewers of significant changes to the protocol (by contacting our academic department’s Ethics Coordinator in the first instance).
- We are aware of our responsibility to be up to date and comply with the requirements of the law and relevant guidelines relating to security and confidentiality of personal data, including the need to register when necessary with the appropriate Data Protection Officer (within the University the Data Protection Officer is based in CiCS).
- We understand that the project, including research records and data, may be subject to inspection for audit purposes, if required in future.
- We understand that personal data about us as researchers in this form will be held by those involved in the ethics review procedure (e.g. the Ethics Administrator and/or ethics reviewers) and that this will be managed according to Data Protection Act principles.
- If this is an application for a ‘generic’ project all the individual projects that fit under the generic project are compatible with this application.
- **We understand that this project cannot be submitted for ethics approval in more than one department, and that if I wish to appeal against the decision made, this must be done through the original department.**
Name of the Student (if applicable):
Jayne Finlay

Name of Principal Investigator (or the Supervisor):
Briony Birdi

Date: 14 April 2014
Appendix 14: Confirmation of Ethics Approval

Information School Research Ethics Panel

Letter of Approval

Date: 6th June 2014

TO: Jayne Finlay

The Information School Research Ethics Panel has examined the following application:

Title: A Comparative Study of Family Literacy Programmes in UK and US Prisons

Submitted by: Jayne Finlay

And found the proposed research involving human participants to be in accordance with the University of Sheffield’s policies and procedures, which include the University’s ‘Financial Regulations’, ‘Good Research Practice Standards’ and the ‘Ethics Policy Governing Research Involving Human Participants, Personal Data and Human Tissue’ (Ethics Policy).

This letter is the official record of ethics approval by the School, and should accompany any formal requests for evidence of research ethics approval.

Effective Date: 6th June 2014

Dr Angela Lin
Research Ethics Coordinator
Access to Dissertation

A Dissertation submitted to the University may be held by the Department (or School) within which the Dissertation was undertaken and made available for borrowing or consultation in accordance with University Regulations.

Requests for the loan of dissertations may be received from libraries in the UK and overseas. The Department may also receive requests from other organisations, as well as individuals. The conservation of the original dissertation is better assured if the Department and/or Library can fulfill such requests by sending a copy. The Department may also make your dissertation available via its web pages.

In certain cases where confidentiality of information is concerned, if either the author or the supervisor so requests, the Department will withhold the dissertation from loan or consultation for the period specified below. Where no such restriction is in force, the Department may also deposit the Dissertation in the University of Sheffield Library.

To be completed by the Author – Select (a) or (b) by placing a tick in the appropriate box

If you are willing to give permission for the Information School to make your dissertation available in these ways, please complete the following:

☑ (a) Subject to the General Regulation on Intellectual Property, I, the author, agree to this dissertation being made immediately available through the Department and/or University Library for consultation, and for the Department and/or Library to reproduce this dissertation in whole or part in order to supply single copies for the purpose of research or private study

☐ (b) Subject to the General Regulation on Intellectual Property, I, the author, request that this dissertation be withheld from loan, consultation or reproduction for a period of [ ] years from the date of its submission. Subsequent to this period, I agree to this dissertation being made available through the Department and/or University Library for consultation, and for the Department and/or Library to reproduce this dissertation in whole or part in order to supply single copies for the purpose of research or private study

Name JAYNE FINLAY
Department INFORMATION SCHOOL
Signed J. Finlay Date 29/8/14

To be completed by the Supervisor – Select (a) or (b) by placing a tick in the appropriate box
(a) I, the supervisor, agree to this dissertation being made immediately available through the Department and/or University Library for loan or consultation, subject to any special restrictions (*) agreed with external organisations as part of a collaborative project.

*Special restrictions

(b) I, the supervisor, request that this dissertation be withheld from loan, consultation or reproduction for a period of [ ] years from the date of its submission. Subsequent to this period, I agree to this dissertation being made available through the Department and/or University Library for loan or consultation, subject to any special restrictions (*) agreed with external organisations as part of a collaborative project.

Name
Department
Signed
Date

THIS SHEET MUST BE SUBMITTED WITH DISSERTATIONS BY DEPARTMENTAL REQUIREMENTS.