

SO, YOUR LOVED ONE IS GOING TO PRISON...

Not sure what to do or what happens next?
In 'RISE: A Book for Families of First-time Offenders',
we help you discover:

- what happens to your loved one in prison,
 - how to cope with the feelings you may be experiencing,
 - how your child might be affected by the imprisonment and what you can do to help,
 - what to expect when your loved one comes home, and
 - resources you can turn to.
-



RISE



Collaboration between:



REINTEGRATING THROUGH
INSPIRATION, SUPPORT, AND EMPOWERMENT



REINTEGRATING THROUGH INSPIRATION, **SUPPORT**, AND **EMPOWERMENT**

FOREWORD

I recently spoke at the Family Justice Practice Forum: Family Justice 2020 (on 14 July 2017) on the complexity of family justice, stressing that those who face an important issue for the first time in an unfamiliar environment are likely to be very much distressed by the experience. While speaking of this in reference to family disputes brought to court and its implications on spouses and children, this much is also true for the families of first-time offenders.

Very often, the silent and oft overlooked victims of incarceration are loved ones who have witnessed the imprisonment of a family member. Faced with a unique set of challenges, guidance and support is necessary if they are to successfully navigate new and unfamiliar terrain. There already exists a wide variety of information and services available for these families. However, if this is not presented in an accessible and digestible manner it can be perceived as information overload, and if that happens it ends up adding to the families' sense of loss and confusion. In addition, the fear of stigma can also deter families from seeking help.

It is thus heartening that a group of third-year Social Work students from Nanyang Polytechnic, together with SACA, have recognised this need, and come forward to develop a series of books to assist and

encourage families of first-time offenders. RISE consolidates the available resources and provides easily digestible information on the basis of which families are better placed to make informed choices.

As Patron, I would like to offer my congratulations to the Association and the NYP students on the launch of these books. It is our hope that families will find solace in the anecdotes contributed by courageous individuals who have journeyed on a similar path and emerged stronger, and come to believe that they, too, can rise above the odds.

Sundaresh Menon

Patron, Singapore After-Care Association
Chief Justice, Republic of Singapore

RISE

A Book for Families of First-time Offenders

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We offer our endless thanks to the **interviewees** for coming forth to share their stories with us. Your strength has been of great inspiration to us.

We are grateful for **Jasmine Yap** for designing our logo for us, a feat we could not have done on our own.

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INTRODUCTION

The imprisonment of a loved one is likely to be a painful experience for everyone involved. If this is the first time then questions like 'Why did this happen?', 'What happens next?', 'How can I manage?', and 'Who do I turn to for help?' will likely come to mind. There could also be feelings of betrayal; after all, the one in prison could be the person you trusted the most...

We are a group of students pursuing a Diploma in Social Sciences (Social Work) at Nanyang Polytechnic. In collaboration with Singapore After-Care Association (SACA) for our Final Year Project, we were convinced of the need for resources specifically targeting families who are dealing with the imprisonment of a loved one for the very first time. After much research and deliberation, we developed the *RISE*, which stands for *Reintegrate, Inspire, Support and Empower*, series of books.

RISE's three books hope to help and support the various members of the family cope with having their loved one imprisoned for the first time. The illustrated story book, "Alex Visits Daddy", is aimed at helping young children make sense of the imprisonment of their parent(s) while, "1045 Days: Diary of a Teenage Boy", hopes to provide

support and guidance to the adolescent members of the family.

This book that you are reading is aimed at families and it hopes to:

- ✓ Inform families of what happens to their loved one in prison, and the support they can offer this person
- ✓ Alert families of the challenges and changes they would face
- ✓ Offer tips on how to cope with the challenges
- ✓ Help identify signs and symptoms of distress among family members
- ✓ Provide information on available Social Service resources.

During our research and fieldwork, we spoke to several people who have had to cope with the incarceration of and separation from their loved one. We hope you will be inspired by the stories of their perseverance.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

***“A moment’s weakness led him astray.
Your strength could get him back on track”***

- Singapore Prison Service



WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO YOUR LOVED ONE?

It is natural to worry about how a loved one will cope in prison, and not many realise that there are programmes that will help him serve his time and prepare him for life after release. The programmes can be roughly divided into in-care, which is the period he spends in prison, halfway care during which he is serving his remaining sentence in the community but has to follow some rules and, finally, aftercare during which he may receive help and resources from community agencies if required.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

This is what your loved one will go through in prison and after:

Phase 1: Deterrence

Your loved one will be allocated a cell with other inmates. He will be under the charge of a Personal Supervisor, who will discuss with your loved one the programmes which may aid in his rehabilitation journey.



Before attending any programme, he will be given some time to get used to life in prison. At the same time, he is supposed to reflect on his crime. This may be a difficult period for him as he needs to adapt and adjust to life in prison.

Phase 2: Developmental

During this phase, he will be able to attend programmes. These programmes help him to gain skills or address the problems he faces.



Phase 3: Pre-release

Towards the end of his imprisonment, the programmes that your loved one will attend focus on helping him to readjust to the community.

Phase 4: Halfway Care

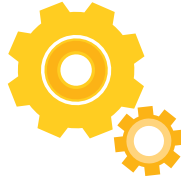
If he is eligible, he will serve the remainder of his sentence either at home or at a halfway house. He is required to either study or work. During this period, he will be guided and supervised by prison staff. He will also be required to wear a tagging device, in the form of an electronic anklet or bracelet which will track his whereabouts and make sure he keeps to his curfew.

Phase 5: Aftercare

When he is no longer under the custody of the Singapore Prison Service, he will be equipped with information on available aftercare services in the community. He may or may not be required to attend compulsory supervision or programmes which depends on his conduct and the offence he was sentenced for. Should he require assistance, he can seek out such services voluntarily.



WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?



WHAT ARE THE PROGRAMMES AVAILABLE IN PRISON?

The programmes offered during the in-care, pre-release and aftercare stages are not just aimed at addressing the various issues that your loved one could be facing at the time but also to ready him for life on the outside. These include:

- ✓ **Core Skills Programmes** aimed at helping him adjust to life in prison through teaching useful coping methods, such as anger and stress management.
- ✓ **Education Programmes** to equip him with higher qualifications and knowledge so that it would be easier for him to find a job on his release.
- ✓ **Work & Vocational Training** in fields such as IT skills, food preparation and electronics. Again, this is to give him more access to jobs after he has served his sentence.

- ✓ **Psychology-based Correctional Programmes** to address specific criminogenic risks and needs such as drug addiction or violence.
- ✓ **Family Programmes** to give him more opportunities to bond and improve his relationship with you and your family.
- ✓ **Religious Programmes & Services** conducted by volunteers from faith-based organisations.
- ✓ **Pre-release Programme** to prepare him for life outside of prison and can include topics on how to gain employment upon release, family bonding and more.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?



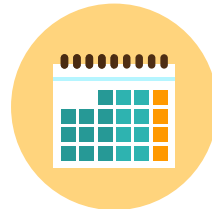
WHY SHOULD YOU VISIT YOUR LOVED ONE

Prison visits allow you and your family to maintain contact with your loved one. It encourages him to do his best to turn over a new leaf and keep in touch with happenings at home. Such visits can be a source of comfort for him as it increases the sense of connectedness and closeness among family members.

HOW TO VISIT YOUR LOVED ONE

STEP 1: ARRANGING A VISIT

Immediate family members and close relatives, such as uncles and grandparents, are allowed to visit their loved one. You will receive a letter of notification should your loved ones be admitted into prisons. Upon your first visit, you will be issued a visit card for self-help bookings through our online portal. If you miss a visit, you can contact the Visit Office at Prison Link Centre at 6546 7170 to arrange for another. Prison Link Centres are open from



8am to 4.30pm, Mondays to Saturdays. They are closed on Sundays and Public Holidays.

Generally, you can only visit your loved one **twice a month**.

Friends who have registered and are approved by the Prison Officers are also able to visit him, provided that they are accompanied by a visit card holder. Note that there is a limit of three visitors each time.

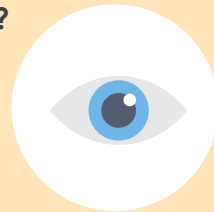
HOW TO BOOK A VISIT?

To book a slot to visit your loved one, call the Visit Office at the Prison Link Centre or make the booking online at www.ipris.sps.gov.sg (effective 15 January 2018).

TELE-VISIT OR FACE-TO-FACE VISIT?

Face-to-face visit:

- Limited to a fixed day of the week (Monday to Saturday)
- 20 minutes per session
- Face-to-face visits are available at Prison Link Centre (Changi) or any institution your loved one is housed in. The first visit will be a Face to Face visit or a televisit at any Prison Visit Centres.



In a face-to-face visit, there will be a glass panel between you and your loved one, and you will not be able to have physical contact with him.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

The Singapore Prison Service will tell you where the face-to-face visit will take place. Call the Visit Office hotline if you require more information.

Tele-visit:

- Monday to Saturday
(depending on availability of slots)
- 30 minutes per session
- Tele-visits are available at all centres listed in the following table
- Tele-visits allow family members to talk to their loved one on a television via tele-conferencing. Please note that for all visits, you will not be able to have any physical contact with your loved one



Name of Prison Link Centre / Community Tele-Visit site	Address	Visiting Hours & Contact Info
Prison Link Centre (Changi)	990 Upper Changi Road North Singapore 506968 Bus Services: 2, 29	Monday to Friday: 8:30am - 4:05pm Saturday: 8:30am - 3:30pm Closed on Sundays and Public Holidays Tel: 6546 7170
Prison Link Centre (Jurong)	Block 134 Jurong Gateway Road #02-307D Singapore 600134 5 mins walk from Jurong East MRT and Interchange	Monday to Friday: 8:30am - 4:05pm Saturday: 8:30am - 3:30pm Closed on Sundays and Public Holidays Tel: 6546 7170
Prison Link Centre (Geylang Bahru)	Block 70 Geylang Bahru #02-2719 Singapore 330070 Bus Services: 26, 61, 107, 853	Monday to Friday: 8:30am - 4:05pm Saturday: 8:30am - 3:30pm Closed on Sundays and Public Holidays Tel: 6299 4041
Singapore Anti-Narcotics Association (SANA) Televisit Centre	2 Sengkang Square, Sengkang Community Hub #05-01, Singapore 545025 3 mins walk from Sengkang MRT Bus Services: 80, 93, 86, 87, 156, 159, 161, 163, 371, 372, 965	Mon to Fri (except Thur) 10.00 am - 7.30 pm Thursday 10.00 am - 9.00 pm Saturday 10.00 am - 5.00 pm Closed on Sundays and Public Holidays Tel: 6732 1122

Name of Prison Link Centre / Community Tele-Visit site	Address	Visiting Hours & Contact Info
<p>Singapore Children's Society (Bishan)</p> <p>(Only for visits of inmates who have children below 16 years old)</p>	<p>Research & Outreach Centre Junction 8 9 Bishan Place #05-02 Singapore 579837</p> <p>5 mins walk from Bishan MRT and Interchange</p>	<p>Monday to Friday: 8.30am - 5.30pm</p> <p>Closed on Weekends and Public Holidays: Tel: 6358 0911</p>
<p>Lakeside Family Centre (Taman Jurong)</p>	<p>The Agape 21 Yung Ho Road #03-01 Singapore 618593</p> <p>10 mins bus ride from Lakeside MRT</p> <p>Bus Services: 154, 240, 246</p>	<p>Monday to Friday: 9:40am - 4:05pm</p> <p>Closed on Weekends and Public Holidays Tel: 6265 6522</p>
<p>Ace the Place Community Club</p> <p>(Only for visits of inmates or visitors staying in Admiralty)</p>	<p>120 Woodlands Avenue 1 Singapore 739069</p> <p>Bus Services: 901 from Woodlands Interchange</p>	<p>Saturday: 9:40am - 11:25am Tel: 6891 3430</p>

Name of Prison Link Centre / Community Tele-Visit site	Address	Visiting Hours & Contact Info
<p>Kaki Bukit Community Centre</p> <p>(Only for visits of inmates or visitors staying in Kaki Bukit Const)</p>	<p>670 Bedok North Street 3 Singapore 469627</p> <p>10 mins bus ride from Bedok Interchange</p>	<p>Saturday: 9:40am - 11:25am Tel: 6445 4223</p>
<p>Kampung Ubi Community Center</p>	<p>10 Jalan Ubi, # 01-01 Singapore 409075</p> <p>5 mins walk from Eunos MRT station</p> <p>Bus Services: 2, 7, 13, 21, 24, 26, 28, 30, 30E, 51, 60, 61, 63, 63M, 67, 93, 94, 155, NR7, 154</p>	<p>Saturday: 9:30am - 11:25am Tel: 6742 3564</p>

*(Source: Singapore Prison Service, 2016)
Information is correct at the time of printing, November 2017.
For updated information, please call 6546 7170.*

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

STEP 2: PREPARING FOR THE FIRST VISIT

You must have the following documents with you as proof for first registration:

- ✓ Visit card
- ✓ NRIC/Passport
- ✓ Work Permit and any other necessary documents, if you are a foreigner
- ✓ Birth / Marriage / Divorce Certificate etc. (for registration only)

For subsequent visits, you need only bring your NRIC and visit card.

WHAT IS A VISIT CARD?

When he is admitted into prison, your loved one will be asked for details of his next-of-kin. He is entitled to only one visit card, which will be issued to the family member he has indicated as next-of-kin. Documentary proof (e.g. marriage certificate, divorce certificate) of your relationship with your loved one will make the first-time registration smoother and easier. If you have misplaced your visit card, you can report the loss to officers at the PLCs. Do not worry as you can still visit your loved one.



SENDING LETTERS, GREETING CARDS AND POSTCARDS

You can send your loved one as many letters, greeting cards and postcards as you want. They can be mailed to the prison or left in the mailbox at the visit area. It is best to keep the language simple and to think carefully about what you want to write in the letter as it would take time for it to be handed over to your loved one. This is also to reduce the chances of it being rejected by the prison.



Mailed items that have musical, perfumed or pop-up properties, shaped irregularly or unusually large, or include personal photos or affixed stickers and neoprints affixed will be rejected.

Your loved one, on the other hand, is only allowed to send out **two** letters a month.

As each visit lasts for just a short time, these letters serve very important purposes for both you and your loved one. Besides updating each other on matters that you would not have to dwell on during the visit, such correspondence allows both of you to give emotional support to each other and maintain some form of connection.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

Books/magazines:

These are allowed as well but would have to be handed over to an officer at a Prison Link Centre (PLC) for clearance first.



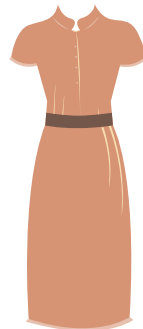
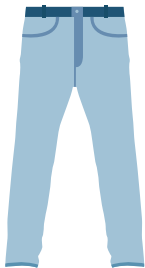
- ✓ You are allowed to bring three approved books per visit or;
- ✓ You can purchase reading materials from the PLC (Changi) book kiosk

Food:

All outside food, including home-cooked food, is not allowed, unless purchased through official means.

DRESS CODE

When visiting your loved one, you need to dress appropriately. You may be denied a visit if you are inappropriately dressed in mini-skirts, bare-back tops or clothes with a low neckline.



SHOULD YOU VISIT YOUR LOVED ONE?

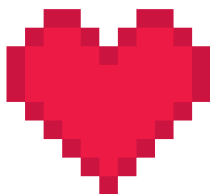
Prison visits allow you and your family to maintain contact with your loved one. It encourages him to do his best to turn over a new leaf and keep in touch with happenings at home. Such visits can be a source of comfort for him as it increases the sense of connectedness and closeness among family members.



WHAT SHOULD YOU EXPECT?

“The emotion that can break your heart is sometimes the very one that heals it...”

- Nicholas Sparks



WHAT ARE YOU FEELING? WHY ARE YOU FEELING THIS WAY?

It is natural to feel overwhelmed and confused when your loved one is imprisoned. Emotions experienced may include:

✓ Denial

In the beginning, you may not want to believe what has happened. Feeling shocked is normal because of the suddenness of the situation. However, as time passes, the reality of the situation will begin to sink in and it will be easier for you to accept it.



✓ **Anger**

You may feel angry because your loved one has gotten into trouble with the law. The imprisonment may mean you now have more responsibilities which can be very stressful. As a result, you may feel like everyone else is to be blamed for your anger. You may also be angry with yourself because you feel that you have been a reason your loved one is in prison.



✓ **Uncertainty**

You may be unsure of what to do next. There can be many difficult decisions to make, such as those regarding finances and caregiving arrangements for your children. You may feel most unsure if your loved one usually made most of the decisions. Your family may feel lost - as if no one is there to guide you.



✓ **Disappointment**

Your loved one's imprisonment may make you feel that your trust has been broken, especially if you used to depend on him for support and decision making. This may lead to you feeling disappointed that he has not lived up to your expectations.



WHAT SHOULD YOU EXPECT?

✓ Shame

Society views imprisonment as a bad thing and ex-offenders are not readily accepted back into the community. As a family member, you may feel embarrassed at being labelled and blamed for the actions that sent him to prison. You may feel that you have not done enough to stop this from happening.



✓ Guilt

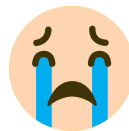
As a parent or a spouse, you may feel guilty about your loved one's imprisonment. You may feel that you had not brought up your child well or had done a bad job as a spouse.



On the other hand, you might also feel guilty about experiencing relief at your loved one's imprisonment, especially in the early days. This might be caused by feelings of frustration or disappointment that you have kept to yourself.

✓ Emotional fatigue

Having to deal with sudden changes, such as greater financial difficulties and more caregiving duties, may make you feel tired and helpless. This will be especially so if you are not used to making the major decisions at home. Feelings of wanting to give up may set in.



✓ **Stress**

You may feel stressed if you have to take on additional roles in the house, such as caregiver, homemaker and breadwinner, especially if your loved one had managed some of these responsibilities in the past.



It is likely that you will experience a mix of the emotions above, rather than any specific one. It can be difficult to handle many emotions on your own. With this in mind, you can seek help from a professional to identify what exactly you are experiencing. You may also share your problems with a friend to better clarify your thoughts and feelings. This helps to increase your emotional self-awareness, allowing you to seek appropriate coping methods afterwards.

WHAT SHOULD YOU EXPECT?



HOW MIGHT THE RELATIONSHIPS AROUND YOU CHANGE?

- **With your imprisoned family member**

As mentioned above, you might experience negative feelings upon knowing that your loved one has been imprisoned. These negative feelings might affect the way you communicate with him as a spouse. Remember that you might not be the only family member who is unhappy. Children are susceptible too. Older folk with children in prison may feel overwhelmed by disappointment. They may avoid or choose not to keep in contact with them, straining further the parent-child relationship.

- **Within your family**

The separation may affect the dynamics in a family. You may have to take on the roles of both the caregiver as well as the sole breadwinner of the family. The children in the family may end up having to take on more responsibilities.



This can be seen when they start taking care of their younger siblings or doing household chores. The change in your family arrangements may cause you and your loved ones to experience more stress.

- **With your extended family & friends**

After finding out that someone close is in prison, some extended family members and friends may start to distance themselves. Your relationship between your extended family and friends might be affected. Some people might blame you and your family for causing the imprisonment.

The shame and stigma that comes with imprisonment may prevent you from talking about your problems to people you are comfortable with. This may further prevent you from expressing your feelings as you may feel ashamed. In extreme cases, you may become withdrawn and avoid communicating with those around you.

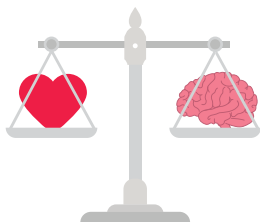
- **With the community**

Being judged or viewed negatively is something that cannot be avoided. Other parents may tell their children to avoid mixing with your children just because your loved one



WHAT SHOULD YOU EXPECT?

is imprisoned. Word may spread around the neighbourhood about what has happened in your family. Your neighbours may become curious and start asking you about what has happened to your loved one.



HOW CAN YOU HANDLE THESE EMOTIONS AND CHANGES?

It is understandable that family members may be hesitant about seeking help from either professionals or trusted relatives and friends, but doing so can be very useful in helping you cope with the troubles you are facing, especially when you are unsure of what to do next.

- **Having people to talk to**

Turn to family members and friends you trust to talk about your feelings. Some may show their support by offering to take care of your children or cook meals for you. Neighbours or close friends who can be trusted can also be a good form of support. This is especially true if your friends live near you and are able to see you regularly.

- **Seeking help**

Keeping your feelings and worries to yourself can be bad for your mental health. If you are not comfortable or do not feel safe opening up to your family members or friends, you can turn to the services in the community for help, such as a Family Service Centre (FSC) near your home.

There are also specialised programmes for families whose loved ones are in prison. For some, turning to faith and religion may also be a form of support and strength. You can refer to the **Useful Resources** section to find out more about these programmes.

- **Support groups**

There are support groups which can teach you how to better handle your feelings so that you won't feel overwhelmed. The key advantage is that they comprise of people who face, or have faced, similar situations. This helps you understand that other people share similar stresses and difficulties. You will be able to relate to people in the support group and gain comfort and reassurance.

You can refer to the **Useful Resources** section to find out more about support groups.



WHAT SHOULD YOU EXPECT?

- **Writing a diary**

If you are uncomfortable with talking about your feelings to someone, starting a diary or journal to write down your thoughts can be a good way to express your feelings. It acts as a release or safety valve. Keeping a diary can also help you keep track of your feelings.

- **Taking up a hobby**

After you have adjusted to the changes in your life, try taking up a hobby or activity that interest you in your spare time. It can be a healthy outlet for you to manage your thoughts and feelings. It can be helpful in relieving stress as well. You can sign up for various courses and activities at nearby Community Clubs as well as Residents' Committees.



There are many different coping methods and different methods work for different people. Coping with a loved one's imprisonment can be a long and difficult journey, so trying out different ways to do so can be helpful.

Remember that you are not alone and there are always people who are willing to extend a helping hand.

There is no one clear-cut way for you to release the stress that you are experiencing, so it is up to you to find a suitable coping method.





“Don’t give up on ex-offenders so easily. People won’t choose a path that will make them suffer. It may be because of family problems or not feeling loved. Have trust and believe in them.”

- *Jill, 30s, cousin of an ex-offender

My cousin is not a bad person. Perhaps it was due to his family’s troubles that he became rebellious. He turned to drugs and violence to ease his woes. Whatever the reason, I was upset when I knew about it. He is like a brother to me and never would I have expected him to do such a thing. It did not help that our relatives expected him to eventually end up in prison. Everyone lost hope, so did I... for a little while. This is our story.

He was arrested. I was shocked when I got the news. How was I supposed to react? What was I supposed to say? I did not know what to do. I knew that he would eventually be arrested, but I never thought it would be so soon.

WHAT SHOULD YOU EXPECT?

It was hard on me when he was in prison. I had a loved one in prison and I did not know what to expect. What was his cell like? What was his life like? I was quite in the dark and that left me worrying about him. I found myself feeling anxious that he might be bullied as what I knew about prison came from movies and they portrayed prison as a place filled with bad guys who commit heinous crimes.

His Dad visited him and from those visits, I knew that my cousin was adjusting well in prison. It was reassuring to know that he was spending his time in prison wisely, thanks to the programmes and activities he had to attend. When he told me that he was going to sit for the 'O' level examinations, I was worried that he would be stressed out due to the fact that he was much older than the other candidates. However, seeing his determination made me realise that my worries were unfounded.

As a sister to him, I felt at ease knowing that he was coping relatively well in prison. I was so thankful for prison visits as they allowed me to keep in touch with my cousin and to check on his well-being. Despite having fears and concerns that I kept to myself, I never stopped believing in him. He could come out a better person; he was capable of getting back on track upon his release. As time went on, my belief in him only grew stronger.

The three years and eight months that he spent in prison was an ordeal for me, but I knew it was for the better and that he would come out as a changed man. As his release date drew nearer, my excitement grew for I thought he would finally come home to us. However, I was heartbroken when he chose to stay in a halfway house over his own home. A halfway house meant another thirteen months before he could come home permanently. The wait seemed never ending but I knew that it was not an easy decision for him to make. He needed to do this for himself, to prepare himself for the future and to prove himself to his family. I knew he made the right choice for himself and I knew the only way for me to show my support was to believe in him.

Life for my family and I was full of ups and downs but I am very thankful that, in the end, everything went well. Today, I am proud of my cousin who is a loving and responsible family member. He strives hard to help others who are in need through his profession.

I am glad that my belief in my cousin never once wavered, as I know that my faith in him allowed him to feel supported and loved. I am extremely proud of where he is now and for working so hard not to let us down.

**Not her real name*

HELPING A CHILD

***“All kids need is a little help, a little hope,
and someone who believes in them.”***

- Magic Johnson

The imprisonment of a parent can be a traumatic experience for a child. Young children might have a harder time understanding what has happened because they are unfamiliar with the concept of imprisonment. Just like any adult, children will also experience emotions such as guilt and confusion. In this chapter, we will explore what a child (up to the age of 12) might feel knowing that a parent is in prison, and how caregivers can help.



WHAT MIGHT A CHILD BE GOING THROUGH?

✓ **Guilt**

Children tend to believe that they are the reason for any changes that happen at home or around them, but rarely do they talk about their guilt directly.



Hearing them say things like “Did Daddy go to prison because of me?” or “Is it my fault?” is an indication that they are feeling guilty. A change in their usual behaviour may also indicate that they need some help and guidance from their caregiver.

✓ **Confusion**

Children who do not know the reason for the sudden departure of their parent(s) are likely to question their current caregiver about their whereabouts. Ignoring them or lying to them will only make them constantly worry and think about where their parent(s) went.



They may begin to start asking questions, such as “Is Daddy okay?”, “Where did Mommy go?”, “Why doesn’t Daddy come home anymore?”, “Does Mommy still love me?”, and “How come so late and he hasn’t come home?”. When they start to ask questions, it is a sign that they do not understand what is going on.

✓ **Fear**

Children who have witnessed their parents’ arrest are likely to be traumatised by the incident. This may result in a change in how they react towards authority figures such as police officers or social workers. The children may feel afraid whenever they see these people

HELPING A CHILD

as they are reminded of how their parent was taken away from them. Their fear and mistrust may be demonstrated in different ways, like trying to avoid authority figures such as police officers.

✓ **Anxiety**

Having one parent in prison may make children anxious about losing their current caregiver as well. This is especially so if they have no explanation for the separation. Some children may feel so anxious that they become over-reliant on their caregiver. They may constantly check on their caregiver to find out where they are or what they are doing. They may also keep asking if their caregiver will be there when they come home.



✓ **Teasing by classmates**

Imprisonment is not a common topic discussed in schools or among children, so their classmates may tease them if they do not understand the child's situation. They may say things like "your Daddy doesn't care about you anymore" or "your Mommy is a bad person". This may then make the child feel sad or angry and they may express their emotions through crying, shouting, etc.



Teasing affects each child differently, so its impact depends on how the child reacts.

✓ **Weakened family bonds**

Children usually form a strong bond with their parents when they are young. With a parent in prison, the relationship between the parent and the child may be affected because they do not get to communicate with each other as often as they used to. Though it is not impossible to maintain the relationship, it can be a lot more difficult to do so.

When children stop asking about their imprisoned parent and are not very excited about visiting them, it is a sign that the parent-child relationship may be affected.



Encourage children to go for the visits by getting them to prepare what they want to share with their imprisoned parent. Ask them to write letters. Tell them the importance of the time limit to help them understand that they should cherish each visit.

Families with a loved one in prison can cope by attending programmes run by the Singapore Prison Service or community agencies.

HELPING A CHILD

You can refer to the **Useful Resources** section at the end of the book to find out more about these community agencies.

✓ **Re-adjustment**

Children will need to adjust to the absence of a parent at home. This sudden change may lead to the child feeling shocked and confused. Siblings might interact differently with each other and there might be subtle changes in roles such as an older child asserting more authority in the family. They may even have to take on some responsibilities at home or become more independent. This can take some time for the child to get used to.



✓ **Doubting or Not trusting others**

No child would expect their parent to land in prison. They might not even know why the parent has to serve jail time or the concept of law-breaking. Learning that their parent did something wrong can make them wonder if what they believed about their loved one is true - "I thought my Daddy is a good man but maybe he is not?" They may start doubting who they can or cannot trust.



✓ **Viewing themselves negatively**

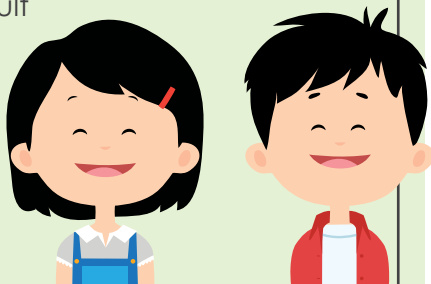
This is more likely to occur if children do not have any contact with their imprisoned parent. When a loved one suddenly leaves, it is very common for children to feel like they are at fault. As mentioned above, teasing from their friends and classmates may also add to their belief that they are the ones at fault. When caregivers do not clarify this misunderstanding with the children, they may begin to believe what their classmates say and that they are to be blamed for their parent's imprisonment.



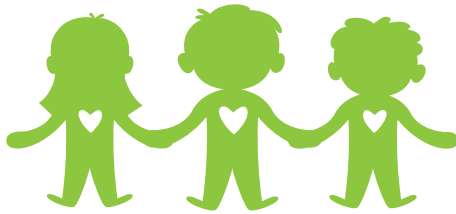
It may cause them to be quiet and withdrawn.

The above are just some possible and common challenges a child might face. It is good to remember that children are unique individuals, and are often more resilient than we think. They will usually find a way to manage their emotions, though it may not be in healthy ways.

This is why having an adult figure guide them and work through their feelings will be helpful.



HELPING A CHILD



HOW CAN YOU HELP A CHILD WHO IS GOING THROUGH TOUGH TIMES?

When your loved one enters prison, it affects the whole family. This is especially so for young children unable to understand what is happening. Your children will benefit from your help and guidance in handling their emotions better. Below are some tips:

✓ **Explaining to the child**

Be honest and tell the child what has happened to his parent.

An example of how you can explain it to your child;

"Daddy did something wrong and broke the law. Since he did something wrong, he is in a place called prison so that he can learn what is right and wrong and think about what he has done. It is just like when you eat in class but your teacher says that you are not supposed to, so she gives you extra work, right? Just like that, Daddy is working on becoming a better person and a better father to you."

A good time to talk about the imprisonment to the child is when he asks after his parent.

We have come up with a children's book '**Alex Visits Daddy**', which may help you explain about your loved one in prison to the child.

It is important to explain to your child what has happened to reduce the negative feelings that come with no longer having his or her parent around. The sudden disappearance of a loved one is likely to cause fear and anxiety in the child. The child will likely assume the worst when no one is able to give him or her answers they are satisfied with regarding their missing parent.

✓ **Respecting the child's feelings**

The first step in getting the child to talk to you about how they feel is to respect the way they feel. A child may be feeling many emotions but may not know how to explain or show them. It is then important for you to let them know that it is alright for them to feel the way they do, even if it is a negative emotion. You can say:

"I know that Daddy's imprisonment makes you feel upset and it is okay to feel upset."



HELPING A CHILD

By letting them know that it is okay to feel the way they do, you encourage them to open up and share their feelings with you.

✓ **Active listening and reassurance**

Active listening refers to giving your full attention and responding appropriately to what the child has said. Doing this allows the child to know that he is important and that it is not wrong to feel the way he does.

This is especially true when the child feels angry with his imprisoned parent. He may then feel guilty about being angry. This is when active listening and your response are important.

For example, when the child mentions that he is very angry, you can ask:

“What are you angry about?” or “Who are you angry with?”

This encourages him to share more about what he is going through. Reassure him by telling him that ‘it is okay’ to feel that way and that you are there for him.

✓ **Positive role models**

Positive role models are often the adults that children spend the most time with. Children often look up to and learn from the adults that



they spend the most time with. The easiest way children learn is through observing the behaviour of adults around them and imitating it. Thus, it is important to demonstrate good behaviour in front of children so that they can adopt these positive behaviours.

✓ **Talking about the imprisoned parent in front of the child**

As mentioned, children are easily influenced and learn from the adults in their lives. Criticising or talking badly about the imprisoned parent(s) in front of them can negatively impact on the way they see, think about, and behave towards the imprisoned parent(s). This will then affect the way the children talk to or feel about their imprisoned parent(s). This may affect the parent-child bond between them, even after release.



Thus, it is important to speak about the imprisoned person respectfully, especially in front of the children.

✓ **Maintaining contact with the imprisoned parent**

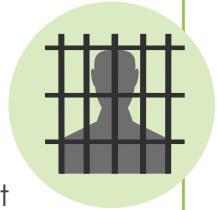
A child's bond with his/her parents is very important. Therefore, it would be helpful to allow the child to keep in contact with his/her imprisoned parent(s). This will

HELPING A CHILD

ensure that they are not completely absent from the child's life. This makes it easier for the child to cope with the departure of his/her parent(s). By maintaining contact, the child would continue to feel a sense of connection to his/her parent. This can be done through involvement in family focused programmes, writing letters to the parent, and/or bringing the child to visit his/her parent(s) in prison.

✓ **Preparing the child to visit his/her parent(s) in prison**

Visiting a loved one in prison can be a long and tiring process. The young child, particularly, will have a harder time understanding what is happening. The actual visit to the prison may be overwhelming for some children. It is advisable that you prepare the child with some information beforehand.



For example, you can let the child know:

- What can and cannot happen during visits, such as how the imprisoned parent will not be able to leave with them
- They may have to wait some time before they can see their parent
- Face-to-Face visits, with a glass panel in-between, will last for just 20 minutes

- Tele-visits mean that they will get to see and talk to their parent for 30 minutes through a television screen
- They cannot touch or hug their imprisoned parent

Visits provide children with the chance to spend time with their imprisoned parent(s). They get to see how their parent(s) is and do not have to imagine how they might be. This will reduce the worry or fear they might be feeling, wondering about their parent's well-being.

It can be hard to say goodbye when leaving and it can take time for the child to learn how to handle his/her feelings after visiting a parent in prison. It would be helpful to talk to the child about his/her feelings after leaving the prison so that you too can understand how they are feeling.

✓ **Keep the imprisoned parent informed**

Keeping the child's parents informed of important events in the family and the experiences of your child helps to keep him/her connected with the family. Children will also feel reassured that their absent parent is keeping in touch with them.



HELPING A CHILD

“Even if your loved one keeps making the same mistake, we have to keep trying until they succeed.”

- *Mdm Faridah, Grandmother of nine grandchildren

I was devastated when I heard that my son was caught by the police for a drug offence. On top of that, two of my daughters-in-law had already been arrested, leaving eight grandchildren under my care. It was so tiring, and I had to struggle through paying for all the bills and expenses.

I knew I had to seek help no matter what people might say. I was not afraid or ashamed to go to centres and agencies. All the help I receive is not for me, but for the well-being and future of my grandchildren.

Having a parent in prison can be seen as an embarrassment to the family, but I didn't want to keep this a secret from my grandchildren. I feel that they have the right to know where their parent is.

I do not want them to feel a lack of parental love so I ensure they receive enough attention from me. I would try my best to meet their basic needs and wants, even though it can be quite difficult for me. The love I can offer is definitely not like what their parents can provide, but I will do anything I can for them.

One day, one of my grandsons told me that his classmate made a nasty comment about his father.

“Your father is useless!” his classmate said.

He was very hurt by it and started crying. Which grandmother can bear to see the tears of her grandchild? I felt hurt too, but I had to be strong. I explained patiently that he should not take his classmate’s words to heart, and that he should focus more on achieving his goals. These negative comments are bound to float around, so he should just ignore them. I told him that his father is currently in prison not because he is useless; it is so that he can change to become a better person, and be the best father he can be.

Whenever I talk to my grandchildren about their father, I will always tell them how important they are in helping their father become a better person. I have never failed to bring them along for prison visits, because I feel that prison visits are very important. To maintain contact with their parents, I ensure each child will take turns to visit their parents. I believe this connection will be a source of motivation for both my children and grandchildren alike.

As my grandchildren are still young, I feel very strongly that their education should not

be affected. Education is the key to a good future. However, there is more to life than just education. I want them to be good people too, so I try my best to fill their time with useful activities like swimming and religious classes. I hope my grandchildren will be able to grow up well just like any other child would.

Despite my son and daughters-in-law being in prison, they are still my family no matter what. Blood is thicker than water, right? Everyone makes mistakes in life, but I believe that only through family support can change take place. I truly believe in second chances. While there is still breath in my chest, I will do my best each day so that my grandchildren can receive the best each day.

**Not her real name*

WHEN YOUR LOVED ONE COMES HOME

“Prison might confine a man, but it should not define one.”

- Unknown



WHAT IS YOUR LOVED ONE LIKELY TO FACE UPON RELEASE?

When a loved one is released, he will need some guidance in adjusting back to life outside of prison. The first step to helping him adjust is for you and your family to understand and be aware that your loved one will be facing various challenges upon his release. There is a possibility that your loved one may look to you and your family for help. For example, he may not have a job immediately after his release and giving him some time to adjust and find a job would benefit him.

Your loved one may face other challenges:

- **Readjusting to life outside prison**

The ex-offender may initially feel uneasy upon his release, having to adjust to life outside of the cell. Thus, he might have some trouble adjusting and this adds to his stress levels.

WHEN YOUR LOVED ONE COMES HOME

- **Over-dependency on family members**

The ex-offender may be dependent on his family upon his release. In prison, he is provided with food, water, and a place to sleep. He does not have to work or earn money to receive any of that.

Upon his release, he may rely heavily on you for support emotionally as well as for basic necessities (e.g. finance). He might also be reliant on you to help with making good decisions until he has readjusted to his new environment.

- **Re-adjustment of family dynamics**

Just as your loved one may have difficulties adjusting back to life outside prison, you and your family may also experience challenges adjusting to life with your loved one back home again.

If your loved one was the head of the household before his imprisonment, he might want to take on that role again now that he is back. This may lead to misunderstandings because the family dynamics (i.e. roles and situation) are likely to have changed after his imprisonment.

For example, if the father was the authority figure in charge of discipline in the household before imprisonment, the mother may have stepped into this role during his absence. The family may have become used to this change causing the father to feel upset when he returns to a family that functions differently from what he is used to.

- **Clash of expectations**

Problems may occur between you and your loved one if you have different expectations of how you want things to work after his release. Good communication is, thus, important to reduce the likelihood of misunderstandings.



For example, when an inmate is released from prison, he might want to spend some time re-adjusting to society and catching up on lost time with his family. However, his spouse may want him to get a job immediately to help with the finances at home. Situations like this may lead to conflict and arguments as the people involved may not appreciate the other persons' point of view.

- **Communication issues**

It might be difficult for you and your family to communicate effectively with your loved one as you may still be upset with him for the crime he committed. Your loved one may also have trouble talking to you because he may be experiencing feelings of guilt. Family ties may thus be affected because of the difficulties faced in communicating with each other.



WHEN YOUR LOVED ONE COMES HOME



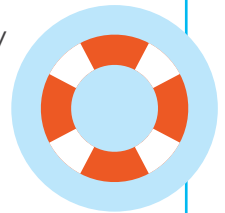
WHAT CAN YOU DO TO HELP?

✓ **Understanding his restrictions upon release**

Your loved one may have to observe certain programme requirements upon his release. For example he could be fitted with a tag and face some restrictions to his movement. Your support in this matter would be of great help to him and aids in building a sense of love and trust within the family.

✓ **Providing practical support**

Upon release, your loved one may be unemployed. You can help by providing him with short-term financial support for transportation and meals for work if you are able to and it is needed.



Your patience and support is necessary to allow your loved one time to get back on his feet. However, both parties should remember that this support is only temporary and your loved one should work towards becoming independent and a contributing member of the household.

WHEN YOUR LOVED ONE COMES HOME

- **Offering emotional support**

A supportive environment will greatly help your loved one as it is the people closest to him who will have the greatest impact on him upon his release. He might face rejection during multiple job interviews because of his criminal record. He might also have difficulty reconnecting with his children as it might have been a long time since spending time with his family. Regular and consistent emotional support ensures that he knows who to turn to if he needs to talk to someone. This can also be a form of motivation for him to keep trying and not give up even if times are tough.



- **Communicating openly**

When your loved one is released, it is not just a period of readjustment for him, but is so for the whole family as well. Having lived apart for some time, it is normal to expect that both parties will have to readjust to the home coming of your loved one. It is very important for all members of the family to be aware of this readjustment and to openly share their feelings when things are not working out.

It may not be easy to share feelings especially if they are negative. However, it is important to understand that keeping such feelings and thoughts bottled up

inside us are likely to have worse consequences in the longer term. We may likely lose our temper and say hurtful things which we do not mean and this could cause our relationships with our loved ones to suffer damage that may be hard to fix.

- **Helping him understand and deal with changes around him**

Upon the release of your loved one, he may need some time to adjust back to daily life. People and places may have changed, and some technology may be unfamiliar. Your support in helping him cope with the changes will help with his readjustment to life on the outside and also improve your relationship as a family.

- **Self-care**

Helping your loved one adapt to life outside prison can be demanding on you as well. Disagreements are sometimes unavoidable as it takes time for you and your loved one to understand each other's needs. So, it is good to give yourself a break perhaps by spending time with people you like or by engaging in activities that help you relax.

It also gives your loved one some time and space to work things out for himself.



WHEN YOUR LOVED ONE COMES HOME

“I want him to know that I love and care for him a lot. I wouldn't have waited for him if I don't love him.”

- *Syafiqah, 24



I have never felt so lost and alone in my life. Only someone who has been in my shoes before can really understand what it is like. I hope that telling my story can help others know that they are not alone and that someday things will get better.

It was not easy for my children too. They were only eight, seven and a year old at that time. They witnessed the arrest of their father and I still remember all the crying and tears as he was taken away in the van. They did not know what prison was, so I did not explain to them. I could only tell them that daddy made a mistake and was in a boys' home. To protect them from stigma I had to warn them not to tell anyone. I had to be on guard constantly; I kept it a secret and none of my relatives even found out.

All the secrecy, the financial problems, taking care of the children as well as being there for them made me feel so many emotions. I was

sad, frustrated and also a little bit relieved. Why relieved you may ask – because at least he is caught now. Better earlier than later. That's how I felt anyway and I felt guilty for feeling relieved. But I knew I was relieved because I wanted his imprisonment to propel him to change for the better.

Despite all my problems, I knew my husband will be having his own problems adjusting to prison. So even though it was costly to visit him, and I was barely surviving financially - I made sure I visited him with the children. I was there every visit to show him I cared.

Time seemed to crawl. But the time for his release came nearer and I went for a course to prepare myself for my husband's release. I was a bit uncertain – feeling happy about his release yet at the same time worried. A lot of thoughts were crowding my mind – Will he change? Can he cope with the work? Can he be a better person? How can I help him?

Ultimately the course prepared me well enough that I knew how to support him through his reintegration. It was not always smooth sailing for me and the children. They had to adapt to having him home again. My youngest child especially, had the most difficult time as she did not know him anymore.

Eventually, she adapted. I tried my best to support my husband when he was first released by letting him take his time to adjust. I had to be patient and take things one step at a time. It really was not easy as we each had to readjust to each other too. I had to control myself to avoid nagging him or bringing up the past.

Things are finally getting better. My family is together again. My husband values our family more and has realised the impact of his bad choices on us - his family. In a way, it was like we were all in prison and we, the family members, suffer as much as the prisoner. But as a family, I feel we must believe in our loved ones in prison. Family support is important and visits are important as it allows prisoners to know that their families still care for them.

Most of all, for us family members, if you need additional support you must ask for it – whether in terms of someone to talk to or to get tips to manage the reintegration.

**Not her real name*

USEFUL RESOURCES

GENERAL

(Applicable to all Singaporeans and Permanent Residents)



FINANCIAL HELP

If you are finding it a challenge to manage household expenses, or your family does not have a stable income, you can visit a Social Service Office (SSO) to apply for financial assistance. It might help to relieve the financial stress temporarily.

Also, it is best to call the relevant agency to discuss the requirements before heading down to apply for assistance, as some applications require you to bring specific documents (such as CPF contributions, monthly pay slips, prison documents, etc.) for administrative purposes.

To find the nearest Social Service Office, please call: **1800 222 0000**, or visit the Social Service Office in your neighbourhood as listed in the following table.

Social Service Office (SSO)	Address
SSO @ Ang Mo Kio	6A Ang Mo Kio Street 53 Ang Mo Kio 3G Centre Singapore 569208
SSO @ Bedok	Blk 426 Bedok North Road #01-515 Singapore 460426
SSO @ Boon Lay	Blk 189 Boon Lay Drive #01-254 Singapore 640189
SSO @ Bukit Batok	Blk 369 Bukit Batok Street 31 #01-505 Singapore 650369
SSO @ Bukit Merah	Blk 105 Jalan Bukit Merah #01-1942 Singapore 160105
SSO @ Bukit Panjang	Blk 232 Pending Road #01-29 Singapore 670232
SSO @ Clementi	Blk 358 Clementi Avenue 2 #01-285 Singapore 120358
SSO @ Chua Chu Kang	8A Teck Whye Lane Singapore 681008
SSO @ Geylang Serai	10 Eunos Road 8 #12-02 Singapore Post Centre Singapore 408600 (Please use the North Lobby)
SSO @ Hougang	Blk 662 Hougang Avenue 4 #01-413 Singapore 530662
SSO @ Jalan Besar	Blk 806 King George's Avenue #03-206 Singapore 200806
SSO @ Jurong East	Devan Nair Institute for Employment and Employability 80 Jurong East Street 21 #01-07 Singapore 609607
SSO @ Kreta Ayer	4 Sago Lane #03-101 Singapore 050004

Social Service Office (SSO)	Address
SSO @ Pasir Ris	120 Pasir Ris Central #01-16 Pasir Ris Sports Centre Singapore 519640
SSO @ Punggol	Punggol 21 Community Club 80 Punggol Field #04-01 Singapore 828815
SSO @ Queenstown	402 Commonwealth Drive Block A #01-01 Singapore 149599
SSO @ Sembawang	Blk 315 Sembawang Vista #01-173 Singapore 750315
SSO @ Sengkang	Blk 261C Sengkang East Way #01-506 Singapore 543261
SSO @ Serangoon	Blk 332 Serangoon Avenue 3 #01-257 Singapore 550332
SSO @ Taman Jurong	301A Corporation Drive Singapore 619773
SSO @ Tampines	Our Tampines Hub Public Service Centre 1 Tampines Walk #01-21 Singapore 528523
SSO @ Toa Payoh	490 Lor 6 Toa Payoh #07-11 HDB Hub Bizthree Singapore 310490
SSO @ Woodlands	900 South Woodlands Drive #06-13 Woodlands Civic Centre Singapore 730900
SSO @ Yishun	Blk 746 Yishun Street 72 #01-127 Singapore 760746

(Source: CARE Network)

Information is correct at the time of printing, November 2017.

For updated information, please visit

<https://www.msf.gov.sg/dfcs/ss0/default.aspx>

USEFUL RESOURCES

SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL SUPPORT

- **Family Service Centres (FSCs)**

They provide emotional and social support through the help of professionals (e.g. Social Workers, Counsellors, and Caseworkers) and run programmes (e.g. support groups, psychoeducational programmes). FSCs are located in HDB towns around Singapore, which makes it convenient for you to visit.

- **Community Centres**

They offer a wide range of affordable activities, classes and interest groups island-wide which is an opportunity to upgrade your skills or even expand your social network.

- **Residents' Committees**

They provide a wide range of affordable activities, classes and interest groups around each neighbourhood.

- **Self-Help Groups**

There are four self-help groups in Singapore, one for each of the major races. They provide various resources and programmes to support families who are facing difficulties in general. As it is reflected in the organisations' names, each agency works with specific racial groups.

Agencies & Tel No.	Address	Services
Yayasan MENDAKI 6245 5710	51 Kee Sun Avenue Singapore 457056	Yayasan Mendaki provides financial assistance to Malay students to ensure that they are school-ready and equipped.
Chinese Development Assistance Council (CDAC) 6841 4889	65 Tanjong Katong Road Singapore 436957	CDAC provides assistance to students and families by providing bursaries and subsidies.
Singapore Indian Development Association (SINDA) 1800 295 4554	1 Beatty Road Singapore 209943	The SINDA Family Service Centre (SFSC) is a one-stop information and referral centre that provides social work counselling services to individuals and families facing challenges in their personal, marital and family life.
The Eurasian Association of Singapore (EA) 6447 1578	139 Ceylon Road Singapore 429744	The Eurasian Association of Singapore has the FSS (Family Support Service), which provides sufficient assistance, service and hope to the elderly, families at risk and those experiencing economic distress or financial difficulties.

*(Source: CARE Network)
 Information is correct at the time of printing, November 2017.*

USEFUL RESOURCES

SPECIALISED AGENCIES

- **Agencies that provide specialised support for children**

These agencies provide specialised support for children whose parent(s) is/are imprisoned, and educate them about why their parents are in prison and how to cope with it.

Agencies & Tel No.	Address	Services
Youth Infinity AMKFSC 6451 1553	463 Ang Mo Kio Avenue 10 #01-1132 Singapore 560463	Yellow Brick Road is a pilot project with Singapore Corporation of Rehabilitative Enterprises (SCORE) to reach out to children, between the ages of seven and 12, and families with parents who are imprisoned, to support and address the issues that parents, caregivers and children face due to the imprisonment of a loved one.
TJ Haven (Lakeside FSC) 6567 1908	21 Yung Ho Road #03-01 The Agape Singapore 618593	The Voice 'R' Us (TVC) was set up to help the children cope with the grief and loss of being separated from parents. The Tuition Plus programme is conducted weekly by experienced tutors and volunteers to help children of incarcerated parents cope with schoolwork.

Agencies & Tel No.	Address	Services
<p>Life Community Services Society</p> <p>Corporate Office: 63873700</p> <p>Mightykids, Family & Community Activities Centre: 6270 7198</p>	<p>Corporate Office: 5 Stadium Walk Kallang Leisure Park #04-04/07 Singapore 397693</p>	<p>Friends of Children (FOC) takes on an interventive approach of providing care and support for children, aged seven to 13 with parent(s) are currently or previously imprisoned.</p>
<p>Singapore Children's Society 62732010</p>	<p>Corporate Address: 298 Tiong Bahru Road Central Plaza #09-05 Singapore 168730</p>	<p>Project LADDER reaches out to families of inmates who may be struggling in isolation due to the stigma associated with the incarceration of their loved ones. A joint project with the Singapore Prison Service, Project LADDER allows children whose parents are incarcerated to maintain frequent contact through tele-visits from the Singapore Children's Society's premises.</p>

Agencies & Tel No.	Address	Services
<p>The Salvation Army</p> <p>HQ: 6555 0188</p> <p>Kids In Play: 6355 1456</p>	<p>HQ: 20 Bishan Street 22, Singapore 579768</p> <p>KIP: 356 Tanglin Rd, Belvedere Block B, BB 3-4 Singapore 247674</p>	<p>Kids In Play aims to address the impact of imprisonment on the children of imprisoned parent(s) and their caregivers through counselling, family bonding programmes and group work for children, caregivers and imprisoned parents.</p>

*(Source: CARE Network)
Information is correct at the time of printing, November 2017.*

USEFUL RESOURCES

- **Agencies that provide support for ex-offenders**

These agencies provide support for ex-offenders upon their release in terms of employment and self-improvement skills in order to secure jobs and support themselves and their families.

Agencies & Tel No.	Address	Services
<p>Singapore After-Care Association (SACA) 6294 2350/ 6294 2763</p>	<p>81 Dunlop Street Singapore 209408</p>	<p>SACA has an Ex-offenders Assistance Scheme which consists of counselling, job referrals, family bonding activities and ad-hoc workshops. SACA also has an Education Support Programme for ex-offenders to upgrade themselves.</p> <p>A volunteer befriending programme is available for inmates who require prosocial support upon their release.</p>

Agencies & Tel No.	Address	Services
<p>Singapore Anti-Narcotics Association (SANA) 6732 1122</p>	<p>2 Sengkang Square Sengkang Community Hub #05-01 Singapore 545025</p>	<p>SANA's Step-Up Centre provides temporary financial assistance, legal assistance and even housing assistance. SANA also provides family support and mediation assistance to bridge gaps between family members.</p> <p>Skills Training and Employment Assistance programmes are available to help ex-offenders re-enter the workforce.</p>

(Source: CARE Network)

Information is correct at the time of printing, November 2017.

Agencies & Tel No.	Address	Services
<p>Singapore Corporation of Rehabilitative Enterprise (SCORE) Employment Assistance Unit (EAU)</p> <p>6513 1581/ 6513 1536</p>	<p>Lloyd Leas Community Supervision Centre No.1 Cosford Road Blk 172 Lloyd Leas Community Supervision Centre Singapore 499547</p>	<p>Through its Employment Assistance Unit (EAU), SCORE provides employment assistance to offenders under the various work release schemes and to ex-offenders. By helping them secure jobs, they gain financial stability and a restored sense of self-worth and respect.</p>
<p>Industrial & Services Co-operative Society Ltd (ISCOS)</p> <p>6743 7885</p>	<p>237 Alexandra Road Singapore 159929</p>	<p>ISCOS provides subsidies for skill-upgrading programmes under the Skills Assistance Subsidy Scheme (SASS). Under ISCOS' job placement programme, employers from various sectors are encouraged to hire at least one ISCOS member, with the hope that more companies will open doors to members who have turned over a new leaf and can be equally productive and committed workers.</p>

Agencies & Tel No.	Address	Services
Yellow Ribbon Fund (YRF) 6513 1658	407, Upper Changi Rd North, 20km (Within Prison HQ Complex, Blk B) Singapore 507658.	The Yellow Ribbon Fund (YRF) funds programmes aiming towards reconnecting families, residential support, education and skill upgrading, financial assistance and rehabilitation programmes.

*(Source: CARE Network)
 Information is correct at the time of printing, November 2017.*

USEFUL RESOURCES

- **Agencies that provide support for families**
These agencies provide support to families of ex-offenders.

Agencies & Tel No.	Address	Services
TJ Haven (Lakeside FSC) 6265 6522	21 Yung Ho Road #03-01 The Agape Singapore 618593	TJ Haven conducts family sessions together with the inmate. They also conduct events and programmes which bonds families and inmates.
Singapore Anti-Narcotics Association (SANA) 6732 1122	2 Sengkang Square Sengkang Community Hub #05-01 Singapore 545025	SANA's Step-Up Centre also provides family support and mediation assistance to bridge gaps between family members. Family members may also seek solace through support groups organised by SANA.
Industrial & Services Co- operative Society Ltd (ISCOS) 6743 7885	237 Alexandra Road, Singapore 159929	ISCOS offers support groups for families of offenders in a casual setting.

Agencies & Tel No.	Address	Services
WE CARE Community Services 6547 5459 (Only for addiction issues such as drugs, alcohol, gambling, etc.)	Kembangan-Chai Chee Community Hub 11 Jalan Ubi, Block 5, #01-41 Singapore 409074	WE CARE Community Services provides counselling for family members of individuals who are facing or recovering from addiction issues.
Yellow Ribbon Fund (YRF) 6513 1658	407, Upper Changi Rd North, 20km (Within Prison HQ Complex, Blk B) Singapore 507658.	The Yellow Ribbon Fund (YRF) funds programmes aimed towards reconnecting families.

(Source: CARE Network)

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USEFUL RESOURCES

- **Religious Organisations**

These agencies provide religious support for ex-offenders. Religious guidance provides the necessary emotional support, giving them the mental strength to maintain a positive outlook in life.

Agencies & Tel No.	Address	Services
Christian Counselling Services 6222 1305 (Only for drug and substance abuse)	605B Macpherson Road, #08-16 Citimac Industrial Complex Block B, Singapore 368241	Christian Counselling Services provides counselling, based on Christian principles, to inmates.
Darul Ghufuran Mosque 6786 5545	503 Tampines Avenue 5 Singapore 529651	Darul Ghufuran provides support to Muslim offenders by providing them with religious classes and programmes.
Persatuan Ulama dan Guru-Guru Agama Islam (PERGAS) 6346 9350	Wisma Indah 448 Changi Road #03-01 Singapore 419975	PERGAS provides educational and spiritual classes to Muslim offenders.

Agencies & Tel No.	Address	Services
<p>Prison Fellowship Singapore 6475 6136</p>	<p>326B King George's Avenue King George's Building Singapore 208567</p>	<p>Prison Fellowship Singapore provides family support, bursaries for children, financial assistance, etc. They emphasise the importance of family work. They also have support groups for male and female ex-offenders.</p>
<p>Roman Catholic Prison Ministry 6100 7276</p>	<p>2 Highland Road, #03-04 Catholic Archdiocesan Education Centre, Singapore 549102</p>	<p>The Roman Catholic Prison Ministry educates inmates on the Catholic faith.</p>
<p>Singapore Buddhist Federation (SBF) 6744 4635</p>	<p>59 Lor 24A Geylang, Singapore 398583</p>	<p>SBF provides counselling for inmates and ex-offenders. They also assist those who are thinking of converting to Buddhism. They have a counselling hotline for families of offenders.</p>
<p>Sikh Welfare Council 6299 9234</p>	<p>2 Towner Road #06-02 Singapore 327804</p>	<p>Sikh Welfare Council provides services such as counselling and rehabilitation to Sikh drug addicts and inmates to assist them with integrating back into society.</p>

Agencies & Tel No.	Address	Services
Sri Muneeswaran Temple 6473 5037	3 Commonwealth Drive Singapore 149594	Sri Muneeswaran Temple provides support for Hindu families of ex-offender.
The Hindu Centre 6291 8540	132 Owen Road Singapore 218935	The Hindu Centre focuses on spiritual progress of Hindus in Singapore through programmes, activities, education (Jnana), devotion (Bhakti) and service (Seva), strengthening their Hindu faith.

(Source: CARE Network)

Information is correct at the time of printing, November 2017.

CONCLUSION

This book was written to inspire, encourage, and empower families with a loved one in prison.

In this book, we have included what you can expect upon the imprisonment of your loved one, possible coping methods, how you can help your children, and what you can do to help your loved one when they are released.

The journey of reintegration begins the moment your loved one is sentenced, and family support is important on this journey. We hope that this book will be of great help to you and your family during this difficult time, and that it helps you to understand how you can assist your loved one upon his return home.

We know that this is tough for you, but you are not alone.

“Families are the compass that guides us. They are the inspiration to reach great heights, and our comfort when we occasionally falter.”

- Brad Henry

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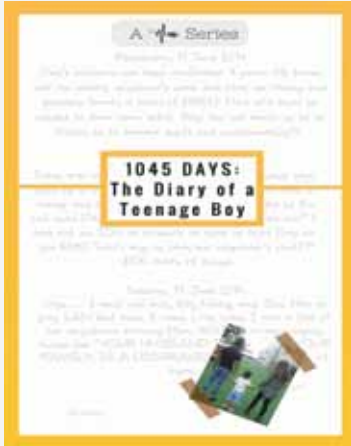
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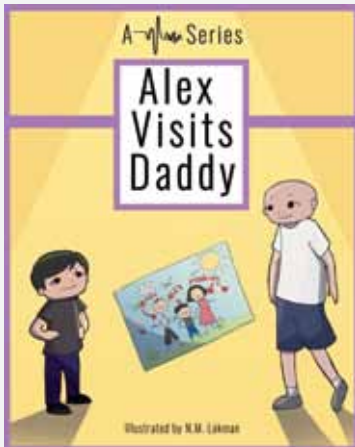
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The *RISE* series also includes:



"1045 DAYS: The Diary of a Teenage Boy", suitable for youths aged 13 to 16.



For more information on how to help a child, refer to "Alex Visits Daddy".