

Families Affected By Imprisonment (FABI) Project

INTRODUCTION

Circle’s FABI Project aims to *‘minimise the impact of parental imprisonment on children and families’*. We are funded to work in the following areas: North Lanarkshire, South Lanarkshire, West Lothian, Fife & Forth Valley, Tayside and Clackmannanshire & Stirling.



To achieve the project’s aims, our Family Outreach Workers adopt a strengths-based and solution-focussed approach in all of the work that they undertake with the children and families they support. This approach allows family members to build on their existing strengths, rather than deficits, and in partnership with the whole family they can be empowered to identify strategies to promote positive change.

Some examples of the wide variety of interventions that we carry out on a day-to-day basis are:

- Understanding the impact of parental imprisonment
- Working with trauma, loss and abuse
- Strengthening family relationships
- Parenting and direct 1:1 work with children
- Advocacy and participation
- Therapeutic counselling

BENEFICIARIES

The children and families who are supported by this project will be dealing with a variety of challenging circumstances such as experiences of trauma, financial adversity and homelessness. The project aimed to support 100 – 120 families in 2019/20 and over the year supported:

	Addiewell	Shine Public Social Partnership (PSP)	Women’s Outreach Team (WOT)	Women’s Outreach Service (WOS)	Caledonian System	TOTAL
Families	10	59	31	30	9	139
Parents/carers	18	64	31	30	7	150
Kinship carers		1				1
Children	20	89	57	40	15	221
TOTAL no of family members	38	154	88	70	22	372

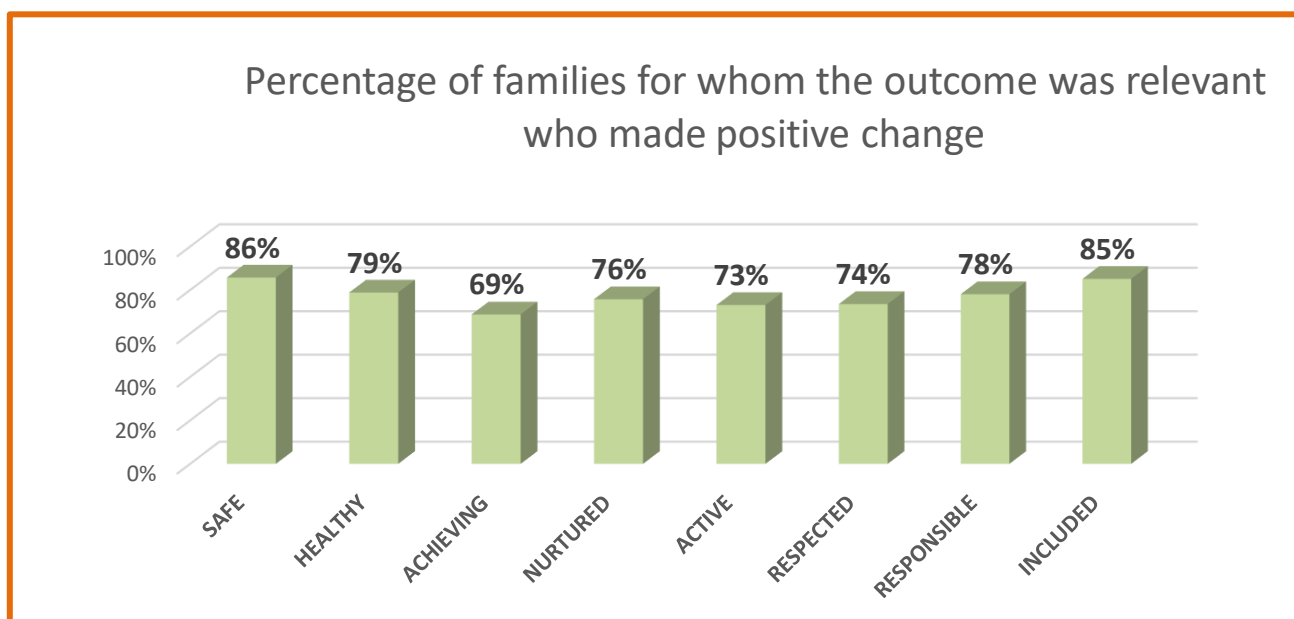
Our Hub Based Work came to an end in June 2019 and at the end of service a total of 17 women had been supported at locality hubs in South Lanarkshire. This is over and above the numbers quoted in the table on Page 1. The FABI Project undertook short term work in supporting families from South Lanarkshire. There was a total of four families supported from February 2019. This is over and above the numbers quoted in the table on Page 1.

OUTCOMES

Circle works alongside family members to identify their specific support needs and concerns, enabling them to work towards improving their health, wellbeing and resilience.

We use the *Getting it right for every child* (GIRFEC) approach which supports children and young people to grow up feeling loved, safe and respected and to realise their full potential. At home, in school or the wider community, every child and young person should be Safe, Healthy, Achieving, Nurtured, Active, Respected, Responsible and Included. These SHANARRI indicators are what we use to measure the progress made by the families we support.

Across the Addiewell, Shine, WOT, WOS and Caledonian System services, there were 76 families for whom service ended in the year, of which 51 have reported outcomes where positive change was made. This is further detailed below:



The positive outcomes experienced by families supported by this project include:

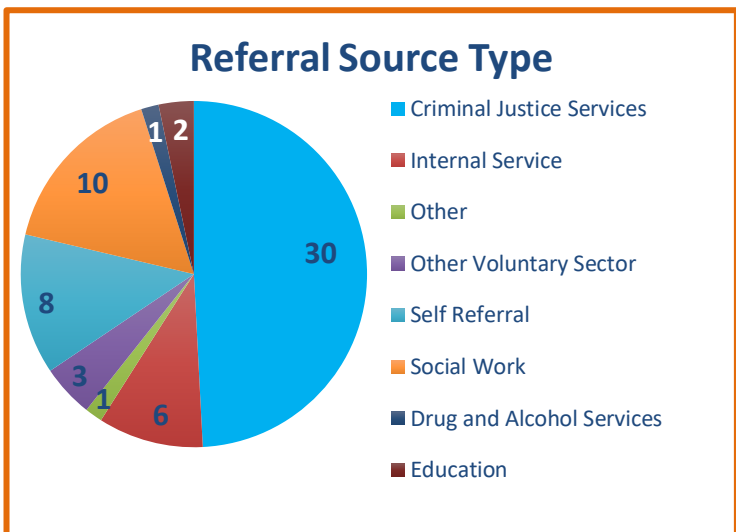
- Improved understanding of the impact of their behaviours, e.g. offending
- Reduction in offending behaviour
- Increased access to assertive addiction and therapeutic support services
- Improvement in family relationships
- Improved emotional wellbeing
- Improvement in families' financial circumstances

"I felt so supported when you came to court with me so thank you from the bottom of my heart. You have played a massive role in me getting my boys back with all the paperwork you provided (solicitor) with, back up letters etc and I will be forever grateful to you." (Parent)

The Women’s Development Worker based across two of South Lanarkshire’s Hubs ended service delivery in June 2019. The service has worked with 17 women since July 2018 offering weekly group work focusing on improving women’s pathways. Outcomes have been recorded with positive change being experienced by the women. This has included 100% of women identifying progress made in regards to feeling ‘Safe’, ‘Respected’ and ‘Included.’

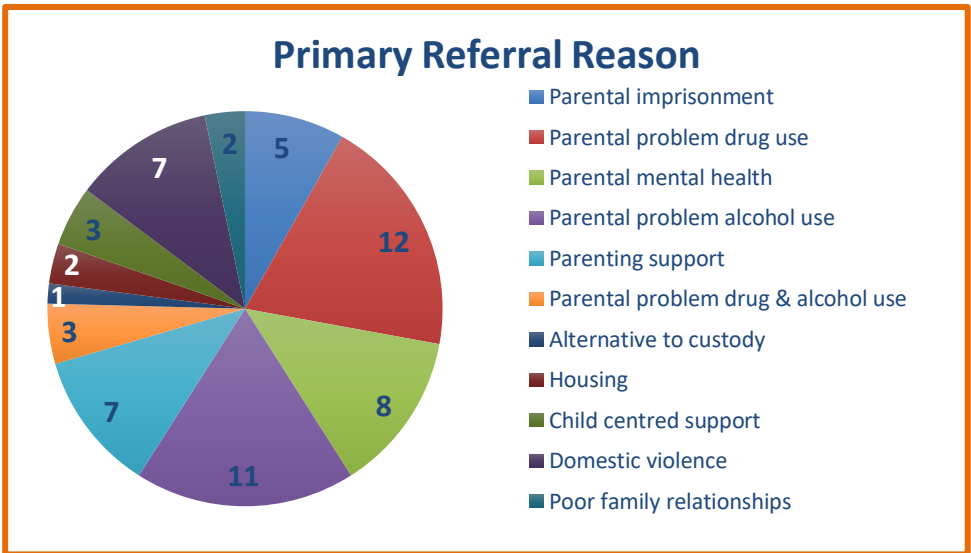
REFERRAL TYPE AND REFERRAL REASON

61 families were referred into FABI’s Addiewell, Shine, WOT, WOS and Caledonian System services in 2019/20 from a variety of sources and for a number of different reasons as outlined in the charts below:



“To be honest, I don’t think I understood the meaning of ‘support’ until I had the support of the Children’s Service. From the help with my children to food support and having someone genuine to talk to as an adult, I don’t know how I would have got through these hard months.” (Parent)

“I would have struggled on my day of release, definitely. I wouldn’t have had anywhere to live. I wouldn’t have had any money.” (Parent)



Over the same five services, 76 cases were closed this year with length of involvement ranging from one to 188 weeks. The average length of involvement was 49 weeks.

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Circle's work is rarely done in isolation. The children and families we work with often experience a wide variety of challenges that require a number of organisations and individuals to work together to help them find their own specific solutions.

“Professional relationships with parents and children are nurtured and this allows for (worker) in particular to do some very challenging work with parents who are extremely chaotic with both confidence and professional integrity. My experience of working with the Circle team has been hugely positive, they are very strong professionals, with a wide range of skills which are instrumental in supporting vulnerable families and empowering service users.” (Social Worker)



Circle's FABI Project operated 7 services providing support to families across ten local authorities in Scotland in 2019/20. Partnerships exist with HMP Addiewell, ASC, SHINE Women's Mentoring Service, South Lanarkshire Council and Women's Aid in regards to the direct provision of services. Relationships with other agencies is vital in ensuring families are able to access timely support that reflects their individual circumstances. Agencies/services that the FABI Project has worked closely with in 2019/2020 are from a very wide range of statutory and third sector services including Recovery Café and Hubs, Women's Justice Services, Addictions Services, Community Justice Social Work, Throughcare Support Officers, Children & Families Social Work, Venture Trust, Housing, Mental Health Services, NHS, Financial Support Services, Solicitors, Community, Counselling Services, Advocacy Services and clothing and food banks.

Furthermore, Circle actively shares experience and knowledge with charity partners, academics and politicians. Circle's FABI Project has also participated and contributed at key events over the last year. These have been important in highlighting the work of FABI services and evidencing the impact and difference FABI support makes. Some examples of this are:

- Team presentation at Scottish Women's Convention Conference with theme for the day being 'Women and Justice'
- Contribution to consultation for the Framework for Smart Justice
- Submission of Evidence to a Scottish Parliament Committee on Presumption Against Short Sentences
- Clackmannanshire's Third Sector Interface Market Place: stall at Information Evening for Children's Panel members
- Two members of the team facilitated a day's learning to a cohort of social work students at Napier University
- Member of the team co-facilitated Motivational Interviewing training alongside CADS nurses

The FABI Project are represented at the Cross-Party Group for Children and Families Affected by Imprisonment. In addition, the FABI Project is represented at a range of forums across areas where services are provided including the following:

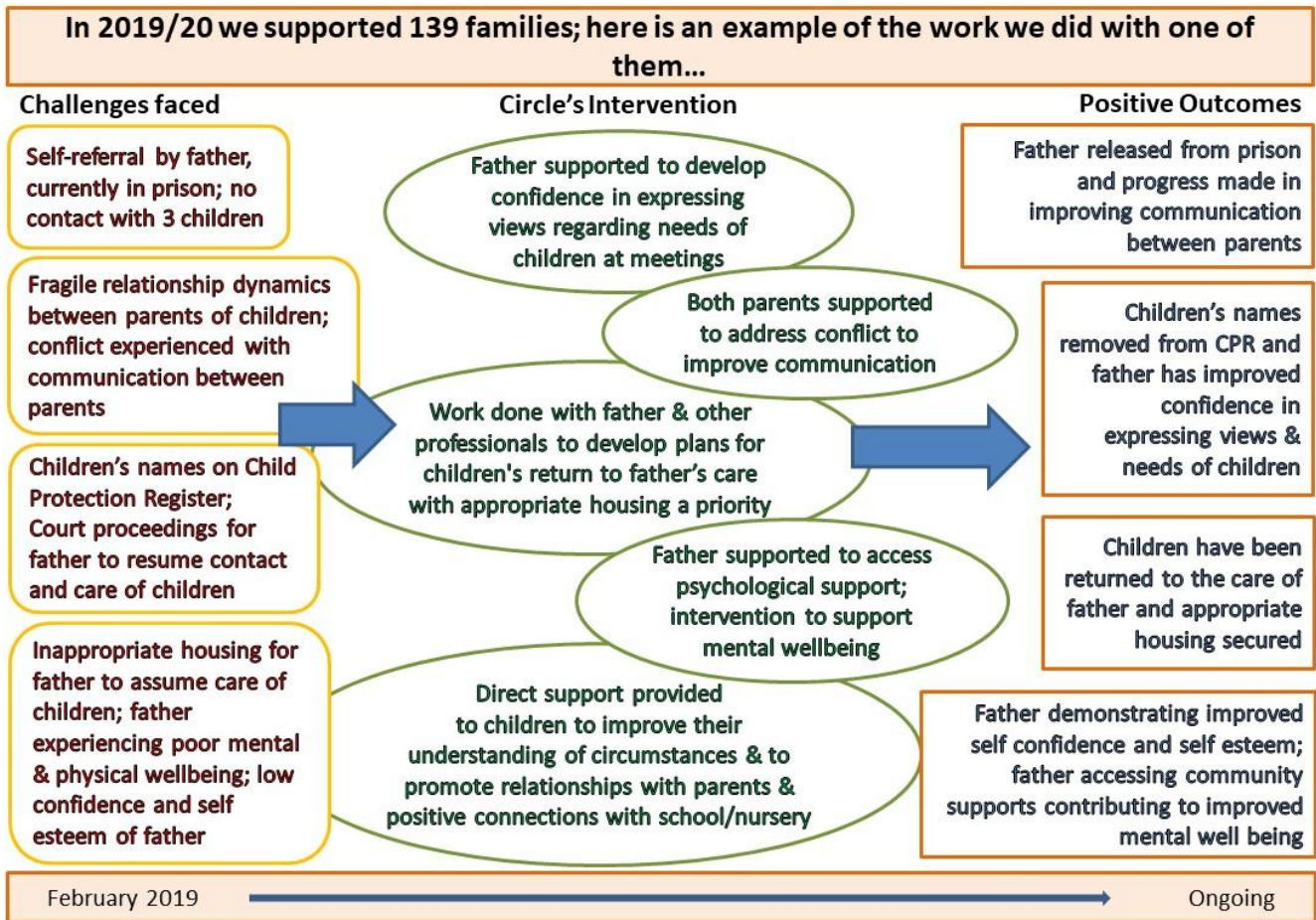
- Children and Families Forum (Stirling)
- Third Sector Community Justice Network (West Lothian)
- Community Justice Network (North Lanarkshire)
- Community Justice Network (South Lanarkshire)

The FABI team took part in a range of training last year including three members of the team completing Safe and Together Training and two members of the team participating in Caledonian System Training.

FUNDING

In 2019/20 the project received funding from Henry Smith Charity, National Lottery Community Fund (Investing in Communities), Clackmannanshire & Stirling ADP, South Lanarkshire Council and Scottish Government (SHINE and Caledonian System), all of which contributed to seven Family Outreach Workers, one Children’s Caledonian Worker, two Addictions Counsellors, one Senior Family Outreach Worker and one Project Manager.

CASE STUDY



PROJECT DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR YEAR AHEAD

The FABI Project aims to continue to consolidate and enhance upon existing service delivery in supporting children, young people and their families. The project aims to support between 115 – 140 families over the course of the next year.

There is no doubt the experiences of COVID-19 will significantly impact on the operation of service delivery in the coming year and the existing partnerships that have been established. There will be an emphasis on flexibility in approach and clarity of communication to ensure the families we support continue to access timely and appropriate support over the forthcoming year.

We will continue to strengthen our relationship with SODEXO and partner agencies in forward planning for the delivery of service in supporting fathers and their families from HMP **Addiewell**. This has been embedded with successful funding from Robertson Trust until June 2022 and match funding from KPE4 and Sodexo.

FABI will remain as a partner agency in providing support to women and their families as part of the **Shine Women’s Mentoring Service**. It is positive that the Scottish Government have provided an additional year

of funding to ensure the continuation of the service. There will be a focus on recovery plans in supporting women pre- and post-release from prison and in the community ensuring timely connections and interventions are provided to women and their families who, not only impacted by parental imprisonment have been significantly been affected by COVID-19.

The **WOT** service secured funding from Henry Smith in October 2019 and this will run until end of September 2022. It is our aim to build upon the partnership with ASC in the provision of whole family support and therapeutic counselling in addressing the needs of women and their families. Building on the evidence from the WOT evaluation highlighted at Circle's Annual Lecture last year there will be a concerted effort and focus in identifying and exploring potential funding to build capacity within the team addressing the impact of domestic abuse and mental health.

The **WOS** service has been operating in Clackmannanshire & Stirling from October 2018 and funding is due to end in August 2020. Unfortunately, there has been no additional funding sources secured to ensure sustainability of this service. The achievements and positive evidence from the WOS service will contribute towards the learning of the FABI Project and influence and inform future applications.

The **Caledonian System** service became fully operational in March 2019. It has been positive that the South Lanarkshire Caledonian Partnership was successful in funding being continued beyond March 2020 until 2021. The year ahead will see the Children's Worker further strengthen the relationships with the Caledonian Delivery Team and engage in direct support of children in addressing the impact of domestic abuse. As partners with South Lanarkshire Council and Women's Aid, we will be reviewing and evaluating the impact of this integrated service with the aim of funding continuing beyond March 2021.

There are opportunities that are already being explored with plans being implemented to ensure these are progressed in the forthcoming year:

- Successful funding from the Tampon Tax Fund will enable the project to facilitate a coordinated group work programme for women and girls with a focus on improving health and wellbeing;
- Early Years development work with South Lanarkshire Council and Education to explore opportunities to develop a service supporting primary school children with increased risk of being excluded and who experience additional needs e.g. autistic spectrum.

"Big differences happened, as a mother I don't feel afraid or judged, to ask for help, or let my worker know if myself or my children have had a hard week. When my children hear her name they get excited, she makes them feel happy and confident, and I feel confident that I am not the only family that would feel confident about the service."

(Parent)



Author: Georgina Lyttle (Project Manager)

Date: July 2020