

Institution: De Montfort University		
Unit of Assessment: 20		
Title of case study: Changing Policy and Practice in Criminal and Social Justice Settings to Improve Outcomes for Mothers in Prison and Their Children		
Period when the underpinning research was undertaken: 2014–2020		
Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:		
Name(s):	Role(s) (e.g. job title):	Period(s) employed by submitting HEI:
Lucy Baldwin	Senior Lecturer in Community and Criminal Justice	1 December 2004–present
Period when the claimed impact occurred: November 2015–December 2020		
Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014? N		
1. Summary of the impact		
<p>Baldwin's research has made a significant contribution to the reshaping of UK criminal justice policy and practice to better support mothers in and after prison. The novel prison-based programme, Mothers Inside Out (MIO), has strengthened relationships between mothers in prison and their children, prepared women for release, and directly contributed to reductions in self-harm. Baldwin's research has directly informed developments in policy, practice and provisions across multiple agencies, including prisons and the probation service. Via her 'Mothering Justice' training and workshops across multiple disciplines, Baldwin's research has changed attitudes and practice by increasing awareness of the needs of criminalised mothers and the importance of tailored support. The research influenced policy and outcomes of the Government's Female Offender Strategy; a cross-party inquiry into the sentencing of women; a high-profile review into strengthening female offenders' family relationships to prevent reoffending; and a joint House of Commons/Lords inquiry into the rights of children whose mothers are in prison.</p>		
2. Underpinning research		
<p>The UK has one of the highest rates of women's imprisonment in Western Europe (Bromley Briefings; Prison Reform Trust 2019). It is thought that 66% of women in prison have children under the age of 18 and the number of children in England and Wales affected by maternal imprisonment each year is conservatively estimated at 17,240.</p>		
(1) IDENTIFYING POLICY AND PRACTICE LIMITATIONS SUPPORTING MOTHERS IN THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM		
<p>Through engagement with mothers in prison and post-release, probation and prison services, and the third sector, research led by Baldwin has provided unique insights into the long-term social impact of incarceration on mothers and their children. In 2015 Baldwin published <i>Mothering Justice: Working with Mothers in Criminal and Social Justice Settings</i>, the first book in the UK to focus on mothers in the criminal justice system [R1]. Baldwin edited it and authored/co-authored 7 of the 11 chapters; other contributors were from DMU, Universities of Hertfordshire and Leicester, and National University of Ireland. The empirical foundations of this work were drawn from ethnographic studies of the experiences of mothers in prison and after release. The findings revealed evidence of long-term, post-release trauma; the need for dedicated support for mothers to strengthen rehabilitation and prevent reoffending; and an underappreciation among policymakers of the sustained damaging impact of maternal imprisonment on mothers, children and wider family.</p>		
(2) INFORMING POLICY		
<p>Funded by the Oakdale Trust, Baldwin, with Rona Epstein at Coventry University, explored the impact of custodial sentences of less than 12 months on mothers and their children [R2]. Short prison sentences have attracted widespread criticism, yet 71% of all women in prison are</p>		

serving 12 months or less. The study found that mothers were disproportionately punished because of the devastating and profound impact on them and their children. The way in which older children were affected was striking; some found themselves becoming carers for younger siblings, interrupting or giving up on their 'childhood' or education, and assuming 'adult' responsibilities prematurely. Taken as a whole, this body of research identified these evidence-based recommendations through which Baldwin engaged influential stakeholders across the criminal justice sector locally and nationally:

- Steps should be taken at every stage of the criminal justice system (i.e. arrest, sentencing, custody and post-release supervision) to better support mothers and children affected.
- Formal data collection should be undertaken in relation to child/mother circumstances before, during and after prison.
- Sentencing guidelines for mothers with dependent children need to be revised.
- There should be provision for social workers to respond to mothers in prison.
- Prison and community-based practitioners working with mothers who are in, or are vulnerable to entering, the criminal justice system would benefit from specific training.

(3) INFORMING PRACTICE

Baldwin conducted research with 43 mothers via in-depth interviews and letters from mothers in prison. The matricentric-feminist study focused on how imprisonment challenges a woman's mothering identity and role, both during incarceration and long afterwards. The findings highlighted the need for compassionate and thoughtful management of mothers in prison in order to secure the best possible outcomes [R5]. The study provided new and important insight into the long-term impact of imprisonment on maternal identity and maternal role, revealing how mothers and grandmothers struggled to reintegrate with children and families [R4], often without recognition or support, leaving mothers feeling 'forever tainted' [R3], and vulnerable to reoffending. The study revealed missed opportunities through which motherhood could be harnessed as a protective factor in relation to desistance and motivation for rehabilitation. Highlighting the need to proactively support mothers under supervision, before, during and after prison, thereby improving outcomes for mothers, children and society.

3. References to the research

The research underpinning this impact case study is published in high-impact journals; R1 was published by the leading academic education publisher Waterside Press. This book was recognised as the first whole book to focus on motherhood in criminal and social justice settings in the UK.

[R1] Baldwin, L. (2015) *Mothering Justice: Working with Mothers in Criminal and Social Justice Settings*, Sheffield-on-Lodden: Waterside Press; ISBN 9781909976238

Book review comments included: 'Lucy Baldwin et al have delivered a stunning panoramic view of Motherhood. This book brings a sense of power so practitioners and students can begin to challenge the effects of punishment has on women and Motherhood.' *Criminal Law & Justice Weekly*; and 'A focus on vulnerable mothers and the intricate connections with their children, whether together or apart, is long overdue.' *Probation Journal*.

[R2] Baldwin, L. and Epstein, R. (2017) *Short But Not Sweet: A Study Exploring the Impact of Short Custodial Sentences on Mothers and Their Children*, Leicester: De Montfort University; ISBN 9781857214314;
<https://www.nicco.org.uk/userfiles/downloads/5bc45012612b4-short-but-not-sweet.pdf>

[R3] Baldwin, L. (2017) 'Tainted love: the impact of prison on maternal identity', *Prison Service Journal*, 233: 28–33; <https://www.crimeandjustice.org.uk/publications/psj/prison-service-journal-233>

- [R4] Baldwin, L. (2019) Excluded from good motherhood and the impact of prison: Reflections of mothers after prison' pp 129–143., in C. Byvelds and H. Jackson (eds) *Motherhood and Social Exclusion*, Bradford, ON: Demeter Press, pp 129–143; ISBN 9781772581980
- [R5] Baldwin, L. (2018) 'Motherhood disrupted: reflections of post-prison mothers', *Maternal Geographies*, 26: 49–56; <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.emospa.2017.02.002>

4. Details of the impact

Change has occurred within two key areas of mothers and children within the criminal justice system. These changes are focused on policy and practice across the female provision in the criminal justice system in England and Wales.

(1) POLICY CHANGES

The Ministry of Justice published its Female Offender Strategy in 2018 to improve outcomes for women in prison. Baldwin and Epstein's *Short But Not Sweet* report [R2] was submitted as evidence to the Ministerial Advisory Board on Female Offenders by the CEO of the national charity, Women in Prison [C1]. She stated, the 'engaging and powerful' research about the harm of short prison sentences 'made an important contribution to the body of evidence on which we draw on in our policy advice role to make recommendations as detailed in the Female Offender Strategy' [C1]. Moreover, a dedicated review into sentencing for women was advised. Baldwin was invited to submit evidence [C2] to an inquiry of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Women in the Penal System, whose subsequent recommendations were in line with Baldwin's findings: custodial sentences of less than 12 months should be abolished for women; probation funding should be ring-fenced for the provision of specialist services for women; lack of knowledge among magistrates of the impact of prison on women should be addressed.

Baldwin was invited to submit written evidence and to present oral evidence to the Farmer Review Expert Group [C3, C4]. Lord Farmer confirmed that Baldwin's 'research made a significant contribution' to his findings stating it was 'influential in developing the final recommendations of the Farmer Review for women' [C4]. The review report published in 2019 included four recommendations directly informed by Baldwin's evidence, and brought about significant developments within criminal justice for nurturing mother and children relationships during imprisonment.

- (a) The Government directed new investment to family-focused interventions, and prison services were required to demonstrate a clear commitment to prisoners and their families.
- (b) Prison services were instructed to gather information about mothers' children and their circumstances and care needs at point of court and reception into custody.
- (c) The charity Prison Advice and Care Trust (PACT) was tasked with implementing a prison-based social worker programme; Baldwin was a member of the advisory committee led by Farmer and tasked with implementing this recommendation.
- (d) Introduction of social workers in the prison setting.

Baldwin was invited to submit written and oral evidence to the Joint Committee on Human Rights (JCHR), 'The right to family life: children whose mothers are in prison' [C5]. Baldwin's evidence informed JCHR recommendations and featured significantly in the Committee's final report published by the House of Commons and House of Lords in October 2019 [C5].

(2) INFORMING PRACTICE

The aforementioned reports led to policy changes and new government investment for family-focused prison and community-based engagement programmes to strengthen family ties. Baldwin designed the prison-based MIO programme, the first of its kind. Informed by Baldwin's research, the MIO programme is a safe space to provide emotional support and guidance to mothers to maintain positive mother/child relationships, to assist with coping and to prepare for successful reintegration. The MIO programme was commissioned and is now licensed by PACT and DMU [C6] and is in the process of being rolled out nationally across the female prison estate

in England and Wales This programme has been available to 66% of the female estate and, similar to all prison programmes, is currently interrupted due to Covid-19 restrictions.

Evaluation statements from the MIO programme [C7] showed evidence of reduced self-harm, better coping skills, feeling more prepared for release, stronger relationships with children and increased engagement with the rehabilitation process. Representative feedback from mothers included: 'I didn't self-harm once during this course and that's because I knew I could talk to her about being a mum, being a shit mum – but also it made me want to try to be a better mum and now I believe I can be.' And 'I now feel I can be a better mum; I want to be – this course has made me want to change. I thought it was too late for me as a mother, but this course has shown me that it's not.' Prison staff said those attending the programme seemed 'calmer' and more able to cope with their situation. The MIO programme is now accredited by Skills for Justice, the Sector Skills Council for the UK's Justice and Community sectors, licensed by Government. This means that mothers completing the course receive a nationally recognised certificate, assisting them in seeking employment. Following the success of MIO, Baldwin was asked to develop a 'Mothers Outside' programme, also adopted and licensed by PACT, to assist the resettlement of mothers on licence and on community orders and/or licence.

Baldwin's research has underpinned the development of 'Mothering Justice' training and workshops for staff and student practitioners working with mothers across multiple disciplines: prison, probation, social work, youth justice and midwifery. Baldwin designed the first specialist guidance and toolkit for probation officers supervising mothers on community orders or post-release. In February 2020, the National Probation Service (NPS) published the 'Supervising Mothers' guidance on its intranet, accessible to all 6,500 probation officers in the UK. This was recognition, in line with Baldwin's research, that 'mother status' is a key factor in supervision and engagement, and it supported the NPS to meet its legal responsibility to follow a gendered approach in their supervision of offenders [C8].

Baldwin created the Mothering Justice programme to train staff at multiple criminal and social justice agencies and at multiple levels (i.e. student practitioner – management), including the prison provider Sodexo (which reaches 25% of the female estate). Since 2016 the awareness training has reached an estimated 170 employees in 5 locations across communities in the UK, from Plymouth to Warwick to Perth and Kinross and Ireland. Participants described how attending the course not only facilitated reflective practice but changed their day-to-day practice [C9]. The Services for Children, Young People & Families team at Perth and Kinross Council testified that: 'Discussions with colleagues after the workshops have continued and there is an acknowledgement of the need to consider how our service can better meet the needs of children and young people affected by parental imprisonment' [C9]. Representative feedback from the programme included: 'I have been a prison officer for 16 years, but this course has changed the way I work with mums (in prison) forever' (prison officer). The training, the first of its kind, was included in prison officer training for the first time via the 'Unlocked Graduates' scheme for the 2020/2021 intake, to be repeated annually [C10]. A train-the-trainer programme for the Mothering Justice awareness training has been developed to roll out across multiple providers but is interrupted in its implementation because of Covid-19.

5. Sources to corroborate the impact

- [C1] Corroborating statement from CEO of charity Women in Prison.
- [C2] All-Party Parliamentary Group on Women in the Penal System's inquiry into the sentencing of women – report including acknowledgement of, and link to, Baldwin's written evidence; <https://howardleague.org/our-work/women-in-the-penal-system/all-party-parliamentary-group-appg-on-women-in-the-penal-system/inquiry-into-the-sentencing-of-women/>
- [C3] The Farmer Review for Women: *The Importance of Strengthening Female Offenders' Family and Other Relationships to Prevent Reoffending and Reduce Intergenerational Crime* – Baldwin's evidence-based contribution cited on pp 111 and 113; https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/809467/farmer-review-women.PDF

- [C4] Corroborating letter from Lord Farmer confirming Baldwin's contribution to the Farmer Review, the Female Offender Strategy and policy recommendations.
- [C5] House of Commons and House of Lords Joint Committee on Human Rights Report: *The Right to Family Life: Children Whose Mothers Are in Prison*. Baldwin's oral evidence was cited in footnotes 43, 83, 89 and 105; her interviews from *Short But Not Sweet* were cited in footnotes 109, 111 and 119;
<https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/jt201719/jtselect/jtrights/1610/1610.pdf>
Link to Baldwin's submitted evidence:
<http://data.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/committeeevidence.svc/evidencedocument/human-rights-committee/the-right-to-family-life-children-whose-mothers-are-in-prison/written/91676.html>
- [C6] Prison Advice and Care Trust licence.
- [C7] Evaluation statements on the efficacy of the Mothers Inside Out programme, including testimonials from mothers who participated in the programme (Mothers A and B).
Meeting minutes from 19 December 2019 that confirm accreditation and licensing of the MIO programme.
- [C8] *Supervising Mothers* – Baldwin's 'lite bite' nationally available intranet guidance co-published by HM Prison & Probation Service and National Probation Service.
- [C9] Evidence of impact in terms of teaching, learning and multi-agency practice:
Letter from Lead Information Officer (Services for Children, Young People and Families): summary of comments relating to the inclusion of *Mothering Justice* (MJ) in practitioner awareness training day.
Letter from independent social worker
Letter from Midwife practitioner/lecturer
Evaluation comments of practitioners on the MJ training programme.
- [C10] Unlocked Graduates advertisement.