

PEER REVIEW HISTORY

BMJ Paediatrics Open publishes all reviews undertaken for accepted manuscripts. Reviewers are asked to complete a checklist review form and are provided with free text boxes to elaborate on their assessment. These free text comments are reproduced below.

ARTICLE DETAILS

TITLE (PROVISIONAL)	The health impact on children affected by parental imprisonment
AUTHORS	Beresford, Sarah; Loucks, Nancy; Raikes, Ben

VERSION 1 – REVIEW

REVIEWER	Reviewer name: Simon Lenton Institution and Country: BACAPH Co-Chair UK Competing interests: None
REVIEW RETURNED	12-Dec-2019

GENERAL COMMENTS	<p>This is a clear and concise paper which highlights the effect of parental imprisonment on the health of children. My only concern is the final paragraph which refers to paediatricians - in my experience paediatricians rarely see children of imprisoned parents and it would be more appropriate to propose that members of the "primary health team" should be more aware of the impact of imprisonment on children.</p> <p>It might also be appropriate to mention that a high proportion of young men under the age of 18 who are locked up are also parents themselves. Many of these young people will be known to community, CAMHs and Local Authority teams and both the needs of the individual and their children should be considered in any therapeutic assessment.</p> <p>It might also be worth reiterating that the UK imprisons more people than most nations in Europe and that women (who are also mothers) are often locked up for non violent crimes often for relatively short sentences (compared to men) without consideration of the impact on their children.</p>
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REVIEWER	Reviewer name: Luis Rajmil Institution and Country: Retired Spain. Competing interests: None declared
REVIEW RETURNED	17-Dec-2019

GENERAL COMMENTS	<p>The article "The health impact on children affected by parental imprisonment" addresses a topic of great interest and importance for children's health. Authors analyse social and health impact in these children, as well as the role of healthcare services to prevent and promote their health. It is impressive to know that more than 300000 children are affected annually by parental imprisonment in England and Wales. And also that many children of prisoners do not have enough support and, as a consequence, they are more likely to experience mental health problems comparing with children from the general population.</p> <p>Authors could consider some minor changes to try to improve the manuscript:</p>
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	<p>1- Would it be possible to estimate the percentage of minors who do not access support services? It is assumed that they have no barriers to healthcare services.</p> <p>2-Think and propose if possible in the case of families with minors, as they do in other contexts that use other types of penalties such as NH and Nordic countries that implies less prison, if authors consider it appropriate. This, in part, could prevent total family breakdown.</p> <p>The format and style should be adapted to the BMJ Paediatrics Open guidelines:</p> <p>3- Reduce the number of words (recommended 1200) and references (5). For example, the first paragraph on the section "Seeing the potential in every child" overlap to some extent to previous sections, overall with the introduction and impact on health. This part would be avoided or reduced and adapted in those previous sections.</p> <p>4- In addition to reducing the number, all references should be reviewed and adapted to the format of the Journal</p> <p>5- Some specific keyword such as Parental incarceration and/or a similar keyword would be helpful to be included</p>
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VERSION 1 – AUTHOR RESPONSE

Reviewer: 1

We are grateful to the reviewer for acknowledging the importance of this manuscript. We have responded to the points raised as follows:

1. It would be more appropriate to propose that members of the "primary health team" should be more aware of the impact of imprisonment on children. We have amended this.

2. It might also be appropriate to mention that a high proportion of young men under the age of 18 who are locked up are also parents themselves. Many of these young people will be known to community, CAMHs and Local Authority teams and both the needs of the individual and their children should be considered in any therapeutic assessment. We could include this statement:

A number of young people in prison may also be parents themselves; again, this information is not systematically recorded, though many will be known to community, CAMHs and Local Authority teams. The needs of the young person in prison, and their children, should be considered in any therapeutic assessment.

On consideration, we have left this out, as we felt it was a digression from the main focus of the article.

3. It might also be worth reiterating that the UK imprisons more people than most nations in Europe and that women (who are also mothers) are often locked up for non-violent crimes often for relatively short sentences (compared to men) without consideration of the impact on their children. We have included this.

Reviewer: 2

We are grateful to the reviewer for acknowledging that this article addresses a topic of great interest and importance for children's health. We have responded to the points raised as follows:

1. Would it be possible to estimate the percentage of minors who do not access support services? It is assumed that they have no barriers to healthcare services. Unfortunately, this not possible, as there is no formal data capture of this information. We have reflected this in the article.
2. Think and propose, if possible, in the case of families with minors, as they do in other contexts that use other types of penalties such as NH and Nordic countries that implies less prison, if authors consider it appropriate. This, in part, could prevent total family breakdown. We have included this.
3. Reduce the number of words (recommended 1200) and references (5). Permission from received from the editor-in-chief to exceed the word limit and reference.
4. Some specific keyword such as Parental incarceration and/or a similar keyword would be helpful to be included. We have included 'parental imprisonment' as a key word and have noted this on the revised manuscript but were unable to add this to the list of key words on the BMJ Paediatrics Open webpage.