
The 'Family Man' Impact Study

An Evaluation of the Longer-Term Effectiveness of Safe Ground's Revised Family Relationships Programme on Prisoner Graduates, their Supporters and Families

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Executive Summary

- ❖ **The prison-based 'Family Man' programme** was established by Safe Ground and the Prison Service in 2002. Its short-term effectiveness has been well-established in earlier evaluations, as has its success in involving Supporters (mainly family members) in its revised programme of learning since 2007. The revisions were made in response to the views of prisoners, their families, professional experts and Government policy. Drawing on understandings about desistance theory, the present 'Family Man' Impact Study was set up to establish the longer-term impact of the revised programme on Graduates and their families, including its potential for reducing reoffending.
- ❖ **This evaluation draws on quantitative and qualitative data** gained from one fifth (104) of contactable prisoner Graduates and their Supporters, about the extent to which their learning from Family Man (FM) continues to impact on their thinking and behaviour (in 9 cases, after release). Its key findings are summarised in the following paragraphs.
- ❖ **The questionnaire to prisoner Graduates** of the 2008/9/10 programmes at HMPs Belmarsh, Birmingham, Bristol, Highpoint, Leeds, Parc and Wandsworth, asked about the longer-term effects on them of attending FM. The most notable findings were that:
 - 74% reported continuing higher levels of confidence
 - 90% reported learning how to problem-solve from their group experiences
 - 78% reported implementing the goals in their FM Action Plan
 - 84% reported improved relationships with their children/families
- ❖ **Fleshing out the above findings in in-depth interviews**, the prisoner Graduates particularly noted the steps along the way to the changes they had made:

Robson, 2008 programme: I kept coming back to prison. Even though my partner loved me, she was about to call it a day. But Family Man challenged me, gave me the skills to understand her and the children, to learn to listen, and for her to understand me too. We have to keep working at it, but I've been out 9 months now, I have a job, and our family life has never been happier.

❖ **The questionnaire to Supporters** of the above Graduates asked how the Graduate had changed from their point of view. Most notably:

- 92% agreed that FM had helped him understand his family responsibilities
- 98% felt that FM had helped both of them think about resettlement
- On an ascending scale of 1-10, all rated the usefulness of FM's 'What Next' day within the top half of the scale, some also relating this to resettlement. The most frequent change cited was his ability to listen and communicate, particularly important dynamics along the pathways to stronger family relationships, employability and, thus, the potential for reduced reoffending

❖ **In-depth interviews with FM Supporters** verified the changes FM had made to the men: *Lola, 2009 programme: A big, big change. He came out different – oh yeah! The family comes first now. Before it was always himself..... I wonder if it's the same man I married!*

Sue, 2010 programme: He's totally amazed me what he's done. He's doing an OU course now.

❖ **Overall, for the vast majority of these respondents,** 'Family Man' had been a significant learning experience which, through drama, confidence-building and resettlement focus, had changed prisoners' attitudes and helped them gradually build upon and implement these changes as they moved towards and beyond release. There could be little doubt of the enduring impact this programme had made on these men and their families or of its consequent potential to strengthen the social bonds which could contribute to subsequent desistance from crime.

The 'Family Man' Impact Study: An Evaluation of the Longer-Term Effectiveness of Safe Ground's Revised Family Relationships Programme on Prisoner Graduates, their Supporters and Families

1. Evaluation Purpose

1.1 The short-term outcomes of this revised 'Family Man' programme have been positively evaluated (Boswell & Poland, 2008; Price, 2009). The overall purpose of the present evaluation was to assess its longer-term impact upon 2008-10 Graduates and Supporters from seven prison-based programmes in England and Wales. This report provides indicative evidence of achievement and areas for future development.

2. Context for the Evaluation

2.1 **Family Man** (FM) is a seven-week full time family relationships programme, developed in response to increasing numbers of prisoners losing contact with their families and being unable to sustain a job or relationships which, Government research publications have suggested, are key factors in reoffending (Ditchfield, 1994; Social Exclusion Unit, 2002; Niven & Stewart, 2005) In line with desistance theory, described in **Section 2.4** below, FM's stated aim is to help prevent institutionalisation and re-offending by providing basic, social and life skills to help prisoners understand the benefits of being part of a family and a community, and of the importance of maintaining family relationships from prison. Safe Ground views the ability to make and sustain relationships as a basic learning skill which is as important as numeracy and literacy in providing the 'hooks for change' necessary for effective individual interplay with the structural forces existing in wider law-abiding society (Farrall & Bowling, 1999; Giordano *et al.*, 2002). The following two paragraphs describe the rationale for and nature of FM's revision since 2007.

2.2 The FM programme was revised in order to meet family learning targets set out in the National Reducing Re-Offending Action Plan (Home Office, 2004). FM now requires students to nominate an adult Supporter (either a relative, partner, close friend, or volunteer) to whom they write four structured letters, describing their experiences of the programme, identifying what they are learning and how they intend to utilise their acquired skills to develop their family relationships and reduce their risk of re-offending. The letters are designed to encourage meaningful communication between the student and the Supporter following course completion.

2.3 Supporters attend 3 workshops, giving them the opportunity to directly contribute to the progression of the offender through and beyond the course. The first workshop requires them to work independently in the Visitors' Centre, where they are introduced

to the FM programme, shown some examples of the men's work, introduced to the SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable Realistic, Time-bound) model of goal-setting, and asked to identify achievable goals for their student to work towards whilst still in prison. The following two workshops take place a week later on the same day. Firstly, the student and their Supporter work together to compare their Family Action Plans and agree a goal for the student. This process of joint SMART goal-setting is unique to Family Man, but can equally be replicated and applied in the context of other interventions and settings. Secondly, both student and Supporter attend a 'What Next?' session, covering all seven National Offender Management Service Pathways to reducing reoffending, where they meet a range of representatives from internal and external resettlement and education agencies, which can offer support to both parties.

2.4 Desistance theory forms a significant part of the underpinning for the revised FM programme and, thereby, for the context of this evaluation. Although the word 'desistance' implies a deliberate refraining from particular actions, such research which has been conducted on this relatively new contribution to criminological scholarship suggests that it actually constitutes more of a reflex action which relates to the point at which the rewards of social bonding, such as stable family relationships and employment, exceed the perceived rewards of committing crime (Laub & Sampson, 2003; Savolainen, 2009). This, however, is a process which builds on itself, creating a more active reappraisal of identity and a 'cognitive reorientation' (Bottoms *et al.*, 2004: 382) away from the criminal identity and towards a new sense of self as, for example a respected employee or literally as a 'Family Man'. As Mills & Codd (2008) note in their comprehensive review of the literature covering the contribution of family ties to the reduction of prisoner offending, there is huge potential for offender management systems and prison-based parenting and family relationships programmes to help prisoners to develop the kind of social capital which leads to this new non-criminal, pro-social identity. **Sections 2.2** and **2.3** above set out the ways in which the revised Family Man seeks to meet this aspiration; this evaluation seeks to assess to what extent it has succeeded.

3. Research Method

3.1 The total number of Graduates from the 2008, 2009 and 2010 revised 'Family Man' programmes was 441. Evaluation questionnaires were sent by Safe Ground to relevant staff based in the seven prison establishments running the programmes. These staff confirmed that questionnaires were then forwarded to 239 contactable Graduates and 240 contactable Supporters. The questionnaires also sought the consent of the recipients to possible contact by the researchers to arrange an in-depth interview about their experience and views of 'Family Man'.

3.2 Questionnaires were returned from 54 Graduates and 50 Supporters - over one fifth response in each case. It might have been higher were the research not being conducted at a time when all prisoners' numbers had been changed, which reduced the chances of both successful delivery and reply, and also staff's ability to track people down, highlighting a perennial dilemma for Safe Ground in not being able to gain access to the programme impact data which NOMS increasingly requires. Nevertheless, for both a prisoner and a prisoners' families population, which are often troubled and in flux, this is a respectable response rate. Of these, 38 Graduates and 32 Supporters consented to possible contact for an in-depth interview. All those who continued to be contactable were contacted, and interviews arranged with 24 Graduates (including 6 who had been released) and 24 Supporters (including 3 with released Graduates), both groups representing the 3 years of the revised 'Family Man' programme. (See **Appendix A** for number and type of data collection from FM students and Supporters). With six exceptions, which receive integral comment where relevant, the Graduate/Supporter samples were not directly matched.

3.3 All interviews with Supporters and released Graduates were conducted by telephone. All interviews with Graduates still in prison were conducted in those prisons, some having moved to a lower security category prison than the one in which they had attended 'Family Man'. All names in this report are pseudonyms.

3.4 Through these questionnaires and in-depth interviews, three aspects of the impact of the revised 'Family Man' programme were assessed, with particular reference to prevailing governmental focus, including their capacity to reduce reoffending, as explained in the section on desistance theory at **2.4**. Drawing on the findings related to the following three objectives, the research sought to provide a holistic review of the longer-term impact of the revised 'Family Man' programme upon its Graduates, their Supporters and families with recommendations for future development:

- (a) The extent to which it has succeeded in supporting its Graduates and their Supporters to develop and maintain their family ties [DfE: Department for Education focus].
- (b) The extent to which it has increased Graduates' skills in working in a group and in engaging in their own personal development, in terms of Employment, Training and Education (ETE) both in prison and on release [BIS/ Skills Funding Agency: Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, and Skills Funding Agency focus].
- (c) The extent to which it has changed the Graduates' attitudes and behaviour, both in relation to the prison environment and towards their resettlement plans and prospects [NOMS: National Offender Management Service focus].

4. The Longer-term Impact of 'Family Man' on Prisoner Graduates

4.1 Tables 1-8 below show the numbers and salient personal characteristics of the 54 men who returned questionnaires, from which, as far as possible, a cross-section was interviewed. It should be noted that none of the tables in this report differentiates between programmes at different prisons or between different programme years. This is firstly because the numbers are too small to be able to draw significant conclusions, and secondly because all the programmes and their staff were highly praised, so that there would be little new evidence to be gained from singling any out.

Table 1 below shows that the highest proportion of respondents (in line with that of the general prison population) lay in the 22-25 year age group while the second highest lay in the 31-40 year age group. However, respondents overall fell into age groups in the range from 22 - 60 years.

Table 1: Age ranges of FM Graduate questionnaire respondents in years (n = 54)

22- 25	26-30	31-40	41-50	51-60
32%	20%	28%	18%	2%

4.2 Graduate respondents were invited to describe their own ethnic origin (See Appendix B for a full break-down). Table 2 below divides the responses, for simplicity, into the two categories of White British and Black and Minority Ethnic (BME). The categories 'Other' and 'White Other' represent those who described themselves thus. Often a contentious issue for prisoners, it is perhaps not surprising that 10% chose not to answer this question. What is of interest here, however, is that, BME individuals make up just under 26% of the adult prison population (Ministry of Justice, 2011) and that, in this sample, FM has considerably exceeded this proportion by recruiting and guiding to graduation at least 34% of this frequently 'hard-to-reach' (because of language, cultural and other related factors) population.

Table 2: Ethnic Categories of FM Graduate questionnaire respondents (n = 54)

White British	BME	Other/White Other	Not answered
50%	34%	6%	10%

4.3 Table 3 below depicts Graduates either on remand, or serving sentences ranging from under 2 years to Life, including a small number on Indeterminate Sentences for Public Protection (IPP). The highest proportion (62% including those serving IPP or Life) were serving sentences of 4 years or more, possibly reflecting the increasing severity of sentencing policy (Sentencing Council for England & Wales, 2009). This wide range shows that the programme is flexible enough to accommodate students at all stages in the custodial process. This is arguably particularly important for those serving short sentences who are statistically likely to reoffend within one year of release, but for whom programmes promoting resettlement are least likely to be available (Social Exclusion Unit, 2002).

Table 3: Sentence lengths of FM Graduate questionnaire respondents (n = 54)

Remand	Under 2 yrs.	2 - 4 yrs.	4 - 10 yrs.	*IPP	Life
12%	6%	20%	44%	12%	6%

*Indeterminate Sentence for Public Protection

4.4 Table 4 below sets out the number of prison sentences which these men had served. It is notable that a third (mostly but not exclusively from the youngest age group in **Table 1**) reported that this was their first prison sentence.

Table 4: No. of prison sentences served by FM Graduate questionnaire respondents (n = 54)

1 st sentence	Under 3	Under 6	Under 10	10+
34%	26%	22%	6%	12%

4.5 In its seminal report on reducing re-offending by ex-prisoners, the Social Exclusion Unit (SEU) reported that 49% of male sentenced prisoners had been excluded from school (SEU, 2002). **Table 5** below shows that this study's sample of FM Graduates exemplified this problem, with 60% reporting having been suspended or excluded. In line with the SEU's assertion that 'education and training can have a big impact on reducing re-offending rates' (SEU, 2002:44), a specific aim of FM is to 'hook in' to learning prisoners who have been excluded from or disaffected with education. For many of these men, FM was the first time they had achieved educationally in any way and this is clearly a tribute to the programme's particular style of group teaching and learning on a subject which all members begin with some expertise, for almost all of them will have some experience, even if negative, of family relationships.

Table 5: No. of FM Graduate questionnaire respondents ever suspended or excluded from school (n = 54)

YES	60%
NO	40%

4.6 The longitudinal Cambridge Study in Delinquent Development has shown a clear correlation between convicted men and convicted parents (usually fathers) – in other words that there is a predictable risk of an intergenerational transmission of offending (Farrington, 2003; Farrington and Welsh, 2007). As **Table 6** below shows, this factor was borne out in the parents of just under a quarter of this FM Graduate sample. It was, therefore, all the more important that some intervention should be provided, to seek to prevent this risk being passed on to their own children. Farrington *et al.* offer a level of hope about this, and an inferred rationale for the reduction of risk through the opportunity to improve family relationships among other interventions:

The intergenerational transmission of offending may be mediated by family, socio-economic and individual risk factors. Intervention to reduce intergenerational transmission could target these risk factors. (Farrington, Coid and Murray, 2009:109).

Table 6: No. of FM Graduate questionnaire respondents reporting a convicted parent (n = 54)

YES	24%
NO	76%

4.7 Table 7 below indicates the stage of sentence at which FM Graduate questionnaire respondents undertook FM. It can be seen that while one third did so in the middle of their sentence, the vast majority – two thirds – did so near the beginning of their sentence, and only one tenth near the end. Some respondents to previous evaluations have asked whether it would be possible for men to attend FM in the latter stages of sentence or, at least, for a refresher course to be made available (Boswell & Poland, 2008; Price, 2009), though additional funding would be needed to implement this. Whilst FM has a significant resettlement focus, it also provides key input on maintaining and managing family relationships from prison, especially now that Supporters are involved. Safe Ground tries to work with prisons to think strategically about where the programme best fits in to an individual’s sentence, and at what point it will make the most impact, and so the debate about the optimum timing for undertaking the programme is likely to be ongoing.

Table 7: Stage of sentence at which FM Graduate questionnaire respondents did FM (n = 54)

Near the beginning	Near the middle	Near the end
58%	32%	10%

4.8 Table 8 sets out the status and percentage of Supporters of the FM Graduates responding to this questionnaire. It shows that well over half of the men had their partners/wives as their Supporters with 16% having their mother and 10% a sister in

that role. It is interesting to note that most of the non-partner Supporters were female, possibly reflecting the lack of supportive male figures in the lives of these men. Those who did not have a family member or friend to act as Supporter were provided with a volunteer to fulfil this role. The vast majority (92%) of men reported that they were still in contact with their Supporters, indicating that this relationship continued to have meaning for them as they developed their resettlement plans.

Table 8: Status of Supporter of FM Graduate questionnaire respondents (n = 54)

STATUS OF SUPPORTER								
Partner/ wife	Mother	Sister	Volun- teer	Brother	Friend	Ex- partner	Grand- mother	Cousin
54%	16%	10%	6%	4%	4%	2%	2%	2%

4.9 In the last 2 years, Safe Ground has employed a Theory Manual (McGuire, 2009) to underpin the delivery of the Family Man programme and, in seeking evidence for Objective (b) about group skills and personal development (BIS and Skills Funding Agency focus), some of the questionnaire items reflected its model of learning based on motivation through drama and group experience, with the aim of increasing confidence, achievement and progression to other forms of learning along the road to successful resettlement. Safe Ground has demonstrated high levels of both achievement and progression to other learning by its FM Graduates (Boswell & Poland, 2008) and continues to reinforce its evidence base in this field. In response to a question about levels of confidence, 6 months to 2½ years after completing FM, 74% reported higher levels of confidence which had continued after the first flush of their programme experience; 26% reported the same confidence levels as before, mostly on the grounds that they had always felt confident, with nobody reporting lower levels of confidence. When asked which part of the programme stood out in their memories, most in-depth interviewees referred to its drama and role play elements which, for them, were the key elements in improving often very low confidence levels.

4.10 In seeking to gain information about motivation for learning, the questionnaire also drew on the Theory Manual’s identification of the main features of FM’s learning dynamics, which centred around the group experience and the hope for positive change. It also reflected advice about evaluation design, provided to Safe Ground and five other charities working with prisoners and their families, by the charity New Philanthropy Capital over the last year (De Las Casas *et al.*, 2011). This included a series of statements with which respondents were invited to strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree or, if none of these, say that they didn’t know. **Table 9** below shows almost universal agreement with the statements on group acceptance, learning to

problem-solve from others, and learning how others might see them, as well as about FM giving them hope that they could change. These findings, together with the confirmatory quotations at 4.11 below, showed that they had gained from FM the skills of working in a group, which had in turn provided them with the building blocks to improve their family relationships, thus meeting Objective (a) (DfE focus) and part of Objective (b)

Table 9: FM Graduate questionnaire respondents’ views about programme dynamics (n = 54)

STATEMENT	Strongly agree	Agree	Don't know	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I felt accepted and valued by the FM group	58%	42%	-	-	-
I learned how to solve some of my problems from others’ experiences	30%	60%	10%	-	-
Being in the group taught me about how others might see me	44%	50%	4%	2%	-
Doing Family Man gave me hope that I could change and do better	56%	40%	4%	-	-

4.11 When asked in the questionnaire whether they had learned any skills on FM that they continued to use 6 months to 2½ years later, 92% said ‘Yes’; the others simply said ‘No’ with no further explanation. Skills like team work, organisation and public speaking were mentioned, but responses mainly centred around being more understanding, communicating better with partners, children and other family, being more open, and being a better listener. The men offered similar responses when asked what they now do differently as a result of doing FM:

Joe, 25, 6 months after FM: *I try talking with my family instead of at them!*

Dwayne, 32, 11 months after FM: *Looking into my kids’ eyes and bending down to talk to them.*

Martin, 35, 18 months after FM: *I learned to act like a father to my children and a son to my parents; to see problems and challenges and talk things through before acting.*

Jake, 28, 2½ years after FM: *Family Man gave me the skills to understand different family make-ups – to be able to listen, and resolve my family issues in a way that suits everyone involved. Maximum respect!*

4.12 Strong confirmation that FM had provided help to understand and strengthen family relationships, and further to think about resettlement (Objective (c), NOMS focus), is depicted in **Table 10** below. The small number who said they disagreed or did not know that these things had happened tended to have been men who began the programme distanced from their families for various reasons and had remained so, working with friends or volunteers as their Supporters. This posed similar difficulties for them when it came to making concrete accommodation plans for resettlement. This was not to say that they did not feel they had benefited in other ways from the learning the programme provided

Table 10: FM Graduate questionnaire respondents' views about the extent to which FM helped them with their family relationships and with resettlement (n = 54)

STATEMENT	Strongly Agree	Agree	Don't know	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Family Man helped me understand my family	54%	46%	-	-	-
Family Man helped me improve my relationships with my family	46%	38%	10%	6%	-
Family Man helped me think about the process of resettlement	40%	42%	12%	6%	-

4.13 All but 10% of FM Graduate questionnaire respondents had children; those who did not either had nephews and nieces to whom they were close, or wanted to learn how to be good fathers in the future. Numbers of children, including stepchildren ranged from one to twelve, in some cases with more than one mother. 52% of those with children saw them regularly while they were in prison; 32% saw them sometimes; and the remaining 16% who had children said that they never saw them, either because of extreme geographical distance or because of long-term estrangement over which they had no control. Just one man said that he did not want his children to see him in prison. There were complex reasons for this, and he did know that FM taught that it was usually better for children to be able to see their fathers in prison than not to do so.

4.14 In order to gain evidence about change in attitudes towards resettlement (Objective (c), NOMS focus), the final part of the questionnaire asked about the goals the men had set with their Supporters in the Family Action Plan (see **para.2.3**). Inevitably there were long lists of these, again very much focusing on ways of improving family relationships, especially through communicating and listening, but also on the resettlement aims of accommodation, training and employment, keeping away from drugs, alcohol and criminal associates - in other words all the 'pathways to reducing re-offending' around

which the Action Plan is formulated (Home Office, 2004). 78% reported that they had taken, or were continuing to take the steps they had identified along the way to implementing their goals. These included undertaking more courses, being in touch with agencies and individuals they had met on the 'What Next?' day (see **para. 2.3**), taking voluntary drug tests, telephoning their children every day, writing to their partners and children and so on. They reported that their actions continued to be influenced by Family Man 6 months to 2½ years after graduating. However, the minority must not be forgotten and, of the other 22% of respondents, a few said that they already knew most of what the programme taught; a few had not really been ready to change their outlook; a few could not remember what was in their action plans; and one could remember that he had vowed to give up smoking in his action plan, but had failed to do so!

4.15 In respect of Objective 3 (NOMS focus) the FM Graduate questionnaire respondents were asked whether they had had adjudications recorded against them since completing FM and only 2 answered that they had. It was not known whether they had had previous adjudications and so 'before and after' comparison was not possible. However, a previous such exercise by Safe Ground in one pilot prison had found that of all 2005-7 FM Graduates who were in that prison 6 months before and 6 months after the programme, adjudication rates had reduced from 34% before FM to 24% after FM (Boswell & Poland, 2008). The signs of the influence of FM on post-programme behaviour in the prison environment, and thus on the potential for more pro-social attitudes beyond that setting, are positive, and indeed staff in previous evaluations have confirmed this trend, but clearly more concrete data collection is needed in this field.

4.16 When asked if they wanted to make any other comment about 'Family Man', there were a number of short responses, of which representative examples are set out below, and one long response, set out at **Appendix C**, which affords an exceptional insight into the positive effect of being a member of the FM programme on wider prison life. They demonstrate in a range of ways the impact that FM has made on these respondents, particularly in terms of how it has moved them forward to a new sense of themselves, and that they are still able to reflect on this many months down the line, providing optimism about the potential for desistance. Mick's and Jerome's comments below are just two examples of many responses which contain the adjectives 'fantastic' and 'brilliant' to describe this programme.

Mick, 46, 2½ years after FM: *It's a really good course. Since being in prison, I lost all my confidence and felt really low. FM helped me to rebuild my confidence, learn to work with other people, learn to trust 17 men I'd never met before. I started writing to my partner and phoning home more. Feeling better about myself meant I wanted to take other courses, and now I've got a qualification as a Learning Support Worker, and I'm really proud that now I can go into a class and help others improve their education.*

Jerome, 31, 18 months after FM: *The course really is an inspiration, but it works better if you put more into it - then you will get more out of it. If you go into it accepting that you might not have all the answers, you will actually gain something much greater. FM is a fantastic course – the only course that actually focuses on moving forward and isn't just about killing time.*

Lol, 24, 8 months after FM: *The 'Family Man' course has helped me more than I thought possible and should be compulsory. The reason I say this is because it lets people know that our actions not only affect us but our whole family. The course made me realise what was wrong with my life without someone telling me, and what I thought needed to be done to rectify this. This was a major eye-opener, and one hell of a ride for my emotions. Excellent, fantastic, brilliant, and helpful, are just a few words I can say about this course. Thank you from the bottom of my heart! ☺*

4.17 The in-depth interviews with 24 FM Graduates included 6 who had been released between 5 and 9 months prior to interview, and 15 others who were reaching the middle to final stages of their sentences. However 3 were serving IPP or Life sentences and only knew their tariff dates – i.e. the earliest date at which they could be released if deemed safe for such release by the Parole Board. For these men, FM's focus on maintaining family relationships from prison was more material than its focus on the resettlement which was becoming a reality for the majority of this group. However, all provided thoughtful answers to questioning about the longer-term impact of the programme upon them. **Table 11** below shows the level at which they rated that impact, on a scale of 1 – 10, where 1 = very low impact and 10 = very high impact. Given the smaller sample, scores are represented in numbers rather than percentages.

Table 11: Levels of impact of FM programme on interview respondents (n = 24)

RATING SCALE	Very low Very high									
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Interviewees' ratings	-	-	-	-	1	1	2	8	6	6

It can be seen that, with one exception, the impact ratings all fall into the top half of the scale, with a cluster around 8, 9 and 10. The positive accompanying comments were consistent with those of the questionnaire responses; the respondent scoring 5 was also positive about the FM tutors, and said he would have scored 10 for the experience of group bonding but had trouble with some of the 'games':

Jack, 39, 2 years after FM, 7 months after release: *I'm 39 years old and I had to pretend to be a tree! A play in front of your children! My son didn't come as he had college, but if he'd been there, he'd have thought I was on crack!*

However, this was the only negative comment about the ‘games’ and role-play element of the programme in all of the Graduate responses. Most respondents found this a very powerful way of learning. Asked which parts of FM still stood out in their memories, this group referred in equal measure to the drama-based elements of the programme, to the ‘What Next?’ session (which Jack also criticised on the grounds of having to queue), to the work they did with their Supporters, notably on the Action Plan, and to the Family Day where they did their final presentation:

Damien, 30, 6 months after FM: *The presentation definitely. Hard guys, people in for murder, all putting flowers on their heads! Seriously though, it was great to be able to show our families what we’d been doing and learning and make them laugh too. It helped them see that prison could be a positive place. The kids loved that whole day!*

4.18 The group of 24 interviewees were also asked to rate the level of impact they felt the programme, with its Supporter and family involvement had made on their Supporters, their children, and on other family members. **Table 12** below shows their responses:

Table 12: Graduate interviewees’ views of the levels of impact of FM programme on Supporters, children and other family members (n = 24)

RATING SCALE		Very low Very high									
RATING LEVEL	N/A	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Impact on Supporter	*2	-	-	-	-	2	2	1	6	5	6
Impact on child/ren	1	-	-	-	1	5	2	2	6	4	3
Impact on other family	6	-	-	-	1	2	1	2	8	2	2

* Not answered

Clearly, the views of Supporters themselves are most important here, and these are reported in **Section 5**. However, the perceptions of the men themselves of the impact of FM upon those to whom they were close, mattered a great deal in terms of their own continuing motivation. **Table 12** above shows that, for the most part, these ratings were again in the top half of the scale. Where ratings were at 4 or 5, this tended to be because the men felt the impact was mixed, or that they weren’t quite sure, particularly in the case of their children, whose responses were not always easy to gauge, especially if they were quite young. The question about impact on children clearly did not apply to the Graduate who did not have any; 6 Graduates said that the question about impact on other family did not apply to them.

4.19 Asked whether they felt that FM changed their Supporter's attitude to them in any way, 19 interviewees answered 'Yes'; 3 said 'No'; and 2 said they didn't know, both taking the view that the onus was on themselves to undertake any changes either in attitude or behaviour. Of the 3 who said 'No', 2 considered that their relationships with their Supporters (one a wife, one a mother) had always been close and nothing would change them. The other also felt that he had a good relationship with his Supporter (his sister) but wasn't sure about the extent of her interest in the programme (confirmed in Jenny's response, **Section 5.8**):

Jack, 39, 2 years after FM, 7 months after release: *The first time she came, I don't think she was interested, except in the advice ('What Next?') people, but that was cut short because we had to queue. I think just me being in prison has brought us closer together.*

Of the majority who felt that FM had changed their Supporter's attitude to them, three described the process thus:

Nyameko, 53, 18 months after FM: *Working together with my wife on the Action Plan really reminded us of the early days when we were happy. It was like a team – all of us with our partners together. We were taking it very seriously. She wrote me a letter saying 'We can get through this with the help of this Action Plan'. I know she'll keep working on this with me and that she'll wait till I get out.*

Winston, 38, 8 months after FM: *My Supporter was my ex-partner, who still brings my 2 daughters to visit me. She was 50/50 about FM to start with – she thought my attitude from when I was outside would never change and this was really why we broke up. I always said I'd never be like my own Dad, never being there, not listening to my children, telling them to wait till another time if they wanted my attention. But doing this course, and watching 'Blinda' made me realise that I was doing exactly the same as he did. I was a Father, but not a Dad when it came to communication, love and affection. We both put the need for me to work on this in our Action Plan, I have written at length about it in my letters. She's seen the effort I've put in and she's starting to believe me now. (Winston's ex-partner confirmed this in her questionnaire)*

Darren, 25, 2 years after FM, 7 months after release: *She loved it! We've been together since we were at school, but we were always a bit on and off. FM got us to talk properly for the first time! She saw me and I saw her in a completely different light.*

These reported attitude changes provide hope that the renewed partner/marital attachment which FM had facilitated might, together with the pathways to employment, also provided by the Action Plans and the 'What Next' sessions, become, as Laub & Sampson (2001: 20) found in their research, 'significantly related to changes in adult crime-the stronger the adult ties to work and family, the less **crime** and deviance'.

4.20 Interviewees with children were further asked whether FM had changed their attitude to their children in any way. Of the 23 to whom this applied, all replied 'Yes',

except for 2 who felt their attitude had always been the same – i.e. close and loving. Further replies from Winston and Darren (whose comments about the change in their Supporters appear above) exemplified the shift from their own to their children’s needs:

Winston, 38, 8 months after FM: *Now I know I need to be a Dad to them, not just a Father. Now I talk to my daughters at length on the phone each week. When they come to visit, I don’t just leave them to run off and play, I pick them up and put them on my lap and keep them there while I ask them how they are and listen to their answers. At first they didn’t know how to respond to this – they weren’t used to it – but now they sit and tell me about their doings quite happily, and I realise how important all of this is not only to me but to them too.*

Darren, 25, 2 years after FM, 7 months after release: *The course highlighted for me what his needs are and what I should do about them, instead of always thinking about my own needs. Two weeks ago in the car he said to me ‘Dad, do you remember the ‘Pie in the Eye’, when I pided you in the face? Wasn’t it great?’ It reminded me that FM gave me the chance to show myself to him in a different light, that I could get up and speak and present myself, and have fun with him too. That’s how it is now.*

It is noteworthy that these two men are still remembering and implementing with their children what they learned on FM a considerable time previously, and that this learning has the potential to impact on the known risk of intergenerational transmission of offending, as discussed in **Section 4.6** above (Farrington *et al.*, 2009).

4.21 Interviewees were asked about the main changes in their own behaviour and thinking since doing FM. Their responses centred around their ability to express emotion in an acceptable way, a renewed confidence which enabled them to progress to other learning, and a different relationship with their families and with other prisoners. Again, they were all describing learning which continued to impact upon them 8 months to 2 ½ years after completing FM:

Matt, 29, 1 year after FM: *Before FM, I would bottle things up and just try to be the person I thought people wanted me to be. Doing the role play and the presentations helped me to see that it was OK just to be myself and people would accept me for that. FM also gave me an understanding of child development and family values that I just didn’t have before. Where do you learn these things if they haven’t been taught in your own family?*

Patrick, 35, 16 months after FM: *I’m a better listener. I’ve calmed down. I’m less angry, and that’s because FM taught me not to let things build up, to be more assertive and honest about things that bother me instead of internalising them. It gave me so much more confidence which got me applying for other courses too. You wouldn’t believe how many things I’m doing here (now in a Category ‘D’ prison) - Personal & Social Development; Plumbing; Business Studies; and now working towards a Diploma in Youth Work – to equip myself for resettlement.*

Winston, 38, 8 months after FM: *It’s more than I could ever describe. Learning to work with and trust that group of men who were all so different, and yet became like a family, helped me to see that if you only respect and listen to the people in your family in the way that you want them*

to respect and listen to you, anything is possible. I now listen to my children. I read their school reports and talk to them about how they're doing. I've put myself to the test since FM, avoiding drugs, fights, not sending guys to beat up my ex-partner's new boyfriend, which I would have done before. I let myself be more emotional now. I never used to read, but I read 2 or 3 books a week now, about history of all things! I've become a Listener, I'm a Toe-by-Toe mentor, a Resettlement Orderly – if I can help just 1 or 2 other prisoners, I've done my job.

Robson, 41, 2½ years after FM, 9 months after release: *I kept coming back to prison. Even though my partner loved me, she was about to call it a day. But Family Man challenged me, gave me the skills to understand her and the children, to learn to listen, and for her to understand me too. We have to keep working at it, but I've been out 9 months now, I have a job, and our family life has never been happier.*

This last quotation emphasises the fact that FM's rationale is to challenge behaviours and attitudes and teach new skills in order to impact on the men's resettlement chances. Here, Robson is describing how this process effectively saved his relationship and understands that he has to continue to face up to these challenges in order to maintain his happy family life, his job, and his non-offender status 9 months after being released. Arguably, he is a classic example of someone who now has a stronger attachment to partner, family and employment than he does to a recidivist lifestyle. (See **Section 2.4**).

4.22 Following on from their comments about the changes they had made, these interviewees were asked if they felt they had, in fact, become a 'Family Man' in line with the programme's aim. All agreed that they had, though 4 with caveats that they were already. It is also important to note that 7 of the 24 interviewees had gone on to become mentors to subsequent FM programmes, some of them on 2 or 3 programmes. This marked their own progression from student to guide and, for all of them, constituted an expression of confidence and trust by the programme Tutors in their ability to advise others – a new experience for most of them.

4.23 The 18 Graduate interviewees still in prison were then asked to rate their level of optimism that they could sustain the changes they had made as a result of doing FM after they were released. **Table 13** below shows that these levels were relatively high, but accompanying comments made it clear that FM had helped them to be both confident and realistic about the challenges ahead and to plan for them. However, it is arguable that those who scored at the 7 or 8 level were the most realistic for, in the words of one of them:

Don, 24, 8 months after doing FM: *I want to say 10 but I have to ask myself and my Mum (my Supporter) whether I can control the variables outside in the same way as I can control things in here, so I'm saying 7. I'm still pondering the learning from the course well after it finished. It taught me that every time you have a negative thought, you should hold it, reframe it, or keep it to yourself. That is such a skill – such an amazing piece of learning. So I use that to be positive about going out, but I know I have to do it in a realistic way, starting now, keeping on thinking about it, so that it will be second nature when I go out there to live it.*

Table 13: Graduate interviewees' levels of optimism about ability to sustain FM changes after release (n = 18)

RATING SCALE	Very low Very high									
RATING LEVEL	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Imprisoned interviewees' ratings (n = 18)	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	5	4	5

4.24 It is appropriate to end this account of FM Graduate responses with some feedback about life outside from the 6 released men who, between them, had taken part in FM at 5 different prisons. As far as was known, none had reoffended. One had been out for 6 months, three for 7 months, one for 8 months, and one for 9 months. They all answered 'Yes', when asked if they were carrying through the changes they had said they would make towards their family and in their general behaviour. None claimed it was easy, but all were still referring to specific ways in which FM was influencing their lives, three quoting from their Action Plans:

John, 36, 2½ years after doing FM, 7 months after release: *I have joint custody of my 2 children and I get on really well with their Mum (my ex-partner) now. It sounds mad but going to prison was the best thing that could have happened to me because I learnt so much from FM. I was the selfish giant! It made me realise that everything I do has a direct effect on my children, even just going out to the pub because of what it could lead to. Everything I do now, I do with them in mind. It isn't just about giving them money – if they're at their Mum's and they want to see me I'll go there instead of going out myself. In my Action Plan I said I'd cut my drinking down to once a week and also not get angry after drinking, and I'm carrying that through. I also did every course available in prison and now I've got a part-time job. I still think about the FM course regularly. It made a big impact and definitely changed how I behave to my children.*

Darren, 25, 2 years after FM, 7 months after release: *Things have been a bit hard as I've had to live in a hostel because I'm not allowed to go back to the area where I committed my crime. But my partner and I have been coping OK – we understand it has to be like this, and we're hoping to find somewhere to live together soon. Me and John still talk about the communication side of FM, how much it taught us about our families - it's the best thing you can do towards rehabilitation because one of the main reasons people offend is that they have broken families. My Action Plan was good, though it was less easy to pursue courses etc once I got transferred to another prison. But one of my aims is a career in the sports industry and I did a fitness instructor course inside so I'm working part-time in that now and hoping to open my own business. My other aims were to settle down, be more open and be more of a family and we're*

working on that. My son and I go to football training together, have haircuts together, see extended family together every weekend.

Jack, 39, 2 years after FM, 7 months after release: *Yes, I'm different now. I don't want to go out. I want to spend my time with the kids.*

Noah, 27, 2 years after FM, 5 months after release: *I learnt that you have to listen to your family and stay close, put them first. It's a big change, but now I spend time with my family and take them places. I play with my small daughter and listen to her, so she knows I am paying her attention. I still have to work on the changes I said I'd make since I've come out. I also want to finish the University course I started before I went to prison (His wife, Lola, confirms the 'big change' in Noah at 5.8).*

Alan, 28, 21 months after FM, 8 months after release: *I'll never forget FM or the Action Plan. I didn't like the paperwork but I'm doing what I said I'd do!*

Robson, 41, 2½ years after FM, 9 months after release: *FM changed me forever!*

4.25 In summary, the 54 questionnaire and 24 interview responses from these Family Man Graduates have demonstrated great acclaim for the impact of the programme on their subsequent thinking and behaviour. Progression to other forms of learning has often been enthusiastically described by men hitherto disengaged from education. They are a wide-ranging group in terms of age, ethnic origin, experience of prison and of family life, yet almost all, even those with minor complaints about content, attested to the power of this drama-based course to steer them to the status of 'Family Man'. The next Section will examine the extent to which their Supporters concurred with these views and experiences.

5. A View from ‘Family Man’ Supporters

5.1 As explained in **para. 3.2** above, 50 FM Supporters returned questionnaires and 24 were interviewed in-depth by telephone (see **Appendix A** for number and type of response, and **Appendix D** for an ethnic breakdown of interviewees). At the time of their response only 3 of the men, to whom one questionnaire and two interview respondents had been Supporters, had been released from prison. The rest were still serving sentences, but several had been moved to lower security category prisons since completing FM. Most Supporters continued to be in contact with their FM Graduates. **Table 14** below shows the status and percentage of Supporters who responded to the questionnaire. While the spread of Supporter type is broadly similar to that described by the FM questionnaire Graduates in **Table 8, para. 4.8** (again with a predominance of women) it is important to note that these Supporters mostly do not correspond to the sample of FM Graduates discussed in **Section 4**, though integral comment continues to be made where this was the case. As can be seen in **Table 14**, a small number of Graduates had not had family or friends to hand to act as Supporters, and Volunteers had been provided to fulfil this role.

Table 14: Status of FM Supporter responding to the questionnaire (n = 50)

STATUS OF SUPPORTER							
Partner/ wife	Mother	Sister	Friend	Volun- teer	Ex- partner	Aunt	Brother
40%	20%	12%	8%	8%	4%	4%	4%

5.2 The questionnaire asked three initial questions about the nature of these respondents’ relationship with their prisoner, while they were acting as his Supporter on the FM programme. They focused on the extent to which FM had helped the student (at the time) to understand his family responsibilities and had helped them both to think about the process of resettlement. They were framed in the format provided by New Philanthropy Capital, as explained in **para. 4.10** above. **Table 15** below sets out the responses to these relationship factors, which show through majority agreement/strong agreement that both Objective 1 (DfE focus in respect of maintaining and developing family ties) and Objective 3 (NOMS focus in respect of resettlement) have been met. Further analysis of the Supporters’ responses appears below **Table 15**.

Table 15: FM Supporter questionnaire respondents' view of relationship factors with their FM student (n = 50)

STATEMENT	N/A	Strongly agree	Agree	Don't Know	Disagree	Strongly disagree
The programme helped improve my relationship with my FM student	*8%	40%	44%	4%	-	4%
FM helped my student to understand his responsibilities to his family and/or Supporter	-	62%	30%	4%	-	4%
FM helped me and my student think about the process of resettlement	-	46%	50%	4%	-	-

As **Table 15** above demonstrates, 84% of these Supporter respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that FM had helped to improve their relationship with their student; 4% (one respondent, whose partner had reoffended) strongly disagreed with this statement and 4% did not know whether it was the case. All but these same 2 respondents – i.e. 92% - either agreed or strongly agreed (a large majority) that FM had helped their student to understand his responsibilities to his family and/or his Supporter. Finally, 96% (all but one) also agreed or strongly agreed that FM had helped them and their student to think about the process of resettlement. These are very powerful findings, which are consistent with previous evaluations involving FM Supporters (Boswell, Poland & Price, 2008; Price, 2009) but, on this occasion, have the advantage of a longitudinal view. The explanation for them would appear to centre clearly around the fact that this was the first time any of these respondents had been invited to be involved in a prison-based programme which their family member/friend was undertaking, or to have a chance, along with their student, to work with resettlement agencies. Their ratings of these opportunities were extremely high, providing further strong evidence for the meeting of Objective (a) (DfE focus on supporting family ties) As shown in **Table 16** below, 68% rated the importance of Supporter inclusion at 10, the maximum possible score – and the remaining 32% rated it at 8 or 9. In terms of the usefulness of the particular sessions which had been specifically incorporated in the programme for the Supporter group, and successfully piloted, these again were scored extremely highly. The Supporters' Session, held separately from the men, in the Visitors' Centre, was rated at 9 or 10 by 78% of respondents and at 6, 7 or 8 by 18%. One person rated it at 5 and later explained that this was because she had only been able to attend part of

the session. The usefulness of the 'What Next' session was rated at 9 or 10 by 76% of respondents and at 6, 7 or 8 by 20%. The same person who had only been able to attend part of the Supporters' Session also could not attend the 'What Next?' day, and so could not rate this session.

Table 16: Supporter questionnaire respondents' views of their involvement in the FM programme (n = 50)

RATING SCALE	N/A	Very low										Very high
RATING LEVEL		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
Importance of Supporters' inclusion in prison learning	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	12%	20%	68%	
Usefulness of the Supporters' Session	-	-	-	-	-	*4%	4%	6%	8%	12%	66%	
Usefulness of the 'What Next?' day	*4%	-	-	-	-	-	4%	4%	12%	18%	58%	

* Represents one person who could only attend part of the Supporters' Session and could not attend the 'What Next?' day

5.3 As outlined at **para. 2.3** above, the Supporters spent their second session working with their FM students to agree a Family Action Plan, based on goals each had separately identified. These questionnaire respondents were asked to list the goals they had agreed with their student, and their responses corresponded closely with those set out by the FM Graduate sample (see **para. 4.14**) – that is to say that they centred essentially on improving family relationships through listening and better communication, and upon the main resettlement aims of accommodation, employment/education/training, avoiding alcohol, drugs and criminal associates. Asked to outline the steps their FM students had taken to achieve their stated goals, Supporters gave many illustrations, with some typical examples set out below, again providing considerable hope that their prisoner relatives are moving along the road to stronger social bonds and desistance from crime.

He writes me deeper letters and tells me what he's feeling on the phone.

He listens to our daughter now and is making much more of an effort with her.

He's spoken to people who are helping him to arrange housing when he comes out.

He's studied and gained qualifications - literacy, horticulture, and has started an OU degree.

He wrote to the Prince's Trust, Kids Company and Foundation for Life. The latter has been of great help and offered training and work on release.

He's doing an alcohol awareness course to help him understand how his drinking affects his family responsibilities.

He's asked Probation to arrange weekly alcohol and drug testing when he gets home.

He wanted it to be part of his licence not to associate with people he's been in trouble with before - and it's going to be.

However, there was one sad exception to this, provided by the Supporter who 'strongly disagreed' in **Table 15** above that FM had helped to improve her relationship with her partner or him to understand his responsibilities to his family:

He has taken no steps to achieve his goals. The course didn't help him enough, or more likely he didn't want it to, because he came out and beat me up and is now back in jail.

Despite this very distressing experience, this respondent had nonetheless been very positive about other aspects of the FM programme. In a section on 'further comments' she added in explanation:

The course was a good experience and was helpful at the time, but did not help when he was released. He went straight back to his old ways, and I had to have him arrested, and I pressed charges for my own and my daughter's safety.

It was perhaps because he had taken none of the agreed steps to his goals (which his ex-partner had identified as 'to get off the drugs and be a good Dad and be a family') that this man had so quickly reoffended. A Drug agency had offered him support during his sentence but it is not clear how far it had followed him up after release. This is an area over which it is difficult for FM to have control. It can bring in agencies for the 'What Next?' session, but it does not have the resources, nor is it really its role, to make sure that agencies carry through any support they may have offered on that day.

Included in the FM guidelines is information about the protective measures that need to be in place to prevent inappropriate students attending the programme, including those with histories of domestic violence. It is necessary for each prison to take responsibility for targeting suitable candidates, and to ensure that they have all been cleared through security and public protection.

5.4 Supporter questionnaire respondents were very positive about the agencies which had offered support to their FM students and, indeed, to themselves on the 'What Next day, mentioning in particular the Chaplaincy, the Citizen's Advice Bureau, Drug

agencies, the Education Dept, Family Help with Parenting, Housing, and Job Centre Plus. However, apart from one who had had further help from a Debt agency, none of these respondents had been in further touch with the agencies they had met, some saying that the student had and some that this was for him to do in any case. But, whatever the reason, it seems surprising that there had not been more such contact offering support to the Supporters themselves.

5.5 Asked to identify 3 ways in which FM had helped them and/or their student, these respondents most frequently cited that FM had given their student much better listening and communication skills and helped him understand how his actions had affected his family. This in turn had helped the Supporters who were part of such a family. These responses lent authenticity to the claims of the Graduate sample that these were the skills they had most learned and were still using 6 months to 2½ years after Family Man (see **para 4.11**). Several men, in their questionnaires and interviews, had referred to the power for them of the letter-writing process and, when asked if they had also found this process useful, all but one of the Supporters replied in the affirmative. For them, this was a medium that had given the process of improved communication a real kick-start. As a consequence, when asked whether there was a difference in the way their students communicated with them now the programme was in the past, the Supporters were able to cite several examples, which powerfully demonstrate the potential for continuing strengthening of relationships post-release

He's more appreciative of his partner and family.

Definitely there's a difference. He doesn't keep his feelings to himself any more. He talks to me and doesn't push me away like he used to.

Our communication is more authentic. We say what we feel. No more game-playing or things left unsaid that need to be said.

He's much more interested in what I have to say. He always asks if I'd like to talk about anything!

He's less argumentative and able to communicate in a rational, respectful manner.

I've had more letters and more phone calls.

He's able to see points from different angles. Calmly expresses his opinion in a mature manner. He's turned his life around and based his energy on constructive things.

5.6 The Supporters were asked what things they thought would make their student less likely to reoffend and they again cited the acquisition of communication skills as well as confidence, and the need for employment, the avoidance of alcohol/drug

misuse and negative peer groups, and prioritising family. These responses are consistent with the FM student sample's own views, expressed in their Action Plan goals (see **para. 4.14**) and also consistent with desistance theory (see **Section 2.4**)

5.7 Finally, when 'further comments' were invited, about half this group of Supporters took the opportunity to make some. The selection below highlights a number of points, including the visibility of Graduate change, the value of both Tutor and peer family support, the disadvantages of moving prison after FM, and the need for FM to be rolled out and financed more widely:

It was a very good programme which made significant changes in my partner. We all enjoyed the experience and the effects are still visible 2 years on.

FM should be rolled out to every prison and every prisoner with a family. FM allowed me to meet other families, to share experiences, and how to cope with problems relating to prisons and relationships.

The people who run this course are lovely, and the Family Day was wonderful and our son benefited so much from spending the day with his Dad. I think it would be beneficial if the students had a workshop for 1 or 2 days to discuss their progress and what courses they have completed or are due to start. Also to go through their Action Plan goals and see if they have actually completed, or started work towards them. The course brought us together as a family due to the 'What Next' day and the Family Day. But since it finished, my partner has been moved much further away, which has just made us grow apart again as we cannot see each other as much as before. Although this is not anything to do with the course, it is a shame that it seems some of this was wasted. Maybe the FM course could also play some part in securing a place in a prison not too far away from home?

We found it very helpful as a family and the support that my son got from this group was great. I would like to thank the FM Tutors for all the support they gave myself and my son during the FM course.

I was very impressed with the course and the Tutors' delivery, and integration of the family into the course. I would be happy to volunteer to promote the course to families.

At times it was very moving, especially the openness people showed, and the support they gave each other.

Very thought-provoking course. It would be great if it could be financed to run more regularly. This would give other inmates a chance to take part. Thoroughly enjoyed the course. So did my brother. It was well thought-out and organised. The only negative was it needs to be spelt out that people have to bring their full birth certificate, as this was disappointing to see people being turned away because they didn't have it. Other than that, everything else was excellent. The meeting, the play, the presents for the children – they were

a real nice touch. Good luck for the next one, if it can be financed the way things are going.

5.8 The in-depth interviews with 24 Supporters, like those with the Graduates, invited them to rate the levels of impact the FM programme had had on themselves, their students, their students' children (if any) and on their students' other family. **Table 17** below depicts their answers. Given the smaller sample, scores are represented in numbers rather than percentages, as for the Graduate interviewee sample.

Table 17: Supporter interviewees' views of the levels of impact of FM programme on themselves, their students, their students' children and other family members (n = 24)

RATING SCALE		Very low										Very high	
RATING LEVEL	N/A	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		
Impact on Supporter		1	-	-	1	3	3	4	4	4	4		
Impact on student		1	-	1	1	-	3	4	5	1	8		
Impact on child/ren	*6	1	-	1	-	-	-	6	3	3	4		
Impact on other family	**1	1	1	-	-	-	5	5	6	3	2		

* 3 sets of children too young to know; 3 students had no children

** No contact with other family

Overall, these ratings are reasonably consistent with those of the Graduate sample (see **Tables 11** and **12** above), though again it must be remembered that the majority of the two samples do not correspond directly in terms of Supporter/Graduate matches, except where noted. The Supporters have scored the impact of FM on themselves, their students, their students' children and families, quite highly, and mostly on the top half of the rating scale, but there are a few exceptions, and some of the Supporters' accompanying comments below show that they are (unsurprisingly) more grounded in the realities of resettlement than are some of their Graduates:

Jenny, sister, scoring 1 for impact in all categories: *To be honest, I thought it was a waste of time. I think that course was more for couples, partners and some of them did it because they wanted an extra family visit. I found the questions difficult as I'm his sister and they weren't right for me.* (Her released brother, Jack's criticisms about playing a tree and queuing for 'What Next' agencies have also been recorded at **paras. 4.17** and **4.19** above, though Jack nevertheless also comments at **para. 4.24** that he has changed and now wants to spend his time with his children, suggesting that he did, after all, gain some benefit from the programme).

Sarah, ex-partner, scoring 5 for impact on herself, 3 for impact on her student, 2 for impact on is other family and not applicable for their young child: *It was kind of good to be able to explain to him he couldn't come back to my house. It got a lot of questions answered and made things clearer for me and for him. He has changed – well I don't know, as he hasn't been released yet. He's been inside for nearly 3 years, so although he talks differently, we can't really tell how he'll be. There's no drugs or alcohol in prison. Everybody in his family is waiting till he's out – he'll have to prove himself then.*

Carina, partner, scoring 6 for impact on both herself and her student, with impact on children and family being not applicable: *He seems easier to talk to. It seems different to what it was before – it's better. Before, everything was about him and 'on the want'. Now he talks about other things, like 'can't wait to go on holiday'. But with prison, you can't really know the effect the course will have on him longer-term till he's out.*

Jean, mother, scoring 7 for impact on herself, her son and her family, with impact on children not being applicable: *I was able to see my son going through a course and making changes. I was impressed with the course. It was good to participate with my son and it made me see what he could do. He was able to begin to express and evaluate some of his behaviour and the impact of it on his family – the shame, as we're not that kind of family. My son wrote a tribute to myself as his mother and my friend was in tears when she heard it. (At this point on the telephone, Jean switched on the tape of the tribute, so that the researcher could hear how positive his feelings were about his mother).*

Louella, friend, scoring between 8 – 10 for impact in all categories: *It was a real eye-opener for me. You meet all these other inmates- they were so polite, not what you'd expect. They were brilliant when their children came in – the kids loved the play. It's opened my eyes to people in prison and the help they need –interactive stuff with their families. I know they've done bad things, but some of them (like Mark) have had terrible upbringings. His daughter's always been number one, but FM has now got him much closer to his brother too. (Louella's last 2 sentences confirmed Mark's comments in his own interview).*

Joanne, sister, also scoring 8-10 for all impact categories: *It helped me see Joseph in a different light. I had been pretty mad with him before that, but, through FM, learnt much more about his childhood and his current life which I'd never known before and it helped to explain why he got addicted to drugs and has behaved in the way he has. He's always been a caring father and husband when he was out of prison, and has stayed loyal to his wife for 22 years, even though she has a diagnosed mental illness. The course has given him a massive increase in self-confidence, he is much more respectful now, and has become willing to take charge of situations and himself. (Joanne's response confirms both Louella's comments about some prisoners' 'terrible upbringings' and Joseph's own descriptions of his childhood in interview, which involved regular beatings with sticks and belts from his parents and elder brother, and which he fears he repeated to some extent with his own daughter, who is now serving an IPP sentence for violence herself. The course made both Joseph*

and Joanne aware of the dangers of intergenerational violence – see also discussion at **para. 4.6** above. Further, it is interesting to contrast Joanne’s positive experience as a sister with that of Jenny above, who had felt that the questions weren’t useful for a Supporter who was a sister).

Lola, wife, scoring 5 for impact on herself and child, 10 for impact on her now

released husband, and 7 for impact on his family: *It didn't affect me and our daughter so much at the time, as she is very young, and Noah and I were always close but, since he was released, a big, big change. He came out different – oh yeah! The family comes first now. Before it was always himself – he didn't care who was affected by what he did. He's changed from being a single man to a family man. He's changed completely. He takes our daughter to the park, he cooks for her, he does everything I do for her now. He is more respectful to both our parents. He is more listening (laughs). We were used to arguing. Sometimes, even if I do something wrong, he's the one who's apologising. I wonder if it's the same man I married! (Lola's comments confirm those of her husband, Noah, at **para. 4.24**, on the subject of how FM had caused him to become much more family-orientated).*

5.9 The Supporter interviewees were then asked if FM had changed their own attitudes towards their student. Sixteen said 'Yes', four said 'No', and four were unsure. Some illustrative comments appear below:

No. It did nothing for him and nothing for me.

No. I was always committed to my son and giving him the best upbringing I could – supportive and caring

I'm not sure – I have to wait to see what he's like when he's released

Probably not. Well maybe. It's made me think he wants to do something with his life, and I think he did the course to show me he cares.

Yes. It's listening isn't it? I'm not a good listener – I'm always the talker! But the course helped me to listen to him.

Yes. Now I've realised that he needs to sort himself out, so I've got to be strong for him. I don't smoke, hardly drink, have never been in trouble with the police, have never touched any drugs, have always worked. When I first found out about him taking drugs, I was just shouting and angry, but now I know that doesn't help and it's been difficult for him. So I need to stand by him.

I used to see other Supporters on visits and realised we could support each other. I've now become a telephone volunteer, befriending prisoners' families. This whole course experience made me feel I could do something useful.

The first comment comes from Jenny (the sister of Jack) whose view that the course was a waste of time appears at **para. 5.8** above. The second comment reflects the committed stance of many Graduates' mothers, as well as partners, that their attitudes to their loved ones will not change whatever happens. The third and fourth comments highlight the very natural uncertainty and reluctance that some family members will have about trusting that a prisoner has changed until they see this carried through on his release. The fifth and sixth comments demonstrate a necessary interactive process between student and Supporter which, in itself, helps to promote the change process in the student, and testify to the importance of Supporter involvement in this programme. The final comment shows how FM has moved a Supporter to become a volunteer herself. This range of comments demonstrates that, like the FM students, their Supporters have different needs and engage differently in the learning process.

5.10 Asked whether FM had changed their Graduates' attitudes towards their children (as opposed to making an impact on the children themselves), 20 of the 21 to whom this applied said 'Yes'. The Supporter who said 'No' commented:

The (Graduate's) boy is so young, I won't know till he gets out. He did send a story for his son, but only because I went on and on. So right now, he doesn't seem changed.

Examples of those who said that FM had changed their Graduates' attitudes towards their children included the following:

He's always been very close to his children. Being away from them was very difficult for him. On home visits now, though, he always makes sure he spends more time with them. He appreciates the support he's had from our daughters. The course made him more aware of how much our son really needed him while he's been away in prison.

He feels like he's a Dad now. He talks about his daughter a lot more.

He doesn't see 3 of his children but he's got very close to his son.

I and his wife and children went in for the Family Day. It was so much fun for them, seeing the role play and the presentations, being given presents, eating and playing together. He talks to his children now, phones them every day and sends letters. He's a good Dad, but he's been addicted to drugs. He's talked to them about this now and knows he needs to stay off the drugs and stay out of prison for their sake.

5.11 The Supporter interviewees were further asked whether FM had changed their Graduates' attitudes towards other members of their family (as opposed to making an impact on the family themselves). 19 of the 21 to whom this applied said 'Yes'. Two said 'No', one on the grounds that the Graduate's attitude had always been positive and close, and one on the grounds that this had yet to be put to the test. The comment of one

Supporter who was unsure, highlighted the fact that while family contact is crucial for many offenders, families can also sometimes be part of the reason why people offend and that, in such a case, it may not be a good idea to return to that family on release:

He doesn't really have contact with his family, but he has said that when he comes out, he wants to build bridges with them. He's the kind of person who does one thing at a time. The first thing is to be a Family Man. My worry is that I don't think his family helped him to keep straight.

Examples of those who said 'Yes, include the following, of which the second also involves a Graduate's attitude having changed in relation to the need to withdraw to some extent from his wider family:

His Mum's 74. Before, when he was stressing with everything, she got stressed too. But now he's more like just talkative and not stressing her. She's not worried when he rings now. She looks forward to talking to him.

Yes. He's the oldest son and his mother is a single parent. There were difficult, challenging dynamics between his mother and father. His mother was very controlling. He now feels he doesn't need to be there any more to support her and look after his 8 younger brothers. It's a challenging thing to change while you're in prison.

He has renewed contact with his brother and has now realised that family is family and you can't be estranged – life's too short.

I think so, yes. Well he wasn't respecting anybody before, but now he's got a respectful attitude to my parents and his own.

5.12 Supporter interviewees were invited to say what they thought had been the main changes in their Graduate's behaviour since undertaking FM. Apart from one, quoted below, all had seen some level of change, again focused around communication skills and family:

None. He's just back to the happy Jack. What he did was a one-off and the only time he'll ever be in prison. He won't be going back there!

Realising what his family means to him – especially as he didn't have a good experience of his own when he was growing up.

He had to play a lady's role in the play and this put him in touch with his feminine side! It's made him more understanding of the women in the family.

He always had a very short fuse, but now in phone calls, he's not always 'going off on one' like a bull in a china shop

He can accept things better, and is calm, and can deal with problems. I think all that anger he had in him has gone. He's mellowed.

5.13 Asked whether they felt their Graduate had become a 'Family Man', in line with the programme's aim, 21 said 'Yes', two were unsure, and one (Jenny, but with no further comment) said 'No'. Those who were unsure explained their reasons:

He would like to be. He's said all the right things. I don't think anything can be proved until he's out. He's had sentences before. He still rings his parents when he wants money. If he lets his Mum down again, it will crush her. She's brought up his sons, now 18 and 21. She just wants him to make her proud.

I think he wants to become a 'Family Man', but you don't really know till he comes out.

Examples of those who said 'Yes' follow:

I'd say so, as when he rings up, he's talking about us getting married, getting our own place and having kids. He's more serious about it now.

Yes, definitely. He was always a 'Family Man', but I think it's deepened that commitment. He's from Jamaica – there's the extended family and the boundaries can be very blurry – but he's now clear that his own family, and himself, come first.

What he said to me was 'Mum, I came in here as a boy and I'm going out a man'. I find that very reassuring!

5.14 The Supporter interviewees were then asked to rate their level of optimism that their Graduates could sustain, or continue to sustain the changes they had made as a result of doing FM after their release. Compared with the sample of Graduates (see **Table 13** above), **Table 18** below shows these levels as still mostly in the top half of the rating scale, but with some tempering scores and comments:

Table 18: Supporter interviewees' levels of optimism about Graduate's ability to sustain FM changes after release (n = 24)

RATING SCALE	Very low Very high									
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
RATING LEVEL										
Supporter interviewees' ratings (n = 24)	-	1	1	1	2	3	6	7	1	2

Supporter scoring 2: *I try to be hopeful for the sake of my son, as he (Graduate) is his Dad, but I don't really believe he will change. And I don't really want him back – it's just for my son's sake.*

Supporter scoring 4: *I want to score about 8, but the realist in me says 4!*

Supporter scoring 6: *I don't know when he comes out what'll happen. I think he'll do brilliant, but I can't say till he's out.*

Supporter scoring 8: *I'm very optimistic because he now wants to progress on to other courses – he got such a positive review and feedback for his work.*

Supporter scoring 10: *I'm very optimistic, because we've learned now that we have to take time to continue this process. We were complacent before.*

5.15 Finally, as for the questionnaire respondents, these Supporter interviewees were invited to make 'further comments' and about half again chose to do this. The selection below highlights the main points they made:

It was a great course. The teachers were very helpful, not just to my son, but to his brothers and especially to me. You see, I can't write, and they helped me with the forms. It's made a great difference to us all. We can communicate now. His brothers now talk to me and don't just all go upstairs without saying anything. I just want to thank the teachers again.

When I first read some of the material on the Supporters' day, I thought it was not very deep. But now I've had time to think about it, I think there's a lot in it. He was the oldest in the group, the father figure! And I'm turning 50. But I felt that the course renewed our relationship – starting again. It was a very important, very valuable course and I hope you continue to get funding for it

I do think they should roll out the course to all prisons. He's now doing other courses, because he wants to, not because he's told to. It's money well spent. Go to the last day of the course when the families are there. Then you'll see what I mean!

Everything seems calm now. The thunderstorm has gone.

5.16 In summary, the 50 questionnaire and 24 interview responses from these Family Man Graduate Supporters have demonstrated that they see a real longer-term impact of the programme on themselves, their Graduates and, where relevant, their children and wider family. There have been a minority of notable exceptions to this, which are to be expected in a population of prisoners who have often caused greater or lesser degrees of emotional harm to their families. There have also been understandable levels of caution expressed from Supporters, mostly wanting to believe that their Graduates have

changed in the ways most of them now readily talk about, but needing the proof that these changes can be or will continue to be implemented in the future. There is also an issue to be explored relating to continuing agency support following the 'What Next?' day. Nevertheless, the very large number of positive comments about the programme, particularly in relation to the acquisition of communication skills, the motivation to self-refer to other courses, and the re-prioritisation of family, show that the involvement of Supporters in this programme has made a substantial difference over time to the dynamics of relationships which, together with employment and stable lifestyles, are the crucial ingredients of successful resettlement (Laub & Sampson, 2001) To a large extent, then, evidence from these Supporters has shown that, through group and personal development skills (Objective (b)), BIS/Skills Funding Agency focus) FM has helped to develop and maintain their family/friendship ties with their prisoner relatives (Objective (a), DfE focus) and that, some time after the FM programme, they consider their prisoner relatives' attitudes and behaviour to have changed positively (Objective (c), NOMS focus) both towards them and towards their resettlement plans and prospects.

6. Summary, Implications and Recommendations

6.1 This report has presented the findings from 104 questionnaires and 48 in-depth interviews with 'Family Man' prisoner Graduates and their Supporters, between 6 months and 2½ years after the programme. While the questionnaires represent about a fifth of the contactable population, some Graduates and Supporters could not be contacted, partly because of the change in prison numbers, and others did not respond to the request to take part in the research, and so the findings from those who were reached and chose to respond may not necessarily be typical. However, as stated at the beginning, the response level from a relatively unstable population in terms of movement and motivation is a respectable one and may be deemed to be at least an adequate representation of views and experiences. The following paragraphs summarise the evaluation's salient findings about the longer-term impact of FM on prisoners and their families, their implications for the programme's continuing development and, where appropriate, offer some recommendations, indicated by a star.

6.2 The research has examined a wide-ranging FM Graduate group which, although not directly representative, obtained views from those on remand and those serving short, medium and long sentences, also reflecting trends in the wider prison population. These included relatively high proportions of younger prisoners serving their first sentences, prisoners with a parent who had been criminally convicted and, importantly for this evaluation, those who had been suspended or excluded from school. Many others were disaffected with education. The risk of continuing intergenerational transmission of offending appeared high, without some form of mediating intervention, as posited by Farrington *et al.* (see **para. 4.6**), such as that which FM provided for prisoners at all stages of sentence. The group also included a higher than average proportion of BME prisoners, which showed that FM was able to recruit a frequently hard-to-reach population. The majority of men had children. Six of the in-depth interviewees had been released.

- ❖ Relevant departments could recognise the flexibility of the FM programme in terms of its wide-ranging recruitment, and ability to run programmes at any stage of sentence, by funding a 2-day refresher course, in response to Graduate and Supporter suggestions reported here.

6.3 Questionnaire responses showed that, through FM's group and drama-based dynamics, the vast majority of Graduate respondents: felt accepted and valued by their FM group; learned how to solve some of their problems from others' experiences; taught them how others might see them; were given hope that they could change and do better. These ingredients were crucial for men, some of whom came from damaged, and not infrequently brutal backgrounds, where emotion and listening to others could be seen as a sign of weakness. Based on the programme's underpinning theory manual (McGuire, 2009), these findings constituted evidence that the necessary building blocks

to achievement and progression in education, training and employment, and in lifestyle change (Objective (b), BIS/Skills Funding Agency focus) were firmly in place.

6.4 Further questionnaire responses also demonstrated that the vast majority of Graduate respondents felt FM had helped them to: understand their families; improve their relationships with their families (Objective (a), DfE focus); and think about the process of resettlement (Objective (c), NOMS focus). They were able to report the steps they had taken/were still taking, to implement the goals jointly identified with their Supporters; these followed the FM Family Action Plan's underpinning model of the seven pathways to reducing reoffending (Home Office, 2004) and frequently included enthusiastic progression to other courses and learning experiences, as previous research has also shown (Boswell & Poland, 2009). In terms of post-programme behaviour within the prison environment, self reported adjudications although of limited value in themselves, appeared very low, bearing out a previous pilot exercise by Safe Ground. A lengthy account by one Graduate at **Appendix C** showed the wider effects of FM on his understanding of group behaviour, and his sense of how to stay safe within the institutional setting, highlighting that FM can also provide skills and understanding which contribute to the Safer Custody policy of the Prison service.

6.5 Graduate responses to in-depth interviews reinforced the strength of the questionnaire findings and also confirmed the continuing high impact of FM upon them, their perceptions of a similarly high impact upon their Supporters and, to a slightly lesser extent and more indirectly, upon their children and wider family. Their levels of optimism about their ability to sustain the changes in attitude and behaviour they had made as a result of the programme were high, and were at least borne out by the absence of further reoffending (as far as was known) by the six released interviewees, though none of these latter pretended their resettlement paths were easy. This gives FM a tentative claim to be able to contribute to the reduction of the risk of reoffending.

- ❖ Fuller evidence is needed in respect of the extent of desistance/reoffending by FM Graduates. This could be obtained if NOMS could provide access to Police National Computer reconviction data.

6.6 The views of a minority of questionnaire respondents and one interviewee respondent must not, however, be forgotten. A few considered that they already knew most of what the programme taught; a few had not been ready to change their outlook; a few could not remember what was in their Action Plans; and a few had not been able to implement those plans. The interviewee felt that some of the games and role plays etc were undignified for grown men to engage in and, in general, was not moved or motivated by the programme. However, he had not reoffended after several months.

- ❖ These findings may indicate the need for a more meticulous programme selection process and also consideration of the possibility that some participants may have responded better to a different or accompanying type of intervention.

6.7 The study also elicited the views and experiences of a similarly wide-ranging group of Supporters of the revised FM programme. Of the questionnaire respondents, 40% were partners of the Graduates and 32% were mothers or sisters, perhaps indicating a lack of close male support in the relevant prisoners' lives. Just one of their Graduates had been released. The proportions of in-depth interview respondents were similar; two were Supporters of released Graduates.

- ❖ Prisoners are often the product of broken parental relationships and lack positive male role models in their lives. Where the FM tutors are not male, there may be an argument for those who do not have partners as Supporters being encouraged to work with a male Volunteer to further this positive male role modelling and assisting them to develop their own identity as fathers and family members.

6.8 Questionnaire responses by Supporters about relationship factors with their FM student showed that the vast majority considered that FM helped to improve that relationship, and also helped the student to understand his responsibilities to his family and/or his Supporter. They further confirmed: that FM had helped them and their student to think about the process of resettlement (bearing out the Graduates' response at **para. 6.4**); the visibility of Graduate change; and the value of both Tutor and peer family support. These responses provided evidence for the meeting of Objectives (a) (DfE focus) and (c) (NOMS focus). Supporters further noted the disadvantages of prisoners moving establishment after FM, and the need for FM to be rolled out more widely.

- ❖ Given that most family relationships appear to improve through FM, it would be helpful if prisons could agree not to move Graduates further away from home after completing the programme, running the risk of weakening the renewed social bonds which can contribute to successful resettlement. Further, the suggestion that many more, if not all prisons should deliver FM, is made so often by Graduates and Supporters alike, that it should be seriously considered by NOMS.

6.9 This was the first time any of these questionnaire respondents had been invited to be involved in a prison-based programme which their family member/friend was undertaking, or to have a chance alongside them, to work with resettlement agencies. Consistent with previous FM evaluations involving Supporters, their questionnaire ratings of these opportunities were extremely high, effectively meeting all 3 evaluation Objectives.

- ❖ This unique model of involving Supporters in the FM programme, and facilitating them to work with their prisoner relatives in planning for the future through exchanging letters, setting action plan goals and jointly attending 'What

Next' sessions, clearly works effectively in promoting resettlement. It could be usefully replicated across programmes in all the other pathways to reducing reoffending, potentially increasing their value and effectiveness, as evidenced in the responses to this evaluation. Safe Ground staff could advise on this process.

6.10 While most Supporters were very positive about the agencies which had offered support to their FM students and, indeed, to themselves on the 'What Next day, only one of these respondents had been in or received further contact with these agencies, though some others knew that their Graduate had. This was not necessarily a problem for Supporters, but nonetheless seemed a little surprising, given that a majority of Supporters were close family, and consistent findings about the considerable support needs of prisoners' families (e.g. Boswell and Wedge, 2002; Smith *et al.*, 2007; Wright and Khan, 2010).

- ❖ FM staff could begin a conversation with these agencies about the quantity and nature of their follow-up contact with FM Supporters to find out what, if any, action needs taking here. The relevant Family Support Workers in each prison should contact all Supporters after the programme has ended, to make sure they have been given any support they have needed or asked for.

6.11 While most Supporters were able to confirm that their Graduates had taken/were taking steps along the way to their Action Plan goals, one particularly sad exception was a (now ex-) partner who had had the highly distressing experience of her Graduate being released, coming home and beating her up, and being returned to prison. This reinforced the need for 'the proof of the pudding', which in-depth interviewees (who were generally positive about the impact of FM on their Graduates, their children and families and themselves) often referred to. Supporters, from their home and community-based positions were, unsurprisingly, more grounded in the realities of the resettlement challenge than perhaps were their Graduates. Nevertheless, most remained optimistic because of the real and continuing changes they had seen in their Graduates' attitudes and behaviour.

- ❖ As advised by Safe Ground staff, it is important that every prison running FM takes responsibility for targeting suitable candidates and ensuring they have all been cleared through security and public protection.

6.12 The most frequent lasting change that almost all the Graduates spoke about and that the vast majority of Supporters confirmed, was that the men had learned to listen and communicate, and had prioritised their relationships with their families, some for the first time. This was frequently reported by both groups as a very powerful experience, produced by FM's drama-based activity, and reinforced through the letter-writing and Action Plan work between the men and their Supporters.

- ❖ The drama content of this programme is clearly the highlight and the ‘hook’ into further learning and development down the desistance path for these men. It serves as a reminder of the importance of the arts in personal growth and, where its effectiveness is demonstrated, needs to remain funded by relevant departments.

6.13 Overall, these respondents saw and experienced ‘Family Man’ as a highly creative programme, which had the capacity to promote longer-term reflection on hitherto often difficult family relationships, enabling many of those families to reconnect over time, and to build on their rediscovered bonds to help encourage and sustain life changes across the board. For these families, the last quotation from one of the Supporter interviewees at **5.15** provides an apt epithet: *Everything seems calm now. The thunderstorm has gone.* But, as many of these Graduates acknowledged, and their Supporters know well, the work begun by FM has to be continued indefinitely by them, so that the signs and triggers of future storms can be identified, headed off, and the long journey towards stable resettlement be fully completed.

7. Conclusion

In conclusion, this evaluation has portrayed the views and experiences of 'Family Man' Graduate and Supporters from the revised 2008, 2009 and 2010 programmes, all of whom had completed these programmes between 6 months and 2½ years previously. Their responses have demonstrated that FM has opened up a strategic path, onto which it has set frequently disengaged and educationally disaffected prisoners on a learning journey focused on the maintenance of family ties from and beyond prison. The involvement of Supporters who are often the prisoner students' 'significant others', has linked them firmly into goal-setting about family matters, as well as the other key constituents of successful resettlement. Through its careful piloting and regular monitoring and evaluation, Safe Ground has shown how this complex path can be negotiated, and that it is a holistic journey in social bonding and necessary partnership with others, retaining the knowledge of education as a protective factor at its centre (Holden and Lloyd, 2004).

The totality of evidence provided in the foregoing report has shown how strongly FM contributes to the three evaluation Objectives set out at 3.4. In other words, it supports Graduates and Supporters in developing and maintaining their family ties (DfE focus); it increases Graduates' skills in group work and personal development towards employment, training and education (ETE) both in prison and on release (BIS/Skills Funding Agency focus); and it changes Graduates' attitudes and behaviour, both towards the prison environment and towards their resettlement plans and prospects (NOMS focus). With its strong focus on promoting family ties and ETE skills, FM sets its students firmly on the road to desistance from crime – and, although a modest number, the 9 released students upon whom this study reports, appear not to have reoffended, when statistically, they were likely to do so. For the vast majority of the respondents to this evaluation, 'Family Man' has been a significant learning experience which, through drama, confidence-building and resettlement focus, has changed prisoners' attitudes and helped them gradually build upon and implement these changes as they have moved towards and beyond release. There can be little doubt of the enduring impact that this programme has made on these men and their families.

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APPENDIX A: NUMBER AND TYPE OF DATA COLLECTION FROM FM GRADUATES AND SUPPORTERS DURING STUDY PERIOD

The chart below shows the number and type of data collection from Graduates and Supporters associated with each of the seven prisons running the revised FM programme. It should be noted that problems with questionnaire distribution at HMPs Leeds and Parc meant that no response was received from Leeds prisoners (though one released Graduate was interviewed after speaking to his Supporter) and only one from Parc, who did not give his consent to be interviewed.

Number and Type of Data Collection from FM Graduates and Supporters

PRISON	FM YR.	QUESTIONNAIRES		IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS	
		GRADUATES	SUPPORTERS	GRADUATES	SUPPORTERS
BELMARSH	2008	1	3	1	1
	2009	5	3	3	2
	2010	12	8	8	3
BIRMINGHAM	2008	1	2	1	1
	2009	4	2	1	1
	2010	4	2	2	2
BRISTOL	2008	1	1		
	2009	2	2	1	2
	2010	1	1		
HIGHPOINT	2008	2	2	1	1
	2009	4	4	1	2
	2010	10	8	1	3
LEEDS	2008				
	2009			1	1
	2010				
PARC	2008				
	2009		1		1
	2010	1	3		1
WANDSWORTH	2008	2	2	1	1
	2009	2	3	1	1
	2010	2	3	1	1
TOTALS		54	50	24	24

APPENDIX B: BREAKDOWN OF SELF-DEFINED ETHNIC ORIGIN OF FM GRADUATE QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONDENTS (IN ORDER OF FREQUENCY)

SELF-DEFINED ETHNIC ORIGIN	PERCENTAGE (n = 54)
White British	48%
Black British	14%
Black Caribbean	6%
Black British-African	4%
White Other	4%
White Irish	2%
White Welsh	2%
African Portuguese	2%
Mixed Race	2%
British Asian	2%
Indian	2%
Other	2%
Not answered	10%
TOTAL	100%

APPENDIX C: Additional comments from an FM Graduate questionnaire respondent about his experience of the programme within the prison environment.

Paul, 44, serving his 1st prison sentence of 6 years, having graduated from FM in the first year of his sentence, now (2 yrs later) awaiting transfer to a Category 'D' prison

When first imprisoned, I wanted to cut all ties with my family and not expose them to the prison environment. I became emotionally volatile when thinking of my 3 children, and this affected my behaviour in prison. **Now** my children are a source of joy and comfort. My wife is my main Supporter. My every action in prison has been focused on progression: attitude, work ethic, peer mentoring, wing rep, and voluntary drug testing.

The 'Family Man' course has a massive impact on those who attend it, many of which are not necessarily obvious to the outside observer. Certainly, the concept of making prisoners aware that they are behaving in the same fashion as 'The Selfish Giant' is, for many of the course participants, a life-changing moment. The actual realisation of the impact and influence these men have always had over their partners and children really does come as a shock to those who have been blind to it. It fundamentally challenges the view that 'wives just nag and moan' in favour of 'she loves me and is worried about the future'. Also, the discovery that the offending behaviour of those around us (as we grow up) influences our life choices and levels of respect for society was instrumental. Rather than providing an excuse for our own behaviour, 'Family Man' allowed us to see the impact it had on our families and children.

However, the 'Family Man' course provided many more tangible benefits to its participants, especially in the short term. I enrolled/applied mainly because of the incentive of an extended visit with my wife, and the opportunity for her to understand how my prison sentence was to be administered (the 'What Next?' day). I really did not think that the course would offer me any insight into my family life as I was already reasonably well-educated, an active father and husband, acutely aware of my actions/conviction upon my young family. The real insight I gained was how 18 months on bail and 6 weeks on trial had isolated and alienated me from the support and love I had around me. How my self-esteem had been hugely impacted without my knowledge, and how I had withdrawn psychologically, emotionally and spiritually from my family. The opportunity for my family to come to the prison, and be openly proud of me during the Family Day, was a seminal moment.

Well before the culmination of the course, came the real power of what 'Family Man' provides. The environment created by the 2 screws who ran it became so many things: a sanctuary and safe haven from prison life; a forum where I could get both intellectual stimulation and not be punished or victimised for wanting it; a method of communicating with the prison authorities and learning how to interpret and

understand the culture of prisoners and prison officers.

Most of all, 'Family Man' gave me a peer group. We were different in all aspects of our lives - age, race/ethnicity, experience, ability, background - yet within a couple of days, it gave me a perfect reason to make eye contact whilst out of my cell, on association, in the corridors and exercise yard. Being part of the 'Family Man' group gave me a connection to groups of men who had not acknowledged me before - black men, Muslim men, oriental men, Travellers. It diffused the institutional hate and mistrust I had encountered, and allowed for a much higher level of tolerance, which significantly lowered my risk of being subject to personal violence, abuse and intimidation.

'Family Man', therefore, gave me social support on a level that was otherwise unobtainable, and hugely increased the quality of my life inside. It also hugely decreased my level of daily anxiety and allowed me to function as an independent person within the prison.

There were no 'special' or 'outstanding' relationships that created these benefits - it was purely because I was now part of a group that had its own unique reasons to form a fraternity, and extend first courtesy and then peer support to each other. Compulsory role play, enforced - or rather facilitated - by screws, is a great leveller!

Finally, some of the personal journeys the lads went on were truly incredible. There were some that can only be described in terms of superlatives - awe-inspiring, motivational, etc. etc. But the thing that impressed me most was seeing a couple of proper 'bad-ass' gangster types finally set aside the issues they had (be it rage, 'attitude', chips on their shoulder, or effects of institutionalised racism and suppression) and actually be open about their life so far and how it impacted on their family - past, present and future.

APPENDIX D: BREAKDOWN OF SELF-DEFINED ETHNIC ORIGIN OF FM SUPPORTER INTERVIEW RESPONDENTS (IN ORDER OF FREQUENCY)

SELF-DEFINED ETHNIC ORIGIN	PERCENTAGE (n = 24)
White British	48%
Black British	20%
Black Caribbean	12%
Mixed Race	8%
White Irish	4%
British Asian	4%
African	4%
TOTAL	100%

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NB: Further information about the work of Safe Ground can be found on the following website: www.safeground.org.uk
