

# FAMILY CARE

## Organised by:



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# PROGRAMME CHARACTERISTICS



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# Parental Incarceration in Singapore

- In 2016, about 1,100 out of 9,502 inmates in Singapore (12%) were parents with children under the age of 16.<sup>1,2</sup>
- Young children have little, no memory of their fathers. The older ones have very traumatic memories.
- Spouses and caregivers are left on their own to raise their families.
- It is challenging for inmates to maintain good family ties during incarceration. Upon release, the situation does not just change for the better and can become even much worse.

## References

1. Tan (2017)
2. Singapore Prison Service (2018)

# Singapore Prison Service's Intention

- Thus, family-focused programmes is a key initiative of the Singapore Prison Service (SPS) to help inmates bond with their families during incarceration.<sup>1</sup>
- The SPS intends to focus on the children of inmates, in order to prevent intergenerational offending.<sup>2</sup>
- Most past programmes focus on serving one group through counselling, casework, and mentoring (e.g., incarcerated parents or caregivers or children of inmates).

## References

1. Singapore Prison Service (2018)
2. Tan (2017)

# Significance of Family CARE

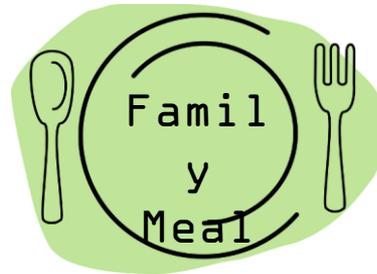
- Inmates often have minimal contact with their family during incarceration and they lose their identity as a father. They need to re-establish their father identity.
- Throughout their incarceration and especially prior to release, they need to begin the re-integration process, restoring family relationships and family roles.
- Family CARE works with the whole family unit to promote family identity and cohesion.



# Project Components



parenting  
with  
CONFIDENCE



## Four 3-hour workshop sessions

A 12-hour programme to empower fathers with the skills and confidence to parent

## 2-hour parent-child session

Help father and child to discover and express their primary communication style for receiving and expressing love; **Dr Gary Chapman's *The Five Love Languages***

## 3-hour family session

Invites the children and immediate family members to reconnect and renew their commitment to journey together as a family

290  
prison inmates &  
their family  
members



*Dad and daughter sharing  
A tender moment*



*Enjoying the joy of family time*

*“Through this programme, I started to realise their love and support, and that my family still needs me. This whole experience has been a great encouragement to me and my family.” – Father of 3 children*

PHOTO CREDITS TO THE STRAITS TIMES PHOTO: SEAH KWANG PENG



# THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK



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# Overview

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## Theoretical Approach

## Implications

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### Identity theory

(Burke & Stets,  
2009/2012)

- Inmates experience loss of parental identity.
- They give up or downplay their parenting role and responsibilities.

### Family systems theory

(Broderick, 1993)

- Family support is a protective factor against recidivism.

# Identity Theory

- Inmates' inability to perform parenting behaviours means that their behaviours become incongruent with their identity as a parent.<sup>1</sup>
- This results in identity interruption,<sup>2</sup> where inmates may give up or repress their identity as parents.

**Identity interruption**

**Inmate behaviours**  $\neq$  **Parent behaviours**

## References

1. Arditti, Smock, & Parkman (2005)
2. Cast & Burke (2002)



# Identity Theory

- The constant exposure to the prison environment heightens the salience of their identity as inmates.
- Incarcerated parents become less committed to their identity as spouses and parents because of the reduced number and quality of social interactions with their spouses and children.<sup>1,2</sup>

Inmate  
identity



Parent  
identity

## References

1. Stryker (1980/2002)
2. Burke & Stets (2009/2002)

# Identity Theory

Studies have found that incarcerated fathers:

- Experienced a sense of incompetence, guilt, and failure to fulfil expectations associated with their fatherhood identity.<sup>1</sup>
- Began to lose their parental identity and self-esteem.<sup>2,3</sup>
- Might try to resolve this discrepancy by downplaying their parental responsibilities.<sup>4,5</sup>

## References

1. Chui (2016a)
2. Day, Acock, Bahr, & Arditti (2005)
3. Nurse (2002)
4. Arditti et al. (2005)
5. Clarke et al. (2005)

# Family Systems Theory

- Family interactions and relationships are meaningful because family members both influence and receive influence from each other.<sup>1</sup>
- The quality of family relationships significantly influences how members cope with changes due to the incarceration and subsequent release of a parent.
- Family visitation and meaningful interactions predict lower recidivism and positive post-release family relationships.<sup>2,3</sup>

## References

1. Broderick (1993)
2. Bales & Mears (2008)
3. La Vigne, Naser, Brooks, & Castro (2005)

# Research in Singapore

- There is little published research and official data on inmates in Singapore.
- Interviews with ex-inmates identified key factors for successful reintegration into society, including:<sup>1</sup>
  - Making a personal choice to change
  - Having purpose and vision in life
  - Having a conducive environment
  - Having a consistent network of support

## References

1. Chan & Boer (2016)

# Overview

## Theoretical Approach

## Project Objectives

### Identity theory

- Reinforce inmates' parental identity
- Strengthen inmates' involvement in parenting during imprisonment

### Family systems theory

- Strengthen family relationships, especially between inmates, spouse and children
- Increase family support and visitation

# EVALUATION

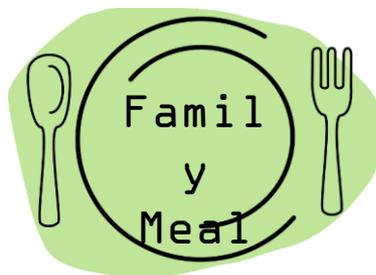


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**Outputs**  
(2016-2017)  
5 runs



**parenting**  
with  
**CONFIDENCE**



### Four 3-hour workshop sessions

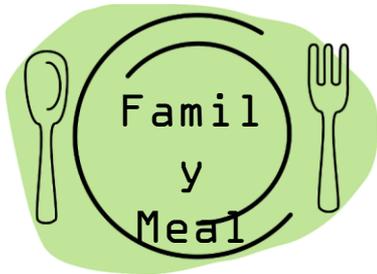
- 101 incarcerated fathers
- **Target for 2018: 60 inmates**

### 2-hour parent-child session

- 101 inmates, 101 children
- **Target for 2018: 60 inmate-child pairs**

### 3-hour family session

- 101 inmates
- 189 children, spouses, and other family members
- **Target for 2018: 60 inmates, 180 children, 60-90 spouses and other family members**



## Short-Term Outcomes

- Increase in parenting knowledge
- Increase in sense of competence in parenting
- Increase in ability to communicate as a family
- Increase in commitment as a family
- More frequent family visitations

## Long-Term Outcomes

- Stronger parent identity
- Stronger family relationships
- Increased family support for inmates after release

## Impact

- More intact families after release
- Lower recidivism

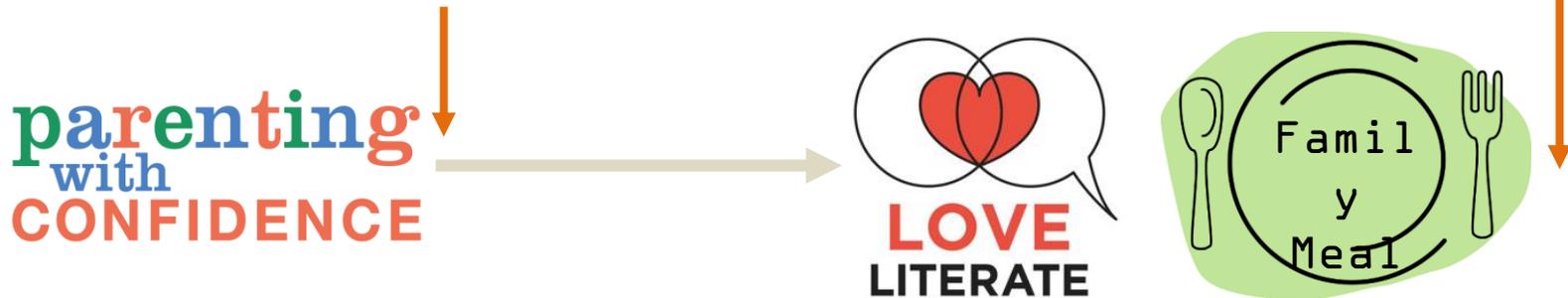
# Methodology

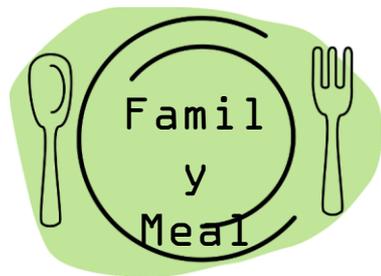
## Retrospective pre & posttest

- For incarcerated fathers at the end of final workshop session

## Retrospective pre & posttest

- For inmates and family members at the end of Family Visit





## Short-Term Outcomes

- Increase in parenting knowledge
- Increase in sense of competence in parenting
- Increase in ability to communicate as a family
- Increase in commitment as a family

Results  
(for 2017 runs)

↑  $p < .0001$

↑  $p < .0001$

↑  $p < .0001$

↑  $p < .0001$

Evaluation Results for 2017

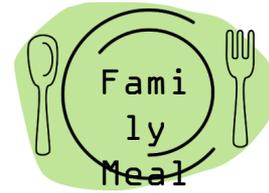


*Parenting with Confidence Workshop for Incarcerated Fathers*

	n	Pre-Workshop		Post-Workshop		t-test	p
		M	SD	M	SD		
I am aware of how I parent my children	45	3.04	0.77	4.62	0.53	-14.05	<.0001
I am able to show love to my children	45	3.24	0.77	4.89	0.32	-13.29	<.0001
I know how to manage my children's behaviour	45	2.84	0.95	4.60	0.54	-14.68	<.0001
I have the tools/skills to communicate with my children	44	2.93	0.85	4.77	0.42	-13.76	<.0001



# Evaluation Results for 2017



## Love Literate + Family Visit for Inmates and Family Members

	n	Pre-Programme		Post-Programme		t-test	p
		M	SD	M	SD		
I know what it takes to build a strong family.	125	3.47	1.00	4.74	0.51	-14.41	<.0001
I am confident that my family will change for the better.	125	3.75	1.04	4.85	0.38	-12.62	<.0001
I understand how to show and receive love in the 5 Love Languages.	124	3.30	1.22	4.73	0.56	-12.71	<.0001
I have a strong, close bond with my family members.	125	3.84	1.00	4.79	0.59	-10.57	<.0001



# REPLICABILITY



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# Replicability In Other Cultural Contexts

- Family CARE can be readily used for families in cultures.
- Studies in other societies such as Hong Kong and US suggests similar issues:<sup>1,2,3,4</sup>
  - Loss of parental identity in incarcerated parents
  - Loss of contact and support between inmates and other family members
- Singapore is a multicultural nation and people from various cultures have participated in Family CARE.

## References

1. Chui (2016a)
2. Chui (2016b)
3. Arditti et al. (2005)
4. Clarke et al. (2005)



# Replicability In Other Cultural Contexts

- Family CARE's programme is based on common key principles for parenting and family relationships.
- *Parenting with Confidence* workshop was originally based on *Toolbox*, a parenting programme designed in New Zealand.



- Dr Gary Chapman's *The Five Love Languages* is internationally recognised and widely used.



# Replicability In Other Cultural Contexts

- Family CARE broadly follows in other prison parenting programmes, which “vary in their format but usually incorporate parenting classes, child friendly visiting arrangements, increased family contact and support for family members”.<sup>1,2,3,4</sup>

## References

1. Hayes, Butler, Devaney, & Percy (2018, p. 182)
2. Buston, Parkes, Thomson, Wight, & Fenton (2012)
3. Meek (2007)
4. Purvis (2013)

# SUSTAINABILITY



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# Readiness for Knowledge Transfer

- Documentation of procedures and materials for Family CARE has been done.
- Standardised programme materials including:
  - Parenting workshop participant's guide and trainer's manual
  - Presentation slides, handouts, activity props, scripts
  - Administrative forms, such as for registration and evaluation
  - Logistics list

# Ongoing and Future Development

## Community Support

- Parenting classes for caregivers
- Support for teenagers
- Holistic approach through a CARE network
- Families Helping Families

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 [user/FOTFSingapore](https://www.youtube.com/user/FOTFSingapore)

## contact us

9 Bishan Place  
#08-03 Junction 8 Office Tower  
Singapore 579837

**TEL 6336 1444**



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[www.family.org.sg](http://www.family.org.sg)