



LONG LIFE LEARNING - Programma Grundtvig

Progetto LEGAMI

MILAN, ITALY





United Nations International Convention on the Rights of the Child statements



The United Nations International Convention on the Rights of the Child, adopted in 1989, states that every child has the right of maintaining the bond with both parents, even if he does not live with them. The Draft European Charter on the Rights of the Child of 1992, article 9,15, specifically states the right of the child of maintaining the bond with the imprisoned parent.



U.N. Convention on the rights of the child

Article 3

In all actions concerning children, whether undertaken by public or private social welfare institutions, courts of law, administrative authorities or legislative bodies, the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration



Article 9

“A child having one or both of his parents in prison must have the opportunity to maintain relationships with the imprisoned parents”.



U.N. Convention on the rights of the child

Article 12

The views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child.

Article 15

1. States Parties recognize the rights of the child to freedom of association and to freedom of peaceful assembly.

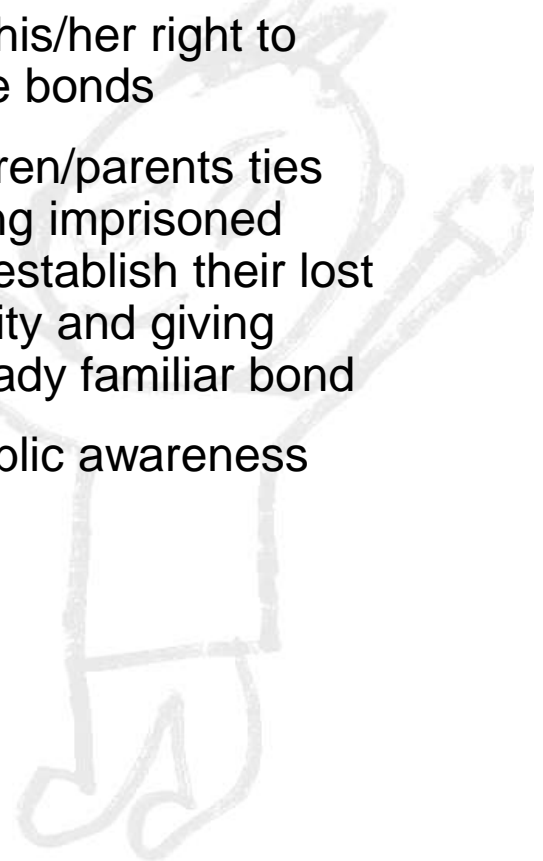
2. No restrictions may be placed on the exercise of these rights other than those imposed in conformity with the law and which are necessary in a democratic society in the interests of national security or public safety, public order (ordre public), the protection of public health or morals or the protection of the rights and freedoms of others.





Bambinisenzasbarre's MISSION

- Maintaining the bonds between imprisoned parents and their children
- Improving parental role first of all focusing on the child's interests and his/her right to maintain close bonds
- Keeping children/parents ties means allowing imprisoned parents to re-establish their lost parental identity and giving children a steady familiar bond
- Increasing public awareness





***Bambinisenzasbarre* is developing three different activities to raise public awareness**

- Providing initiatives in prison offering educational and psychological support
- Inspiring institutions and specific networks to develop efficient solutions to maintaining parent/child bonds
- Participation in European Commission projects focusing on the issue of imprisoned parents and family ties



LEGAMI, Grundtvig Program



LEGAMI is a partnership learning programme that deal with supporting imprisoned parents. BambiniSenzaSbarre and partners have been long working on this on a national/international basis, comparing best practices and theories and developing paths of research and action to give families adequate learning tools and improve the parents-children relationship, aiming at social prevention and reduction of distress.



Some data and general information



- Families with a detention story are usually at risk of exclusion from society, relationships, work and training. Minors are more prone to leaving school and deviance, many become convicts themselves and become parents before the average age of their country.
- 750 thousand children enter every day the European prisons to meet their imprisoned parents, 75 thousand every year in Italy are separated from a parent (or both), as imprisoned, 4.500 in Lombardy region only.



Some data and general information

30% of the children risk to become a future criminal according to the official statistics, if missing interventions, supports and answers to their requirements.

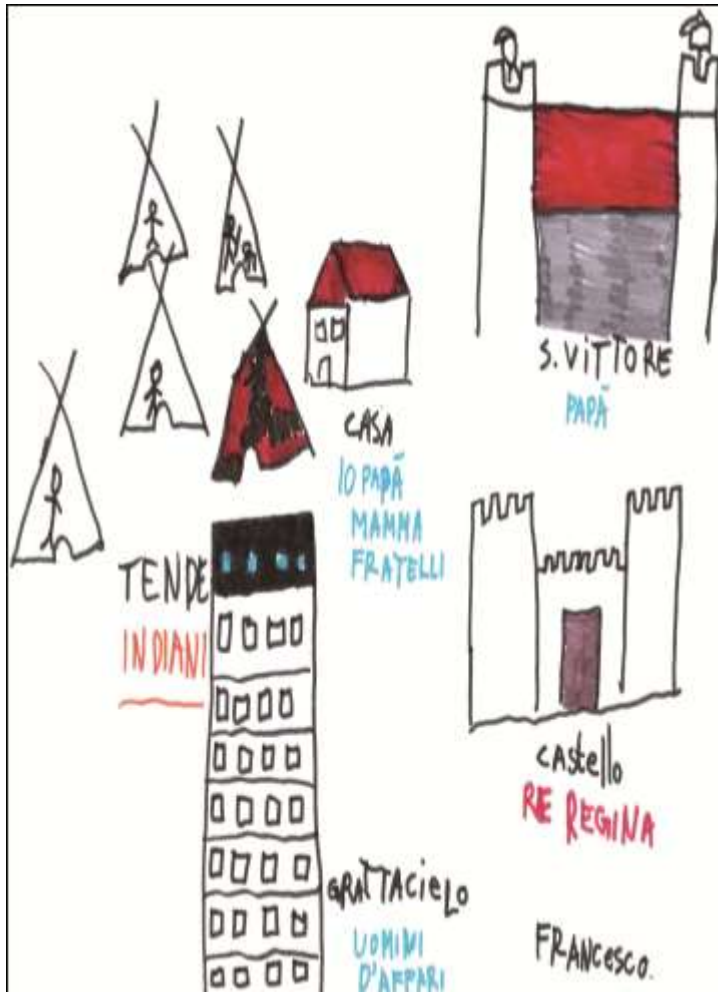
750.00 children in the European Union are divided from their prisoner parent, or sometimes from both (*National French Statistic Institute - 1999*)

30% of prisoners in France is son of a prisoner parent (*Parents and Children Together, PACT*)

An imprisoned parent's son/daughter, when adult, has 5 times more chance getting in conflict with the law than other people (*Texas, Usa, Assistance Service*)



LEGAMI GRUNDTVIG PROJECT



Bambinisenzasbarre and partners are settling up 3 **TIPS** (*Training and Information Packs*) a training guide, suggestions and recommendations devoted to 3 targets:

- **Schools:** to raise awareness among those who play key roles in the lives of prisoners' children, in their communities, as well as in schools and pre-schools
- **Prisons:** to support prisoners' children by promoting recommendations and initiatives that will improve visits conditions for them and boost the awareness and competence of those working with them
- **Professionnels:** to promote recommendations and initiatives that will boost competence and skills of practitioners working with imprisoned parents and their children to improve their lives and boost all relevant skills



Prison TIP

For prison TIP Bambinisenzasbarre activity is focused on prisons staff: directors, officers, trainers, policeman to whom address the key message: *The prisoner is not only a prisoner but a parent as well.*

Main goals

- To make accepted the issue that “a parent *remain* a parent even if he is in prison”
- To demonstrate maintaining the parental bonds is useful to social reintegration and to avoid the relapses
- Take into consideration the child’s point of view and rights: he/she enters into prison to visit his/her parents, and prison must to be able to welcome him
- Motivate the prison staff and make it change its work’s attitude/methods/approach



“Yellow Space” activity as a best practice of TIP in prison



- The “Yellow Space” is a waiting area inside the San Vittore Prison, in Milan, for children (about 150 per week) visiting their parents on the occasion of a weekly talk, an hour meeting which becomes central to develop any children’s relationship with their parents.
- The “Yellow Space” daily activity is a kind of ‘*innovative*’ training to prison’s officers: working with the ‘shadow’ method - side by side - the *Bambinisenzasbarre* staff makes they slowly change their attitude and approach toward children (*see video*).



Yellow Space



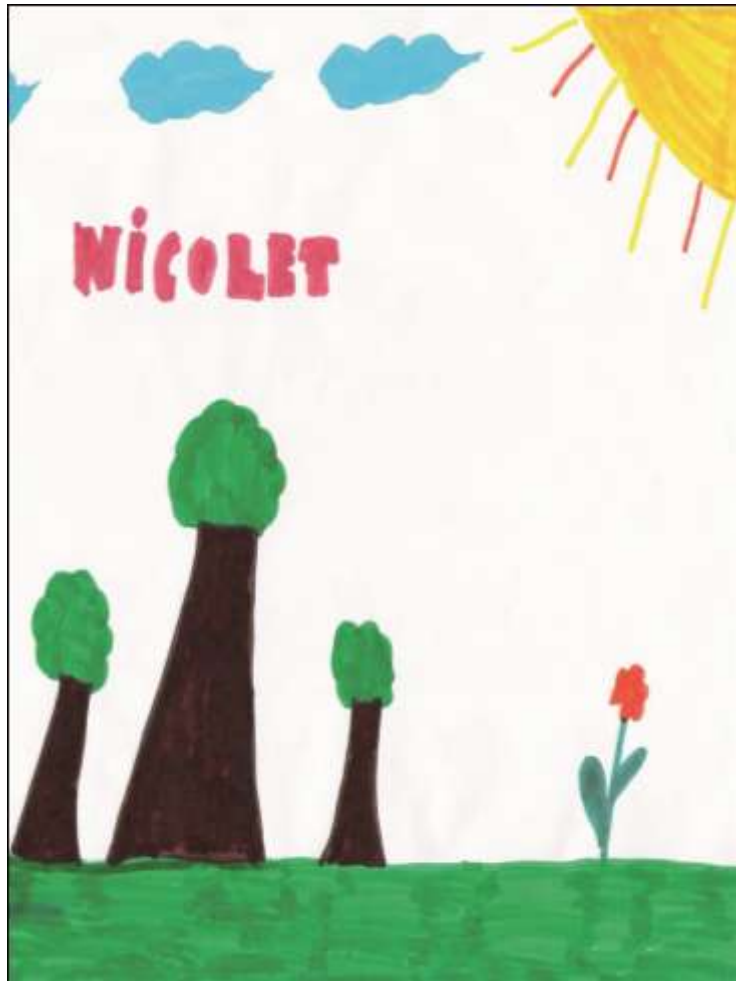
The “Spazio Giallo” (“Yellow Space”) is a daily training carried out by team working side by side the prison officers, devoted to meetings with families, and it is becoming an effective method of changing the approach children act in such a particular environment.

The “Spazio Giallo” (“Yellow Space”) was awarded “*Friend of the Family Prize*”, by the Premiership of the Cabinet, Department of the Family Politics “*Merit Special Mention*” (Nov. 2009).



TIP's crucial points

- Analysis of difficulties are encountered and of the difficulties of parenting in prison
- Confronting bias and stereotypes and fostering empathy
- How to reduce difficulties of imprisoned parent as work is carried out. Why the way the work is carried out exacerbates the parent's difficulties; in which way their work reduces the parent's difficulties. *E.g.: avoid humiliating the prisoner in front of the child.*



TIP's recommendations

- The director's prison attendance is an added value to the message
- Depending on the kind of prison, decide if gather the officers by hierarchy or keep them separated
- Start from the needs of target to draw up and prepare the training
- The training should take place during work-time, not mandatory
- Use a simple and easy language, understandable with concrete examples
- Work in small groups using games and other similar tools
- Involve the officers on the meetings, conferences, workshop to motivate them and let them feel involved



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