

## Why a Village?

The village is a metaphor for the First Floor Program because it emphasises an aspect of community which is not present in other organisations and, in many cases, is non-existent in modern society.

Villages are important as they are inclusive and evolve to meet the needs of their population. In this way they are able to become self-sustaining communities. Villages rely on close bonds between their members and, as a result, members feel comfortable, welcome and safe in the village environment.

The groups established here aim to meet the needs of numerous individuals who have entered our village over a period of more than ten years. It is hoped that you and the other members enjoy the experience, whilst learning things about yourselves and assisting others in their personal discovery.

You are an integral part of the village we have created at the First Floor Program and our café hospitality work program.

You are a valuable part of this community and we thank you for your special gifts. The insight and kindness which you bring help to enrich the lives of the entire village community.

## The First Floor Program also offers the following:

- Drug & Alcohol Counselling
- SMART Recovery
- Case Management
- Outreach Programs
- Family Conferencing
- Mentoring
- Parenting Training
- Financial Literacy
- Workshops
- Social Outings
- Professional Workplace Training (hospitality)

## FOR ASSISTANCE OR MORE INFORMATION

Telephone: 4229 1079 Fax: 4227 6457



### Community Programs

The Salvation Army  
Wollongong Corps  
Burelli St  
Wollongong

# shared sentence

*Breaking down the walls*



FOR FAMILIES WITH A  
LOVED ONE ON PAROLE  
OR SERVING TIME



Many families struggle when a loved one enters the criminal justice system and often the judge's verdict raises many questions for families.

Lack of knowledge of the court and prison system, how to visit a loved one in gaol, as well as the feelings of anger, guilt, and confusion associated with having a loved one in gaol, often mean that this journey becomes a shared sentence for the entire family.

In addition, many families encounter stigma and shame due to having a loved one in gaol, leading them to withdraw from their community in an attempt to solve the problem in private. In the majority of cases, families often face the many burdens of this shared sentence alone and feel that no one will understand their situation.

However, recent studies have found that practical information and coping strategies, as well as support from other families who have shared similar experiences, can be empowering for families and allow them to begin to reclaim their lives.

Shared Sentence is a support group established for parents and families who have a loved one in gaol or on parole. We are a supportive group of people who come together to share our experiences, offer practical information about the prison system, provide support and become empowered.

*Shared Sentence is a safe space to explore what crime and incarceration have meant for you and your family, and gain support if you need it.*

We aim to improve the greater community's awareness of the issues experienced by families of prisoner's and their unique needs so that more families are able to work towards ending the shared sentence of incarceration.



*"A great relief to be able to communicate with a group of people that can relate to similar problems. To listen to issues and experiences of others and how they have managed them."*

\* Tracy-age 47

*"The support of the group and being able to tell them anything and not being judged as a bad parent."*

\* Clive-age 53



\* denotes name changed

We meet over a friendly coffee on

**2nd Tuesday each month**

**5:00 pm – 6:30 pm**

(except public holidays)

at **The Salvation Army**

First Floor Program, Burelli St, Wollongong

(between Corrimal & Harbour Sts)