

Thanks for your interest in joining Storybook Dads. We've tried to put together some useful information in this pack, although not all of it may be relevant to you. We would be pleased to offer any more help and support. Feel free to contact our Channings Wood office on 01803 814702 or on info@storybookdads.org.uk

Contents:

1. **Overview**
2. **Frequently asked questions**
3. **Setting up Storybook Dads/Mums Facility – the basics**
4. **Security Guidelines - the basics**
5. **Setting up an audio recording facility**
6. **Setting up an audio editing facility - extra considerations**
7. **Setting up a video recording/editing facility – extra considerations**
8. **Membership application/payment form**

1. Overview

Storybook Dads, a registered charity, began operating in HMP Dartmoor prison in 2002. We have steadily expanded across the prison estate and now operate in over 100 prisons, including women's prisons where we operate as Storybook Mums. Our main office is now in HMP Channings Wood.

The idea is simple. Prisoners are recorded telling a story. The story is downloaded onto a computer and any mistakes are edited out. Music and sound effects are added and the final story is put onto a disc and sent to their child. As well as audio discs, we offer a DVD option where prisoners are filmed reading the story.

The results are very professional and editing process makes the stories come alive for the children. The children love these stories because they can hear their parent's voice whenever they want and the prisoners feel that they are doing something tangible for their children. Storybook Dads can be a lifeline for families and can help to maintain the family unit during the period of separation.

We offer an audio/video editing service to other prisons who can send their recordings to us in HMP Channings Wood where they are edited by our team of staff, volunteers and prisoners. The beauty of the scheme is that prisoners can take part regardless of their reading ability as the editing process eliminates any mistakes and any unwanted noises.

The Storybook Dads & Storybook Mums names and logos are trademarked in order to safeguard the brand and the quality of work produced in our name.

If you would like to see our project running first hand at Channings Wood, you are welcome to come for a visit. However this isn't essential and when you're up and running we can offer support via phone & email. Alternatively, we may be able to visit your establishment and give a presentation or deliver training if our expenses are reimbursed.

There are four main options for you to consider:

- **Audio (CD) recording option** - you record audio stories and send them to us for editing. We send the completed CD back to you
- **Audio (CD) recording and editing option** - you set up your own audio editing facility so you can do your own editing and produce your own CDs
- **Video (DVD) recording option** - you film video and send them to us for editing. We send the completed DVD back to you
- **Video (DVD) recording and editing option** - you set up your own video editing facility so you can edit and produce your own DVDs

Whatever option you choose, you *must* check with your Security Department about their requirements before you start to implement the scheme.

2. Frequently asked questions

What about Security?

You will need to talk to your Security Department about the project before you do anything.

Please refer to the section dedicated to Security

Who normally runs it in other prisons?

It varies from prison to prison. Very often it is the library, but it is also run by education, officers, chaplaincy or volunteers – in fact anyone who has a few hours a week can set up the scheme.

How much does it cost to take part?

The annual membership fee is currently £100 per prison (a higher rate may be charged for large volumes of recordings). This helps to cover administration/discs/packaging costs.

Who pays for everything?

Storybook Dads is a registered charity. Money is raised through applications to charitable trusts, fundraising and donations. HMP Channings Wood provides our accommodation and amenities.

What does the membership fee include?

As well as our editing service, we will give you the necessary info and support to get up and running. We will provide you with all the discs/disc wallets, an approved book list, our Storybook Dads/Mums logo, templates for posters, examples of paperwork/tracking templates as well as ongoing support. If you choose to do your own editing we also offer a Quality Assurance checking service. Editing training will incur an extra charge.

How do prisoners find out about it?

We can provide you with poster/flyer templates for you to put up on the wings, visits, library etc. Induction is also a good time to let newcomers know about the scheme; you could make flyers to be handed out, or see if you can get a five minute slot yourself to explain the project. Mostly the scheme spreads through word of mouth between the prisoners.

Who does the recording?

That's up to you. We will send recording tips to help get the best recording levels etc. Some prisoners do not want to read in front of anyone- however most benefit from having someone there to help and support them.

What happens then?

The recordings are sent to our editing suite where they are edited: mistakes are deleted and music and sound effects are added. The story is put onto a disc and returned to you to post to the family.

What if someone can't read very well?

The beauty of this scheme is the editing process. All mistakes or prompting can be deleted so anyone can take part regardless of their reading ability.

Can a prisoner record a story in another language?

Please refer to Security section of this document for our guidelines.

How many stories can we do? And how long do they take to come back to us?

It varies. Some prisons send us a few every week; others send several once a month. It all depends on time and resources. Our normal turnaround time is about two weeks although it can take a bit longer at Xmas as we are very busy.

How can we develop the project?

Prisoners could try writing their own story and include their children in the storyline. If there is somewhere that they can type it up, and even illustrate it, they could send out a little book with the

CD. This could be incorporated into literacy, IT or parenting courses. We can sometimes facilitate a Story-writing workshop for our member prisons. You may also be interested in rolling out our Me & My Dad (or Mum) project where prisoners can make educational, interactive resources for their children. You may also consider running a DVD Mums/Dads option where you film the parent reading the story and we create a DVD. Some prisons (with enough money, manpower and resources) choose edit their own stories. We can provide training and support for this. However, please note, it is a LOT harder to get this established than simply sending your recordings to us. Please contact us for more information on any of these projects.

Who works on the project at Channings Wood and what facilities do you have?

We have a small team of staff, volunteers and usually about a dozen carefully selected prisoners. We have a fully equipped audio/video editing suite and a separate project room.

Does it cost the participants anything?

You may wish to make a charge to your prisoners – most prisons don't. At Channings Wood, we don't charge, but we give the prisoners the option of making a donation. We encourage all our members to give prisoners a donation form. You will need to arrange this with your Finance Dept. We can send you a copy of the form that we use for you to adapt.

What books should we use?

You can only use books for which we have copyright permission. We will send you our approved list once you become a Storybook Dads member. When choosing books remember; this is audio! **Books with not much text and lots of pictures will not be suitable.** The child will not be able to see the story, only hear it. Try to choose books that look like they will lend themselves to sound effects. Stock up on a variety of books to suit all ages. The ideal length is a story that will take about five – ten minutes to read (this will take two or three hours to edit). Stories that take longer than about fifteen minutes to read will take too long to edit. We do not send books out with the CDs as this would cost too much. If you have a big budget, feel free to do so.

How can we find out more?

You are welcome to visit us to see how the scheme runs here. Alternatively, feel free to contact us by phone or email anytime.

How can we join?

Just fill in the attached membership application and let us know where we should send the membership fee invoice to. We'll then give you all the info you need to get started.

3. Setting up Storybook Dads/Mums Facility – the basics

Get known

It is a good idea to liaise with various prison departments to let them know what you are doing. This will go a long way towards co-operation if you need to ask for men to be unlocked / excused from work etc, or if you need to use a room to record in. Departments you could liaise with include: Governors, Head of Learning & Skills, Education, Officers, Workshop Managers, Library Staff, Chaplaincy, Writer in Residence, Probation. In fact, EVERYBODY- you never know when you might need them.

Location

Finding somewhere suitable to record can be difficult. The wings are generally too noisy, as are workshops. The chapel, library or education may have quiet times when you can record.

Staffing

Where is the project going to be based and who is going to help? This will vary from prison to prison. People that might get involved in running the scheme include education, library, officers, Writer in Residence, volunteers, prisoners.

Tasks include:

Promoting the scheme and collecting names of applicants.

Checking each applicant for child protection issues.

Making appointments and giving out application forms.

Helping participants to select book and doing the recordings

Sending recordings to us for editing.

Receiving finished discs and issuing to participants to listen to, then posting to family.

Sending out, receiving and collating feedback.

4. Security Guidelines - the basics (these apply for running a Storybook Dads/Mums audio recording centre. An editing centre or DVD project will incur extra considerations.)

It's vital that you implement the necessary security measures. Please read guidelines carefully and then check with your Security Department for their requirements.

Equipment

The PSO 1100 has been implemented to stamp out improper/ unauthorised use of audio or visual recording equipment (including mobiles) and it is now a criminal offence to do so.

Our use is legitimate but you need to draw up a document stating what recording equipment you have, what it is used for, how it is used, where it is kept and who is authorised to use it. Get this signed by your Governor / Security dept.

Storybook Dads is now running in 100 (all categories A – D). As long as certain security measures are observed, the scheme can be delivered safely. Your recording equipment will consist of a mini disk recorder and mini disks (if you still use the older system) or a digital recorder and a few SD cards. You may or may not need a separate microphone depending on which type you buy. It is important that the equipment is supervised at all times and kept in a locked cupboard when not in use.

If we are editing for you, you will be sending us SD cards / mini disks / CDs via post or as files over the internet. SD cards are very small, and could be easily misplaced - you will need to keep a very close eye on them. When you send an SD card to us for the first time we will mark it with a unique number and return it to you with your finished discs.

Child Protection

EVERY prisoner should be checked before he can participate. Child protection orders can be found on P-NOMIS. If you have not been trained / do not have access to finding out the child protection details in the case files you will need to ask get security / public protection office to do this for you.

If any of these apply to a prisoner you will have to investigate further before he is allowed to record a story. It may not necessarily preclude him from participating, but you will need to find out if he has access to his children. You will need to find out the best way in your own prison of doing this so you could ask the child protection / public protection officer, security or probation. Once you have a system in place it should run smoothly. Check with your security dept / public protection office if this all they want you do to enable a prisoner to take part. Prisons differ in their guidelines.

We get the prisoner to fill in an application form and ask if there are any court procedures/ custody applications pending. We also ask if there is a difficult relationship between prisoner and carer, so that we don't waste resources on a CD that is going to be thrown in the bin before the child gets it.

You may also wish to send a consent form to the carer first, to ensure that the disc will be well received. However, most prisons do not do this. Check with your public protection / child protection dept. Some prisoners may be going through a legal procedure regarding access. A few prisoners can only have a disc sent via their solicitor, probation officer or social worker.

Data protection

You will be getting names and address of families to which you will be sending discs. These must be kept in a locked cupboard and at no time be on display so that other prisoners can see them.

Recording

A staff member should record prisoners. However we realise that in some cases a prisoner may wish to record alone or you may wish to have an orderly assist with recordings. It is up to you to get permission from your security department for prisoners to be left unattended with your equipment.

If you do use an orderly, they should sign a compact saying that he/she will be responsible for the appropriate use of the equipment which should be checked at the end of the recording session. The orderly will also need to declare that he/she will maintain client confidentiality and not discuss anything that has been recorded with other prisoners. You will need an orderly who is sensitive to the needs of the prisoners (some may need help with reading etc).

Recording content

Prisoners must not say anything inappropriate on their recordings i.e 'bad mouthing' mum's new boyfriend etc or anything that could be considered a breach of security. Everyone involved in helping prisoners to record should be made aware of this. All recordings that we edit will be listened to by one of our staff /volunteers or one of our experienced prisoner editors, so anything untoward will be spotted. However, this is not a common problem.

You need to send us a completed 'editing sheet' with your recordings. It contains the information we need to process your recording and ensure we don't get recordings mixed up (we are editing for many prisons). **N.B.** If you prefer to keep your prisoners' names concealed for security purposes- you can just give them a unique reference number. As long as you know who is who at your end – we don't need to know. Don't repeat the same numbers when you send new recordings. We keep recordings for about 3 months so we can send a replacement if any get lost/ damaged –and we would not be able to differentiate readers if you duplicate personal numbers.

Recording in a Foreign Language

Welsh prisoners: Prisons have a legal obligation to ensure that prisoners can record in Welsh
Foreign Nationals: There is no legal obligation to ensure foreign nationals can record in another language, however as far as possible or practicable, it is desirable that the prison should try to facilitate this.

In both cases, the recording prison should ensure that the following conditions are fulfilled:

- Verifying the suitability of the recording should be done by a prison staff member or an appropriate external partner who speaks the language or by the prison translation service. Written confirmation that the recording contains no unsuitable content (see Recording Content above) should be forwarded to the editing centre along with the recording.
- Since the recording will not usually be understood by the editors, they will just put music at the beginning and end of the recording before burning onto a CD. If there is an experienced and capable editor who understands the language they can edit and enhance the recording in the usual way. However the recording must still be verified as suitable by an appropriate external partner or prison translation service first. Please contact us to find out what languages we are currently able to edit in.

Completed discs

Once we have edited the recordings we send them back to you on non-rewritable discs, along with your SD card/mini disk. The prisoners like to listen to disc before they are sent out so it is a good idea for you to offer this option. If a prisoner is going to listen to it in their cell, we recommend you give them an authorisation slip stating the Storybook Dads disc is in their possession.

Posting

We post everything out through the prison post. The prisoner may not include anything else with the disc. If you let them include anything else (letter etc) you are breaching security. Some prisoners will ask if they can hand it out on a visit. This is for your Security Department to decide.

5. Setting up an Audio Recording Facility

Equipment

We recommend the **Zoom H2 or Zoom H2n**. Available from Amazon at @ £150. It runs on mains or batteries and uses SD cards. It has a built in microphone and the sound quality is excellent. You will need a tripod to stand it on. You will need a couple extra SD cards – 2GB or bigger (also available on Amazon for approx £5-10 each). If you are on a tight budget you can go for the **Zoom H1** (£79) but it only runs on batteries and is more flimsy but still pretty good quality sound recording.

By all means look around, but don't be tempted to buy anything too cheap – the sound quality won't be good and it won't be durable. DON'T be tempted to buy anything that is little more than a dictaphone. We are not experts on the various devices and cannot guarantee quality on other devices other than the Zoom H1, H2 or H2n. When setting up your Zoom recorder, please refer to our Handbook (a copy of which will be sent to you when you become members).

Sending audio files to us for editing

Most prisons send their recordings on SD cards, mini disks or CDs. Reusable media will be given a unique ID number by us. CDs (which need to be non rewritable) will be destroyed. However if you are able to transport your recordings in and out of the prison via an authorised USB drive or other medium, you can either e-mail them to us directly to our storybook dads e-mail address or upload them to a web site that we use for this purpose. This saves sending SD cards through the post. You will have to record in mp3 format but can't be bigger than 10mb. It is not possible to send audio files through an HMPS e-mail as an attachment.

6. Setting up an audio editing facility - extra considerations

Editing and production may be done by staff, civilian volunteers or prisoners. Training prisoners to do editing, provides purposeful activity for them whilst also helping to maintain family ties for other participating prisoners. **However, please be warned: an editing facility requires a lot of extra work and supervision! Unless you have a LOT of staff hours to devote to overseeing the project, we don't recommend you attempt to do your own editing.**

Cost

Training £125 per person for our 2 day training course at HMP Channings Wood. Alternatively we can come to you to train (cost negotiable). Software £150 for each computer, headphones £25 each. You may also need to upgrade your computer to ensure it has sufficient memory/capability.

IT equipment

Recording devices and associated equipment (including blank discs) must be kept in a locked cupboard. Equipment associated with your computer also pose a risk. You will need to speak to your IT and Security depts about the equipment you need and how you will safeguard its use. This is likely to include disabling functions such as Internet capability, CD/DVD writer, USB ports. In addition, they will advise you on ensuring information assets are suitably risk assessed and that suitable Information Assurance safeguards are implemented. If you are allowing prisoners to burn discs they should be issued one at a time and a log kept. We **strongly recommend** that you use an external CD writer. This can be kept in a locked cupboard and plugged in and supervised by a staff member when a project is ready to be burned.

Supervision

Editors must be supervised at all times. If prisoners are left on their own they may start trying to use the USB ports or software for other things like making beats/ music/ rap etc. You will need to be extremely vigilant about this.

Location

Although the editors will use headphones, there needs to be a space set aside for them to work in, even if it's a corner of a classroom / library. Too much ambient noise (such as people chatting) is distracting. Ideally the editing facility would be in a separate room. If the room is fairly quiet it can also be used for the recording stories, thereby encompassing the whole project in one location.

Editor training

Although it doesn't take long to learn the basics of editing, it will take several weeks to gain proficiency, speed and creativity. If you are going to rely on prisoners to do the editing, it isn't worth training anyone unless they are going to be with you for at least 4-6 months. Similarly it is not suitable to implement an editing suite with the main purpose being for editors to gain a qualification and then move them on to make room for new editors. **There are real clients out there – the prisoners' children – so the quality of the production should be the main priority.** At least one staff member or civilian will need to be competent on the use of the editing software so that they can train and supervise the prisoners. The staff member will need to edit stories on an ongoing basis to keep their skills honed.

Standards

Editors' work will need to be listened to regularly for security purposes and for quality control. The Storybook Dads name depends on its reputation of producing an excellent product. Editors can become bored or lazy and you cannot assume the work is always going to be good. It is essential that staff monitor the work on a regular basis and give feedback and additional training as required. In addition, we require samples of editors' work to be sent to us for quality control every 3 months.

Confidentiality

Prisoners who help with recording or editing other prisoners' stories need to sign a compact to declare that he will maintain client confidentiality. They need to be sensitive to the needs /problems of the readers (some may be poor readers).

Recording content

If a staff member is going to be doing the recordings there should be no problem with inappropriate content. However if this is not the case your editors need to be made aware of the possibility of inappropriate comments/ messages etc and a staff member will also need to listen to the final CD.

7. Setting up video recording/editing facility – extra considerations

As well as the usual security measures in place for audio work regarding child protection, supervision of equipment, data protection etc, DVD Dads has more security implications because of the opportunity of improper use of equipment. Security departments are very cautious about allowing cameras/camcorders into a prison so be sure to consult with them first. They will not take kindly to be informed after the fact. You will need to prepare some sort of protocol for safe storage and use of the camera i.e. kept in a locked cabinet, who will be using camera. As with the audio scheme you can run DVD Dads in either of two ways:

Equipment and approx costs:

Recording scheme: (You film your readers and send it to us production): Camcorder (£150- 400), Tripod (£30), authorised books – from which we have permission to use images (£100). You will also need several large SD cards in order to record more readers while we are editing from one of your cards (£40). Alternatively you can download the recording from the camera onto your computer and then burn them onto a DVD and send that to us. We will return your SD cards and DVDS so you can use them again.

Recording and Editing scheme: (You film, edit and produce your own DVDS):

As well as the above mentioned equipment, you will need: video editing computer (£500), video editing software, (£60). If prisoners are going to be trained to do the editing, security could be an issue and you will be wise to take the DVD burner out and replace with a DVD reader and just use an external burner when you are ready to burn the DVD. An external DVD burner which attaches by USB Lead will cost about £25. 2 day training course at Channings Wood - £125 per student. We may be able to come to you to deliver training (cost negotiable).

In addition you may want to use a puppet, as we do, to encourage readers and help them relax. Bear in mind though that this only works if you have a puppeteer who is confident but also adaptable and sensitive to the needs of individual readers. Better not to have a puppet than one that doesn't work. We will send you examples of DVDs with and without a puppet. If you are unsure which scheme to set up feel free to get in touch with us for more advice.

The main thing to remember is that if you are going to set up your own production centre you will need to ensure that you have enough staff resources to oversee it. You can't just leave it to prisoners to be responsible for the quality of the work being produced. So a staff member will also need to be able to learn film editing in order to oversee quality and training of new editors.

We recommend that you ask security if they are happy with your arrangements and ask if there is anything else you need to put in place.



Membership Info Pack



Membership Application/Update/Contact Form

Establishment DATE

Please give the name, position, dept, telephone and e-mail of staff that will be involved in Storybook Dads/Mums.

Contact 1

Name:

Position:

Dept:

Phone:

Email:

Contact 2

Name:

Position:

Dept:

Phone:

Email:

Who should annual membership invoice to be made out to?:

The amount varies depending on how many stories you anticipate sending us – and is adjusted each year.

0-100 recordings = £100

100 -200 recordings = 200

200 – 300 recordings = 300

(We can only accept payment by cheque or bank transfer. Most prisons pay through the Shared Service Centre).

Please return by post or e-mail to info@storybookdads.org.uk