**Table 1**. Data extraction for coping

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Reference of the reviewed study | Location | Study popu-lation (n) | Age or grade in school | Method | Aims | Eligibility | Ethnicity | Coping strategies | Key conclusions | Limitations |
| [42] | US | 34 children | 8-17 | Descriptive qualitative open-ended interviews. The interview topics included the demographic characteristics of the child, caregiver, and the imprisoned parent, information about the incarceration of the parent, social, - family, - school-, and personal experiences and coping strategies | To describe the effect of parental imprisonment on children from children’s perspectives | Children’s ages ranged from 8-17 at the beginning of the study, parent in prison, both child and caregiver willing to participate, several recruitment methods to increase broader participation | 62 % African American  19 % native American  19 % white | Supportive people were helpful for coping, involvement in activities and sports, theatre and church/faith (distraction activities), the need for a place to feel normal, overall resourceful and creative coping strategies, children had responsibilities that made it easier to challenge hard situations and cope. | Supporting children through support from families and caregivers, good communication. There were feelings of isolation and stigma, but a need for support groups, friends and mentors. The majority of participants did well in school. Most children were mature and developed for their age, but need support groups, mentors and places to feel normal. | No randomization,  Most children <13 years old, and most experienced paternal incarceration |
| [38] | UK | 6 children and their parents | 7-17 | Used qualitative interviews from 161 children and more in depth interviews with six cases, cross-country comparisons. Themes: resilience, attachment and loss as well as gender significance, stigma and support | To assess children’s coping mechanisms and investigate the relationship between parent’s perceptions and behaviours related to the prison stay | Having a parent in prison, only six cases were interviewed from the larger cohorts | Children from Sweden, UK, Germany and Romania, other information was not provided | Openness and honesty influence children, school and peers are important distractions and activities, sports and therapeutic groups were seen as helpful, it was important for the children to talk about their parent’s situation, family policies about disclosing and managing stigma | Coping strategies were influenced by the children’s surroundings and how/if it was talked about in the family, children were influenced by parents and caregivers, the study found an overall ability to show and handle feelings, problems of stigma, challenges for the children of prisoners were similar in the four countries | Gravity of offence and length of sentence differed in the countries, children who were not in contact with their imprisoned parents were underrepresented, some children were supported by an NGO, more girls were represented in the study |
| [44] | US | 10 children | 11-16 | Qualitative Interviews with themes such as personal characteristics, family relationships, experiences with parental incarceration and expectations for parental reentry from prison | To examine the coping strategies of young adolescents during and after parental imprisonment | Families with at least one child between 11-17 years’ old | Black African American  one had another race-ethnicity | Combination of de-identification (avoidance and distance from the imprisoned parent) desensitization (normalizing and minimizing the parent’s situation) and strength through control (finding control in life, distraction and handling), school support, therapy was helpful, caregivers played an important role | Variability in the coping strategies of young people, but a combination of de-identification, desensitization and strength through control, as well as the problem of stigma | Small sample size, mostly paternal incarceration, ethnicity limitations, only six had a parent imprisoned at the time of the interview, only interview at one-time point, recruited children where they could obtain mentoring support |
| [40] | US | 35 children | 1st-10th grade | Non-experimental, qualitative interviews were conducted about a one-year mentoring program, semi-structured questions included topics such as coping, family relationships and context, quantitative measurements from the Youth Self Report, Withdrawn Subscale and Delinquent Subscales | To examine children’s coping strategies related to loss through parental imprisonment and suggesting a need for additional mentoring programmes | Family member in prison, primarily parents | 94,3 % minority (African American or Hispanic) | Ineffective, lack of family and social support and children coped on their own, overall variability in coping strategies, avoiding emotions and other people, a greater understanding of the parent’s situation was related to better coping strategies | Findings of stress and trauma, significant results on the CROPS, PTSD, decreased mental health, isolation, kept it inside, a lack of social support for grief, many spent time alone and did not have supportive surroundings. Hard living conditions, a negative correlation between received support and externalizing attitudes, openness in the family was important as was talking about parental imprisonment | Small sample size, geographic/race homogeneity, the data from only at one source, difficulties with audiotaping the interviews, no reliable foundation data |
| [39] | SE | Ten children | 7-17 | Qualitative semi-structured interviews included family, school and leisure activities, information about the imprisoned parent, prison visits, contact, contact with helpful organizations and views of the future | To investigate the experiences of children who had parents in prison and to summarize the results with other studies’ in which children suffered from parental problems | Parents sentence had a duration of at least three months, the children knew that the parent was imprisoned | Children in Sweden, other information not provided | Mental strategies, talking about it, spending time with friends, good support at school and NGO’s and peer support, time and age were helpful coping mechanisms. Coping strategies based on resilience were positive ways of dealing with parental imprisonment, family, friends, teachers and health professionals were viewed as helpful | Children are affected by parental imprisonment, expressed feelings of stigma, most participants imagined their future as positive and that problems were improving | Difficulties recruiting participants who had no contact with an NGO, qualitative studies differed in their designs and aims, differed in types as well as descriptive results based on narrative analyses |

Table 2: Data extraction for interventions

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Reference of the reviewed study | Location | Study population (n) | Age or grade in school | Method | Aims | Description of the intervention | Ethnicity | Type of intervention | Key conclusions | Limitations |
| [43] | US | School students | 5th | A descriptive evaluation of an intervention project | To evaluate a group intervention offering support to elementary school children who had imprisoned parents. The group intervention consisted of eight sessions | 3rd or 5th grade in school, students who had coping problems, lower self-esteem and academic problems | Not provided, but data collection in the US | An eight-session supportive group intervention at school | Structured and theoretically based intervention program, school was important for support. There is a need for workshops for school professionals and school counsellors, who are important for a lead roles | No follow-up, minimal time in group, a small sample size, the need of a more formal evaluation process |
| [37] | US | 15 children and their caregivers | 10-16 | Qualitative, semi-structured interviews and a descriptive summary of the quality of the programme and the relationship between the child and the mentor. Evaluated the four goals from the mentoring programs: Social development, emotional development, friendship and bonding | To describe the outcomes of an evaluation of two mentoring programmes and examine whether the programmes could change children’s attitudes and behaviours | Ages between 10-16 years, two members of the interview cohort had to participate (mentor/parent/child) | Not provided, but data collection in the US | Weekly mentoring program, duration from nine months - five years | Mentor was a positive role model, gave stability, improved cognitive and social development, greater openness, more sociability, more self-confidence, signs of happiness, improved school skills | No longitudinal analysis, relationships and expressions were subjective |
| [35] | US | 35 children and their caregivers | 10-11 | Quantitative survey, evaluation | To investigate the l effect of parental imprisonment on children and their families who participate in a mentoring programme with “Seton Youth Shelters” | Having a mentor and experiences having an imprisoned parent | 45 % African American  24 % White | A one-to-one mentoring program, once a week | Increased interest in school, improved relationships with their families, speaking to someone was helpful, positive changes in the children’s behaviours, school and increased interest in well-being, 80 % agreed or strongly agreed that mentoring had benefits | Families were transient and did not hand in new contact information, there is a need for male  mentors, the survey was too long |
| [41] | US | 10 children | 4-5th | Quantitative non-randomized | To investigate a solution-focused mutual aid-group and its impact on children’s well-being | Hispanic American, 4th or 5th grade, had a family member in prison, no psychosis, mental retardation or developmental disorder | Hispanic American | Solution focused and mutual aid group intervention | Significant differences and improvements in the experimental group based on the Hare-Self-Esteem-Scale | Small sample size, no generalization possible, lack of random assignment, difficulty measuring the mental health of children, limited time |
| [36] | UK | 250 children and their caregivers | 7-17 | Qualitative and quantitative data from three-years of the European Commission funded research project COPING, using the Goodman’s Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire, the Rosenberg Self Esteem Scale and Kidscreen as well as in-depth interviews | To illustrate results from the COPING project, based on good practice tools for schools to help them support children of imprisoned parents | Families paternal- or maternal imprisonment | Sweden, Romania, Germany and the UK | Support from schools and the need for staff training | Schools were the most important for supporting children and could help with academic performance and counselling, but there was a need for training the teachers and school staff | Not provided, but different in the four countries and all schools reacted differently |
| [34] | US | Children (in general, without a specific number) | Not provided | Descriptive summary of programmes | To discuss and to review services, efforts and interventions to support children who have imprisoned parents | Not provided | Review, but no ethnicity was provided | Mother-daughter intervention activities, grief and loss models of therapeutic intervention | Different interventions had good results (academic and emotional), but there is a need for evidence and gender specific interventions as well as professional training | Not provided, but data duplication was mentioned |